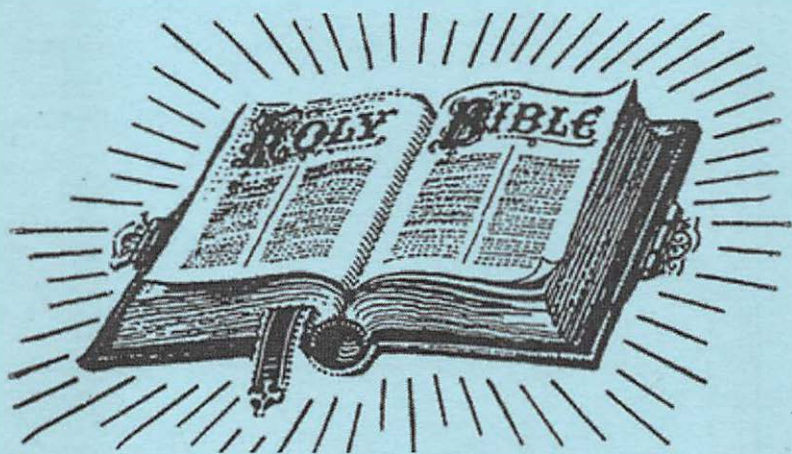


# Bible Lessons



The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; ... when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

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**July • August • September**  
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*Quarterly Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People*  
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# Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Volume 46

July August September

No 3

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## BIBLE LESSONS THIRD QUARTER, 2014

### THEME FOR LESSONS

We are inspired to have for this series of Bible Lessons the various teachings of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as recorded in the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These lessons have wonderful and valuable light and knowledge that we all need in this mortal journey of life. We pray the Lord will make these lessons a rich blessing to all who study and partake of them.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

**JULY 6, 2014**

### MARRIAGE AND ADULTERY

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.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

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 19:3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, 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.

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, 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*.

Romans 7:2 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.

3 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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. 1 Corinthians 7:39

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** It was God's original plan in the beginning for a man and his wife to hold fast in mutual love for each other until death parts them. But because of the power and influence of sin and fleshly desires the marriage bond has been many times broken, but godly fear and guidance of the Holy Spirit can help to bring the victory and peace that is needed.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 5:27, "*adultery*": Unlawful physical relations between a man and a woman.

Ver. 28, "*lust after her*": Look upon her with unholy desire.

Ver. 29, "*pluck it out*": This is a spiritual plucking, a solid resistance against looking with evil desires. So it is in verse 30 with cutting off the right hand.

Ver. 31, "*writing of divorcement*": A legal document of separation. This was a part of the law given by Moses as recorded in Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

Ver. 32, "*saving for the cause of fornication*": Except it be because of unlawful relations with someone else.

Matthew 19:5, "*cleave to*": Be joined to. "*twain*": Two.

Ver. 6, "*put asunder*": Separate and take apart.

Ver. 8, "*the hardness of your hearts*": The stubborn and selfish attitude in the heart of sinful man.

Ver. 12, "*eunuch*": A man not able to have physical relations with a woman. "*eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake*": This is referring to men who for the sake of pleasing God and being in His service deny themselves of having a wife.

1 Corinthians 7:39, "*only in the Lord*": Only by obedience to the will of God.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have before us a Bible Lesson that is very serious and important for us human beings to give ear and take heed to. It was a wonderful blessing that the Almighty Creator gave the first man Adam, as recorded in Genesis 2:21-24, and is quoted and referred to in Matthew 19:4-6 in our lesson. In the animal and bird part of the creation, God made male and female, "...but for Adam there was not found a help meet for him." So God performed a sacred and wise blessing upon man. Taking out one of Adam's ribs, He produced a lovely creature and presented her to him. What a wonderful blessing and relationship there was between these two! And down through the ages of history can be found many wonderful experiences of a man being blessed with the love and fellowship of a beautiful wife, especially if godliness and obedience to God is the central part of both hearts and lives.

And still today for all who yield their hearts and lives to

please the LORD and do His will can be found this blessed happiness of holy wedlock. But along with the blessedness and the beauty there always exists a possibility of sin and disobedience entering into the picture to mar the blessing of the Lord. It is for every person to yield in submission to God and His will for their lives. A man and wife who have been brought together by the will and providence of God and have let Him guide their way can find the happiness and joy of a truly married relationship. Sad to say, there have been so many marriages dissolved and torn asunder, and adultery and fornication have defiled the lives of countless men and women. May the Lord bless our young people especially to get down to business with their Maker and let Him guide them to find the happiness and blessings that He wants them to enjoy and have a happy home and marriage through the years of life!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did God plan such a wonderful blessing as marriage for humanity?
2. How long did God want marriage to last for man and woman?
3. What causes double marriage and adultery to so many times take place?
4. What steps should be taken to obtain and enjoy a happy married life?
5. What can be seen in this sinful world concerning men and women?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The wonderful blessing of marriage is exemplified in the scriptural references of Jesus Christ and His relationship with the redeemed of mankind as that of a blessed Bridegroom and His beautiful and Holy Bride. In Ephesians 5:22-33 the apostle Paul brings it out so wonderfully. He tells wives to be submissive to their own husbands as the Church is submissive to Christ. He enjoins husbands to love their wives "...even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." He says in verse 28 that "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies." What a beautiful picture we have in the Scriptures of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour being united with us even as

a man is united with his beloved wife! If people would follow this blessed example in their lives with each other as man and wife, there would be much less trouble and disaster in the realm of marriage!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

This Bible Lesson reminds me of an essay written by Caitlin Flanagan from the Time magazine, July 13, 2009 issue entitled: "Why Marriage Matters." The excerpts are as follows:

*"Adultery is not about...romance. Ultimately, it is about how little we mean to one another. And so American families discover a truth as old as marriage: a lasting covenant between a man and woman can be a vehicle for the nurture and protection of each other, the one reliable shelter in an uncaring world; or it can be a matchless tool for the infliction of suffering on the people you supposedly love above all others, most of all on your children.*

*How much does this matter? More than words can say. There is no other single force causing as much measurable hardship and human misery in this country as the collapse of marriage. It hurts children, it reduces mother's financial security, and it has landed with particular devastation on those who can bear it least: the nation's underclass.*

*On every single significant outcome related to short-term well-being and long-term success, children from intact, two-parent families outperform those from single-parent households. Longevity, drug abuse, school performance and dropout rates, teen pregnancy, criminal behavior and incarceration—if you can measure it, a sociologist has, and in all cases, the kids living with both parents drastically outperform the others.*

*Few things hamper a child as much as not having a father at home. Maria Kefalas, a sociologist who studies marriage and family issues says, 'Women always tell me, "I can be a mother and a father to a child," but it's not true. Growing up without a father has a deep psychological effect on a child. The mom may not need that man, but her children still do.'*

*'It's dismissive of the human experience,' says David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values, 'to suggest that kids don't suffer, extraordinarily, from divorce: Children have a primal need to know who they are, to love and*

*be loved by the two people whose physical union brought them here. To lose that connection, that sense of identity, is to experience a wound that no child-support check or fancy school can ever heal. We recognize that it is something of great worth, but we are increasingly less willing to put in the hard work and personal sacrifice to get there.’ “*

—LaDawna Adams

**JULY 13, 2014**

## **FORGIVING OTHERS**

Matthew 18:21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow servants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:



33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

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.

14 And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. Matthew 6:14, 15

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Our trespasses and sins against Almighty God, our Creator in whom we live and move and have our being, are far worse than the sins and trespasses our fellow man may commit against us. If we would have His forgiveness and mercy, we must also be forgiving and merciful to others.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 18:21, "*forgive*": Let go; hold not against.

Ver. 22, "*seventy times seven*": This equals 490.

Ver. 24, "*ten thousand talents*": An intense and overwhelming amount, far beyond one's ability to pay. Jesus compared this to our debt to God for sinning against Him.

Ver. 26, "*worshipped*": Bowed the knee in pleas for mercy.

Ver. 28, "*an hundred pence*": A very small sum of money.

Ver. 29, "*besought*": Begged.

Ver. 35, "*trespasses*": Offenses, injuries, unjust treatments, hurtful words.

Ephesians 4:31, "*clamour*": Outcry, grievances, arguments. "*malice*": Evil thoughts and ill will.

Ver. 32, "*kind*": Considerate and thoughtful. "*tenderhearted*": Compassionate, sympathetic, and pitiful.

Colossians 3:12, "*Put on*": Cover and clothe yourself. "*bowels*": Tender feelings of pity, compassion, and affection. "*meekness*": Gentleness.

Ver. 13, "*forbearing*": Putting up with. "*quarrel*": Complaint.

Ver. 14, "*above all*": Most needed and important. "*charity*": Pure love, affection, and benevolence. "*bond of perfectness*": The uniting principle of completeness.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today concerning the forgiveness that we must have for those who trespass against us was preceded in this 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew by some other matters that we can see might be related. In the first part, the disciples came to Jesus and asked Him who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus answered them by calling a little child and setting him in their midst and stating that unless we become as little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. He followed this statement with the same word that we had in our previous lesson about marriage and adultery concerning cutting off the hand or the foot or plucking out the eye that causes one to offend. He also spoke of how to deal with your brother who trespasses against you, telling his fault between him and yourself, then getting two or three witnesses, or going to the church about it and then counting him as a heathen and a publican if he does not take heed. At the last part of the chapter, Peter presented to Jesus the question of how much forgiveness are we to show to those who sin against us.

Jesus made it clear that we are to forgive with complete and perfect forgiveness any who trespasses against us. He shows that the forgiveness we receive from God is so far above the forgiveness that we owe to our fellow man. So there is no way that we can harbor bitterness and a grudge against anyone. Complete forgiveness, love, mercy, kindness, meekness, and

tenderness is the standard of our feelings and dealings with all humanity. If we want God's forgiveness and mercy for our sins, we must forgive and be merciful to our fellow creatures of earth.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What comparison did Jesus show between God's forgiveness and ours?
2. What kind of attitude must we maintain in our hearts toward others?
3. What lurks in the heart of a person who holds grudges and does not forgive?
4. What price did our Saviour pay for God's forgiveness for us?
5. Why is it so much better for the soul's welfare to forgive others?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The guilt and condemnation that is felt in the heart of a lost sinner is a terrible and woeful agony. Sad to say, so many people in this world are not aware of this plight they are in. Very little thought is in the souls of many in this short earthly life of the great Creator who created the beautiful Heavens and wonderful earth. God has not left himself without a witness. His glory is declared by the Heavens day after day and night after night. Psalm 19:1-4 so speaks. And God has worked with humanity through the ages, giving His witness and shining the light of His goodness and truth before us. The Law given through Moses along with the testimony of the men of faith such as Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and many others down through the years is sufficient testimony and evidence. Parents are responsible before God to earnestly testify and teach their children about the greatness, goodness, and holiness of the Almighty Creator. Then the Holy Spirit has a way of working with the individual soul. Man can be, and has many times been, convicted of this sins and need for mercy and forgiveness. Jesus, the greatest witness Heaven ever sent, has made it clear with His life, testimony, death, and resurrection the truth that we need to hear and understand. We need God's forgiveness for our sins, and we must forgive the trespasses that our fellow man has done to us. There is no

way around this wonderful and vital truth that we need to know. The price we will pay for disregarding and overlooking this need for God's forgiveness and our responsibility to love, have mercy, and forgive our fellow creatures of earth will be eternal damnation and suffering shame.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

I can vividly remember a son and daughter giving testimony of how their mother was murdered years previously. Although many years had elapsed, the pain and hurt was still very evident.

Forgiveness, simply put, is not easy, depending on the severity of the offense. It is impossible to do within ourselves; it will be only by the grace of God. Sometimes we can have the knowledge in our head that, yes, I am supposed to forgive and it is necessary for us in order to make heaven, but this knowledge within itself doesn't bring an automatic forgiveness. It will take a working of God in our hearts as we humble ourselves before our Lord.

Perhaps, you remember the account of Corrie ten Boom, who suffered greatly in a Nazi prison camp, losing her sister there. Sometime later, after a speaking engagement, one of the Nazi guards approached her. When she recognized him, feelings and hurts came to her. She made a choice in those few moments, and as she reached out her hand to shake his, the peace of God flooded her soul.

Offenses are many, and the world is filled with hurting people who are struggling with their wounds. Victory will never be found in our resolutions and purposes. Victory over wounds is through Jesus Christ. "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

—Bob Wilson

**JULY 20, 2014**

## THE GOSPEL PLANTING IN THE HEART OF MAN

Matthew 13:3 And he [Jesus] spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some *seed*s fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: [Luke 8:6: "it withered away, because it lacked moisture."]

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns: and the thorns sprung up, and choked them, [Mark 4:7 and it yielded no fruit."]

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh [Mark 4:15: "Satan cometh immediately"], the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. [Luke 8:14 "choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection."]

23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; [Luke 8:15: "In an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience"] which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Hebrews 8:10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.

11 And they shall not teach every man his neighbor; and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

**MEMORY VERSE:** All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. || Timothy 3:16, 17

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God Almighty, through His Son Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit, wills to plant the seed of His gracious and soul enriching Word into the hearts of mankind; but because of contrary and hindering conditions therein, the truth cannot prosper and have the intended effect.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 13:3, "*parables*": Stories of common life that convey a spiritual moral or thought.

Ver. 20, "*anon with joy*": Seemingly with gladness.

Colossians 3:16, "*admonishing*": Encouraging and instructive teaching. "*spiritual songs*": Songs that express and reveal the blessing of spirituality.

|| Timothy 3:16, "*doctrine*": Instructive teaching. "*reproof*": Showing a fault. "*correction*": Straightening up. "*instruction in righteousness*": Training and discipline in the truth of godliness.

Ver. 17, "*thoroughly furnished*": Fully equipped.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus had come out from a house he had been in and had sat down by the seaside. Great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. This was the setting of His speaking the parable we have in our lesson of the sower that went out to sow seed. Jesus spoke this parable to the crowd but gave no explanation of its meaning. He finished it up with these words: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." His disciples came and asked Him why He had spoken to the throng in parables. Jesus explained to them that it was not given to the multitude to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. He said that He spoke in parables to the people because they were not able to understand. He stated that His disciples who were following Him were able to see and hear what He taught, but the crowd were not so. Jesus quoted from

Isaiah 6:9, 10 as a basis of His doing so. This is a thought that we today ought to seriously consider. He said in verse 12, "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." This is a solemn truth that very few people even today are aware of. The Word of God is solemn, serious, and vital for the spiritual good of man; but not every one can understand and take it in.

Our Lesson today goes into the depth of the meaning of Christ's parable and how He explained what it is pointing to. The four different kinds of ground described are four different kinds of human hearts of people. Some hear the Word and it has no effect upon them because their minds are taken up with fleshly and material things. Then there are some people who have a certain amount of interest, but it is shallow and not earnestly sincere. Then there are those who hear the Word but are hindered by the current and influence of fleshly lusts, desires, and interests that hinder them from getting the real essence. It is for us to take this thought seriously and seek the Lord in earnest prayer that we be not those who fail to understand, but rather of those who are benefited and enlightened to know and do the will of God.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of heart of man is like the ground by the wayside?
2. What kind of heart of man is like the stony places?
3. What kind of heart of man is like the ground infested with thorns?
4. What kind of heart of man is like the ground that grew good fruit?
5. What could be done in each ground to help things to be more successful?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It means so much and is of great importance for us mortal beings to take diligent heed to the Word of the Almighty God who created us. Failure to take heed to and obey His Word caused Adam and Eve to sin against God in the beginning. It was Satan who turned their thoughts from what they had heard God instruct them to do. Eve knew what God had

commanded, for she told it right out what God had commanded them concerning eating of the forbidden fruit. Then Satan turned her thoughts in the wrong direction, causing partaking of the forbidden fruit to appear profitable. So it is with us today. Mark says that it was Satan who comes and takes away the Word of God that was sown in the heart. So we must be wise to the arts of the devil and be on our guard against any influence that would lead us away from the Truth. It is more than just being in our minds and thoughts; we must set our affections and sincere determination to take heed and fully and earnestly obey the precious counsels of God's Word.

The world is charged with communications that are contrary to what the Almighty has given to us in the teachings of His Son Jesus Christ. Pride, ungodly affections, selfish purposes, and many other contrary attractions are like a great wave that floods the realm of humanity. Jesus Himself set the pattern and example that we should follow. He went against flesh by being submissive to the will of His Father in allowing Himself to be crucified on Calvary. He set an example of submission and obedience to the will of God that we must earnestly follow in the personal heart and life of every one of us. The price we will pay for failure will be eternal damnation.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

Can a person, initially hearing the Gospel in the condition of heart described as *wayside*, hardened and beaten by many ideas and influences, ever change to *an honest and good heart*? Ah, yes, I've seen it happen; God softens the individual, sometimes by sorrow and loss, followed by true comfort and love shown by the patient influence of a godly friend. Hard hearts need much love, and time, and winning with wisdom. But they can change. When understanding dawns, the Word begins to take effect.

Stony hearts. Can sub-surface stubbornness, rebellion, and misunderstanding resulting from hurt ever be transformed into *an honest and good heart*? Again, through a patient, winning friendship, bitter stones can be brought to the surface and heaved out of the way. How rewarding it is to see the change—the place where an individual came in his or her experience and bucked repeatedly, becomes a place of submission and willingness!



The impossible-with-man-but-not-with-God problem to surmount is the heart that truly understands the Gospel, has accepted it, and begins to bear fruit but is stifled to a halt by worldliness. Navigation through the many temptations that lie between conversion and a safe landing in the eternal world is treacherous! To know how to be in the world, but not of it; to use the world, but not abuse it; to know how to make an earthly living while maintaining a spiritual life; to keep from developing a love for the forbidden; to keep from being deceived by the false security offered by wealth.

Again, let us patiently love one another, faithfully meet together, warn each other, encourage each other, pray for each other! Brother, sister, keep *an honest and good heart!* Remember the final reward! Be mindful of the dangers that seduce us! Let us keep striving for ETERNAL FRUIT!

—Angela Gellenbeck

**JULY 27, 2014**

### **CHRIST'S TEACHING CONCERNING PRAYER**

Matthew 6:5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But 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.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for

ever. Amen.

Luke 11:5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he* ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Hebrews 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession.

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6, 7

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** What a wonderful privilege we have to come before God in earnest prayer and perfect assurance of His wonderful help for every difficulty and need that we might face in this earthly life!

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 6:5, "*pray*": To earnestly entreat and make requests. "*hypocrites*": Those who pretend without true possession.

Ver. 7, "*vain repetitions*": Utter again and again. "*heathen*": Nations in darkness and ignorance.

Ver. 9, "*Hallowed be thy name*": Thy name is holy, sanctified, and very sacred and dear to our hearts.

Ver. 11, "*our daily bread*": All that we need for this day.

Ver. 12, "*debts*": Trespasses, sins, and shortcomings. "*debtors*": All who trespass and sin against us.

Ver. 13, "*temptation*": Adversity and trouble.

Luke 11:8, "*importunity*": Persistence.

Ver. 9, "*ask*": Beg, desire, and call for. "*seek*": Search diligently for. "*knock*": Ask and seek for desperately.

Ver. 13, "*evil*": Not all what you should be.

Hebrews 4:14, "*profession*": Sincere testimony and acknowledgement.

Ver. 15, "*touched*": Sympathize.

Philippians 4:6, "*careful*": Anxious. "*supplication*": Begging and making earnest requests and petitions.

Ver. 7, "*passeth all understanding*": Goes beyond all we can comprehend.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

"What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!" Joseph Scriven. Our hearts are overwhelmed as we view the text of this wonderful subject of our lesson today! What a message given to us by God our Heavenly Father and His beloved Son Jesus! We have been inspired with the scriptures in our lesson today down through the years of our life. We see Jesus coming down to earth to bear our sins and sorrows and then behold Him taken up to the right hand of His Father to be our High Priest and Intercessor for us down here in this troublesome and difficult world. It is our blessed privilege to carry out the exercise of praying to our gracious Creator for help, guidance, strength, wisdom, courage, and overcoming power to help us live for Him and do His blessed will. We have included two scripture texts from the two gospels and choice writings from the apostle Paul. Their message speaks so

clearly that we need not much comment. Just thank the Lord for this blessed privilege of prayer and employ it in your life daily, nightly, and without ceasing!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is this blessed privilege of prayer to God such a valuable benefit?
2. Why should prayer not be something in pretence or public display?
3. How did Jesus say we should begin our approach in prayer to God?
4. Why should we welcome His Kingdom and submit to His will?
5. Why should we pray for daily bread and not for tomorrow?
6. Why is it important to forgive others as we seek forgiveness for us?
7. How can we be assured that God will hear and answer our prayers?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, was Himself a man of prayer. He had been praying in a certain place and when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, "Lord teach us to pray." This was just before our text in Luke 11:5-18. Luke recorded what Jesus said about how to pray, and it is very much the same as our text in Matthew 6:5-13 except the last part. Luke also brought out Christ's thought about importuning in prayer.

In Luke 6:12 it says, "And it came to pass in those days, that he [Jesus] went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." And when it was day Jesus called His disciples to Him and chose the twelve disciples. Then we have the touching scene in the garden of Gethsemane when Jesus in anguish and sorrow sought His Father's help and strength to face what He was about to suffer. With Peter, James, and John, He had gone there to pray, and while the others slept, He agonized before God. Luke 22:43, 44 says, "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Then came the awful scene of the wicked throng led

by the traitor Judas coming and arresting our Lord and taking Him away to be tried and sentenced to the death of the cross. And we have His prayer on the cross as recorded in Luke 23:34: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Then, just before He died, Matthew 27:46 tells us that Jesus cried with a loud voice, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

So we see that Jesus closed his life with prayer. Oh, how we need to follow His example and live our earthly lives strengthened and guided by earnest and continuing prayer! The prayers of the saints are pictured in Revelation 5:8 like golden vials full of odors, and in 8:3,4 they were offered upon the golden altar before the throne of God. The prayers of the righteous have had a great part in the course of God's Church through time. Let us all be encouraged and determined to live lives of earnest prayer.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

As a young boy, my mother would put us to bed with prayer. Those times made great impressions on me. I remember a time when my mom had rheumatic fever and had been bedfast for weeks, and a dear sister came by to pray for her. After prayer, I heard her say, "Now, Ruby, we are going to get up out of that bed and walk." She had not been able to do so in quite a while. She proceeded to get her out of bed while praising the Lord and walked with her down the hall. My mother kept walking, and she walked many more years after that. Her step of faith with prayer caused her to walk again.

When we pray, we must believe, act on faith, and wait on God. I was impressed with this quote from Robert E. Springer in the book, *Odors from Golden Vials*, written by C. E. Orr: "Prayer is the substance of spiritual life, the breathing of the immortal soul. It is a child's simple, sweet, trustful conversation with its heavenly father. It sweetens the bitterest cup of human life and causes the light of heaven to burst through the darkest cloud." I love the song where it says, "I kneel in sweet submission while my prayer ascends with faith on wings to father's throne. He listens while my hopeful spirit there, its faltering petitions maketh known." Let us value our prayer life more highly and seek God to inspire our petitions that our

prayers will be ones that he is eager to answer. It is a very great encouragement to us when our prayers are answered.

—James Bell

**AUGUST 3, 2014**

## **YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN**

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have eternal life.

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

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.* 1 Peter 1:22, 23

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To understand and be able to enter into the true kingdom of Almighty God a person must believe beyond the earthly material values into the eternal realm of God's Holy Spirit and His Word and be willing to be enlightened and led thereby.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

John 3:1, "*Pharisees*": An organization among the Jews, meaning "separatists" who felt they were really close to God.

Ver. 2, "*Rabbi*": Meaning "Master".

Ver. 3, "*born again*": The real meaning is "born from above."

Ver. 5, "*water*": This is referring to spiritual water, which is the Word of God. "*Spirit*": The eternal Spirit of Almighty God.

Ver. 7, "*Marvel not*": Do not wonder.

Ver. 8, "*The wind bloweth where it listeth*": The Spirit breathes where He desires.

Ver. 17, "*condemn*": Pronounce judgment.

Ver. 18, "*condemned already*": Is already under judgment.

Ver. 20, "*reproved*": Exposed as evil and wrong.

Ver. 21, "*manifest*": Shown clearly beyond doubt.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Nicodemus was like so many people of our world today. He was a master and ruler among the Jews who professed to be God's people, but he was totally ignorant and in darkness to spiritual eternal values. The thought of being born again was completely ridiculous to him because the only birth he knew anything about was that of a mother giving birth to a child. Jesus was presenting the real truth to him. It is still being held before humanity today in the Holy Scriptures. To be born again as Jesus said was to be born from above, that is, born of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. It is a spiritual birth, a spiritual resurrection from the dead state of sin to a life of holiness and righteousness before God. It is an experience that without fail every human being on the face of the earth desperately needs and must attain to if they will be accepted and well pleasing to one's Maker.

Our lesson reveals more about this wonderful experience that Jesus declared to be the true access to the kingdom of God. He stated that He, the Son of Man, would be lifted up as the serpent was lifted up by Moses for the children of Israel to look at when bitten by the serpents in the wilderness. This is told about in Numbers 21:8, 9. Jesus was to be lifted up on the cross of Calvary for the atonement of the sins of mankind. Whosoever will believe in Christ and obey Him can escape eternal damnation and have everlasting life. Jesus declared that God sent Him not to condemn humanity but to bring salvation. We must believe and obey, otherwise we will be condemned to eternal death. Jesus brought out how light is come into the world (through Him), but men love darkness and are not willing to accept the light. If we will face the truth and fully accept Him as Lord and Saviour, we can be delivered and enjoy the works of God in our hearts and lives.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Nicodemus so sure that Jesus was come from God?
2. What did Jesus say a man must become to enter the



kingdom of God?

3. Why did Nicodemus question the thought of being born again?

4. Why did God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son?

5. What does it really mean to truly believe in God's beloved Son?

6. How did the true light come into the world?

7. Why do men love darkness rather than light?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The blessed truth of being born from above that Christ presented in our lesson today has echoed down through the ages of time and has been a great monument for humanity to come to and experience so wonderfully! Sad to say, there are many who, like poor Nicodemus, are in ignorance and total darkness to what it means and really is to experience. In our Memory Verse selection from Peter's writing, we find it expressed so wonderfully! He states that in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned brotherly love, we must love one another with a pure heart fervently, being born again, not of corruptible seed (such as our first birth), but of incorruptible seed by the word of God. As our lesson points out, Jesus shows how we are born of the Word (water), and the Spirit. These two agents are pictured in Revelations 11 as the two witnesses and describes their course of history down through the gospel age. Oh, it is an experience that every person needs to seek earnestly for. To be born from above by the Word of God and the Spirit of God is the key to open up the kingdom of God for the souls of men. It is real, even though the masses of blinded mortal men are in darkness about it. Oh, the wonderful light of the gospel that declares that we can be born from above and have the Holy Spirit living in our hearts, and which opens up the Word of God to our life and understanding! Oh, may we encourage anyone who may not have attained to this blessed experience to seek for it earnestly with all of his heart. It is real and will be the means of having hope through this short vale of tears of an eternal life in the world to come. Praise our God for His great plan of salvation!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

The conversation that Nicodemus had with Jesus includes probably the most quoted verse in the Bible: John 3:16.

***"For God so loved the world"*** In the beginning, we read how the Father lovingly created all things in that beautiful garden of Eden. Oh how he loved the greatest of his creation—man. When Adam and Eve disobeyed, it put the whole future of the world on a path to eternal destruction. But God had already implemented a perfect plan of salvation that would reach to every man, woman, boy and girl. Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

***"That he gave his only begotten Son"*** While here on earth, Jesus had perfect control over every situation. He told his disciples, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." His last words on the cross were, "It is finished". It was not accidental or haphazard; it was a deliberate intention resulting in the ultimate and perfect sacrifice for our salvation.

***"That whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life"*** In Revelations, we read, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." There has never been sin in heaven, there is no sin present even now nor will there ever be sin. Thus, our only hope of entrance into that beautiful land of eternal life is through the precious blood of the Lamb.

Nicodemus had a great responsibility on his shoulders after talking with Jesus. We are blessed to have the scriptures in our hands to read and search out this great truth as well as the Holy Spirit speaking to our hearts and

guiding us in this way of truth. Thus, we too have a great responsibility. Paul asked in Hebrews, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The answer? We won't!

—LaDawna Adams

**AUGUST 10, 2014**

**THE BLESSED IN CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD**

Matthew 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shalt it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Philippians 2:14, 15

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** By being meek, lowly, righteous, merciful, pure in heart, and makers of peace in this world, the true saints of God will suffer and endure adversity; but in faithfully so doing, they will shine a light to all around them of what is well-pleasing and glorifying to God.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 5:3, "*Blessed*": Fortunate, well off, happy and blessed of God. "*poor in spirit*": Needy, without means, destitute, and empty in one's own estimation. Such deeply sense their poverty and need for the help of God.

Ver. 4, "*mourn*": Grieving and sorrowful in adversity and trouble.

Ver. 5, "*meek*": Mild, gentle, humble, and returning good for evil. "*inherit the earth*": Possess the eternal riches in the world to come.

Ver. 10, "*persecuted*": Mistreated and made to suffer.

Ver. 11, "*revile*": Wrongfully treat with scorn and hatred. "*for my sake*": Because of your faith in Jesus Christ.

Ver. 13, "*salt of the earth*": The wise, prudent, and godly among men. "*savour*": Taste or flavor.

Ver. 14, "*set on an hill*": Exalted in holiness and righteousness above the general course of humanity.

Ver. 15, "*bushel*": A covering.

Philippians 2:14, "*murmurings and disputings*": Complaining and arguing.

Ver. 15, "*without rebuke*": Faultless. "*perverse*": Far out of line.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

In the verses at the end of Matthew 4, it says that Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people. It goes on to say that

His fame went throughout all Syria and many sick and afflicted people were brought to Him, and He healed them. There followed him great multitudes of people from various parts of Israel.

The mountain that Jesus went up into was probably not a great mountain but rather a small hill or rise of ground that put Him up above the great crowd so that He could speak and be heard by them.

In our lesson today we have the first part of the great sermon He preached to them that day. It is good to take diligent and earnest notice of what He said. He names out those who are going to be blessed and specially favored of His Father to be true members of His eternal kingdom. Such people will be a preserving element of mankind that will qualify them for His grace and the blessings of His everlasting kingdom. Let us take each one of these to note and earnest consideration. It is a serious declaration of the just who will be accounted worthy of the blessed benefits of our Lord and Saviour. The poor and needy souls seeking for eternal values, the weeping and mourning hearts heavy laden with adversity and disappointments, the meek and lowly who seek no revenge or repay for harm from others, the hungry and thirsty souls who earnestly desire to be partakers of His righteousness, the merciful, pure, and peace-endearing hearts, and those who suffer the scorn and persecution of the world— these are the ones that can surely be qualified to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why are the poor in spirit worthy to possess the kingdom of heaven?
2. What are some of the things that cause a person to mourn with sorrow?
3. Why are the meek so counted worthy to inherit the earth?
4. What is there that can help a person to hunger and thirst for God?
5. Why should we be merciful to others?
6. What does it mean to be pure in heart?
7. Why are the persecuted for righteousness' sake so well-favored?
8. How can we rejoice when we suffer persecution for our faith?

9. How can we keep being the true salt of the earth?
10. How are the righteous likened to a city set on a hill?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

When I read or call to memory verse 3 in our lesson about the poor in spirit being blessed of God, I always remember a message I heard from Bro. Ostis Wilson at a revival meeting in Guthrie, Oklahoma years ago. This was his text, and in the course of His message, he told about a wonderful experience he had when he and his wife, Sister Opal Wilson, were living in Anthony, Kansas. He came home from work one evening and found his wife suffering with stomach trouble that she had quite often. It just tore at his heart to see her in such trouble, so he went right to her, layed on his hands and prayed earnestly for her healing. She did not get any better. He prayed again, and she still did not get any better. He said that he was about two-thirds sick himself, so he went into the other room and threw himself down upon a couch. He was so depressed and cast down. Here he was with his wife so sick and he could not get any help for her. He lay there in this distress when suddenly the Holy Spirit spoke to his heart with such inspiration and strength, "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles!" Psalm 34:6. He said it had a thrill and comfort that he knew it was the Lord speaking to him. He got right up and went into the other room where his wife was and laid his hands on her and prayed for her and the Lord undertook for her, and she got up and went to her work in the kitchen.

In another part of his message Bro. Ostis read in Matthew 15:22-28 about the woman who came to Jesus for her daughter's healing. At first He answered her not a word. His disciples said, "Send her away, for she crieth after us." Then Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Then she came and worshipped [bowed down before him], saying, "Lord, help me." But Jesus answered and said, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to the dogs." But the woman said, "Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." She humbled herself and would not be offended at the Lord. Jesus commended her for her faith and her daughter was made whole from that very hour. She would not be offended. And so

we must take that same attitude in prayer and faith in God for our burdens and needs. We are like that poor little woman; and if we take no offense nor be discouraged, we can prevail with God and He will send us the help that we need.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

While pondering on the lesson today, it occurred to me of how opposite these truths are to the ideas and sentiments pervasive in our society:

Blessed are the proud in spirit, who know how to use others to get what they want.

Blessed are those who win the lottery, for they are rich.

Blessed are the movie stars and professional athletes for they have fame and riches.

Happy are ye when you can't get along with one wife, you move along to another.

Happy are ye when you abort the responsibility of an unwanted child.

Many are calling "good evil and evil good." Following the spirit of the world will always lead to a dead-end of unhappiness and lack of fulfillment. I won't disagree that there are pleasures and high places in going the way of the world, but they are only temporary and very short lived. One verse of song states it so clearly: *"Tell me not of the pleasures that sting, coiled under roses of pride; Only the holy and innocent sing out of a bosom where pleasures abide."*

—Bob Wilson

**AUGUST 17, 2014**

## MORE PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth

fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? From when then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them into bundles to bum them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*.

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall



come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

**MEMORY VERSE:** The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day.  
2 Thessalonians 1:7-10

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** There is coming a great judgment day when the wicked and ungodly will be cast into the everlasting furnace of fire, while the righteous and faithful to God and His Son Jesus Christ will be rewarded with everlasting life and happiness.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 13:25, "*tares*": False grain.

Ver. 26, "*blade*": Plants of wheat.

Ver. 27, "*householder*": Owner of the property.

Ver. 36, "*Declare*": Explain the meaning.

Ver. 41, "*offend*": The Greek word is "scandal", meaning all that is displeasing and sinful.

Ver. 42, "*wailing and gnashing of teeth*": Weeping and grating of teeth in pain and suffering.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The first parable we have in today's lesson is an illustration that is likened unto the great judgment day when this world passes away and all mankind will be called to appear and give an account of their lives. It was another parable that Jesus put before the multitude, and His disciples desired to know of its meaning. So Jesus undertook to explain its solemn meaning to them. It surely is a serious message for us today.

It pictures the ending of this present world and the separation of the faithful saints of God from the children of the devil, Satan. They all grew together in this mortal life, but when Jesus comes in flaming fire, as our Memory Verse from 2

Thessalonians states, there will be a solemn separation. Sad to say, so many people do not allow the solemn truth of the final judgment to affect their hearts and lives. Their minds are so taken up with earthly cares, pleasures, and troubles that they do not consider what the end of it all is going to bring about. Many are unaware of the influence and power that Satan has over them. It is shown in this parable, and we would be wise to seriously consider its dire meaning. The Son of man, Jesus Christ, will send forth His angels to execute this great separation between the righteous and the ungodly. It will come, have no doubt. That is why we must take heed to the teachings of the Holy Bible and repent of our sinful ways and seek earnestly to live and walk the way of holiness taught therein.

Verse 44 of our lesson is a very vivid picture of what a person needs to do when confronted with the message of the everlasting kingdom of God that Christ has made available to us. It is pictured to us of a man who finds a treasure that was hidden in a field that did not belong to him. Perhaps he was working for the owner of that field, plowing and tilling the soil. As he moves along, suddenly his plow upturns a large box, and, examining its contents, he sees that it is a great bountiful treasure of wealth far more than he ever saw before. He studies and ponders what he should do. He finally buries it again in the soil, and sets his heart to purchase the field from the owner. He does not tell of the treasure but seeks to purchase the field. When he is given a price to pay, he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. This can be applied to a person who hears the everlasting gospel of Christ and is made aware of its great eternal value; to him who hides this belief in his heart from the wisdom of this world and people; to him who makes the consecration and pays the price to obtain this everlasting treasure of hope and salvation.

This is similar to the parable Christ also gave of the man seeking for goodly pearls and when finding the "one pearl of great price," goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Let us take earnest heed to the message of these parables. The great judgment day is coming, and we have the privilege now of obtaining this great salvation that Christ has made available. It is for our eternal good and happiness that we surrender all to Him and live so we can attain to that resurrection from the dead and live forever with Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. To what does the wheat and the tares in Christ's parable refer?
2. What must one do to be wheat and not be one of the tares?
3. What is going to happen at the end of this present world?
4. Who are the people that will be thrown into a furnace of fire?
5. What will be the state of the righteous in that great day?
6. Why was the kingdom of God likened unto a treasure hid in a field?
7. What must a person do to gain entrance into this blessed kingdom?
8. What is the "Pearl of great price" that we need to seek to obtain?
9. What price must we pay to possess this precious treasure?
10. How will it be worth all that we have to give up to obtain it?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It will be worth all that a person has to give up in submission to God and His precious holy will to be able to attain in that last great day to the resurrection from the dead. As Paul did, we must count all but loss for the excellency of Christ to gain Him, obtain His righteousness by faith, to know Him and the power of His resurrection, experience the fellowship of His sufferings, and be made conformable unto His death, if by any means we might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Philippians 3:7-14

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **REFLECTIONS**

The kingdom of heaven: the good and the true, hidden and mingled here on earth with that which is unworthy and unholy. That seems to be the connecting theme in these parables. It is not so much my business to root out all the evil and wickedness from the hearts of men as it is to seek for myself and find what is that true, pure, and priceless life.

All around me may be look-alikes. Searching deeper into the experiences of many professors, I find they are fakes. Does this discourage or disillusion me? Should I give up my search for what is real? Do I say, "There must be nothing to it" when my high expectations of someone are crushed by disappointment? No, I keep searching. When I find the treasure

that has been hidden from sight, I give all I have to obtain it. I may go through thousands of pearls before I finally see one that I know is of utmost worth. I know that the foundation of God stands sure, with this seal: "The Lord knows them that are His."

With this comfort, I keep standing, although amid mere forms of godliness all around me. I leave to God the business of rooting out, judging and condemning. Only in my heart the distinction is made, and the utmost price will daily be paid, to buy the truth, and sell it not.

—Angela Gellenbeck

**AUGUST 24, 2014**

### **SEEKING FOR SPIRITUAL WEALTH RATHER THAN EARTHLY**

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully;

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than

raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 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.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. 1 Timothy 6:17-19

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** It is true godly wisdom to not put our trust in earthly possessions but rather seek for eternal blessings in the Lord Jesus Christ that we will be ready and accounted worthy to escape the destruction of the ungodly and stand accepted before Him in that last great day.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Luke 12:15, "covetousness": Desire for earthly riches and wealth.

Ver. 20, "*thy soul shall be required of thee*": This very night your soul will return unto God who gave it. Ecclesiastes 12:7

Ver. 22, "*Take no thought*": Do not be anxious about.

Ver. 23, "*meat*": Food. "*raiment*": Clothing.

Ver. 25, "*stature*": Height in years or size. "*cubit*": About 18 inches.

Ver. 27, "*spin not*": Do not sow to make clothes.

Ver. 28, "*neither be ye of doubtful mind*": Stop being worried or fearful.

Ver. 31, "*seek ye*": Strive earnestly to possess.

Ver. 33, "*give alms*": Help others in their needs. "*bags*": purses

1 Timothy 6:17, "*highminded*": With thoughts of pride and self-honor.

Ver. 18, "*distribute*": Impart and share with others. "*communicate*:" Be generous.

Ver. 19, "*a good foundation*": Certainty to attain to. "*against the time to come*": True preparation for the last judgment.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We see in our lesson how Jesus declined from responding to the man's request for Him to speak to his brother that he would divide the inheritance with him. Jesus would not enter into such matters. Instead He gave the warning to that man and to the others around to beware of the love of and efforts for earthly wealth. It is very evident that riches and earthly wealth are some of the greatest, if not the greatest, of all of the temptations in this earthly journey. It is as Paul stated in 1 Timothy 6:10 that "...the love of money is the root of all evil." And he added this counsel: "But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." Verses 11 and 12. Then Christ's parable about the foolish rich man pictures it even more clearly. That poor man was thinking only of fleshly and financial security. He had no thought of eternity, even as the majority of the people of our age. That very night death came, and someone else had to

deal with his earthly possessions. Oh, how we need to take heed to Christ's teachings here!

We have included with this lesson a memory verse from that same sixth chapter of 1 Timothy. Oh, what a wonderful and wise treasure of knowledge and wisdom is found in our lesson today! It would be so much a blessing and benefit to our youth if these counsels would be earnestly followed. Many poor deluded people like the rich man in our lesson have met the same terrible ending of their pilgrimage journey here below! May this counsel have a great bearing on everyone's mind and heart!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is covetousness and the love of earthly wealth such a temptation?
2. What is God offering to us in His salvation that is far more valuable?
3. What attitude should we have concerning earthly riches?
4. What earthly creatures did Christ tell us to consider, and why?
5. How can we lay up treasures in heaven?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Earthly riches and material gain have a great attraction to the hearts of men and women, boys and girls. It is because there are no thoughts or desires beyond what is earthly and of this temporal stage. We live in a world and a society that is steeped in this mad rush of selfish desires for gain and riches. We see it in every aspect of society. And just think, all earthly possessions will pass away in that last great day when Christ appears in His eternal glory to destroy this world and bring all humanity to judgment before His face. In 2 Peter chapter 3 and verses 10-14 we see the truth declared of that awful day. The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. 1 Corinthians 15:52 indicates that it will happen "...in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." All awful man-made contraptions will be gone in an instant. Oh, how we need to set our affections on things above and not on things on the earth! Colossians 3:2 The New Testament of our Holy Bible is distinctively plain about this. We will have no excuse if we allow these fleshly treasures to rob us

of the hope that God has provided for us to have! Awake, awake!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

Years ago I worked for a heat and air company in Springfield, Missouri. When I started working there, the size of the company was just a fraction of what it had been in years prior. As I became aware of many unscrupulous business practices, I had to quit. One thing I learned about the owner was that when he was young he had a great ambition to be a millionaire, so he gave his business everything he had. He worked so many hours that he hardly had time to change his clothes. His employees would find him on different job sites asleep with his tools still in his hands. He was married and had two beautiful children and a loving wife; but his goal was clear: he was more interested in his own ambitions than in his family. He did reach his goal, but he had lost his wife, his health, and the love of his children in the process. Later, when I sat at his funeral, my mind thought of all the things he had sought for in this life and how little value they were now. The song they played was, "I Did It My Way." I thought how true. When we do things "our way" and seek for material things instead of God's way, putting more value on our wants than on spiritual things, life becomes a tragedy instead of a blessing. Our children watch us as we make choices in life, and they pick up on what we value. If we put more value on attaining the corruptible than the incorruptible, they will probably follow our example.

May God help us to know how to rightly divide our time and seek mostly for the lasting treasures above, while striving to become less entangled with this world. Our time is the greatest resource that we have; how we spend it will tell the story of our lives.

—James Bell

**AUGUST 31, 2014**

### **MAN'S POWER OF SPEECH FOR GOOD OR FOR EVIL**

Matthew 12:34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.



35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.

12:18 There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise *is* health.

13:3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

15:2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.

18:21 Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

21:23 Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.

James 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body.

Ver. 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

Ver. 4 Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

Ver. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great matter a little fire kindleth!

Ver. 6 And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

Ver. 7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

Ver. 8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Ver. 9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Ver. 10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. Matthew 12:36, 37

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God Almighty created man and gave him the wonderful power of speech to communicate with each other. This can be a great blessing and benefit to each person, but there is a great danger in using this power of speech for wrong and injurious purposes toward others. It is a responsibility that each one must faithfully bear before God and before our fellow creatures of earth.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 12:34, *“generation of vipers”*: Human beings who bite and injure others with their tongues.

Ver. 36, *“idle word”*: Useless speech that is void of proper wisdom and judgment.

Prov. 10:19, *“wanteth not sin”*: Transgression does not cease. *“refraineth”*: Restrains and brings into proper control.

13:3, *“keepeth his mouth”*: Controls his tongue. *“keepeth his life”*: Preserves his soul from sin. *“openeth wide his lips”*: Does not exercise strict control of his speech.

18:21, *“love it”*: Love and appreciate its value and purpose to use for good.

21:23, *“keepeth his mouth”*: Controls his speech for the right. *“keepeth his soul”*: Helps to preserve his soul’s happiness and welfare.

James 3:2, *“in many things we offend all”*: In many ways we all stumble. *“offend not in word”*: Does not commit sin in his speech. *“perfect man”*: A truly mature man. *“bridle”*: Have perfect control.

Ver 4. *“helm”*: Rudder or guiding lever. *“the governor listeth”*: The pilot chooses.

Ver. 5, *“great a matter”*: Bunch or number. *“a little fire”*: Just a small flame.

Ver. 6, *“our members”*: Our bodily parts.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have just a few verses of what Jesus said concerning the mouth and tongue and the wonderful ability that God gave man to speak and communicate with others. When you get to thinking about it, one can really see the wonder of the tongue, lips, and voice that God designed to enable us to speak words and express our hearts and minds to our fellow creatures. Oh, what a blessing this has been to mankind! But, at the same time, this power of speech has possibilities of detrimental harm and injury to others and to one's own heart and life. Jesus had just made the statement about the tree being good and his fruit good or the tree being corrupt and his fruit being corrupt. And He stated, "For the tree is known by his fruit." Now we know that He was talking about us mortals being as trees and the fruit that we bring forth, much of it by our tongues and the words of our mouths. Notice what Jesus said about "...every idle word that men shall speak." He declares, and I am sure that it is truth, that we will have to give account for every idle word that we speak in the day of judgment.

What Jesus said here we have accompanied with several statements from Proverbs and the vivid text in James 3. It all goes to show and declare that we need to exercise great care and caution with our words and what we let go from our lips. There are, no doubt, many lost souls who will spend eternity in hell fire because of the wrong use of the tongue. Cursing, swearing, foul speech, injurious statements and threats, and vulgar statements and expressions are so numerous among mankind. Ephesians 5:4 has a list: "Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks." It just pays to take heed to this lesson and exercise great care and caution in our daily conversation.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why is the power of speech that God gave us such a wonderful thing?
2. How can it be used for a valuable and beneficial purpose?
3. But how also can it be used for evil and to bring sorrow and trouble?
4. What will we have to give account of in the day of

judgment?

5. How can a person be a perfect man and be able to control his body?

6. How can the small tongue set on hell fire the course of nature?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The power of speech and the ability to converse and communicate with our fellowman is a wonderful bestowal that God gave to man and woman. It must be used carefully and prayerfully daily. A look back through history can reveal many times when a person let loose from their tongue unwise and hurtful expressions to others. Psalm 106:32, 33 speaks of Moses and how it went ill with him because of Israel's behavior, and "...because they provoked his spirit, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips." For this reason Moses was not privileged to have part in possessing the land of Canaan. It is a warning and lesson that we must not take lightly.

There is a story in a book I have about a pioneer couple and how because the man spoke harsh, critical, and unkind words to his wife, it caused her to try to do better and it caused her death. All because he spoke unwisely this great sorrow came on him. The poem about it ends with these thoughts: "Boys flying kites haul in their white winged birds. You can't do that when you're flying words. "Careful with Fire" is good advice we know; "Careful with Words" is ten times doubly so. Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead; but God himself can't kill them once they're said!"

Let us take warning from the words of our Saviour and from the many examples of good use of the tongue and bad use of the tongue that have occurred in the history of mankind. Pray earnestly that God will help us to use the tongue to help others and glorify the One who gave us its use.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

The old saying, "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me" is *not* correct. Have you ever been so wounded by someone's words that you wanted them to open their mouth to see if it was a human tongue inside or perhaps a forked serpent's tongue? The sting and bite of

words are very hurtful, if not deadly, and are often never forgotten.

On the other hand, dealing with our own tongue can prove to be a very difficult task. We may use willpower and still a small comment may issue forth. Or we may actively try to keep our tongues by using our teeth (remember "bite your tongue"?); but words just slip out unbidden. This is indeed a frustrating task.

Bro. Leslie started this lesson with the verse in Matthew 12:34 that holds the key to this whole tongue issue: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Now we know that it is not just a matter of the words we speak, but the hidden sentiments of the heart. The psalmist David said, "Search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts and see if *there be any* wicked way in me". Examination of the heart will often reveal uncaring or resentful attitudes that indeed spew out in the words we speak. So, take proper care of the heart and the tongue will take care of itself!

—LaDawna Adams

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2014**

## **JESUS FORETELLS THE END OF TIME**

Matthew 24:3 And as he (Jesus) sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one

another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Mark 13:31 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

Luke 21:25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Matthew 24:37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Luke 21:34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?* 2 Peter 3:11, 12

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ will come again with power and great glory to destroy this present world and bring judgment upon the ungodly and eternal life and happiness to all who are ready and qualified as His Holy Bride.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Matthew 24:6, "*rumours*": Hearing of reports.

Ver. 7, "*pestilences*": All kinds of plagues and diseases.  
"*divers*": Many different.

Luke 21:28, "*your redemption*": The change of your body from mortal to immortal. "*draweth nigh*": Is about to take place.

Ver.34, "*overcharged*": Loaded down. "*surfeiting*": excess or over indulgence in eating or drinking. "*unawares*": All of a sudden.

Ver. 35, "*as a snare*": A sudden unexpected trap.

Ver. 36, "*accounted worthy*": Judged by God to be qualified.  
"*stand*": Be fully accepted.

2 Peter 3:11, "*dissolved*": The Greek word means "loosened" which is referring to the elements that are held together by the word of God to pass away to nothing.

Ver. 12, "*hasting*": Rushing and hoping it will come very soon.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> chapter of Matthew, just before our lesson today begins, we have the account of Christ's final renunciation of the scribes and the Pharisees as hypocrites and blind guides. He ended His speech with the words: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the

Lord.” Then chapter 24 begins: “And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple.” Luke 21:5 says that “some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones and gifts.” But Jesus began to foretell the destruction that was to come upon Jerusalem and the temple. Along with this, Jesus included prophecies of His coming at the end of the world. Judgment was to come upon Jerusalem as reward for their rejection and horrible death they inflicted upon Christ, the Son of God.

We are using the scriptures from the first three gospels that refer to His coming, and also we include as the Memory Verse what 2 Peter has to say concerning this. Our text may seem quite lengthy, but it is all very valuable to know.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS**

1. Who is the only One who knows when Christ will come again?
2. What are some of the terrible things to be seen on earth before the end?
3. What will be accomplished for a witness unto all nations?
4. What will Christ’s coming be likened unto that happened in ages past?
5. What will happen to the earth when Jesus makes His final coming?
6. What manner of persons ought we to be to be prepared for the end?
7. What must we be on guard against lest that day come upon us unawares?
8. What must we do that we may be accounted worthy to escape?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,



and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Titus 2:11-14. Yes, we should live this sober, righteous, and godly life in great anticipation of the last great day when Jesus will break through the skies in power and great glory. This is our only real hope. All this man-made stuff around us that people are so taken up with will fade out like a light that is snuffed out. Oh, how we need to look for this wonderful day with joy and earnest expectation! We know that it is in God's own Hand and purpose just when and how soon it will come to pass. But in our hearts we can yearn and pray for it to come soon! We can take it a day at a time, but hope and pray that it will be today, and be diligent to keep ourselves in the love of God and His true holiness of heart, life, and character. Oh, how we need to watch and pray! Let us not be so taken up with eating, drinking, and the cares of life so that day come upon us unawares. I know we have to take care of these earthly matters, but let us not be overcharged with them! As saints of God we must not allow any earthly association to hinder us, so we can attend upon the Lord without distraction. 1 Cor. 7:35. It will be worth all the sincere diligent effort we must make to be accounted worthy to meet our Saviour and be accepted of Him in that day!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

We are closer to eternity than we ever have been. Many of the prophecies of the Old Testament have been fulfilled, and we still await the second coming of Christ. Jesus gave us the account of the five wise and five foolish virgins. The bridegroom tarried long and all slept and slumbered. The five wise had made preparations to have plenty of oil on hand. The bridegroom came at a time they were not expecting. "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

There will be many scoffers in the last days, saying, "Where is the sign of his coming"? However, we are confident that as many other scriptures have been fulfilled, the end of time will also come to pass. Revelation 10:1-6 reads, "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: And he had in his

hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: ...And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be **time no longer.**"

What a day that will be! All nations, tongues, and people will be gathered before him. Every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. Oh, may we all be prepared and ready for that day. There will be no time to get ready when the Lord comes back; we must be ready now.

—Bob Wilson

**SEPTEMBER 14, 2014**

## **WHAT CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS MEANS TO US**

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.

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

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.

Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

10 For it became him, for whom *are* all things, and by whom *are* all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

11 For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified

are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren,

12 Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

13 And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.

14 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

16 For verily he took not on *him* the nature of angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham.

17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

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

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

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

**MEMORY VERSE:** Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come. Hebrews 13:12-14

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, came down to the level of mortal man to offer His life and shed His blood for the atonement of all the sins of mankind. Because of His obedience to God by allowing Himself to be thus crucified, God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the Heavens to intercede for all who will give their hearts and lives to Him.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Philippians 2:5, "*mind*": Purpose and decision.

Ver. 6, "*form of God*": Image and likeness of God. "*thought it not robbery to be equal with God*": Counted equality with God not to be held on to.

Ver. 7, "*But made himself of no reputation*": Emptied himself.

Ver. 8, "*in fashion*": The same condition of flesh and blood.

Ver. 10, "*things*": Living creatures. "*in heaven*": Angels. "*in earth*": Humankind. "*under the earth*": Spirits of those who have died.

Hebrews 2:10, "*became him*": Was fitting and appropriate for God.

Ver. 11, "*sanctifieth*": Maketh pure and holy. "*sanctified*": Made pure and holy. "*all of one*": Of the same source and nature.

Ver. 15, "*subject to bondage*": Condemnation of sin and fear of death.

Ver. 18, "*succour*": Help and give victory to overcome.

Hebrews 5:7, "*heard in that he feared*": Heard by God and delivered from death and the grave because of his reverence and obedience to God.

Ver. 8, "*learned he obedience*": Gained experience and knowledge of. "*by the things which he suffered*": By faithfully enduring what he suffered.

Hebrews 13:12, "*without the gate*": Outside the walls of Jerusalem on the hill Calvary where He was crucified.

Ver. 13, "*without the camp*": Outside of and rejected by the world.

Ver. 14. "*no continuing city*": All in this world is temporal and soon to pass away. "*we seek one to come*": We look for a home in eternal glory.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

After our lessons of what Jesus taught in His wonderful doctrines, we are inspired to bring a lesson on what the New Testament writers have brought out about Christ's humiliation, suffering, and death, and also the reward He received from His Heavenly Father. With all of His wonderful teachings, our Lord Jesus manifested the great depth of His love and surety of His truth by willingly and obediently submitting to be crucified as a

price to be paid for the atonement of the sins of mankind. His obedience to God in that great sacrifice of Himself to the horrible sufferings of being rejected and condemned by man and to be nailed to the cross and left to die is a testimony of His love and kindness and good will to us who were in such a sad state in this life.

All of the scriptures in our lesson together portray Christ's submission of obedience to God as a wonderful example that we must all be willing to follow in our lives. Jesus made that statement as recorded in Matthew 16:24, 25: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find [eternally save] it." Jesus so clearly taught us this by His obedience to God in allowing Himself to suffer the horrible death of the cross on our behalf. To really follow Him all the way, we all must be consecrated and willing to lay our lives down as Christ did His life.

Let us keep in mind that, as Christ so greatly suffered and was so greatly rewarded, even so we can look for the great reward of eternal life with Him if we will willingly and faithfully suffer with Him also. As our Memory Verse states: "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What mind did Jesus have that He wants us all to have also?
2. What price did Jesus pay for our salvation and deliverance from sin?
3. What possessed His heart and mind to be so willing to suffer for us?
4. What great reward did Christ receive from God for His obedient sacrifice?
5. What reward will all who obediently follow Him be worthy to receive?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Oh, how we need to earnestly seek to have the same mind and purpose that our Lord Jesus Christ, our great Redeemer, had! When we view in the sacred Scriptures the greatly

touching account of His obedient submission to be cruelly and unjustly sentenced and so meekly suffer the death of the cross, we are drawn with love and faithful obedience to Him. Let us consider what Hebrews 12:1-2 says about how it all should affect us and what we should do in response to it all: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Amen! Amen! Amen!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

*Agony.* The only time this word is used in the King James Version is when Christ was in Gethsemane before He was led away to His execution. "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood..." (Luke 22:44). This condition, hematidrosis, caused by acute fear and intense mental contemplation, is where tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can rupture, causing the skin to become very tender and fragile.

It was in this condition that Jesus endured the scourging from the Roman soldiers. A steel-imbedded leather whip shredded the skin, muscles, and arteries of His chest, back, shoulders, and legs. Further blood loss and pain occurred when the crown--literally, a helmet--of inch-long thorns was thrust onto his head, driven into his scalp by repeated blows. The scarlet robe was put on his bleeding shoulders, then jerked off, reopening the wounds and causing searing pain.

Jesus was then forced to walk the one-third mile to Calvary, bearing a timber weighing up to one hundred twenty-five pounds. Dehydrated and in shock, He was offered wine mixed with a drug, to dull His pain. He refused it, willing to face death with a clear mind.

Spiked through the hands, or wrists, and feet to the cross, struggling to push his body up to inhale, then sagging back down to exhale, his internal organs beginning to fail, insects and beasts circling him--this was when He cried, "Father, forgive them." This is when He now felt totally forsaken, even

by His Father.

*Excruciating.* Our word for this comes from the Latin word, *excruciates*, or *out of the cross*. As we consider Christ's journey from Gethsemane to the cross, let us remember the painful torture Christ endured because He loved us.

—Angela Gellenbeck

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2014**

### **THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

John 7:37 In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

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

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth...he shall testify of me

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come..

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. John 16:13

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** After Jesus had been in His wonderful ministry for a good while, He was facing the great suffering and death on the cross. He clearly informed His disciples that He was to be resurrected to life again and would go back to Heaven to be with His Father, but would send the Holy Spirit to live within their hearts and be with them forever.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

John 7:38, "*out of his belly*": Out of one's innermost being.

Ver. 39, *Holy Ghost*": The word "Ghost" is translated from the same word as "Spirit."

John 14:16, "*Comforter*": Intercessor, consoler, and a blessed connection between mankind and the Heavenly Father.

Ver. 17, "*with you, and shall be in you*": The Holy Spirit was near and all around them at the present, but, when He comes from heaven after Christ had died, risen again, and gone back to Heaven, this blessed Spirit of Almighty God would be within their innermost being.



Ver. 19, "*the world seeth me no more*": Christ is saying that He is going up to the right hand of God in the Heavens, and will not be with them in the visible flesh like He was at that time. "*but ye see me*": They will see Him with the bright and clear eye of faith and Holy Spirit inspiration.

John 16:8 "*reprove*": Convince and make men to be aware of. This conviction of the Holy Spirit is a vital and wonderful benefit to us mortals.

Ver. 11, "*judgment*": Condemnation. "*the prince of this world is judged*": Satan has been defeated and overcome of his power over man.

Ver. 13, "*whatsoever he shall hear*": Whatever the Heavenly Father will speak to the heart of man the Holy Spirit will convey it to him. And, thank the Lord, as Paul states in Romans 8:26, 27, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*"

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have in our lesson today the most wonderful Gift that God has to give to us poor and needy mortals. It was purchased and brought about by the sacrifice of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And it is the precious Holy Spirit that can come and enter within and blend so sweetly and joyfully with our spirit. When Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:15, "Thanks *be* unto God for His unspeakable gift," it just seems to me that the wonderful Holy Spirit living, working, comforting, guiding, and revealing the precious Word of God to our hearts is that unspeakable Gift!

It is so wonderful, the greatest possession and experience that one can have in this life! The Holy Spirit can do and does do much, much more than what Jesus could or ever did do in His earthly dwelling. How important and vital it is for every soul to seek earnestly and with all the heart for this wonderful blessing and Gift from above! Just think of all that Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be and do for us! This blessed Spirit is that living water that Jesus spoke of. It flows down from heaven into the heart of man and then it flows out of one's life in a stream of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, and all the fruits

mentioned in Galatians 5 22, 23! After a person has left all the world to follow Jesus and obtained peace and forgiveness for sin, he or she needs to earnestly consecrate their whole being to God and His will and seek Him earnestly for this unspeakable Gift! And then, when the Holy Spirit comes in, we must be diligent to keep in submission and harmony to the will of God and hold fast to our faith and love in Him.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why did Jesus have to go up to the right hand of God in heaven?
2. What did He promise would be sent from Heaven to take His place?
3. What are the blessings that Jesus said the Holy Spirit would bring?
4. Why do we need the comfort, guidance, and inspiration of the Spirit?
5. What does the Holy Spirit do with souls in sin and condemnation?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

I want to conclude our lesson today with the words of the greatly inspiring song by C.W. Naylor, No. 292 in the Evening Light Songs hymnal:

Spirit holy in me dwelling, Ever work as thou shalt choose.  
All my ransomed pow'rs and talents, For thy purpose thou shalt use.

Chorus: Spirit holy, Spirit holy, All my being now possess;  
Lead me, rule me, work within me, Thru my life thy will express.

Oh, how sweet is thy abiding! Oh, how tender is the love  
Thou dost shed abroad within me, From the Father-heart above!

Thou hast cleansed me for thy temple, Garnished with thy graces rare;

All my soul thou art enriching, By thy fullness dwelling there.

In me now reveal thy glory, Let thy might be ever shown;  
Keep me from the world's defilement, Sacred for thyself alone.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

Thank the Lord for the promise and fulfillment of the coming of the Holy Spirit. In I John 1:1-2, we read, "...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;** (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)." The writer obviously had experienced closeness with the Holy Spirit working in his life. We need this also. We need to experience him personally working in our life more than just talking about it. Matthew 13:16 says, "...but blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear *those things* which ye hear and have not heard *them*."

The world was changed by the power of the gospel during Jesus' time while living here in person, and he traveled just a few miles from his birthplace. He told his disciples in John 16:7, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The Holy Spirit can travel worldwide and be in every nook and corner of the world at the same time. What a blessing for us today to partake of the power of his Holy Spirit. No wonder Jesus had to go away in his physical body, because he was limited in the flesh; but his spirit brings his presence to everyone everywhere and at the same time. Let us be grateful for the privilege to have the blessing of the Holy Spirit with us today by actively believing and receiving his workings in our daily lives.

—James Bell

SEPTEMBER 28, 2014

### ATTAINING TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

Philippians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness,

which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith;

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this* one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

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

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

¶ Peter 1:5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge;

6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;

7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.

8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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

11 *Seeing* then *that* all these things shall be dissolved, what

manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness,

12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

13 Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

14 Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of *persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? || Peter 3:11, 12

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** This present earth and heavens will pass away when Jesus Christ comes with power and great glory to punish the disobedient and wicked and reward the holy and faithful saints of His love.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

Philippians 3:8, "*dung*": Rubbish and trash. "*win Christ*": Truly possess Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Ver. 10, "*know Him*": Experience His transforming power clearly and properly understand His Word. "*fellowship of his sufferings*": Suffer even as He suffered and for the same cause. "*being made conformable unto his death*": Willing to suffer and die as Christ died.

Ver. 11, "*If by any means*": By the proper measures prescribed in God's will.

Ver. 12. "*apprehend*": Lay hold of and fully possess. "*apprehended of Christ Jesus*": Purchased and possessed by Christ through his suffering and death.

Ver. 14, "*press*": Eagerly reach forth and diligently pursue.

Ver. 20, "*conversation*": Citizenship.

Ver. 21, "*our vile body*": This mortal body of our humiliation. "*glorious body*": An eternal body just like Christ's resurrected body.

|| Peter 1:5, "*add to*": Fill out with completeness. "*virtue*":

manliness, valor. *“knowledge”*: Accurate learning in full. *“temperance”*: Self control. *“patience”*: faithful endurance of suffering and difficulty. *“godliness”*: True and rightful reverence and respect for God.

II Peter 3:10, *“elements shall melt with fervent heat”*: All earthly matter will be “loosened” and pass out of existence.

Ver. 12, *“hasting”*: Earnestly longing that the coming of the Lord will very soon take place.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The grace of God that brought salvation for mankind through our Lord Jesus Christ affords a bright and blessed hope and expectation. This hope proves to be an anchor for our souls through the toils, sorrows, and adversities of this mortal life. It greatly helps us to bear with courage and faith whatever we meet along the way. We must remember and be aware of the responsibilities that attend our possession of this hope. In our lesson today we have these solemn and yet joyful requirements presented by the writings of these two apostles: Paul and Peter.

In Paul's epistle to the Philippians we have in our lesson the things that we need to diligently attend to in our pursuit of the crown of glory. Paul said that he suffered the loss of all things and counted them as worthless trash so that he could win, or truly possess, Christ. To be found in Him with the righteousness of faith; to know (learn and get fully acquainted with) him; to experience the power of His resurrection and fellowship His suffering; to die as Christ had died—all of this he was seeking to attain in pursuit of the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ. He also stated that he did not count himself to have yet gained it but was pressing toward it for the prize.

In II Peter 1, we who have obtained this like precious faith have the counsel given to add to our faith the things that are so vital to gain entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord. Consider carefully and earnestly these valuable assets to success in serving God: faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and charity. By having these abounding in us we will make our calling and election sure.

Then our final scripture points us to that final awful day of the coming of our Lord, the destruction of this fleeting material

world and the new heaven and new earth. We are hereby exhorted to "...be diligent that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the things that Paul was striving to experience and have?
2. Why was he so desirous of having these things in his heart and life?
3. What are the things that Peter counsels us to add to our faith?
4. What is going to happen to the heavens and earth we now are in?
5. What are we to be so very diligent about if we look for this hope?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We need to diligently consider and be attentive to pursue the objective that we have in our lesson today! This matter of having a home in heaven when we die has much more solemn requirements and responsibilities to be attended to than so many people in darkness and ignorance are aware of. "Oh, just believe in the Lord Jesus and accept Him as your personal Saviour!" is the theme of many people in our age. Many churches hold this standard. The holy scriptures present a much greater and more serious challenge for us to attend to. It is more than just a head faith, but we must attend to following the example of our Lord Jesus in His obedience, suffering, and sacrifice of His life if we are to have a share in the blessed resurrection from the dead that Christ gained. We must possess (not just profess) Christ, be found in Him (not about Him), know Him personally in His light, experience the power of His resurrection, suffer as He suffered, and be willing to die as He died, This is what Paul clearly believed. Then Peter gives us the list of the things that we need to seek to possess along with our faith if we hope to have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of Christ.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

The apostle Paul realized the great value of forsaking everything in this world that would be a distraction in order to attain the great prize of the resurrection. He said he counted all things but loss. Our pastor used to tell us we needed to learn how to count. Many things that seem so valuable to the flesh are weights that will prevent us from gaining the true riches. We must be single-minded in our focus if we hope to gain that abundant entrance. That only comes through keeping our eyes steadfastly on Jesus.

There is a story of a small boy who was lost. A policeman was trying to help him find his home and started enumerating the streets in that area. The little boy didn't recognize any of them. The police remembered there was a church with a tall white cross near the center of town. He mentioned this to the boy. His face lit up and he responded, "Oh, yes, just take me to the cross and I can find my way home from there."

As we approach eternity, the things of this world will fade into insignificance. I remember standing by the bed of a beloved saint of God as she approached death. Several were singing and her hand was raised in the air as we sang the verse:

*Oh, could you offer every earthly treasure,  
diamonds and pearls of the sea;  
Then turning from them I would gladly whisper,  
"Christ has set me free."  
Oh, blessed thought, my sins are gone!  
I lean on Jesus' breast,  
And while the storm without is madly raging,  
I have perfect rest.*

—Patsy Smith

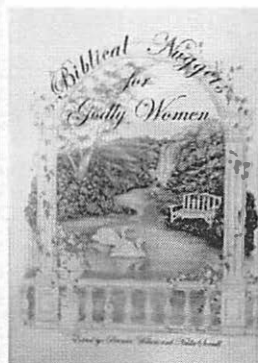


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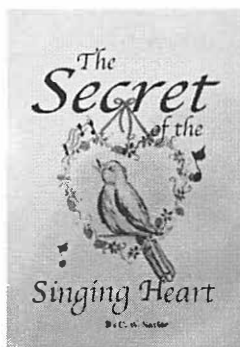
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