

# A New Creature in Christ

by Michael Zaucha

The surpassing riches of grace of our Heavenly Father that is granted to every man "in Christ" is to take "the ages to come" for us to see them fully revealed (Eph. 2:7). But before we are encouraged to need to remember the cost to our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son.

It has been revealed to us "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was in the beginning with God (Jn. 1:1-2). However, what little has been revealed to us about this time "ever changed when "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14). "Although (the Word) did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped (Phil. 2:6). In other words, He voluntarily laid aside and laying aside His privileges, "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant, and being made in the likeness of men was in a manner He had not experienced, and brought men encounter, but in a far greater and unique degree. He had to learn obedience, not because He had to "become to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation (Heb. 5:8-9). He had to be tempted yet He was without sin, in order to sympathize with our weaknesses (Heb. 4:15). And finally, "God made Him to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (II Cor. 5:21). The Christ, bore the full wrath of God in His body, the wrath that sinful men justly deserved, shed His blood, God raised Him from the dead, and "when He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Father (Heb. 2:3). While not showing here all that is involved in God bringing men "into Christ," there is a lesson and the Word. To this point I say, the matter of being "in Christ" ought not to be looked at with caution or philosophical, but rather to be seen as reality. It is something to be experienced NOW.

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. All this is from God's grace, that we should receive His new things, we must meet His Condition; "If ye be in Christ." God is very clear in His pronouncement and there are no exceptions. This is God's Way and He consistently declares it from the Old Testament covenant sacrifices, to the prophetic utterances of His Holy Prophets, to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "Whoever is born again" (Jn. 3:7). Our being made a new creature by God is totally dependent on believing the record God has borne concerning His Son (I Jn. 5:10). This is a most critical matter with God's standard, no work of man that can accomplish this. Our being a new creature is totally dependent on our faith and we appropriate it by our faith. There is no other manner by which this can happen.

"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). This is the foundational point of being in Christ; KNOWING, that in Christ, we have peace with God; KNOWING, that we are acceptable before God; KNOWING, that in Christ, we are no longer alienated from Him; KNOWING, that

forgiven. Before any man can make advancement in the Kingdom, this matter must be totally believed by those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. Blessed is the man who takes into account" (Rom. 4:7-8). The blessing is in knowing this for yourself. There is no greater standing before God.

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, HE IS A NEW CREATURE." There is absolutely no one "in Christ" who has been missed or overlooked. Listen to what God declared through the prophets: "I have looked down from the eyes on high and see who created these stars, the One who leads forth their host by number, He called out the greatness of His might and the strength of His power. Not one of them is missing (Isa. 40:26). Therefore, in this truth when He said "the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Mat. 10:29-31). The word of God stands, and it cannot be shaken or moved because of who God is, and because of His power. "we may have strong encouragement, we who have fled for refuge in laying hold of the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18).

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Behold new things have come, and all things have become new. Since the new creature and all the things we receive are from God, they are not of the flesh and blood, nor are they of this earth. They cannot be seen by human eyes or touched by human hands. They cannot be counted or weighed. They can only be appropriated by our faith in what God reveals to us. These are new things and they are not of any human knowledge or earthly wisdom, for what we have in Christ comes from God and we need not be ashamed of it" (1 Cor. 2:9-10).

"Through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things" (Acts 13:39). In Christ, not only have we been freed from the power of sin, but we also have been freed from its power! In Christ we have been freed from the power of sin! We are no longer under its power; rather we have been freed from sin, now to serve the living God. So now, instead of being slaves to sin; instead of being enemies of God, we are now the friends of God; we are pleasing to God.

In Christ, God has "delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin" (Col. 1:13-14).

In Christ, God has "raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places" (Col. 3:1).

In Christ, God has "blessed us with every spiritual blessing" (Col. 1:3).

In Christ, "We have received the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God" (1 Cor. 2:12).

In Christ, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3).

In Christ, "we are the children of God" (1 Jn. 3:1).

In Christ, if we are children, "heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

In Christ, God grants us to "draw near with confidence to the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16).

This is what God says about those who are in Christ, and we have barely touched the hem of the garment of His grace" (Eph. 3:12).

This, then, is the nature of the new creature in Christ; drawing near to God (Heb 7:19, 25; 10:22; Jn. 1:18), setting our affections on the things above (Col. 3:2); encouragement to draw near to God (Mal. 3:16; 1 Th. 2:11-12, 5:11; Heb. 3:13, 10:25). We are given a picture of the nature and mission of Christ to assist us in seeing this more clearly in Psalm 48:12-13: "Walk about Zion, and go around her; go up to her ramparts; go through her palaces." In Christ, there is no longer a veil of separation between us and God. We no longer have to wait for that one-day-a-year time in order to come before God, and that only through a high priest.

walk about Zion, and YOU are to go around her. YOU are to see these things and take hold of them : sider her ramparts and her towers and her palaces for yourself and see the solid foundation they ar taught of God (Isa. 54:13; Jer. 31:34; Jn. 6:45), and to hear His voice for yourself (Jn. 5:25, 10:27; Heb the manner of the new creature, and these new things are granted from God “if any man be in Chri: “Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something Will you not be made aware of it? (Isa. 43:19)

## Strangers and Pilgrims

By Dean Boelt

“Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappa Pet. 1:1). “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes scattered abroad and James both were addressing those that were scattered abroad. Later Peter, again, beseeches the “Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war again

**Strangers and Pilgrims.** Dictionary definition of Stranger: One who is strange as a (1) For Pilgrim: One who journeys in foreign lands; a wayfarer. Strangers and pilgrims are in a foreign, ofte their homeland, and it may be said they were “scattered abroad.” In one sense, they were pilgrims were absent from their homeland in this world. However, in a fuller sense they would also be strang of their inheritance. It is said of Abraham, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojor as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the sam city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:8-10). Abraham was a str because he was looking beyond this land looking for a city, which hath foundations, a continuing cit He had his affections set there. “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the ea things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is a not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:13-16).

Strangers and Pilgrims, in one sense, is our status in the world today. Yet in another sense, o over. We have a settled rest—an eternal home. Mount Zion is our native clime; the heavenly Jerus which we have come by faith. They (the patriarchs) had received the promises they saw afar off and embraced them. By faith we draw nigh and “have tasted of the heavenly gift and were made partaker tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come” (Heb. 6:4-5). Because we are st world we need not, and indeed must not, become entangled in the affairs of this life. “No man that with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (II Tim. 2: temporary status in this foreign land, and culture a taste for that place of permanence. The more





the “abundance of grace” available to us through Jesus the Lord (Rom. 2:7; 5:17). And, in seeking necessity, we shall certainly be asking aright, since we are simply calling upon God to work in us “to His sight.”

**Conclusion.** Have you, through His great love and kindness, “obtained mercy of the Lord?” If so, that endowment was not an end in itself. “Freely ye have received, freely give,” is the charge (Mt. 10:8). “Whatsoever ye shall give, of him shall much be required” (Lk. 12:48). “God is able to make all grace abound toward you until the end. And that design is that you “always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”

In view of the complete efficacy of Divine grace, and its intended, application in our lives, there is no need of any assured confidence in the Lord. Are there areas of your relationship to God and men that you find yourself in captivity to “the obedience of Christ” (II Cor. 10:3-6)? Your affirmative response but represents your weakness of humanity. Let us not despair, however. Remember that the Apostle “obtained mercy of the Lord to be made sufficient for thee,” was the glorified Savior’s word of reassurance (II Cor. 12:9). In realization of this gift, he later exclaimed, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me!” (Phil. 4:13). In that same trial of our faith, making way for the perfection of God’s strength in our weakness. So shall grace live by completing that which is lacking in our faith and sonship.—*Reprinted from the September Truth*

## The Importance of Taking Heed to Ourselves

by Harold Lohse

It is with great concern that I write about the backslider of today. We sometimes feel as did Elijah that we are the only ones left still zealous for the Lord. This of course, is wrong, for God maintains His church to continue to do so until He terminates this world and all that is in it, some glorious day. Yet, there are still a real living desire for God’s word, and for some reason have now returned to that from which they had commented on the parable of the lost coin. The woman, having ten pieces of silver, when she lost one, she found it. Then she rejoiced. “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one that hath sinned and is repented.” When someone that had loved the Lord falls away, or backslides, there is no joy in Heaven for the Lord. Heaven what terror a life of sin will lead to, and what an eternity in Hell will mean for the unrepentant.

It is so important that we take heed to ourselves. It is important that we be diligent in attention to the Word of God, keeping the statutes and judgments we are taught. It is evident to those that are rooted and grounded in the Word that growth in grace and fruitfulness is of great necessity in their spiritual lives.

Above all, one must keep his eyes on Jesus, and must seek out what His will is for his spiritual walk. We must accept entirely, not from the mouth only, but from the heart fervently. We are not to add to or take from the Word of God by God for us. His work is perfect, and mere man cannot enhance it in any way. In short, we are to be “as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:1-3).

I, by no means, am implying that the only backsliders are those that have confessed Jesus as the

have been baptized, and then openly fallen away. These cases are serious in themselves, but just as that attend church meetings faithfully, but whose first love is the world and fleshly desires. They are the ones spoken of in II Tim. 3:5 as “having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” spiritual growth in these people. They never advance. They seem to go to church on the Lord’s day what is done at that time. We are admonished not to be careless, not to take for granted that a small portion of our time on the Lord’s day is sufficient.

We are to take heed to ourselves and to keep our souls diligently, lest we forget the things our eyes are to strive for progress in our spiritual life. We are to receive God’s word. We are to hide His commandments and to incline our ears to Him with wisdom. We are to apply our hearts to understanding. We are not to be like silver. He says then, we shall “understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God” and only from His mouth “cometh knowledge and understanding” (Prov. 2:1-6). Why are we not growing in the Lord’s testimonies? So that we can teach them our sons, and our “sons’ sons” (Deut. 4:9). There is no sitting around looking spiritual. You are to equip yourself so that God can use you in the upbringing of your children. You are responsible for them and their salvation, whether you think so or not. This is not just a picnic. We are to pursue our course unflinchingly and persistently. We must be red hot in our zeal, not lukewarm.

May I ask you to stop right now, consider yourself. Are you advancing and growing in grace and becoming stronger? Has your zeal for the Lord inspired you to seek deeper and greater truths in His holy word? Do you have your heart to live righteously before Him? Consider what is said in Scripture. “And if the righteous shall not be saved, the ungodly and sinner appear?” (I Pet. 4:18). I do not mean to be abusive, my brethren. But our Savior says, “When I see people (church members) that apparently couldn’t care less, I become alarmed for their welfare. They will not be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth” (I Tim. 2:4).—*Reprinted from the July 1968 issue*

## ***The Witness of the Spirit’s Leading***

The Holy Spirit leads all of God’s people, without exception, in mortifying, or putting to death (I Cor. 9:27) the flesh, and all that proceed from the heart. *This is the primary leading of the Spirit.* Any other supposed leading by the flesh, or the world, or the devil, must be examined and proved.

Hear now this word of instruction by the Apostle Paul in the context of Romans 8. “For if ye live according to the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Rom. 8:13-14). The sinful deeds (deeds of the body) or thoughts that arise in the heart. As the Lord Jesus declared: “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: these are the things which defile a man: but to eat with a man” (Mt. 15:19-20). Again, in Mark’s gospel, “And He said, that which cometh out of the man, that defileth him, that is, the evil which proceedeth from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:21-23). Obviously the old saying, “The devil made me do it”, is clearly a lie, for sin proceeds from the heart, and which must be mortified, or “put to death” (RSV), *before it expresses itself.* Once the sin expresses

man," however, it must be confessed before God and repented of. But, as new creatures in Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17), we have been constituted us (cf. Eph. 4:24b), so that there is now a part of us (the new man) that does not want to sin. We are continually "put on the new man" by being "nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine" (1 Tim. 4:6), and we also are putting "off the old man with his deeds" (Col. 3:9).

Finally, those individuals who put sin to death (that is to say, those who have come to hate sin, and sin itself) on a consistent basis, have grounds for a bona fide assurance of being one of God's sons or daughters by affirming that only such individuals have a right to such assurance. We must ask ourselves: Is the proceeding from the heart offensive to us? Is the Spirit leading us to put to death the sinful deeds that are the case, then that very leading and the hatred of sin have become a witness to us that we are, in fact, sons and daughters.

The new covenant is all about God getting rid of our sin through the Lord Jesus Christ in order that a new world to come. Sin must be gotten rid of judicially and experientially. Our Heavenly Father has done this in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. However, for men to be carelessly and regularly doing this, and is doing so salvationally, (for example, by not earnestly mortifying the sinful deeds that arise from the flesh) is a mark squarely beside the genuineness of such a profession of faith. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God. —Editor*

## The Troubled Time in Which We Live

The hearts of all thoughtful people are disturbed and apprehensive over the troubles of this present age. A general lawlessness prevails, and is on the increase. We do not presume to have the answer as to the cause of these troubles. We are convinced, however, that God is setting the stage for some great epochal interposition.

It would appear that the cup of iniquity of this world is waxing full, and it is the Holy God of Heaven who is the cause of it. In all the uncertainty, one fact is clear and unimpeachable: God is over and in and through all things, and is not out of control. Everything is, instead, right on schedule, and will be manipulated by our God for the purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began.

This knowledge and assurance is a great boon for the spirit. When the boat is tossing wildly on the sea, it is comforting to know the Master of the sea and of the universe is aboard, and will not suffer things to happen which would harm our souls take their rest in the midst of perilous times. Thus, when the hearts of unbelievers are failing, and the things that are come upon the earth, we simply look up to God, and rejoice in Him through the Lord Jesus Christ. Our portion draweth nigh, being now nearer than when we believed. It is precious beyond words to know that we are in the eternal home of glory than we were even yesterday.

Let us encourage our hearts in these considerations, meanwhile committing the present world to God, and trusting in His ever-faithful and earnest prayer. So shall "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7). And in this spiritual repose, we shall glorify our heavenly Father by the new work within us.—*Submitted by Dean Boelt (Selected and Revised)*

# Put ye On the Lord Jesus Christ

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, nor in envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts of the same.”

All of the above exhortations are directed to those who are new creatures in Christ; they assuredly who are exhorted is washed, sanctified, justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. It is not to be made to individuals who are walking according to the flesh, or who are flesh-dominated. Putting on Christ is a moral constrainer that enables men to prefer the Lord Jesus Christ, and all that pertains to Him, over all other desires.

The fact that the Apostle does not spell out *how* the Lord Jesus is to be put on is because “the new man” (cf. Eph. 4:24) just as surely as “the first man Adam” was (I Cor. 15:45). The new man is the new creature, characterized by righteousness and true holiness.” The new man understands how to respond to exhortations without needing to be told how to respond.

Wherever Christ is put on, there the new creature is, and there men and women are walking in the lust of the flesh. But wherever He is not put on, such ones are in the flesh and are walking according to the flesh. Scripture categorically declares that “they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:8). —*Ed*

## The Word of Faith That We Preach (Part I)

by Fred O Blakely

The “word of faith” that was preached by the Apostles, or the “word of this salvation” (Acts 13:2) and the same word, stands in diametric opposition to “the hand-writing of ordinances” proclaimed in the Law. It is, in fact, categorically contrasted with that “yoke of bondage” (Gal. 5:1) in the Law. The “word of faith which we preach” occurs in the Law. The legal code, which proved to be but a “ministration of death” (Rom. 7:13) which drew people’s attention to themselves—to their obligation to do the will of God—as does much of the Law, which is cast in the same mold. The Apostle’s recapitulation of the burden of the law— “the man will live by them”—indeed, well sums up its message. The gospel of our salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, in His hand, is to us the word of life. It summons us to look away from ourselves to the One who has effected our eternal salvation, and now desires that we come to Him for its full possession and enjoyment. “Whosoever shall confess the Lord shall be saved,” and so be constituted an “heir of the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Rom. 10:10), is the clarion keynote of this message.

There is a vast difference in these two proclamations, despite the apparent inability of many who are “in the city” to perceive it (Isa. 48:1-2). The distinction embraces all that lies between spiritual death and the word of the law, being addressed to man’s energies and demanding their employment in “obedience” (Rom. 6:16), can do no more than result in “the knowledge of sin,” and so of death unto God (Rom. 3:20; 5:12). The distinction, directs one to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29), and call “unto righteousness” (Rom. 10:10), and thus to be justified by faith “from all things,” from which he “was delivered by the law of Moses” (Acts 13:38-39). We do well, therefore, to forget the “carnal commandment” (Heb. 7:19) by God, and to ever press on in apprehension of the word of faith as our Divine sufficiency for both

## **Its Subject Matter**

The great distinguishing element of “the word of the truth of the gospel,” as “the faithful word” is (1 Tim. 1:5; Tit. 1:9), is its subject matter. Because “the grace of God that bringeth salvation” has now act through the Person of the Son (Tit. 2:11; I Pet. 1:18-20), with the consequent inauguration of the new covenant, the nature of salvation has been radically changed from that authorized under Moses. By the law, God, in order to save man from the penalty of sin (Rom. 7:13) by demonstrating man’s total inability to do “that which is well-pleasing in His eyes” (Rom. 7:5), drew attention on the creature, as it were. The commandments demanded strict obedience as a condition of life, and sacrifices, far from cleansing the conscience, but stabbed it with new remembrances of sin (Heb. 10:1-4). In the new covenant, an overtone to the general emphasis, the Name of the Almighty was declared to Israel, they were not saved by their acceptance before Him depended upon rigid adherence to His precepts. The overall result of that ultimately salvation designedly hinged on man, and so the word of the law was essentially a sword to focus man’s attention on himself rather than on God.

**Its Nature.** In contrast, the subject matter of the gospel is precisely opposite, lying entirely outside of man. It is thus objective in character—it calls upon its auditors to look not to themselves, but to Jesus, the Christ, the faith once delivered to the saints, who has Himself redeemed us to God by His own precious blood. In the gospel, faith must have an object. And, in scriptural usage, that object always lies outside of the one to whom it is directed. It is the spiritual faculty bestowed by God to connect one with the external object toward which it is directed. The object to be the object of faith, that to which it is directed must be unseen, and intangible to the natural eye. As the Apostle in another place, faith that is seen is not faith (Rom. 8:24). Contrary to widespread insistence, quite the opposite is the true situation: believing is seeing with the eyes of the heart and of the understanding.

Thus, “the word of faith which we preach” has essentially to do with the unseen facts and truths of God for man which He has “prepared before the face of all people” (Lk. 2:25-32), and His current reign over the earth through Jesus Christ our Lord. In the Rom. 10:1-13 text, Paul speaks metonymically when he uses the expression “the word of faith” to denote the whole body of redemptive, sanctifying, and preservative facts of the gospel. The Apostles, all of which must be apprehended by faith, since it lies beyond natural ken. Inasmuch as faith is the substance to the things of God as they have been revealed by those who preached the gospel with “the word of the Kingdom of Heaven” (Heb. 11:1, ASV, marg.; I Pet. 1:10-12), the word of faith as used in our basic text is the set

ter of apostolic and prophetic preaching. He who truly declares the “heavenly things,” and makes known the “things of Christ” (Jn. 3:11-12; Eph. 1:3; 38) is, accordingly, preaching the word of faith, as did the Saviour and His emissaries.

**Its Scriptural Representation.** A few specifications from Scripture will demonstrate the nature of the word of faith. That word concerns “those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; and there are some things up there—above—and we have been urged by the Spirit to diligently seek them (cf. 1 Cor. 2:9). The information of the word of faith sets these glorious things before us, to be grasped and tenaciously held. The word of faith pertains to the “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” with which God has blessed us. The form of the verb in this passage denotes an accomplished action by God. He “hath blessed us in Christ with all manner of spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” We have but to apprehend, or possess, the inheritance which we have obtained in Him, and, as regards the inheritance, apprehension is made by faith. So the spiritual blessings in the heavenly places are the proper subject of the word of faith.

In another view, the word of faith can be said to herald “the things which are not seen,” upon which we are to look (II Cor. 4:18). It does not contemplate things “after the outward appearance” (II Cor. 10:7), but rather things “after the flesh,” but “after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5; II Cor. 5:16). Yea, verily, the word of faith is “the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5), speaking only those things which have been purposed by the Father and revealed by the Spirit. It proclaims to us “the kingdom of God, and His righteousness” (Mt. 6:33), which is obtained by faith in the Father and the Son. There is, in fact, proclaimed this word of our salvation, a God in Heaven; His works of His hands; and, in His infinite mercy. He has provided for His people a great and eternal inheritance in His holy Child. This, truly, is “the word of the truth of the gospel” (Col. 1:5), the gospel of our salvation which the Apostles preached. In Christ, God is now “rich unto all that call upon Him” in truth, in that “whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom. 10:12-13).

It is thus readily apparent that the subject matter of “the word of faith which we preach” lies in the supernatural nature (Heb. 13:10-15). It is not only supernatural in character; it is preternatural, or different from the natural. To receive it, therefore, we must leave nature behind, dying to it in Christ, and being “raised with Him in glory” (Col. 2:11-12, ASV), earnestly and diligently “seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, who raised Him from the dead” (Col. 2:11-12, ASV), earnestly and diligently “seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” It is just this that the word of faith calls upon all who hear it to do. In order that “He might sanctify His people, Himself, by the word of His own glory, which He might sanctify His people, Himself, by the word of His own glory, which He might sanctify His people, Himself, by the word of His own glory,” saith it, the Lord Jesus “suffered without the gate.” “Let us go forth therefore unto Him with confidence, and let us not be ashamed of reproach,” is the gentle but authoritative exhortation. “For here we have no continuing city, but (praise Him) which is to come” (Heb. 13:10-14).

*(To be Concluded in the July 2003 Issue of The Banner of Truth)*

## **WHAT CAN YOU KNOW?**

**By Given O. Blakely**

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may KNOW them. . . . And if WE KNOW that He hears us, whatever we ask, WE KNOW that we have the petitions that we desire. . . . WE KNOW that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the sin that he has seen not to do.” (I John 5:1-10)

touch him. WE KNOW that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked o  
Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that WE MAY KNOW Him who is true . .

### PAUL'S TESTIMONY

**RECEIVING A GREATER WITNESS.** To “believe in the name of the Son of God” is to trust in  
declared in the Gospel. It is to receive the greater “witness of God,” and to shape our lives around C  
some, this is not sufficient. They imagine that verbal commitment to Jesus is the highest and most  
But this is not the case, for commitment to Christ and labor for Him are dependent upon something  
not the tree. They both spring from faith, and the persuasion that we have eternal life! Where these  
nonexistent, work for God loses all of its strength, and those doing the work become spiritually fatig

In explaining something of his personal involvements with the Lord, Paul spoke of his own persua  
pervading his whole person. “I KNOW whom I have believed and am PERSUADED that He is able  
ted to Him until that Day” (I Tim. 1:15, NKJV). To “know” the One you have believed is to be acqu  
familiar with His ways, and cognizant of His preferences. Those who walk with the Lord come to k  
academic familiarity – such as one might have with the record of George Washington or some other

Take, for example, the familiarity that is developed between a husband and a wife. This is an  
knowing the Lord involves being “joined” to him, and thus becoming “one spirit.” As it is written, “b  
Lord is one spirit” (1 Cor 6:17). This joining is similar to that experienced in marriage, where the n  
flesh.” In my own case, I have come to know how my wife thinks, and she knows my mind as well. E  
ferences of the other, both likes and dislikes. If someone was to ask my wife what kind of food I like  
me. She knows me. If a person asked me what type of clothing my wife prefers, or what colors she p  
have to consult with her. I know her.

Knowing the Lord answers a lot of questions that are otherwise confusing. When we are aware of  
iniquity, we do not have to ask so many questions about whether this or that is right. When we ar  
and His willingness that all men be saved and none perish, it resolves the issues about whether we si  
patient we ought to be with struggling souls.

I will wax bold and say that most of the dilemmas which have risen in the Christian community  
ignorance of God. Too often the churches have cultured their people to be more familiar with the wa  
the ways of God. They may know WHAT they believe, but they do NOT know WHOM they have belie  
is altogether too common among professing Christians. They have an “Unknown God,” and are ther  
out knowing who He is” (Acts 17:23, NLT).

Compare Paul's testimony with the above condition. “For I know the One in whom I trust, and  
guard what I have entrusted to Him until the day of His return” (NIV). That is why he was able to  
they all,” for the grace of God sustains and empowers such a person (I Cor. 15:10). That is why he coul  
endure at least eight sever beatings (five with a whip, and three with rods), and spend a day and a  
the One in whom He trusted. That is why he could endure perils of great magnitude, sing while he v  
the ministry to which he had been called by writing when he was in prison. He knew the One in wh

Where such a conviction is lacking, living for Christ will become a burden, and salvation will be ea

for the instability and vacillation of many professed believers. This is why laborers quit, and preachers grow weary in despair. It is not because circumstances were difficult for them. Such difficulties are part of the Christian life. They fainted because their strength was "small" (Prov. 24:10). They have been "wearied by the swelling of the Jordan" (Jer. 12:5). Their persuasion was too feeble, and their knowledge too shallow.

In this day of psychological babble, men are sent to analysts to uncover why they experience depression. They trace spiritual deficiency to earthly circumstances. But all such efforts are a gigantic distraction, and do not solve the problem. God is still "our strength" (Ps. 81:1), "my shield," and "my High Tower, and my Refuge" (Ps. 46:1). He is "able to keep you from falling" (Jude 24), and can "make" you "stand" (Rom. 14:4).

All of that must go beyond textbook knowledge. It is something of which faith can persuade you to believe, and which you have believed.

Knowing we "have eternal life" is more a necessity than a luxury. The Spirit did not move John to enjoy a sort of spiritual *hors d'oeuvre*. The nature of life in this world demands that we be certain at all times. If it is evident from our text, it is possible to have eternal life and not know it. But this is not at all a favor. In the warfare of faith, it is possible for such wonderful knowledge to diminish, and even disappear from our minds. If we must be brought to this knowledge, then have our comprehension of it fortified by Divine affirmations.

Paul had no doubts about God's ability. He was persuaded He could keep what he gave to Him, and the glorified Christ will be shown openly, and every eye will see Him. You can have the same perspective. —*GivenB@aol.com*

## **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 address is: 9204 Crawfordsville Road, Indianapolis, IN 46234

The theme for this summer's Renewal is "The Grace Of God." The following is the list of the sermons who will be ministering each message at the Clermont meetings:

1. Grace Given According To The Measure Of Christ's Gift — Eph. 4:7 (Jonathan Ingram)
2. Grace for Grace, and Grace and Truth Came by Jesus Christ — (Jn. 1:16-17). (Al Stoner)
3. The Exceeding Riches of His Grace — Eph. 2:7 (Given Blakely)
4. Believing Through Grace — Acts 18:27 (Aaron Hutchcraft)
5. The Grace of God Effectively Teaches — Tit. 2:12-13 (Bill Dinwiddie)
6. Sufficient Grace — II Cor. 12:9 (Tim McCulfor)
7. The Grace of God Has Abounded Much More — Rom. 5:15 (Dean Boelt)

8. I Do Not Frustrate the Grace of God — Gal. 2:21 (Paul Ingram)
9. It is By Faith That it Might be by Grace — Rom. 4:16 (Ken Smith)
10. The Word of His Grace — Acts 14:3; 20:32 (Rick Sims)
11. Receive Not the Grace of God in Vain — II Cor. 6:1 (David Maddack)
12. Salvation by Grace Through Faith — Eph. 2:8 (Jason Hutchcraft)
13. Everlasting Consolation and Good Hope Through Grace — II Thes. 2:16 (Gene Hutchcraft)
14. The Grace of God Brings Salvation — Tit. 2:11 (Michael Blakely)
15. Salvation by Grace Through Faith — Eph. 2:8 (Robert Cobb)

As of this Banner issue date this year's meetings are only a little more than a month away. We regarding this year's Renewal in the coming issues, as it becomes available to us. In the meantime Blakely at: (317) 293-9745. His E-mail address is <DESMODROME@aol.com>. —*Editor*

## VALLEYS AND MOUNTAINS

**By Given O. Blakely**

“Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and every rough places plain.” (Isa. 40:4).

The entrance of sin into the world brought great inconsistencies. It introduced unfathomable deep insurmountable hills and mountains of difficulty. The path of life was made rough and crooked, and became “hard” (Prov. 13:15). Men and woman of faith discerned this was the case, and often confessed, “Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward,” and “Man that is born of a woman is ble” (Job 5:7; 14:1). Jacob said to Pharaoh, “Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been” “Behold, Thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before Thee: verily is altogether vanity” (Ps. 39:5). Solomon said, “All his days also he eateth in darkness, and he hath his sickness” (Eccl. 5:17).

Indeed, sin introduced a certain futility of life, in which living often became a burden. Sorrow, grief through life like deep valleys. Hardship and discouraging challenges rose like mighty mountains in dreadful day when “by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Rom. 5:12).

But this is not the end of the story, and certainly does not present the consummate human experience on the horizon of time, sending a beam of bright hope into the world. God was going to send One into the entire terrain of life. Everything would become new, and hope would leap in the stall of life, like

Isaiah the Prophet spoke of this time in our text. With a shout of glory the Lord said to him, “Comfort ye . . . Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she will sit as a widow, and be as an orphaness” (40:1-2). This word was for Israel, but it was not limited to Israel. We know this is the case, because the Baptist. “The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight the way for our God” (verse 3). John the Baptist confessed he was that “voice” (Jn. 1:23). The Holy Spirit

case (Mt. 3:1-3; Mk. 1:1-3). The role of John the Baptist was to prepare the people to receive Christ—“to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Lk. 1:17). Our text, then, refers to the glorious minis-

The Savior would bring a refreshing consistency to life. The burden of life itself would be lifted, a Lord with “everlasting joy upon their heads” (Isa. 35:10). Life’s valleys would be elevated, so that difficulties and sorrows would not be as deep. Life would not be so erratic, swinging from one extreme to the “glory” in their “infirmities” (II Cor. 12:9) rather than despairing because of them. Every valley without the light would become possible (I Jn. 1:7)!

Hindering mountains would be brought down, making the path “plain” and clear (Ps. 27:11). No mountains obscure the land of promise, and the cold and bleak mountains of discouragement block the promises of God. Men would be able to live with their hope cast into heaven itself, fully persuaded of it to them. They would know the One they believed, and be persuaded He was able to keep what they promised on that great and notable day of the Lord (II Tim. 1:12). No longer would the people of God be surrounded by enemies like “the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites” dwelt (Num. 13:29). Instead, they would be surrounded by protection – angelic hosts that would camp round about them to deliver them from the fear of evil (I

These are some of the involvements of that wonderful description of life in Christ Jesus. “Therefore we are a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor 5:17). Old valleys are no longer before us. The path is clearer, and we can see farther. Our experience no longer swings from one extremity of life to another. Rather, spiritual stability is experienced – a stability that comes from walking in the light. It is a way where saints “obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. 35:8).

*MO 64801*

**From Collierville, TN.** “There has never been but One that was perfect and they crucified Him. As an example, there are several that have respect for me. I definitely need the prayers of true Christians and admiration for Bro. Fred . . . . Let’s pray for all of those that it’s our duty to pray for . . . . I do not think any people would be offended if you would suggest they read all the Bible, and believe it all . . . . If I ever print it I’d be very appreciative if you would print it. Sincerely, Clyde Rush.”

## **DRAWING WATER WITH JOY**

**By Given O. Blakely**

“Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” (Isa. 12:3)

Centuries before the Savior entered into the world to accomplish our reconciliation, God began to speak of salvation. From the Garden of Eden through the revolutionary ministry of John the Baptist, the promise resounded in the ears of humanity. Prophets wrote about it, singers sang about it, and the righteous lived. In bleak life became, faith could see the star of hope shining in the blackness of the night created by this world.

Isaiah's prophecy is particularly replete with references to the day of salvation. He foretold the birth of the Redeemer. He also chronicled the impact His vicarious sacrifice would have upon the sons of man. It would not be "done in a corner," and its effects would ripple throughout the world.

The twelfth chapter of Isaiah is refreshing in this regard. It speaks of a time when men who had been turned away from God—when God Himself would comfort His people (v. 1). God would undertake the work of saving His people—shouldering all of the responsibility for their sin, and a sacrifice would be required to form a basis for their acceptance. With refreshing insight the people would confess that God would be their strength, and HE would be their song. In summary the people would acknowledge "my salvation" (v. 2).

Once perceived, the very people who were noted for no faith would cry out, "I WILL TRUST, AND I WILL OBEY," who drew back in terror at the voice of the Lord would now "run the way" of His commandments, and would be hungry and thirsting for righteousness. Insightful and expectant exhortations would be shown to them, and they would declare His doings among the people (v. 4). Refreshing songs would be sung unto the Lord, and His name would be made known in all of the earth (v. 5).

An eternal well would be made accessible to men – a well from which they could draw energizing life. The "water of life" drawn from this well would be conducive to joy and great delight. No more somber tones and morose feelings. A certain liberty would be experienced that loosed the tongue and the heart in praise. Hear the promise again. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

God's people must beware of any approach to God that shuts up the "wells of salvation." Like Isaiah, there are many wells. There is one where you are – one from which refreshing water for the heart and soul can be drawn. God places these wells within us: "a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). It is not different springs of water, bursting through the crust of life to furbish and fortify the soul. Are you drawing from the well of salvation? The water you need is there to be drawn up by your faith. I encourage you to draw often —*GivenB@aol.com*

## **There is a Land of Pure Delight**

**By Isaac Watts**

There is a land of pure delight  
Where saints immortal reign;  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.  
There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers:  
Death like a narrow sea divides  
This heavenly land from ours.

Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood  
Stand dressed in living green:  
So to the Jews old Canaan stood,  
While Jordan rolled between.  
But timorous mortals start and shrink  
To cross this narrow sea,  
And linger shivering on the brink  
And fear to launch away.

O could we make our doubts remove,  
These gloomy doubts that rise,  
And see the Canaan that we love  
With unclouded eyes,  
Could we but climb where Moses stood,  
And view the landscape o'er,  
Not Jordan's stream, nor Death's cold flood,  
Should fright us from the shore.





