

# Christ, the Gate to God's Presence

By Fred O. Blakely

The status of our Lord Jesus Christ as the exclusive means of access to God the Father is strikingly foreshadowed by the tabernacle court, which was specified by God Himself and faithfully constructed by Moses His servant that was shown to him in the mount (Exod. 25—27). This foreshadowing occurs in the gate of the court, which itself represented the Presence of Jehovah in the midst of His people as they journeyed toward the land of Canaan. The categorical declarations of the Savior on the cross, who manifested in the flesh, are clearly anticipated and represented in the imagery of the court entrance. His proclamation made in both instances (as well as in all of Divine revelation). Besides Him, there were no other Most High and sinful men (I Tim. 2:4-7).

**The Inaccessible God.** The wall, or fence, surrounding the court of the tabernacle bespoke the holiness of the Lord God, as did the tent itself and the holy of holies situated at its farthest end, beyond the veil of the place of manifestation, where He dwelt in the midst of His people, redeemed unto Himself out of the world (Exod. 25:8; 40:36-38; Lev. 1:1). As such, the wall shut the people out of the court and the Divine Presence was very material out of which the hangings were fashioned attests their exclusive intent. It was “fine twined linen” (Exod. 27:9). From Revelation 19:8, we learn that “fine linen” in Scripture represents righteousness. The wall symbolized the absolute righteousness and “true holiness” of the Holy One of Israel (Eph. 4:24), who deified the earthly sanctuary which He had caused to be erected in the midst of a wicked and gainsaying nation (cf.

Man by nature is separated from God, because God is holy and man is sinful (Isa. 59:2; Col. 1:20). The meaning of the court wall. The fine linen of the hangings is thus “a type of the righteousness of God which is revealed in His Presence, and admitted him thereto only on the ground of sacrifice and shed blood.” This fundamental truth is stated in the necessity which compelled God, “in His great love wherewith He loved us” (Eph. 2:4-6), to bear the impairment of the Divine Nature, whereby His banished might not be expelled from Him forever (Rom. 3:24-26). Truly, as the situation after the fall presented itself, “there was no man” to provide a way, so it devolved upon God Himself to resolve the matter, which He—bless His Name!—did in the Person of His only and well-beloved Son (Isa. 59:16-17; 63:1-5; II Cor. 5:21).

**The Gate of Admission.** This gracious compassion of the Father through the Son had its prefiguration in the gate which encompassed the court of the tabernacle. Located at the east end of the enclosure and measuring three feet, in width, this opening was the point of entrance into the court, and so of approach to the tabernacle. From it, there was positively no avenue of admission into the court or the more immediate Presence of God. The gate meeting. Those who would draw nigh to God under the Mosaic regime of law and of types and shadows, had to pass through the gate which He had provided, hung as it was with its curtain of “blue and purple and scarlet and fine twined linen and needlework.” This was the only medium of entrance; hence, its exclusiveness for that purpose.

But this typical way of access to the Most Holy by His rebellious offspring was there—by His grace—only for the praise of His glory, who has “compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way” (H

compassion, His sinful children could enter in and avail themselves of the remedial system of Divine in the types of the dispensation then in effect. The Father of mercies would have been wholly just, vided no gate in the wall, and so have hopelessly shut His people from His Presence. But He is of “t and unrelenting in justice (Jas. 5:11). The point of entrance provided in the hangings which surround nacle stood as a graphic testimony to this, as it proclaimed beforehand the effulgent manifestation o who was to come.

**The Fulfillment in Christ.** When He who is infinitely greater than both Moses and the tabern into the full Presence of God was made manifest (Heb. 9:8). Our Lord Jesus, being the countertype 12:6; Jn. 1:14, 18; 2:18-21), was also the complete fulfillment of the implications of its court gate. T own categorical declaration of the situation, as well as the consistent representation of the Apostles the door,” proclaimed He; “By Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and am the way, the .truth, and the life,” was His proclamation on another occasion; “no man cometh un 14:5-7). To this agree the words of the Spirit by Peter: “Neither is there salvation in any other; for the heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Christ as the door is, of course, the poetic or parabolic picturization of His Person and function in response to the prefiguration of the type. More literally, He is the “one Mediator between God an man sinned, the door to Heaven was closed to him; and when he looked up thither, there was no opened it and established communication between Heaven and earth; and as man gazed up, he sa When Christ left Heaven for earth, He left the door ajar, and opened a new and living way for man the Nature of His Person and ministry—by what He is in Himself, the Son of God, and in virtue of v Purchaser, sole Proprietor, and Provider. In a word, our Lord Jesus is the only Medium of admissio the riches of His glory.

Christ as “the Door of the sheep,” or their Means of individual access to God, fully corresponds v by Himself or by others in His Name. “In all the fulness of His Personality, He had always been the theocracy or beyond it, men have drawn near to the Father. The Logos is the Angel of the covenant the great High Priest, the Veil over the holy place, the propitiatory Sacrifice, the Prophet, the King. has given consolation and peace to His people. He is the one Method, Agency, Reality, by which not sheep, enter the fold, and go forth thence to pasture.”

Let us, therefore, not only “by Him,” but for Him, “offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually giving thanks to His Name (Heb. 13:10-13; cf. Hos. 14:2). Merciful and compassionate beyond all hu loving Father, to have provided for such wretchedly miserable and undeserving creatures as we s Priest and Savior. In joyful reception of this Divine grace, let us receive Him with all readiness of n in through the Gate “into the city” of heavenly fellowship and blessing (Rev. 22:14). —*Reprinted fro Banner of Truth*

## The Fellowship of the Brethren





wearied in “the good fight of faith” (I Tim. 6:12).

Our Heavenly Father continues to encourage and strengthen us in that He would provide a Way (Isa. 35:8) that would lead sinful man back to the Father. Jesus said, “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and no one comes to the Father, but through Me” (Jn. 14:6). We need to see that it was the Father who was the initiator, the One who sought us (Deut. 32:10; Isa. 62:12) and bought us (Lk. 1:68; I Cor. 6:20; Gal. 3:13; Tit. 2:14; I Pet. 1:18) the One who “so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:16) and “There is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The Name of Christ Jesus is the one and only Name.

To those on God’s Highway of Holiness, to those “who walk that way,” to those who are “in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 5:6, Eph. 2:10, Phil. 2:5-8, 3:3, 3:14, Col. 1:4, I Th. 5:18), our Heavenly Father promises and assures that no lion will any vicious beast go up on it; these will not be found there (Isa. 35:9). Those walking in the Way are safe from the lion. He is our “adversary, the devil...seeking someone to devour” (I Pet. 5:8), but the assurance to those who are in Christ Jesus, the devil will not be found there. No matter what external conditions, this promise from our Heavenly Father stands: “No lion will be there.”

In order to understand what our Father is revealing to us, we need to look at it from God’s high perspective. His desire for all men is that of being reconciled back to Himself and to see God’s Great Provision given to those who are born of God; but he who was born of God keeps himself and the evil one does not touch him. That this promise is for those “born of God,” those walking in God’s Way of Holiness, those who are in Christ Jesus, we need to see that this is not the only condition that must be met in order to take hold of His “exceedingly great and precious promise.” It is only for the one who “keeps himself.” It is only for the one who, by God’s strength and power, “keeps himself” that way.” It is only for the one keeping his eyes upon Jesus, the one walking by faith, not by sight, the one fighting not to fulfill the lusts of his flesh. To this one, the evil one cannot touch! What the uncertain terms, is that Satan cannot affect or change, the one born of God and who keeps himself, he cannot touch. He accomplished in Christ Jesus. Satan has no power in this realm. He cannot affect or change the one who is in Christ Jesus. Jesus said “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (Jn. 10:27-29). Satan cannot affect or change a promise given to us by God that pertains to life and godliness. Satan cannot affect or change those exceedingly great promises given to us by God in order that we might be partakers of God’s divine nature because the one in Christ Jesus has the power. While Satan remains in his domain of darkness, we have been “transferred to the kingdom of the living” where we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin (Col. 1:13-14). However, God has not yet redeemed our bodies, they are still in Satan’s domain. So Satan has the power, provided God allows it, to tempt our flesh. He cannot force us to give up. And, God will allow this to occur if we give in to the lusts of our flesh (cf. Jas. 1:14-15). We exhort ourselves and all those “born of God,” “keep yourself.” We need to continually encourage one another by proclaiming what God has said; for therein lies the power. We need to encourage one another that Satan could offer to us that is of any worth in exchange for that which God has granted us through His promise. We need to believe this assurance that nothing or no one can snatch away those who are in Christ Jesus.

To those walking in that way and continue to keep themselves, this is of great consolation.

In Romans chapter eight, Paul posed this same question to those in Rome who were suffering of the prince of this earthly domain. He answered this question in order for those brethren to con- order to “keep themselves.” “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (Rom. 8:35). Is there anyone or anything that has the power of Christ? We need to look at some very familiar texts of Scripture to encourage us with the answer

Can tribulation or distress that comes upon us separate us from the love of Christ? Job, undoubt- lation and distress came upon. But as we see, Satan could only affect those things which are in his God allowed him to: Job’s oxen, donkeys, servants, sheep, camels, and sons and daughters (cf. Job 1 Satan in an effort to affect and change the faith of Job in his God because he could not directly touc earthly perspective of what was happening, Job did not appear to be one that God was demonstrati- “comforters” were quick to point this out. However, in this testing of his faith, Job was given the ch “keep yourself.” Through God’s sustaining power, Job replied, “Shall we indeed accept good from G And the Scriptures proclaim to us: “In all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God” (Job 2:9-10, 1 much grace and mercy to overcome his adversary. Thusly, Job kept himself, and Satan couldn’t tou

Can persecution that comes upon us separate us from the love of Christ? In Acts chapter seven, to the Council and the high priest. And he finished with a heart wrenching accusation: “You men w- cumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers di- did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming o- betrayers and murderers you have now become; you who received the law as ordained by angels, a 7:51-53). This was essentially the same message Peter had preached on the day of Pentecost, with th- ing of the word: men’s hearts were affected (cf. Acts 2:37, 7:54). But while the ones who heard the w- word and replied, “Brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37), those who heard the word from Stephan- them, and were instead, stirred up to kill him. From the earthly perspective of what was happenin- be one that God was demonstrating His love to. From this viewpoint, it appeared that God had dese- events had separated him from His love. But from God’s viewpoint, these men who thought they w- fact, ushering him into an exceedingly abundant entrance into glory (cf. Acts 7:55-56). God provid- and mercy, “full of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 7:55), to overcome his adversary. Thusly, Stephan kept him- him!

Can famine or nakedness that comes upon us separate us from the love of Christ? “And a certa- was laid at his gate, covered with sores, and longing to be fed with the crumbs which were fallin- besides, even the dogs were coming and licking his sores (Lk. 16:20-21). Satan was allowed by God- to the point that he couldn’t even get to the rich man’s house in his own strength. In order to beg f- to be “laid” at the rich man’s gate. Lazarus couldn’t even cover himself for “the dogs were coming ar- fact, was his only source of comfort. From the earthly perspective, it would not be said of Lazarus th- love of God. But we do know that Lazarus received much glorious comfort and, indeed, was in the lov- that the poor man died and he was carried away by the angels to Abraham’s bosom” (Lk. 16:22). Fr

had kept the faith, and God sent His angels to bring him home. Thusly, Lazarus kept himself, and Paul boldly declares, so as to leave absolutely no doubt in any believer's mind, "For I am convinced, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39). It is a great consolation to all those who are walking in God's Way of Holiness, so we need to believe the one and the other. We need to "keep" them, firstly for ourselves, and then strengthen the exhausted and the faint, claiming, "Thus saith the Lord."

By the mercy and grace of our Heavenly Father, by "keeping ourselves," we truly have a glorious and abundant reward at the end of our journey. "And the ransomed of the Lord will return, And come with everlasting joy upon their heads. They will find gladness and joy. And sorrow and sighing will flee away. And ye shall encourage one another in this manner, "in order that you may know that you have eternal life" (I Thim. 2:15). *(I serves as a deacon at First Christian Church*

## The Only Abiding Satisfaction for Our Hearts

By Fred O. Blakely

The quest of all who seek their ultimate satisfaction anywhere except in God is certain to be frustrated. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing," declared Solomon the wise, "nor the ear filled with hearing" (Eccl. 1:8). After having searched with all that earth has to offer, the disillusioned monarch exclaimed, in the bitterness of spirit and vexation of spirit" (Eccl. 2:10-11). Only God Himself can satisfy the yearning and restless hearts. "Do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" (Eccl. 3:9). "Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness" (Eccl. 3:17). "of life," echoed our Lord Jesus; "he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). (cf. 4:13-14).

To these representations, agree the words of the Psalmist. "How excellent is Thy lovingkindness, O Lord! and how abundant are Thy mercies! The children of men put their trust under the shadow of Thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fruit of Thy goodness, and Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasure" (Ps. 36:7-8; cf. 22:26). "Blessed is the man that dwelleth in Thy house, and causeth to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell in Thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy holy temple" (Ps. 65:4; cf. 63:1-5; 81:16).

In this day when people seem to seek their satisfaction everywhere else, what an admonition the Bible gives! "If you find your deepest gratification anywhere other than in the Father and the Son, you are drinking from a cistern that will soon run dry. By Divine grace, let us learn to look unto Jesus for our peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. With the Psalmist that all of our springs are in Him (Ps. 87:7). So shall our bread not fail and our hearts not faint, though others faint and fall because of drought and heat (Jer. 17:7-8). —*Reprinted from the June 1968*

# The Idolatry of Substituting for God

Idolatry is an abomination in the sight of the Lord. Yet in spite of Divine displeasure, man is an idol? It is a substitute god—and as such it is one of the most effective methods the Devil has e from God.

**The Gift or the Giver?** The idols of the heathen are quite obvious, but there are many more which, as believers, our hearts may be deceived. It is with these less obvious forms of idol worship Whatever is given first place in one's heart and life, other than God Himself, is idolatrous in charac the experience of Abraham when he was called of Jehovah to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on N reaction to this command prove? It proved who had pre-eminence in the life of this mighty man of promise, but Jehovah, the God of the promise.

The application of this comes as a direct challenge to anyone who may have received some preci temptation is always to allow the gift to become elevated above the Giver. Thus, in a most subtle become idolatrous through the very gifts God has given. The Lord did not want a dead Isaac, He alive to Himself. This applies to us also. God is still a jealous God; therefore we must be careful to gifts, than to the gifts of the Divine Giver.

Isaac did not die; God provided Himself a Lamb, one which pointed to the greater Lamb who wa world. The cross of the Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, has removed all that stood between man and peace has been made. Nothing must now hinder our fellowship with our risen Lord. Every gift and from this Calvary relationship must serve but one end—the drawing of the soul ever closer to the Sav express this truth: “Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart, draw me my Savior, so precious Thou ar

Between earth and heaven was once the barrier of sin, but this has been replaced by the bridge of : to be crossed; however, as God builds a bridge, Satan always erects barriers. He would even seek bridges God has built. Can he do such a thing? He has done it!

**The Blessing or the Blesser?** The Pharisees fell into this subtle trap in their attitude to the l it as an end in itself, a kind of terminus of truth. As such it became a hindrance to the fulfillment of a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ; He was the end or the goal of the law. Unfortunately they stopped short—their bridge to Christ had become a barrier.

Christians have been entrusted with many wonderful gifts and blessings. Handled in the right v to the Lord Jesus and issue in His glorious purposes being fulfilled in our lives—to His own eternal and blessings, handled in the wrong way, can become definite hindrances to further progress in our s to hold what God has given in such a way that we do not prevent Him from leading us on and givin, ize that He has more to give! How easy it is to deceive ourselves into thinking we have both given all from Him.

Many believers are shutting themselves off from further blessing, simply because they have not . itual possessions without pride and possessiveness. Possessiveness leads to spiritual dehydration. It

tude, and can be discerned both among those who testify of a second birth and those who testify of is this—whether it be second birth or second blessing: We have not had all! By all means we should have received, but let us not make a full stop (a period) at any blessing. The Ultimate is the Lord Himself—the Blessor!

**The Means or the End?** Everything God has given to His Church is intended to be a means. (1 Cor. 10:17) to save some! But nothing is to be viewed as an end. Preaching, for example, is not an end. The purpose is the house of our God. His business is to point to the One who said, “I am the door!” What of the Lord’s gifts? Some have tried to make it such by declaring the elements to be Christ’s very substance. Thus, the result is believing that all that is necessary in order to partake of Christ is to eat this wafer—God.

Is Scripture a means or an end? Obviously, it also is a means. The “word” is a window through which we can see, even so darkly, another world, a heavenly kingdom. The written word must lead us to the living Word. We must be translated into the language of life; for the letter is of itself lethal except the Spirit give it life. If we do not, we become bibliolaters.

Neither are the gifts of the Spirit an end, but rather a means the Lord would use among us to reach an end. It is easy to make this means into an end. If we do, however, we will be left with but a shadow, having missed the real thing. To see, if we make too much of the Spirit, we prevent Him from making much of Christ. But if we make the Spirit an end, we eat with the Holy Spirit!

At this point, a word may be helpful to those who might be tempted to deny any of the means. Remember that denial of a means automatically involves a denial of the end for which it is intended. Satan will either try to make us elevate a means too highly, or else cause us to deny it altogether. The end for which God has purposed that means is frustrated.

The truth we are seeking to establish is clearly seen at Calvary. The Cross is the mightiest possible end. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God” (1 Peter 3:18). There we have it in a nutshell. This is the end of all things “to bring us to God!” This is both the means and the purpose of salvation.

**Stepping-Stones, or Stumbling Blocks?** This principle has its corporate application also. All people have as their central focus some distinctive teaching, doctrine or experience which becomes the basis of their fellowship. Therefore, each denomination, fellowship or society tends to be mutually exclusive. The Lord’s centrality, sovereignty and authority are largely subverted even in His own Church! No longer is the Lord central. Instead, pre-eminence is given to some “It” or other. For all doctrines, teachings, and even experiences, we have “Its”!

The World Council of Churches is crying out for a united Church for a divided world. But this is the special need of this hour is that all born again believers grasp the reality of the undividedness of the life of Christ. We need the faith to grasp the revelation of an undivided Christ for a divided Church! Our divisions are not divided. All who have received Him have partaken, with all others in Him, of His wholeness. We might share His wholeness—His seamlessness. Let us take our stand in a whole Christ, receiving Him as being one with us also. If we all stand in the wholeness of Christ we will discover the reality of c

Many will not face up to the truth of the above statement, but none can deny the sharp division between believers from other born again believers. This is largely because “Its” have replaced Him. It is high place. If Christ is truly central and in His rightful place of preeminence, then all our doctrines stand in order, for they will be simply means to the end of bringing us to His fulness. The apostle Paul tells us that as we keep the unity of the Spirit and holding Christ as Head, each one functions in his or her ministries, that we shall all come unto the unity of the faith and grow corporately into His full purpose and measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ!”

A careful reading of the “New Testament” clearly reveals that this is the purpose ordained for this age and its consummation. But should any group or individual prefer to clutch at their particular “It,” be it knowledge or truth in themselves, all “Its” are idols! With the glorious promise of Christ’s fulness held out to us, beware of your “It”! Your “It” will prove as worthless as the ark was to Israel when, having lost the presence of God, they said, “Let us fetch the ark of the covenant . . . that when it cometh among us it may save us out of the hands of the Egyptians.” (Exodus 32:1-4).

**A Prophetic Statement.** On the eve of the sailing of the Mayflower for America, John Robinson made the following statement: “I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed church who are come to a period (for they) at present go no further than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn away from their saw. Whatever part of His will our good God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace another. They see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a reproach to the Spirit of God . . .”

It is more than three hundred years since Robinson made this statement to the Pilgrim Fathers and it remains a fundamental problem confronting God’s people today. John Robinson saw behind the Reformation a process by which God was restoring the truths lost in the dark ages to the Church. Yet, each recovery of an aspect of truth, because of the hardness of the hearts of those who rejected it, became enshrined in a static form by those who received it. Each denomination arose to “stand for” the new revelation and defend it from those who would persecute it.

Sad to say, those who persecuted the hardest were usually the very group who had received the new revelation. The person seems obvious. Each viewed his own particular aspect of truth as the whole of the truth. What was intended to be the whole by the enlightened, they felt that what they had received was not only the last revelation but the very last He would ever give. As a result of all this we are still cursed with the remains of so many centuries of error. Witnesses to the fact that somewhere, somehow, someone stopped short. Satan succeeded in turning the light of the living block. A comma in God’s progressive purpose had been turned into a full stop. What was once a process of revival is now but ashes, and those who sit in spiritual death clutching these ashes only bear their own part in the final end which awaits all who allow their center to become something less than Christ Himself.

**Conclusion.** We are not implying that God is revealing truths that go beyond the New Testament revelation. He is seeking to lead us back to the New Testament revelation—then on into the depth, height, length, and breadth of the New Testament life in the Spirit. The Lord wants that which is revealed to us there, in the Spirit, through us hereto the end that all things might be put under His feet and He be truly Head over all things, and that He is His Body, and thereby the Body become in actual fact, literally, the fulness of Him who is able to fill all things.

Has the Holy Spirit faithfully put His finger upon some subtle form of idolatry in your heart? It is as He called Abraham, to make a pilgrimage to Mount Moriah. "God is the Lord, which hath showed us with cords, even unto the horns of the altar" (Ps. 118:27). —*Selected, Revised and Reprinted from Banner of Truth*

## The Blessed Deliverance from Empty Deceit

By Fred O. Blakely

The redemption that is in Christ Jesus is represented in Scripture as including deliverance from "deceit"—"the futile ways"—inherited from religious fathers (Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8; I Pet. 1:18, RSV). Indeed, for by these vain traditions many were blinded for years to "the light of the gospel of the glory and thus straitened within themselves respecting the operation of God's "glorious power" (II Cor. 6:14) however, the rising of the "Day-Star" in the hearts of "the heirs of promise" dispelled the darkness and to their enraptured gaze the glory of the Lord and "the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10; Heb. 6:17; I Th. 5:5), did they turn from the yoke of bondage which they had accepted, and renounced it for the iniquitous lie that it is.

The particular tradition with which "The Banner" editor and many of our readers were restrained from the contemporary "power of Godliness" (II Tim. 3:5). Occasionally, during the days of our denomination, when we read some of the great declarations of Moses and the Prophets and would become wondrously incited to joy in the Lord was quickly squelched, however, by some "loyal brother." This teaching, it would be said, "is not of the New Testament," and was therefore, according to the creed of our sect, not applicable in "New Testament" times. By this repression, but for the "movement's" sake we submitted to it, and turned from the comfort that we had known of the Holy Ghost. Again essaying to edify ourself by the word of truth, as we had been repeatedly exhorted to do, we turned to what our denomination called the "New Testament." There we, of course, found no such commitments from God concerning His indwelling Presence and Divine power for His people. But such things were cited to quench our spirits, as we began to wax joyful and confident in the Lord. These things were forbidden to 19th century believers, we were reminded, and not for us. As our last hope of present benefit from God, we were reminded, Here also we, quite obviously, found great cause for rejoicing in the Spirit. These things, however, according to the tradition of our church, we were reminded.

Finally, as Christ was being formed in our heart by faith with the resultant dawning of the eyesight, we were brought to see the emptiness and fallacy of the creed itself. Then came the word of the Lord unto us: "Do not say true though every man be false" (Rom. 3:4, RSV). So, by His grace, we once for all turned from the traditional tradition, to serve "the living and true God" (I Th. 1:9). Having been redeemed from such vanity, we were given Him by the precious blood of the Savior, we were given to enter into the possession of our heritage. And by His Divine mercy, we read the Scriptures without the veil of human tradition upon our hearts, and say v

God,” that the matter is precisely as He represents it to be (Acts 27:27). In the Name of Him who bondage to man’s wisdom and reasoning, we call upon all of our readers who are still bound by God their bands asunder” and thrust their cords from them. By the Spirit of all grace, let us seek to rise dren of Jehovah, who is “the God of truth” (Ps. 31:5; Isa. 65:16). —*Reprinted from the April 1968 iss*

## ***Greater Works than These***

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and g he do; because I go unto My Father” (Jn. 14:12). What are the “greater works” of which the Lord Je

**The Works that Christ Did.** At the household of Cornelius, Peter gave an abbreviated summar there, of the things that Christ did “in the days of His flesh” (Heb. 8:15). As he said, the Lord Jesus healing all that were oppressed of the Devil; for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). And more specifi things as the raising of Jairus’ daughter, the healing of lepers and blind men, the raising of Lazaru son, the healing of the woman with an issue of blood, the healing of paralytics, and casting demons were held captive by them. These are only but a few of the specific instances of Christ’s miracles. *How ness of these works, all of those individuals, who were healed by the Savior, eventually met their app death (cf. I Cor. 15:26)!* In saying this, our intention is *not by any means* to cast a shadow upon the mi to give perspective regarding the “greater works” of which He spoke.

**The Nature of the Greater Works.** If the Lord Jesus had been speaking of miracles such as the “greater works” that the Apostles and disciples would be doing in the time of His absence from indeed be difficult, if not impossible, for men to improve upon, even with Divine assistance. So far is difficult to conceive of anything greater, and more dramatic, than that which occurred in Bethany Lazarus out of his grave (Jn. 11), or in Nain when the Lord transformed a funeral procession into amazement (Lk. 7:11-17). And these are only two of a large number of instances.

Rather, it seems that the “greater works,” to which the Savior was referring, have to do with ou “the ministry” as well as “the word of reconciliation” (II Cor. 5:18-19). The fruits of this ministry an death, but are such as shall endure into the ages to come. As we minister this word to our fellow r the increase. “We are laborers together with God” (I Cor. 3:9), and both we and the ones we to whom v husbandry” (His cultivated field) and His “building.” One of the greatest joys associated with this pr God is using us in the ministrations of His Word to our fellow men. In those blessed occasions we a Pet. 4:11), and by His grace are “speaking the very words of God” (NIV). “As though God did bese As we draw near to Him we are given to sense that God is speaking through us to our fellow men a fruits proceeding from these labors shall endure into the world to come. Such labors are “greater wo ciated therewith is “unto holiness, and the end” is “everlasting life” (Rom. 6:22).

**The Reason for the Superiority.** “Because I go unto My Father.” Another vital reason for the that they are being orchestrated by the glorified Savior, who is now seated at the right hand of God with us “in the days of His flesh” (Heb. 8:15), He was “straightened” (Lk. 12:50), that is to say, restrair

to what He was able to do because of His enfleshment. But now that He has ascended up “far above objectives of His exaltation was that He might “fill all things” (Eph. 4:10), so that there is no longer ministering to us who are yet “compassed with infirmity” (Heb. 5:2). “All power is” now “given unto” Him (Mt. 28:18), so that the Savior is now able to personally indwell and animate His church (which is His world.” As men draw near to God through the Savior, they find that they are not only benefiting the Lord, but He is clearly and unmistakably working in them and through them to benefit their fellow men and women.

As a side thought here, let me say, there was a time when I used to speak with my acquaintances because I felt that it was my responsibility. (And this is certainly a valid starting point.) But it is important to know that “the ministry of reconciliation” is actually God’s enterprise, in which He is present (Ps. 74:12), and that He is continually looking throughout the earth for persons, unreservedly set apart in the gospel, whom He may employ and empower in this great work (cf. II Chron. 16:9; II Cor. 5:12:20-21). —*Editor*

**Acknowledgement of Recent Contributions.** We would like to publicly acknowledge the friends of the *Banner of Truth* and their gifts. It is always a source of great encouragement when we hear from our readers with appreciation and with contributions. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the following individuals.

Everett Tucker, Little Rock, AR, \$100.00; Wanda Waugh, Portage, IN, \$100.00; Ricky and Tasha Florian Meeks, Louisville, KY, \$50.00; Edith Coffman, Cedar Lake, IN, \$50.00; Ruby Bowling, Pair Point, IN, \$25.00; Amy Sims, Crown Point, IN, \$25.00; Anonymous donor, \$20.00; Ahmud, \$20.00; Barri Cae Mallin, Marietta, GA, \$20.00; Michael Zaucha, Crown Point, IN, \$20.00; Edward, \$15.00; Bill Hawkins, Joplin, MO, \$15.00; Harry H. McDuffee, Cottondale, FL, \$10.00. —*Editor*

**Greetings from Missouri.** “Brother Dean & brethren, Grace to you and peace from our Lord and soon to take us home. Thank you for all your labors in the Lord. We are grateful to receive the Blessings to our spirits. We often pray that your labors will yield a bountiful harvest. We are grateful to the Lord who have several that are receiving the truth with delight. However, we do have those we are concerned for in our prayers. We are looking forward to seeing you all at the renewal. We have a new addition to our family, 9th, 9 lbs. 10 oz., 22 in., and beautiful. Continue this good fight, we have a crown of righteousness in store. —*Tasha Sims, DeSoto, MO*

“The creative power of the redemption of God works in the souls of men only through the preaching of the truth and the sharing of personal experiences that saves people, but the truth of redemption. ‘The words that I have spoken to you are life’ (John 6:63).” —*Oswald Chambers*

**A Deplorable Situation.** There are many who have made a profession of faith, who still are not saved, but who have accepted them in Christ. In many cases their doctrine and profession of faith affirm their acceptance of the truth.

science do not. This is truly a deplorable situation, and the only remedy for rectifying this is the coming of the gospel (cf. I Cor. 1:18-21). —*Editor*

**Death and Life.** In earth life always precedes death. But in the kingdom of God a death must may participate in the heavenly life. “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him” (Rom. 6:8)

When those who are living by faith come to the end of life’s journey, this is not the time for sl Godward, but rather for picking up the pace. —*Dean Boelt*

“Obedience and servanthood do not have terms of office.” —*Tom Dimos*

**From Lynnwood, WA.** “Dear Brother Boelt, Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus with a check for \$20.00 as my donation / subscription. Thank you. Sincerely, In Christ always, Ahr

**From Painesville, OH.** “I look forward to receiving ‘The Banner of Truth’ and sharing it with great is the need for them. Thank you for your labor of love for the Kingdom.” —*Ruby Bowling, Pai*

**From an Anonymous Donor.** “Enclosed is a little appreciation (\$20.00) for your paper which good points in your paper. I wish to remain anonymous.”

## ***Hope and Man’s Constitution***

Men instinctively have hope that something better is coming. Their speech often bears witness to great loss and calamity. You hear men say such things as, “This thing was meant to be,” and “ever in the end.” Even in Job’s day, men could reason in this manner, “There is hope for a tree, if it be again, and that its shoots will not cease” (Job 14:7, RSV). In other words, if there is hope for a cut- is hope for those created in God’s image, even amidst the most grievous circumstances.

Hope is an essential part of man’s constitution and make-up. Man is in a fallen state where it o things could possibly come to him. But for those who are outside of Christ such “hope” is clearly illu: the better thing hoped for will never finally come to fruition. In their alienated condition they are str sively brings hope to fruition. And they, as well, are ignorant of the nature of the “better thing” which 11:40) for those who love Him and who are called according to His purpose (cf. Rom. 8:28).

Those, however, who are living by faith in the Son of God can knowingly and assuredly affirm v reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the c vany, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. 8:18-21). For s

but rather substantive. Those living by faith are given to taste of the heavenly gift, and of the powers 6:4-5). Let all who are in Christ make full proof of the hope which is laid up for them in Heaven (cf.

## **Refreshing Waters Renewal 2003**

### **Theme: The Grace of God**

**Clermont Christian Church, Indianapolis**

The dates for the next Refreshing Waters Renewal are July 29-31, 2003. The church's address is: 9204 Crawfordsville Road, Indianapolis, IN 46234. We are certainly grateful to the brethren there their hearts and facilities.

The theme for the upcoming Renewal is "The Grace Of God." The following are sermon topics to be meetings:

1. Continuing in the Grace of God — (Acts 13:43)
2. Recommended to the Grace of God — (Acts 14:26; 15:40)
3. The Gospel of the Grace of God — (Acts 20:24)
4. The Grace of God Has Abounded Much More —(Rom. 5:15)
5. The Grace of God Makes Us What We are in Christ — (I Cor. 15:10)
6. Receive Not the Grace of God in Vain — (II Cor. 6:1)
7. I Do Not Frustrate the Grace of God — (Gal. 2:21)
8. The Grace of God Brings Salvation — (Tit. 2:11)
9. The Grace of God Effectively Teaches — (Tit. 2:12-13)
10. Jesus Tasted Death For Every Man by the Grace of God —(Heb. 2:9)
11. Stewards of the Manifold Grace of God — (I Pet. 4:10)
12. Standing in the True Grace of God — (I Pet. 5:12)
13. Believing through Grace — (Acts 18:27)
14. Everlasting Consolation and Good Hope through Grace — (II Th. 2:16)
15. Salvation by Grace Through Faith — (Eph. 2:8)
16. It is By Faith that it Might be by Grace — (Rom. 4:16)
17. The Word of His Grace — (Acts 14:3; 20:32)
18. Justified Freely by His Grace — (Rom. 3:24)
19. Grace is Exceeding Abundant With Faith and Love — (I Tim. 1:14)
20. The Exceeding Riches of His Grace — (Eph. 2:7)
21. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ — (II Cor. 9:8)

We will provide more information regarding this year's Renewal in the coming issues, as it becom

# Will He Find Faith?

By Michael Zaucha

Our God, “to whom Salvation and glory and power belong” (Rev. 19:1), has much to tell us concerning believing the record He has given concerning His Son. Consider the words of our Lord: “when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” (Lk. 18:8). When Jesus returns, when He comes again, will He find faith? Will it be nothing like His first coming, when He came as a helpless infant. Scripture tells us, “They will appear on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory” (Lk. 21:27), “with all the angels” (Mt. 16:27), “hundreds of thousands” (cf. Dan. 7:10), “and with many thousands of His holy ones” (Jude 14). For God to “bring the Son” (Jn. 5:22), “to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (Jude 15). On that day in mind, remember the words of our Lord: “will I find faith,” for it is this faith that will save us for it is a life and death matter for all of us, so let us seek God to be the ones in whom Jesus will find this importance, for our eternal salvation hangs upon it.

What is this “faith” Jesus will recognize? What is this “faith” that will be acceptable to God in His Kingdom? The Scriptures say, if “You believe there is one God; you do well” (Jas. 2:19). This is, truly, a good thing here; for the Scriptures continue that “the demons also believe (this),” and we are told of the place of the lake of fire. Rev. 19:20; “the lake of fire.” So clearly, this is not the “faith” our Lord will recognize when He returns. The faith He will recognize is the one that He, Himself, will count as righteousness. Because of the importance of this, let us clearly see the only “Way” of our becoming the “righteousness of God.” “He (God) made Him (Jesus) righteous on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. 5:21). Our Lord Jesus Christ made us righteous of our being made “the righteousness of God.” This is God’s only ordained “Way” of imputing His righteousness to us by becoming the righteousness of God.

God is just as clear in revealing to us the means of our attaining His righteousness; “that I may glory in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith which comes from God on the basis of faith” (Phil. 3:9). Our becoming the righteousness of God does not require “work of the law,” but rather, just as it did with Abraham, in our believing God. In the first five verses of Genesis, God is speaking with Abraham. “One who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be the head of the house, and shall be greater than you, and shall be blessed. So shall your descendants be” (Gen. 15:1-6); “Then (Abraham) believed in the Lord, and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.” It was at this time that God had spoken that God declared Abraham righteous. God did not recognize any righteousness of Abraham but rather declared him righteous because he believed what God said. To assist us in taking hold of this, let us remember that “Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness” (Rom.4:5). So as it was with Abraham, so it is with us today.

In thinking back to our Lord’s return, what then is the purpose, the necessity for our being “clothed

“For we shall all stand before the judgement seat of God” (Rom. 14:10), and “then each one of us shall stand before God” (Rom. 14:12). Standing before the Holy God on that day, without being covered in the blood of Christ, we shall become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds (would be) like a filthy garment; and a leaf, and all of our iniquities, like the wind, (would) take us away” (Isa. 64:6). This is God’s assessment before Him on the day of judgement in the righteousness of their own works or in any other righteousness. “Then the King said to His servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the fire, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth’” (Mt. 22:13). This then, will be the just recompense for the record that God has given concerning His Son” (I Jn. 5:10). The only righteousness that will be accepted before the Holy God, the only righteousness that will be accepted by God is His own— “the righteousness that God imputes to us through our believing, and through our life-long, continued belief in His (Christ Jesus) blood” (Rom. 3:25). For those who will not believe in the provision God has made for us in Christ Jesus, “the day of the Lord will be great and very terrible” (Joel 2:11), and they will be cast to those who have believed the record God has given concerning His Son, God’s own righteousness with the presence of His glory blameless with great joy (Jude 24), and “we shall see His face” (Rev.22:4), and “I will be with them, and we shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among us” (Rev. 21:3).

So, brethren, “Remember therefore what you have received and heard; and keep it, and repent” (Rev. 2:2). If you are in Christ, you have received God’s own righteousness through your faith. Thus saith the Lord! Remember and keep believing this. Remember also, what you have heard. God is the initiator of our faith in His Word, and, to His glory, His continued “speaking” to us, to encourage and strengthen this faith. Those who keep this “faith” to the end, Jesus said, “ And they will walk with Me in white; for they are washed in the blood of the Lamb. Their names shall be written in the book of life” (Rev. 19:8). This is the faith Jesus will be looking for on the day of judgment. It is the righteousness that comes from our believing God in the provision He has made for us in Christ Jesus. It is the righteousness that God will accept on the day of judgment when His Son comes again. —*Brother Zaucha*

## ***A Notice to our Subscribers***

The Banner of Truth will end its Fortieth year with the January 2003 issue. It truly began as a labor of love by its first editor Brother Fred O. Blakely and continues with Albert G. Stoner Jr. as editor for the last year. Brother Blakely has since past on to his reward and has left us with this grand legacy. We are aware that we are stewards of the resources the Lord has provided, and it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (I Cor. 4:2). To continue many years in the future, the proper management of the resources the Lord has provided.

Due to the rising costs involved in preparing, printing, and mailing The Banner of Truth, we are asking for ten dollars a year from each subscriber. (Some are already providing much more). Of course, if this is not possible, then continue at your present level of support. We also request that if any one receives the Banner and has no use for it, to please notify us so we may remove your name from our mailing list. As a cost saving measure, we will remove some names of people that we have not heard from for a period of time. If you stop receiving the Banner, then please notify us and we will gladly reinstate you to our mailing list. —*Dean Boe*

# The Working of God's Mighty Power

## *It is to Us-ward Who Believe*

By Dean Boelt

It appears the church of our day has lost its vision of the purpose of Calvary and what was accomplished impacts every child of God.

**The Objective of God in Christ.** We can most assuredly say it is not to patch up the old man. Some but His objective is not just to make men better, but that seems to be the general thought today. It is not to be poured into old wineskins (cf. Mt. 9:17), but it appears this is what men are attempting to do. They simply straighten out the old life. He did not come to bring a means of behavior modification to the old man. His work rests upon the fact that man's condition is such that only a death and a rebirth can effect a re-creation. The idea of pleasing unto God in his natural condition by trying to imitate walking as Jesus walked has proven to be a failure. At Mount Sinai, said "all that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exod. 24:3). Of course, they were not a true commitment. The law has a fundamental weakness and it was clearly demonstrated under the law that it could not do in that it was weak through the flesh" (Rom 8:3). We cannot please God by keeping the law, but by being imitators of Christ as best we can by walking as men. Some think, and teach, we are under the law of Moses. We often hear "do the best you can". The best we can is not good enough. We need Christ as our role model and so to imitate His life. Our sin and corruption runs too deep for reformation. It is necessary for us to see how thoroughly sin has corrupted the natural man and there is no hope apart from the new man working in us. Sin has penetrated and infected every part of our being. Do we doubt the extent of the word of the Lord. "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that doeth right and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth right, no, not one." "How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water" (Job 15:16). "The law is manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The law, by imitation of Christ, who kept the law perfectly, is not the remedy. The remedy, instead of imitation of the law, is the new man.

We are called to be participants in His death, burial, resurrection, and then His life. We have the basis of our refusal, and death, of the old man. The abundance of life, which Jesus has promised, depends upon the death of the old man. The move to a higher and higher plane is dependent upon how often and how deep we plumb the depths of our death. As Paul said, "I die daily" (I Cor. 15:31). We must repudiate the flesh life repeatedly as it tries to regain the old man.

**The Remedy Provided in Christ.** Christ takes us down into the grave and terminates the old man. He has come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, because he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26). This radical operation is generally resisted vehemently by the old man.

