

Glorious Gospel Publication



Editor: Jack Davis
796 N. St Paul * Wichita, Kansas 67203
316-943-4190 or 942-5468
www.gloriousgospel.org
Email: ggospel5@juno.com

Published Monthly, No Subscription Price



Contents:

Jack's article will appear next issue

A Woman Everlastingly Remembered

E. J. Davis 1

The Last Days

Anita Clark 5

Romans – Ch. 16:1-16

W. J. Franklin 9

Moderation - Part 8

Doug Delhay 14

Repentance & Forgiveness

Orville Freestone Jr. 19

Encounters

Corina Medina 23

A Woman Everlastingly Remembered



We will read of this woman in Matthew, Mark and John because we learn some special things in each of these citations.

Mt. 26:1-2 - "...when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." Jesus spoke plainly that He was to be crucified, yet the disciples did not understand. In **Vs. 3-5** - "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest...And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people." They thought not on our feast day, but Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world to be the *Lamb of God* (Christ our passover is sacrificed for us – I Cor. 5:7). At God's set time it would come to pass, not their time.

Vs. 6-13 - "...Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper (which He had healed earlier). There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath poured this ointment on *my body*, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world,

there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.” This tender act of devotion and love will ever be remembered. Her act is in strong contrast to the unbelief of the disciples. They murmured at the waste.

The box surely figures Christ’s body, which was shortly to be **broken**. The ointment expresses His fragrant life **poured out** on the cross, an acceptable offering to God. Her act testifies of His death and that fragrance will fill the House of God forever.

In **Mk. 14:6-8** Jesus said, “Let her alone...she hath wrought a good work *on me*. She hath done what she could...she is come *aforehand* to anoint my body to the burying.” It was not customary to anoint a body before burial, but He appreciated the fragrance while He was alive. It sweetly assures of His resurrection.

In **Jn. 12:1-3** we learn who she was, it is Mary of Bethany. She poured the ointment on His head and it ran down His body (for in Mark we read, Jesus said, she hath anointed *my body*). She anoints His feet and dries them with her hair. Others came to His feet to have their needs met, but Mary to *give* to Him. The house was **filled** with the odor of the ointment. We also learn from John that it was Judas that spoke this criticism and caused the others to question such a waste -**V. 4-6**. Judas was the treasurer for the group and helped himself to the contents of the money bag many times. He was the poor he had concern for. He would later betray Jesus and ask “what will you give me to deliver him into your hands.” He sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave.

Mary’s whole-hearted giving was worth a whole years wages. For the ointment was worth 300 pence and we read that a pence was a day’s wages. Mary must have saved up for months to be able to perform such a costly act of *worship*. Ask not, what do

I get? But what may I give. The odor of the ointment smelled sweet to many, but smelled of waste to others. Mary had sat at Jesus feet and took in His words -Lk. 10:38-42. She learned of His death (even his disciples did not realize he was to die). She dedicates the Lamb of God for the sacrifice He is about to make. She even knew He would rise again. She anointed Him beforehand. She realize she could not do so after His death. The women who came to the tomb to anoint Jesus body were too late, He had risen. Mary had already anointed Him.

The Lord openly vindicates Mary for her act of devotion. It must have refreshed His heart that was wrung with the treachery of Judas and the nearness of the cross. She manifested her appreciation of Him far beyond that of others. This brings out forcefully the difference in believers. There will be differing companies of believers.

Mary gave her best, she did what she could. She expresses the acts of the *bride* of Christ- Rev. 19:7. In Jn. 12:1,2 Martha is found serving and speaks of those who will be *servants* at the wedding feast in the air- Rev. 19:5. Lazarus sat at the table and represents the *guests* that will be present there; “Blessed are those who are *called* unto the marriage of the Lamb.” -Rev. 19:9. But it is the bridal company that will perfume the banqueting house with her costly ointment. For they are the choicest company of all the redeemed.

Jesus had won Mary’s heart and she proved it by her extravagant display. It figures the love of that company which will constitute the wife of the Lamb. This people are truly consecrated to Christ, His glory is uppermost with them. They pour upon Him all their wealth of love and adoration. They give all and will get all. Their work of faith and labor of love will never be forgotten.

They will fill the house on high (the New Jerusalem) with praises of the Lamb. They will lead in the worship of heaven as they do today on the earth. Others may criticize, but the Lord defends us. This beautiful and glorious company of saints enter into fellowship with Jesus far in advance of others of the Church.

Lazarus and Martha loved Jesus and the Church needs Marthas, but to sit at Jesus feet and learn of Him should be our first priority. Commit our cares and responsibilities to the Lord and offer Him our best. Mary just had a **fuller appreciation** of her Lord She lingered we might say there at His feet. Her association with His feet showed her humility, reverence and spiritual hunger. Do you hunger to know Him better. The Apostle Paul did –**Phil. 3:9-15**.

Mary cultivated deep spiritual thoughts. She became lost in His unfolding of the truth. She learned His will. How do we win the love of the Bridegroom? By loving Him supremely and following hard after Him regardless of all objections from others. The Lord knows the thoughts of our hearts.

May we hear Him say that we have done what we could. What a glorious testimony to a woman – “Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.” It is recorded of none other.

**Our highest place is lying low
at our dear Redeemer’s feet.
May we constantly anoint Him
as the Chosen of our hearts.**

By E. J. Davis

THE LAST DAYS



Anita Clark

“They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance” (Psalms 83:4).

In the world today as in past centuries, hatred for the Jews is rampant. God has allowed their persecution to bring about His plan for their redemption. As long as they lived in relative peace in any of the nations of the world, they were content to remain there. God stirred up the nest, as a mother eagle does, and made it uncomfortable for the Jews to remain in the nations where they lived and prospered. Their desire to go back to their land became foremost in their minds, and they began to leave the nations to which they were scattered. Israel is one of the greatest signs of the end of this age. So many prophecies have been fulfilled now that Israel is back in their land.

Some of these prophecies are:

(1) Israel will exist as a nation in the latter days: Ezekiel 36:24-38. Can you see that God’s plan for Israel is being fulfilled? According to this scripture Israel will come back to their land, and will be redeemed before the Lord at the end of the tribulation, when Christ comes back . The Lord will “give them a new heart and put a new (His) spirit within them, and they will walk in His statutes” (Vs.27). This part has not been fulfilled yet, but to have Israel return to their land and become a nation again (1948) is a great sign that God is beginning to work out the plan for the end of this age and the beginning of the Kingdom Age, where Israel will be the “head nation and not the tail.”

(2) Israel will be in possession of Jerusalem is a prophecy that had to be fulfilled before the tribulation period of seven years. In the six-day war of 1967 Israel was able to retake the Old City from which they had been expelled in 1948 during the war for their independence. In Daniel 9:27 it speaks of the AntiChrist, who will “cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease,” showing that Israel will have reestablished temple worship and sacrificing of animals at the end time. Matthew 24:15 says, “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation...stand in the holy place...” From this scripture, you have to assume that in the end time there will be a holy place of a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. II Thessalonians 2:4 speaks of the “man of sin” who will sit in “the temple of God showing himself that he is God.” Since Israel regained this holy place, the scripture concerning these things can be fulfilled.

(3) Israel will remain in unbelief until the end comes and they accept Jesus as He comes in power and great glory at the end of the tribulation. Zechariah 12:10 says, “ They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for Him as one that mourneth for His only son.” The majority of Israel are unbelievers in God. At the present time only about 1% of Israel are even religious.

(4) Israel returned to a desolate, uninhabitable land of desert and salt swamps. The Arabs were not interested in this land, until the Israelites bought great portions of it from them, and began the process of making “the land bloom like a rose.” They have planted millions of trees on the denuded landscape. Former conquerors had used up all the trees of the land for fuel and war machines. Also, Israel began planting orange groves, which began a lucrative business with Europe and especially Britain. Later, they planted other crops, such as flowers, shipping them, to Europe and other countries. God has blessed the land at this present time, but during the tribulation it will

became desolate again. Then, Christ will appear and during His Millennial Reign, the promise will really be fulfilled that the desert will bloom like a rose.

(5) There will be international conflict over Jerusalem. God has promised that Israel will have Jerusalem in possession in the end time. The Palestinians want to declare it as their capital, but it does not belong to them. The nations want an international city, but God's Word states that it will be the center of universal worship of the Lord Jesus Christ as He rules as King of kings and Lord of lords. Zechariah 12:2-3 states, "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against It."

(6) Israel will be surrounded on every side by enemies. Anti-Semitism is increasing all over the world. Many Muslims deny that the holocaust even existed. The cry of many is to completely annihilate the Jews. The prophet Joel spoke by the Holy Spirit in chapter 3:16 saying, "The LORD also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the LORD will be the hope of His people, and the strength of the children of Israel." The Tribulation of seven years is so near, but first the Lord will come to take His overcoming saints of this Church Age away. (I Thess. 4:13-18). There is no prophecy that is waiting to be fulfilled before He accomplishes this. His coming could happen at any moment. We are being tried more severely now than before because He is finishing His good work in us. Do not despair, but look up! As, Isaiah 41:10 says, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will

strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with my right hand of my righteousness.”

The Red Sea Place in Your Life

Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life,
Where, in spite of all you can do,
There is no way out, there is no way back,
There is no other way but—through?
Then wait on the Lord with a trust serene,
Till the night of your fear is gone,
He will send the wind, He will heap the floods,
He says to your soul, “Go on.”

And His hand will lead you through—clear through—
Ere the watery walls roll down,
No foe can reach you, no wave can touch,
No mightiest sea can drown;
The tossing billows may rear their crests,
Their foam at your feet may break,
But over their bed you may walk dry shod,
In a path that your Lord will make.

In the morning watch, ‘neath the lifted cloud,
You shall see but the Lord alone,
Where He leads you on from the place by the sea,
To the land that you have not known;
And your fears shall pass as your foes have passed,
You shall be no more afraid;
You shall sing His praise in a better place,
A place that His hand has made.

—A. J. F.

ROMANS

W. J. Franklin



Chapter 16:1-16

PHEBE COMMENDED

“I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea”—V. 1. This woman was a “Deaconess” in the church, as the word “Servant” means. Cenchrea was a town and seaport about eight miles east of Corinth. This indicates Paul’s whereabouts when this epistle was penned. Paul sailed from the port in Cenchrea at one time. See Acts 18:18.

Phebe’s name means “Radiant,” and it is believed she was the bearer of this great epistle to the city of Rome. She had Paul’s full commendation.

“That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also”—V. 2. The word “Succourer” means, one who stands in front of before, a leader, a protector, a champion. It is the noun for the word translated “Rule” in I Tim. 3:4,5,12. This woman had been a blessing to many, including Paul.

CHRISTIAN GREETINGS

“Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus”—V. 3. No other of Paul’s epistles even approaches this one in the number of personal greetings to the saints. Colossians comes closest, but does not have near the number of names here mentioned.

This worthy couple here named had been forced out of Rome—Acts 18:2. They befriended befriended Paul, being of the same trade as he—Acts 18:1-3. They were able to instruct Apollos in the way of the Lord more perfectly—Acts 18:24-26. They seemed to have returned to Rome as soon as opportunity afforded according to Rom. 16. They seem to have always had the people of God meet in their home—Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19. They were saluted in Paul’s last letter to Timothy—2 Tim. 4:19.

It was in God’s providence for the good of the couple when they were forced out of Rome, as they met Paul, and obtained a place in God’s program with Him.

“Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles”—V. 4. The words “Laid down their necks” mean, to lay down the neck under the sword of the executioner or to set on imminent risk. Just when or how they did this for Paul, we are not informed, but in some unrecorded manner, they put themselves between him and grave danger. God knows and has the record. The churches along with Paul were thankful to them for their love and sacrifice.

“Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ”—V. 5. We suggest that the reader consult “Jackson’s Proper Name Dictionary.” For the meanings of the names in this chapter.

It was perhaps in the third century before any buildings were erected for the church to meet in. They met in the open or in rented places or in people’s homes. In addition to the texts noted above, see also Col. 4:15; Philm. 2 for references to meetings in private homes.

Beginning with Epaenetus, through V. 15, we have a large group of names that we are not sure of their being mentioned elsewhere in the N. T. “Rufus” of Mark 15:21 is thought to be the same as the one mentioned in V. 13 of our

chapter, but there is no evidence to attest this. In the salutations, one can detect degrees of love and development as well as usefulness and devotion to the Lord. One is “Beloved,” another is “Approved;” some laboured in the Lord, while others laboured much in the Lord. Some had a closer place to the heart of Paul as kinsmen. One had been as a mother to him. Some had been fellow-prisoners. We feel that the Spirit of the Lord expressed Himself through Paul in all this.

The statement, “Firstfruits of Achaia,” in the margin is “Firstfruits of Asia.” We believe this to be correct, as Stephanas is called the firstfruits of Achaia in 1 Cor. 16:15.

“Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us”—0-V. 6. There are six women named Mary in the New Testament. We do not know any other reference to this one, nor do we know her family connections. She did much for Paul, and inspiration wrote the fact down for us.

“Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me”—V. 7. The worthies of faith of this verse have several distinctions. They were noted among the apostles. They were saved before Paul and somewhere in his long line of prison experiences, they had been fellowprisoners with him. They ere dear to his heart.

“Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord”—V. 8. Only one thing noted of Amplias, “Beloved in the Lord.” This indicates a place of nearness to the heart of the apostle.

“Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved”—V. 9. A helper and a dear friend are here greeted by the warmhearted apostle, who seemingly, never forgot peoples’ kindnesses.

“Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus’ household”—V. 10. Apelles had been approved in Christ, we believe by Christ. Aristobulus may have had an assembly of saints meeting in his house, or the apostle may have had in mind just his family or even his slaves.

“Saute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord”—V. 11. Herodion was probably a Jew. We doubt if all who are called Paul’s kinsmen were truly such after the flesh, but as he mentioned in 9:3, “My kinsmen according to the flesh,” though he had all Israel in mind. It could be the same here, or else they could have been of the same tribe.

It might be implied that all the household of Narcissus were not in the Lord, judging from Paul’s wording of this verse.

“Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord”—V. 12. All the names in this verse seem to be women. Note that when addressing a woman, Paul does not call her “My beloved,” but the “Beloved.” They too, labour in the Lord, and some labour much in the Lord.

“Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine”—V. 13. Rufus was a choice or select man, no doubt, one highly favoured of the Lord. We believe the woman here mentioned to have been truly a mother after the flesh to Rufus, but only in a figurative sense to Paul. She had probably treated him as though he were her son.

“Salute Asyncritus, Phegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them”—V. 14. Little or nothing is known of the five individuals mentioned here, except their names. We would judge that perhaps an assembly met with them.

“Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them”—V. 15. Nothing is known personally of this group. Since Rome was such a large city, perhaps there were many small groups who met in different places. The great warmth of love so manifest in the early church found expression in the through the heart of the apostle.

“Salute one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you”—V. 16. Four times Paul mentioned the “Holy kiss.” Note 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:20. Peter calls it a “Kiss of love”—1 Pet. 5:14. It is to holy in contrast to the natural. It was common among the early Christians, and can still be seen among God’s people today. In the early church, the men greeted the men and the women greeted the women after this manner.



HE GIVETH MORE

**He giveth more grace when the burdens grow
greater,
He sendeth more strenght when the labors increase;
To added affliction He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.**

**When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father’s full giving is only begun.**

**His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.**

—A. J. F.



Moderation

Part 8

Doug Delhay

Philippians 4:5 - *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

As we have been studying, the more clearly we understand what has been opened to us through the gift of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, the more we discover about the gloriousness of our calling. We are now beholding with Paul the liberality of our invitation in Philippians 3:10 to experience the will of God unencumbered by the restraints of this world, for we have judged the world's advantages to be but interruptions of our pursuit of Christ. We are excited to move forward into our new life and purpose in God, and ready to leave all else behind.

The fact of Christ in us changes everything about us. We find great comfort and deep satisfaction in our soul while we are in close communion with our loving Lord. Even when our flesh may be sorely tested, our circumstances outwardly miserable, our hearts burdened with that which we would rather not bear, and our minds occupied with responsibilities that we long to someday leave behind, yet we can pause and give thanks to the Lover of our souls because all is truly well in our relationship with Him. Like a soldier huddled in a foxhole far from the comforts of home, the sense of duty to the greater good bestows an atmosphere of magnificence to the most humble of tasks. Is it any wonder then that Paul expresses the desire to “*know . . . the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;*” What a grand transformation of a life is this, that one would desire to

journey into the awesome depth of what it meant for Jesus to lower Himself into the place of an innocent, sacrificial lamb that He might accomplish the will of His Father in bringing many sons to glory!

As in all other spiritual matters, in order to truly know them, the Spirit leads us into circumstances in which we must experience them on a level within the scope of God's working in our lives. We shall never fully know what it was for Jesus to set aside His glory and humble Himself to the death of the cross, but we are called to know (experience) the fellowship of His sufferings within the framework of the preparatory work of the Spirit to ready us to rule and reign with Him. I may not ever actually find myself in a soldier's uniform firing upon enemy combatants, but I most certainly will find myself the target of the onslaught of the forces of darkness as I follow the Spirit's leading into the calling of God. The soldier may know the heat of battle, but he may never experience the heavy responsibility of the general who directs thousands of soldiers into such battles. Nor will he probably know the awesome burden of a president leading an entire nation into war. Yet this does not diminish the importance or the impact of a single soldier fulfilling his commitment to his sworn duty.

Even so, the moderation of our lives by the hand of the only true God is no small matter, no matter how small the matter may seem to be. Applied faith in the Word of God is still faith in the Word of God. One can read through Hebrews chapter 11 and the Book of Acts to learn of the good reports established by many of God's people throughout hundreds of years. Some testimonies were established at the cost of the loss of one's natural life, while others are the imparting of blessings through faith in the promises of God. Each was an action of faith in identifying with the ultimate fulfillment of the promises of God to His people. We might look at them and judge one

to be more or less important than another, but God looks on each one as a triumph of His will in a person's heart over the will of the flesh in the same heart. Each is a battle won; each is a victory taken; each documents the yielding of a part of the creation to the purpose of the Creator in a display of faith. Each mirrors the actions of Jesus, "...*who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" (Hebrews 12:2).

In our text in Philippians 3:10, the word "fellowship" means a partnership, a literal participation, or involvement with something. "Sufferings" means something undergone, i.e. hardship or pain; subjectively, an emotion or influence resulting directly from what is experienced. The phrase "*being made conformable*" is one word in the Greek (summorphizomai) and is defined by Strong's Concordance to be a word which "is only used in Christian writings: to be conformed to, to grant or invest with the same form, to share the likeness of, to take on the same form as (what Christ took on through his death, Phil 3:10)." A similar form of the word is translated as "followers together" in verse 17 of this same chapter of Philippians.

In these brief definitions, we can see that Paul's desire to associate himself with what Jesus experienced as He journeyed through this world as the Son of God in human form was to clearly not only understand, but to continue to pursue the full depth of the meaning of what it is to be Christian (Christ-like). To be conformed to a way of being and living that was not originally his own, but was like that of Jesus as He submitted to His Father's will. It was the way of the Lamb; it was the way of Love; it was the way of Grace; it was the way of Truth; it was the way of Life. It was the way of God.

Jesus brought to this world a great light that enables those who will receive it to understand that this world is not about us, but about God. The gospel brings to light the calling and purpose of God in man from before the foundation of the world, and with it the means of life and immortality (II Timothy 1:9-10). With this light, it can be plainly seen (as the Spirit of God imparts the truth to us) that the world without God abides in death and darkness. The lives that are lived without the benefit of the knowledge of the purpose of God are themselves, at their end, devoid of purpose. They are lives wasted; they are lives lived contrary to Life. They are lives lived under eternal condemnation because they love the darkness rather than the light. Jesus stated this early in His ministry (John 3:16-21).

The desire of Paul to have a practical understanding of the purpose of God in his life and to have the life of the Christ manifest through him to the world around him consumed his former life and purpose. He desired to live, not as though he were part of this world, but as a citizen of the unseen realm of God (Philippians 3:20). He desired to live to please God, not himself or human nature (I Thessalonians 2:3-8). He desired to joyfully live to minister the grace and nurture of God in Christ the Lord (Acts 20:24). By pursuing such a life, he testified in word and deed that he had been greatly transformed by the power of God into a heavenly-minded, earth-bound creature that considered himself dead to this world, but alive unto God because Christ truly lived in him (Galatians 2:20). Whatever sought to draw him back into the realm and reasoning of the flesh was to be overcome by faith in the One Who called him to glory and virtue (II Peter 1:3).

The power of the resurrection holds daily, practical, necessary truth for all who receive it. It gives a magnificence of purpose to our outwardly, humble days as we serve as good soldiers of Jesus Christ (II Timothy 2:3-4).

HE GIVES ME A SONG

***He gave me a song to sing;
My praises to Him I bring.
When I don't understand
He still holds my hand,
And He gives me a song to sing.***

***He gives me a song in the night
Whether stormy and cloudy or bright.
When nights are so long
I can still sing my song.
For He gives me a song to sing.***

***He is coming again some day
And this hope gives me joy all the way.
There's no need to be sad
For this hope makes me glad
Since He gave me a song to sing.***

—Beula Clark

REPENTANCE & FORGIVENESS

By Orville Freestone Jr.

There is much confusion and fuzzy thinking about the subject of repentance and forgiveness. What do these words mean and why and when are they necessary? What do they accomplish? The scriptures are very clear on both of these matters.

REPENTANCE

Let us examine some of the scriptures concerning repentance. Hebrews 12:17 says that Esau “found no place of repentance,” concerning his sale of his birthright to Jacob. This has no reference to Esau’s salvation, but rather to his father’s blessing. There was no way he could change his mind in this matter. This is what repentance means: to change one’s mind, his way of thinking.

John the Baptist, in Matthew 3:8, demanded “fruits in keeping with repentance.”—NIV Just as fruits are produced naturally by plants, evidence of change accompanies repentance. This results in “works meet (fit) for repentance.” That is, different ways of living or of responding to whatever was repented of.

Jesus said (Mark 2:17) that He came to call sinners to repentance. The apostles (Mark 6:12) preached that men should repent. Paul “testified both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” The Gospel message is that all must repent and believe in Jesus to be saved.

Believers also have reasons to repent. The risen Lord Jesus addressed believers in Revelation 3:19, “as many as I love, I

rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent.” In II Corinthians 7:10 Paul commends the Corinthians for their repentance in their attitude regarding the sin of fornication by one of their members and in chapter 12:21 he warns those who have not repented of their uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed. These were Christians who needed to repent. Jesus said in Luke 17:3,4 that we need to repent to each other when we have wronged someone. This is something all too rarely done.

In II Samuel 11, we read of David’s great sin. He was guilty of adultery, attempted cover-up and murder (by proxy). In chapter 12 he gave us an example of true repentance. First, he admitted that he had done wrong: “I have sinned.” These are the hardest words for a person to say. Second, he accepted his punishment: “the sword shall never depart from thine house.” That is one reason he wept so bitterly for his son Absalom, he knew this was a part of his punishment. His sin was forgiven, but the consequences remained. Third, he published the fifty first Psalm and appointed it to be publicly sung in the temple as evidence of his repentance. This is the reason he was “a man after God’s own heart.” He did not justify himself as Saul had done.

The results of repentance are apparent to all. One of the “fruits of repentance” is sorrow for the sin or wrong done. (Matt. 3:8) Lest we think that God’s grace treats us differently, Paul wrote (II Cor. 7:10) “Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.” Paul was writing to Christians about Christians, not sinners. Salvation means deliverance. Repentance and confession is the only way of deliverance from sin. It is the only way of victory over the flesh.

John wrote (I John 1:9) “if we confess our sins (plural), He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins (what we have done) and

to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. In verse seven he wrote, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth (present tense) us from all sin.” True repentance restores fellowship between the offended and God as well as others who were offended. The mere passing of time changes nothing. Repentance changes everything.

FORGIVENESS

There is even more confusion about forgiveness than about repentance. Forgiveness is a response to repentance (Acts 2:38). The New Testament word for forgiveness means to remit, to release. In what is called the Lord’s prayer in Matthew 6:12 we read “forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” In Luke 11:4 we read “forgive us our sins; as we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.” In keeping with Rabbinic teaching, Jesus calls sins debts, either to God or to men. In Mark 12:24-25 sins are called trespasses. To forgive is to remit the indebtedness (sins) of others. Forgiveness is a transaction between two or more parties. It is to be requested and granted or offered and accepted.

Repentance and forgiveness change the relationship between the offended and the offender. The mere passing of time changes nothing. When forgiveness is offered and accepted (Acts 2:38) or requested and granted (Luke 18:13-14) fellowship is restored. (II Cor. 5:20) The Pharisees said (Mark 2:7) “only God can forgive sins” (resulting acceptance with God). Jesus did not contradict them, but pronounce forgiveness (Mark 2:10) as proof of His deity. The apostles (Acts 5:31-32) linked repentance to forgiveness.

God forgives the sins of His children when they are confessed (I John 1:9). This is because of His faithfulness to us, His children. In like manner He expects us to be forgiving

(Matthew 6:14-15). In Luke 17:4 Jesus said that if a brother trespasses against us seven times in one day and seven times says “I repent” we shall forgive. We would likely think such a person insincere, but if he repents we must forgive. Again, penitence and forgiveness effect reconciliation.

In I Corinthians 5 there was gross sin and no repentance. Paul demanded that the church, collectively, administer discipline. In II Corinthians 2:7, when this sinning brother repented, Paul instructed them to forgive him and to “confirm your love toward him.” This does not mean that discipline is without love, but rather that forgiveness must also be given in love.

Since forgiveness is a transaction between two or more parties based on repentance, when there is no repentance there can be no forgiveness and no reconciliation. Unilateral forgiveness is meaningless. What, then, can we do? In Hebrews 12:5 we are admonished “to follow peace with all men” and be sure that no “root of bitterness” grows in our hearts. When there is nothing we can do, we must leave the matter with the Lord.

Step By Step

***He does not lead me year by year
Nor even day by day.
But step by step my path unfolds;
My Lord directs my way.***

ENCOUNTERS

Continued

by Corina Medina

In Acts 9 we have yet another encounter. From verse 1-16 “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letter to Damascus to the synagogues, and if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and stonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas, for one called Saul, of Tarsus; for, behold he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem. And

here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

The apostle Paul had an encounter with *Jesus the Light of the world*. He saw a light shine round about him, a light from heaven and he fell to the earth. John 8:12, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." **Now what did this encounter bring forth in Saul of Tarsus?** I thought of *submissiveness*, for he said, "What will thou have me to do?" He had seen the Light of the World and was submissive, *following* Him and *he wanted to know Him*.

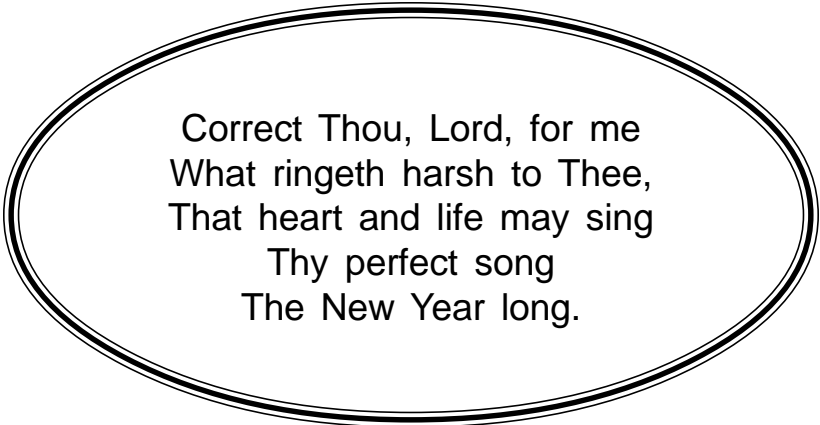
In Phil. 3:7-15, Paul said, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge (an experiential knowledge) of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ; And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ: the righteousness which is of God by faith. That I may know Him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death: if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as may as be perfect, be thus

minded. And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.”

What a change God brought about in this self-righteous Pharisee. He wanted *to know and to win Christ*, he was *pressing toward the mark of the prize*. He wanted a close relationship with Him. We can also be thus minded. God will show us what we need to win Christ. so Paul respond *with good*. (we could say submissiveness and Bridal love!)

What is our response to God, and know my heart. Try me, and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” Paul was led of Christ, and may our hearts be united that we’d be willing as Isaiah, to be *humble and willing*; as Jeremiah, *receiving strength to be enabled*. As *greatful and with a sound mind* like the man in the Gadarenes; as the woman who *gave all*; As Zacchaeus, *repentant and joyful*; as Paul, *submissive, zealous and loving the Lord*.

*Let our hearts be united to fear thee Lord
and love Thee always!*



Correct Thou, Lord, for me
What ringeth harsh to Thee,
That heart and life may sing
Thy perfect song
The New Year long.