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**\*\*SPECIAL NOTICE – PAGE 31\*\***

**The Landmark Baptist**  
"MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD."—John 1:23

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**DID JESUS PREACH  
SOVEREIGN GRACE?**

**By Pastor Sam Wilson  
Grace Baptist Church  
Gladwin, Michigan**

Recently, while discussing the doctrines of grace with a so-called Baptist, I was informed that Paul and Jesus were not necessarily in agreement as to the



way of salvation, since Romans 9 was written by Paul, it only shows what Paul believed and not Christ. I had a similar conversation with a counselor at Oral Roberts University which did not surprise me in the least. I don't expect people to understand the inspiration of God's Word. However, I did not expect to hear such blasphemy from the mouth of a so-called fundamental Baptist. The more Ar-

minian Baptists I meet, the more shocked and disappointed I am in so-called sovereign grace churches accepting the baptism of organizations which blaspheme the name of Christ, be it purposely or out of ignorance.

Brethren, there are no traditions in God's Word. I am a firm believer in the verbal plenary theory of inspiration. I believe, without compromise, that every word and every part of the Bible is God-breathed (II Tim. 3:16). The words of Paul, Peter, Moses or any other writers are equally

**(continued page 2)**

as important and equally as concerning salvation. I believe applicable as the words of Jesus Christ Himself. If Paul wrote it by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we had better listen and agree to what it says.

I think it is very important that people realize how they are saved. You cannot really appreciate your salvation and the work of the Godhead therein, until you realize that you did nothing and *God did it all*. You will not love God as you should until you realize that by God's own choice and love, you are made a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Let me emphasize this point: Jesus Christ is the greatest preacher this earth has ever known. I've often thought how wonderful it would have been to have heard Him preach. There are several reasons I say Jesus is the superior preacher. First, He is the only preacher that is capable of understanding and preaching nothing but pure unadulterated truth. Second, He is the only preacher ever to practice everything He preached. Third, He always preached with the proper attitude and the help of Diety. Fourth, He was unafraid to "tell it like it is" and leave the results, humanly speaking, to the Father and Holy Spirit. It should be the desire of every preacher to follow the example of Christ. Especially, to preach what Jesus preached

I can prove from the Words of Christ that He preached the total depravity of man, the unconditional election of the Father, a limited atonement, the irresistible grace of the Holy Spirit and the preservation of the saints or eternal security. If I can prove this, then every preacher should put away pride-producing Arminianism and start preaching what Jesus preached.

Beside the preaching of Christ, there are three verses which strongly insinuate Jesus did not preach what modern day Baptists (?) preach. The Bible mentions several times that people were astonished at the teachings of Christ. Beloved, when sovereign grace is preached today, we often receive the same reaction. It bewilders people to hear God doesn't love everyone, Christ's blood was not shed for all, and the Holy spirit isn't *trying* to save everyone. Their mouth flops open in astonishment at such teachings. Since we get the same results, isn't it probable we are teaching the same thing. The Gospel of John, chapter 3, speaks much on the sovereignty of God in salvation. At the end of this chapter, we see Jesus losing His crowd. What kind of preaching today drives away the crowd? Certainly not blasphemous Arminianism which tickles the ears of its listeners.

Certainly not any form of theology which gives man his share of praise for his part in salvation. However, if you preach that man is dead in trespasses and sins; unable to assist God in salvation, that his eternal destiny is completely in God's hands; it won't be long until you're preaching to less people than you were (if this is not what you have been preaching). Preach a sovereign God and a debilitated, feeble and impotent man and see if your results aren't the same as our Lord's. Also in John 6:60, we hear the Lord's preaching described as "a hard saying." Arminianism is an easy saying; it exalts man and gives men false hope. Sovereign grace is a hard saying because man is proud and rebels at the Bible's abasement of himself. Many times Arminians have labeled sovereign grace as a hard, harsh and cruel doctrine. Let us remember this is what they said of our Lord's preaching. I will add here that sovereign grace is in no way hard or harsh, it gives all glory to our gracious God in our salvation. It promotes a greater love for Christ than other systems of theology. It assures the salvation of all God, in His infinite mercy, desires to save. Praise God for the revealed truth of salvation by sovereign grace!

Now let us search the words of Christ and see if He preached the doctrines of grace. I wish to inform you the few verses I give will in no wise exhaust the teachings of our Lord on this subject. Due to limited space, I will only mention a few verses for each point. However, if I were to only produce one verse showing Jesus taught these blessed truths, it should be acceptable to all true believers.

Let us ask the following question, "Did Jesus preach total depravity?" The root of understanding man and salvation is tied up in the doctrine of total inherent depravity. Does man help in his salvation? Does he do anything at all to aid God? Let us see what Jesus says. In John 6:63, Jesus said, "**...the flesh profiteth nothing.**" We all must agree that belief and faith in Jesus Christ is the greatest profit possible. *There is no greater profit than for a man to gain his soul.* Jesus clearly tells us that the flesh or natural man profits or gains absolutely nothing. The verse is teaching man's inability to do anything to appease the Godhead. Surely this verse teaches total depravity. In John 5:24, Jesus speaks of passing "**...from death unto life.**" It would take a spiritual ignoramus not to realize this is speaking of spiritual life and death, and not physical. This verse teaches

the condition of man before is dead and unprofitable and the Holy Spirit imparts faith. Jesus said, that man is dead. A physically dead man can do nothing physical or mental whatsoever, even so a spiritually dead man can do nothing spiritual. Again, Jesus teaches the total helplessness of man to please God or aid Him in any way. In John 3:3-8, Jesus again teaches man's depravity. He tells us a man must be born again. Not made better, or reformed, or healed; but born again. Again, we must agree this is speaking of spiritual birth. Jesus here teaches depravity by saying man must be made a new creature due to the extent of evil in the old. John 5:40 speaks of man's inability to will to be saved. Jesus being God and omniscient, said: **"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."** Jesus could only say this as He knew that their will was incapable of itself to come to Christ. To see what Jesus thought of man's heart, read Matthew 13:15. Read Matthew 23 and the description Jesus gave of the Pharisees. From these few verses, honesty forced us to admit that Jesus did preach total depravity.

Next we ask, did Jesus preach unconditional election? Due to the condition of the natural man, an unconditional election could be the only kind possibly preached. Since man is dead and unprofitable and unable to choose God, election has to be the act of God, not man. In John 17:2 and 9, Jesus speaks of giving life to, and praying for, only those given Him by the Father. The given are the elect of God; those the Father chose to save before the world began (Eph. 1:4, 5). In John 17, you will find two classes of people; in verse 2, the living and the dead; in verse 9, the prayed for and the world. Election is what makes the difference in these people. In John 15:16, **"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you..."**. For those who say Judas would be included, Jesus answers that in John 13:18, **"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen..."** He goes on to speak of His knowledge of Judas and his betrayal. For those who say election is only unto service, I urge you to read John 15:16 more carefully. Jesus says He chose them, speaking of salvation, then ordained them unto good works as a result of salvation. The truths taught here are election unto salvation and works after salvation. Matthew 20:16, tells us **"...many be called, but few chosen."** For more verses where Jesus taught election, read John 6:64; Mark 13:20; Matthew 24:31 and several others too numerous to mention. From the preceding verses we see

without question that Jesus did preach election.

Did Jesus preach a limited atonement? Jesus would certainly know who He was dying for. He was dying for those He loved beyond comprehension. First, let me make this point: there were already people in hell suffering the eternal wrath of God that hated them. Certainly, you would not insult my intelligence and Christ's Deity by saying He died for those already in hell. Due to fact, I had a recent article in this paper on the atonement, I mentioned only a couple of verses. In John 17:9, we find Jesus not praying for everyone, certainly He would pray for all those He was to die for. In John 15:3, Jesus says He laid down His life for His friends. The book of Hebrews tells us His "...enemies will be made his footstool." Jesus did not die for those omniscience revealed as His enemies. In John 10:11, Jesus speaks of giving His life "...for his sheep." Matthew 25:32 tells us all are not sheep but many are goats. Jesus shed not one drop of blood for a goat. In Matthew 20:28, Jesus tells us He "...gave his life a ransom for many." Notice "many", not all. Pay particular attention to the ransom. It shows a price paid to redeem. If Jesus paid the price for all, then a grave act of injustice would be committed each time a soul went

to hell. From these verses we see Jesus preached a limited atonement.

Did Jesus preach irresistible grace? You will find no long invitation, trickery or games used in the Bible to save a sinner. You will simply see the Word of God preached and the Holy Spirit making that Word effectual by His power. If man were able to resist the call of the Spirit, all would be lost; because we love sin and evil and hate that which is righteous and just. John 17:2 speaks of God giving life to whom *He will*. John 1:12 speaks of God giving power to become sons of God. Jesus also says in John 6:44, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..."** John 6:65 says about the same thing. Jesus said in John 6:37, **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me."** Not that they *might* come, but *shall*. Only a powerful God can say shall. Also, see John 3:27 and John 10:27. We learn from these verses that Jesus preached irresistible grace as the sinner's hope.

Lastly, did Jesus preach eternal security? The verses for this are extremely numerous, so we will only mention a couple. Jesus teaches in John 10:27-29 that His sheep shall be eternally saved because they rest in the Father's hand and no one can pluck them

out. What comfort to rest in grace. First, He knew the truth the power of God. Jesus tells and preached the truth He us in John 5:24 that we who knew about salvation. Second, believe, have eternal and ev- He knew it was the only hope erlasting life and shall not en- of the lost being saved. Third, ter into condemnation. For it is the only system of theolo- more proof see John 6:51; gy which gives the Godhead John 3:16; John 17:2. Let us their proper honor and glory. be thankful for eternal salva- Let us preach these truths that tion; and yes, Jesus did are such a comfort to our preach eternal security. In hearts and which bring such closing, let me give three rea- great glory to God's name. sons Jesus preached sovereign May God bless you. Ω



Josiah Conder  
(1789-1855)

***'Tis not that I did choose Thee,  
For Lord, that could not be;***

***This heart would still refuse Thee,  
Hadst Thou not chosen me.***

***My heart owns none before Thee,  
For Thy rich grace I thirst;***

***This knowing, if I love Thee,  
Thou must have loved me first.***

1 John 4:19

## The Two Stages of Christ's Return

A. W. Pink  
(1886-1952)



**I**t is highly important to the understanding of unfulfilled prophecy that (the) two stages in the Return of Christ should be clearly distinguished; failure to do so will inevitably result in the utmost confusion. There are not yet to be two Returnings of Christ, but one Return in two stages.

The two stages in the Return of Christ are clearly distinguished in the New Testament. We now call attention to some of the leading differences between them.

- 1.** The first stage will be in grace, the second will be in judgment.
- 2.** The first stage will reach no farther than the air, the second will reach to the earth itself.
- 3.** The first stage is when the Redeemer returns to catch up the saints unto Himself, the second is when He returns to the earth to rule it with a rod of iron.
- 4.** The first stage will be secret, unseen by the world, the second will be public and seen by every eye.
- 5.** The first stage is Christ re-

turning as "The Morning Star" (Rev. 22:16), the second is His appearing as "The Sun of Righteousness" (Mal. 4:2).

**6.** At the first stage He comes for His saints (John 14:3), at the second He returns with His saints (Jude 1:14).

**7.** The first stage, His secret coming for His saints, is not the subject of a single Old Testament prophecy, the second stage, when He returns to the earth, is referred to in numerous Old Testament predictions.

**8.** The (second) stage of Christ's Return will be followed by God's blessings being poured upon the earth, and by the Holy Spirit being poured out upon all flesh.

**9.** The first stage will be followed by Satan coming down to this earth in great wrath (Rev. 12:9), the second will be followed by Satan being removed from the earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2, 3).

**10.** Between the present hour and the first stage of Christ's



Return nothing intervenes, no Kingdom (Matt. 25:31-46). Here then is the double bearing of the Fact of the Redeemer's Return— it respects first His own people and then the whole world.

These two stages in the Redeemer's Return are in strict accord with the order of events which transpired at His First Advent. At the first coming of the Lord Jesus there was a secret or private manifestation of Himself, and subsequently a public revelation. The newly-born Saviour was actually seen by very few. The shepherds in the field, the wise men from the East, Anna and Simeon in the temple saw the Redeemer in the days of His infancy, but Herod and Pilate, the scribes and the Pharisees— the unbelieving civic and religious heads—saw Him not! After His return from Egypt on the death of Herod, He retired to Nazareth and it was not until an interval of nearly thirty years had passed that He was publicly manifested. Thus will it be at His second coming. First there will be the secret manifestation (in the air) unto His own people, and then after an interval of seven years or more He will be publicly revealed to the world. **Ω**

**11.** Concerning the first stage of our Lord's Return we "wait for God's Son from heaven" (1 Thess. 1:10), whereas the second stage is distinguished as "the coming of the Son of Man."

**12.** The first stage was typified by the translation of Enoch to heaven (Heb. 11:5), the second was foreshadowed by Elijah who has yet to return to this earth to herald the judgments of the great and terrible day of the Lord (Mal. 4:5).

**13.** The first stage is our Lord's coming as our Saviour (Heb. 9:28), the second is His return to earth as King (Rev. 19:11, 16). **14.** The first stage will be followed by the saints coming before the "judgment seat" (Bema) of Christ to be judged according to their works and rewarded for their service (2 Cor. 5:10), the second will be followed by the "Throne of glory" upon which shall set the Son of Man who will judge the nations that are upon earth at the beginning of His millennial reign and apportion them their positions in His

**From *The Redeemer's Return***



## IS THE UNITED STATES TO BECOME ANOTHER SODOM?

John R. Gilpin  
(1904-1974)

**"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." — Jude 1:7.**

I once knew a preacher who was pastor in a college town. The heads of the various departments in the college worshipped often in his church. One day in talking to his father, an elderly country preacher, he asked the latter, "What shall I preach? If I preach history, or science, or philosophy, there are the professors of these subjects setting before me, and they know all about these things:" The old father quickly replied "Tell them about Jesus. They probably do not know much about him."

This, beloved, is my attitude every time I stand before this microphone. I don't care to discuss the sciences of life. It is merely my desire to preach the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes in order to give a proper presentation of

Jesus, it is necessary for us to take a look at our own depravity and see just what we need, and just how far removed each of us are from God. It is thus that today I talk to you concerning the City of Sodom. My text offers a good description of the city. Yet, if you would see the city in all of its vileness and impurity, go back and read the 19th chapter of the book of Genesis.

It has always been rather interesting to me to notice the characteristics of this city of Sodom as revealed in the Scriptures. First of all, it was materialistically inclined. It was a great city of commerce. Lots of buying and selling took place in this City. It was because of this that Lot went there to live. When he separated from Abraham, we read that immediately he **"pitched his tent toward Sodom,"** (Gen 13:12) and little by little entered into the city and began his trading and trafficking with the people of of the city.

A second characteristic of the city of Sodom is that it was a city of unusual vice and

exceeding sin. Listen to God's description of it: **"But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly."** (Gen. 13:13).

Just before God destroyed the city of Sodom, He revealed to Abraham His purpose relative to the city, which resulted in Abraham's interceding with God in behalf of the city. In connection with the conversation that passed between Abraham and God, you find God saying, **"Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous."** (Gen. 18:20).

All this is but a revelation of the exceeding sinfulness of the city of Sodom. You find it likewise described in Ezek. 16:49, 50. Listen: **"Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good."**

Then too, my text offers an exceedingly characteristic picture of the sinfulness of the city. **"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example suffering the venge-**

**ance of eternal fire."** (Jude 1:7).

Finally, if you would see the moral putrefaction of this city, read the entire 19th chapter of Genesis. **"But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them. And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him, And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly. Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof. And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door."** (Gen. 19:4-9).

Our country is often shocked today when we read of that which the newspapers may describe as a sex killing. Sexual maniacs are always held up by the newspapers as perversions at which the public stands in horror. You have

it all described in this 19th chapter of Genesis. Their sin was unnatural, violent, obdurate and even universal, for both young and old, and all the people from that section, gathered round Lot's home on this memorable night of sin.

That you might see how sinful this city really was, remember that Abraham took it upon himself to talk with God in prayer concerning the city, asking God to spare the city, which God promised to do if ten righteous people could be found in it. Yet, not even ten were found. Only Lot, a back-slidden preacher, his wife, who was turned to a pillar of salt, and his two daughters, who later fell into vile sin, escaped from the city. So vile was the city that these were all that escaped therefrom.

Still another picture of the sin of the city of Sodom is to be seen in the latter part of Genesis 19. After Lot and his two daughters had escaped from the city, they each produced a child by their own father, so that Lot was at one and the same time, both father and grandfather to the offspring of his daughters. All this is but a picture of the sin, the immorality, and the impurity of the city of Sodom.

In spite of all this portrayal of their depravity, yet this city would have believed if they had heard Jesus' message. For this, we have Jesus'

own words: **"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."** (Matt. 11:23).

Thus, the city of Sodom was characterized. It was materialistically inclined; it was sinful, immoral, and ungodly; and there would have been a willingness on the part of the people to have received the message of God if they had heard it.

## II

Having noticed the characteristics of the city of Sodom, in order that we might answer the question, "Is the United States to Become Another Sodom," I would have you see what God says will characterize the closing days of this age.

Listen: **"Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."** (Matt. 13:33). This is Jesus' parable of the leaven. In the Bible, leaven is always mentioned in an evil sense. Just as leaven or yeast spoils the bread dough, so we are warned in the realm of religious truth the entirety shall be leavened. This surely does not present a very pleasant picture as far as our future is concerned.

In the city of Sodom, apparently there was no truth preached. This, the Word of God tells us will ultimately be true. In the parable of the leaven, the meal represents gospel truth. Eventually, the whole of it shall be corrupted.

What a terrible "jolt" this Scripture brings to the post-millennialists, who insist that the world is getting better, and that eventually, the world will be so good that Jesus will come to it that He might make it His home. Instead, the Word of God tells us that just before He comes back to take possession of this sin-cursed world, that it will be so iniquitous that the entire gospel truth which He came to bring 1900 years ago, shall be corrupted and leavened with false doctrines and heresies. Instead of the dream of the post-millennialist being true, the world is to get farther and farther from God and His Word.

If you would see whether the United States is to become another Sodom, then note these words of Jesus: **"For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together."** (Matt. 24:28). The word for "eagle" is the word for "buzzard." You know that when you look up into the skies and see an old buzzard floating about, that he is looking for something dead. Well, the Word of God declares that when Jesus comes back, that

society will be just as a rotting, putrefying, decaying carcass.

Jesus, in this same chapter, in discussing the second coming, says: **"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark."** (Matt. 24:37-38). That which will thus characterize the days when Jesus comes back to this world, will be eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, just worldly living, no thought as to God.

Slowly but surely we are drifting into those conditions described in the words of Jesus. During World War 1, a commission was sent from this country to France to study social conditions then existing. They visited all places of amusement, and observed the nation politically, socially, and in the home. When they made their report in Washington, they said, "We are supposed to be in a war to save civilization, but it is questionable if such a civilization is worth saving." Certainly the morals of Paris then are practically the morals of this nation today.

I cite as a proof of this fact that at San Francisco, Sally Rand's nude ranch was

the biggest attraction, while at New York at the World's Fair, Billy Rose's nearly nude bathing girls were headliners.

Thus, Jesus declared that society would be just a rotting carcass morally when He returned. In movies, magazines, and dances, morals and, ethics today have practically putrefied. The theme in it all is sex, and the sinfulness of Sodom is thus characteristic of this twentieth century.

But let's notice another Scripture in which Jesus gives us a pen picture as to what shall characterize the closing days of this age. Listen: **"Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."** (Luke 17:28-30). In Lot's day, the city of Sodom, as I have said, was materialistically inclined. Jesus said that it would be the same when He comes back to this world.

Having noticed that which did characterize the city of Sodom, let me show you still further what shall characterize the closing days of this age. When Paul wrote to young Timothy, by inspiration, he made such a revelation: **"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall**

**come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."** (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 12, 13). This is what Paul said would characterize the United States, and England, and Germany, and all the balance of the world when Jesus comes again.

That you might see that this world is getting farther from God, and shall thus continue, look at the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream. You remember in the second chapter of Daniel this mighty image with the head of gold, chest and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, and legs of iron. Daniel interpreted this as a dream of history. He said that Nebuchadnezzar represented the head of gold; whereas the arms and chest of silver represented Medo-Persia; and that the belly and thighs of brass was typical of Greece; and the legs of iron represented Rome. You will

notice the metals that made up this image — gold, silver, brass, iron, and ultimately iron and miry clay. This meant that there was an increase in strength, but a decrease in finer qualities. We have it in the world today. The world is much stronger educationally, materialistically, and even religiously than it used to be; and yet, there has been a terrible deterioration and depreciation of the finer qualities. There are sentimental post-millennialists who talk about the world getting better. Surely no one can read these Scriptures without being definitely convinced that post-millennialism is an idle dream, and that instead of the world getting better, it shall get worse and worse until Jesus comes, so that the characteristics of the city of Sodom shall ultimately become the characteristics of the world, and the United States will thus become another Sodom.

### III

In view of this, what should be our proper attitude today?

Every Christian ought to be out and out for the Lord. Since by prophecy we have seen that the United States is to become another Sodom, then as long as each of us are here in the world, we certainly should be busy witnessing to

the truth which has been given us, remembering that Jesus has said, "**Ye are the salt of the earth,**" and "**Ye are the light of the world.**" (Matt. 5:13, 14).

If this should be the proper attitude of the Christian, then surely it should be the part of prudence and wisdom for the unsaved man, in view of that which is coming to pass, that he should turn to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. When the city of Sodom was about to be destroyed, the angel said to Lot and those who came forth from the city, "**Escape for thy life.**" Today, I would take the position of this angel, and would say to you in the light of existing conditions of today, and prophesied conditions of tomorrow, "**Escape for thy life!**" And if you would escape and find a refuge, a haven of rest, a shelter in a weary land, then receive Jesus Christ by faith and be saved, remembering His promise, "**He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.**" (John. 6:47). Ω

Editor's note—This message was preached by Brother Gilpin in 1942, eighty-one years ago. Today, the answer to his titled question is *an emphatic "yes"* as is easily observed.

From *The Baptist Examiner*  
January 31, 1942



## THEY HATED KNOWLEDGE

By Pastor Wm. Troy Sheppard  
Citrus Missionary Baptist Church  
Inverness, Florida

**“For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:”**

Proverbs 1:29

Living in the information age as we do, how can it even be true that men hate knowledge? Don't the masses "surf the web" and "Google the internet" because they want to know and "be in the know"? Hours are spent daily tapping on "smart phones" and reading and writing countless "Twitter feeds" and "Facebook posts". Folks spend countless precious hours of just "a little screen time" watching others do important things like file their nails, saw boards, drive cars, eat lunch, chase women, paint walls, gawk at men, cross dress, make jokes, curse, dig holes, shoot pool, smoke dope, be dopes...you get the picture. Much of this is to gain knowledge, so men say. Surely with all the knowledge available, easily accessible, and endlessly searched for it could be said of no one, that they "hated knowledge". But, alas the Bi-

ble is true as always! And, the haters of knowledge abound!

The very places they chat, and surf are testimonies, more than not, that these knowledge seekers are often really knowledge haters.

The knowledge they hate is found on the lips of Lady Wisdom (Pr. 1:20). It is knowledge of the holy God of the Bible, which knowledge they outright reject (Pr. 1:24-25, 30; Rom. 1:28). Such knowledge is the source of understanding (Pr. 1:7; 2:5; 9:10; 30:3), the path of blessing (Pr. 3:13-18; 4:1-9), and the assurance of eternal life (John 17:3). It includes God's will for man's life given by godly parents, godly teachers, and God sent pastors (Pr. 12:1; 15:14; 18:15; 19:27; 22:17; 23:12; Ps. 119:66; II Tim. 3:14-17). But, those "in the know" will have none of it!

The word on the street (or chat rooms or safe places) is that Lady Wisdom doesn't know anything. Though Wisdom is constantly instructing, helping, and warning (Pr. 1:20-23; 8:1-21), she is frequently



being drowned out by all the competing knowledge in the streets (Pr. 1:20). When she is heard at all, she is told to sit down and shut up! She is continually being protested against and relentlessly being berated, mocked, and called names. I have heard her called bigot, narrow minded, legalist, homophobe, judgmental, old fashioned, killjoy, and many other words that are too shameful to mention. Of course, she is always treated this way in the name of inclusiveness, love, and understanding.

The haters of Lady Wisdom and her message reject the existence of the Creator, His right to rule, His moral absolutes for human conduct, eternal punishment, and other things she supports (Rom. 1:18-32). They will not hear Wisdom's voice on subjects like life goals (Pr. 3:5-8; 4:25-27), spousal choices (Pr. 12:4; 21:9,19; 30:21-23; 31:30), child rearing (Pr. 19:18, 26; 27:11; 29:15), work ethic (Pr. 6:6-11; 13:23; 14:23), speech (Pr. 4:24), dress (Pr. 7:10; I Tim 2:9), or beverage choices (Pr. 20:1). They will not be told who to reject and avoid (Pr. 1:10; 4:14-16) or who not to hook up with (Pr. 2:12-19; 5:3-14; 6:23-29). They reject her knowledge for all the important things in life (Pr. 3:16-

18; 4:23). Their lingo is: "Don't judge me", "It's my life", "my body; my choice", "I did it my way"...!

The rejection of the knowledge of God is evident by a lack of the fear of the LORD (Pr. 1:29). It leaves men in a rage (Ps 2:1) and a deplorable condition (Pr. 1:24-33; Rom. 1:24-32; 3:9-20). Embracing knowledge will move men to fear the LORD, which is an awe toward God that leads men to delight in Him, love righteousness, and hate sin (Pr. 8:13; 14:27; 16:6; Ps. 111:10; Eccl. 12:13-14). It causes men to despise their own foolish hearts and the vain opinions of others (II Chr. 19:7-9; Dan 3:16-18; Heb 5:7) and provides an anchor from compromise (Gen. 42:18).

Are you a knowledge seeker or a knowledge hater? Do you love or hate knowledge? Whose voice in this information age has your attention? Is the voice of Lady Wisdom sweet? Would you have Wisdom speak or be silenced? Do you gladly hear her in personal Bible reading? Do you delight in her life choices for you? Do you eagerly desire to meet her in the house of God? When the man of God exalts her in his preaching do you receive her as a cherished friend or revile her as a loathsome enemy? Can you and do you take her everywhere you

go? With all the noise on the streets, in chat rooms, and internet places make sure you carefully and consistently hear and heed Lady Wisdom, your life and peace depend on it!  $\Omega$

## TATTOOS AND THE BIBLE

**Pastor Matthew Stepp  
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**"Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD."**

Lev. 19:28

This verse is pretty clear in the English that we are not to **"print any marks"** upon our bodies, or in modern vernacular, *tattoos* are a no-no for Christians. When we go into the Hebrew, the word used here is singular in the Old Testament; the only time it is used in this form. But, basically the root word means "to write" and it is used many times in the Scriptures as folk and even God write upon stone tablets (10 Commandments), doorposts and papyrus. But the word used in Leviticus 19:28 forbids God's people "to write upon their flesh."

Why does God forbid this here? And is it just for the Israelites under the Mosaic Code? Or is it still incumbent upon God's people today to refrain from tattoos?

First of all, let me state that God believes in tattooing.

We can't deny it!

Read Rev.7:2-4- **"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel."** We see here that God sends His angel with a "seal" to "mark" His sign of Authority on His people! I picture here a cowboy heading out to the pasture with a hot brand to mark his sign upon his cattle! He's going to write on the flesh of the cow—he's going to tattoo them.

Now whether, this "seal" is an actual physical seal that can be seen by all, or only seen by spiritual vision, it really makes no difference, does it? God can see it, and from the context, the *angels* will be

able to see the "seal/tattoo", toward these "RF chips", etc..., so as to avoid "hurting" or we think it might be "harming" these sealed / tat- "scannable marks", and that tooed ones! may be true. Going back to

Perhaps these "markings" our text, the initial form of are something that other be- tattoos, is "cuttings in your lievers might be able to see, flesh"... For the dead? Yes, as well, and in the fierce per- still the same, because it will secution of the Great Tribula- be propagated and instigated tion, it will be a bond between by the spiritually dead of our these beleaguered believers, society.

to ensure safety and protec- Most people today and tion from the constant betray- down thru the ages would ar- als in this terrible time of gue that they are not brand- Jacob's Trouble. ing, but rather that it's a form

God is not the only one of art or in the case of our that tattoos in Scripture, how- text, religion. (Pagan Art!) But ever. Satan, the great Imita- it's impossible to deny that *in tor will also brand, mark or its primary usage*, branding or tattoo his people, as well. writing on the flesh is a "sign Rev.13:15-18, "...as many as of ownership". We think we would not worship the image *own* our own bodies, and that of the beast should be killed. we can do whatever we want And he (Satan) causeth all, with them. This is the base both small and great, rich and excuse that Pro-Choice Plan- poor, free and bond, to re- ned Parenthood and others ceive a *mark* in their right give as the reason that wom- hand, or in their foreheads: en can forsake their young babies in their wombs. And that no man might buy or *"Because it's my body and my sell, save he that had the tissues, and so it's my mark, or the name of the choice!"* beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six (666)."

This "mark/tattoo" for *sure* is going to be visible to others. Merchants will be checking for it, before making any sales or transactions. Sometimes, as we see technology progressing

But is that really the case? Where does the Gift of Life in the woman's womb come from? How many parents down through the ages have desired children, or specific sons or daughters? God *alone* can impart Life to any woman's womb. It's *His* Gift! Logically and certainly, *nobody* has the right to end life, except the One who gives life.

And as time has proven, that is not the mom or the dad, or a combination of mom-n-dad. It's God, and God *alone*, that can create life, even in the mother's womb. And further to the current point of tattooing, God and God *alone* is the Preserver of life in "our own" bodies. Job 7:20, "**I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men?**" 1 Tim. 4:10, "**For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.**" Job recognizes the preserving attribute of our God and the Apostle Paul goes even further down this avenue making a distinction, that yes, God is an *especial* Saviour of the believers, but also is undeniably the Saviour, or Preserver of *all* men, women, boys and girls. What was it someone said about the frailty of our existence? "I am but one step or one breath away from eternity"? In reality, we are at God's pleasure and disposal. Not just our souls, but our bodies (physical existence) and spirit (eternal existence), as well. And that's why God is forbidding any form of "branding/tattooing" in the text. And that's also why it's still applicable today. Not just an Old Testament doctrine, but it is an eternal proposition, that we are created, or-

dained and the workmanship of God. Eph. 2:10, "**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**" Because we are "owned" by God, we don't have the right to "inscribe on our flesh". "**What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**" -1 Cor.6:19-20.

Tattooing is an outward sign of rebellion against the authority of God. Undeniably, the vast majority of tattooers are lost people. We could go so far as to say Self—or Satan—worshippers, and it would be true, but the main thrust of tattoos is *rebellion*. Rebellion against the authority of God's ownership of our bodies. Tattoo parlors are not frequented by faithful Christians, but by outright rebels against God. "Birds of a feather will flock together", and the Tattoo Parlor is no different than the Honky-Tonk bar, the whorehouse, the smoking den and every other worldly, carnal establishment. If you're running away from God and His judgments, that's where the rebels will be. I would exhort you to head to Church, if you want to find and hang out with

God's people. It's really a simple matter, isn't it? God will bless the one, and will curse the others.

But, what if someone wanted to mark their body for Christ? Maybe a cross, a wedding ring or some imagery that would allow them to be a testimony for their Saviour? Well, the second commandment rules out any imagery: Ex.20:4-5, **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God..."** Let's not try to add anything physical to the spiritual worship of our God. To try to contain God in a box, or an image is foolish, at best, blasphemy at worst. Isa.40:18- **"To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?"**

But as we meditate upon this reasoning, even writing Christ's name on our bodies verges on blasphemy, doesn't it? Taking it a step further, let's examine the body of the Apostle Paul and his "tattoos": Gal.6:14,17, **"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. ...From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I**

**bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus."**

How arrogant, presumptive and foolish it is to "mark with tattoos" our own bodies with some cheap imitation of the tattoos of the precious saints gone by! God is *able* to "mark" us *Himself*. If by faithfully standing for the truth God would allow persecution to come into our lives to mark the LORD Jesus indelibly upon our mortal bodies via stripes of the whips or cruel deformations of persecution, then give Him the praise! How insolent and arrogant it would be to do it ourselves without being *worthy* of the marks. Beloved let us save the tattooing for God.

End, conclusion? "Tattooing /branding" is a sign of Ownership. God owns everybody, but how much more particularly does He own His people that He saved with His own Precious blood? If, by the grace of God, we are allowed to enter eternity with the stripes of a cat-o-nine-tails across our backs, or with the scars of persecution tattooed across our bodies, then, we can show our prized tattoos for all of eternity, as the "marks" and "brands" of our Heavenly Father and Precious Saviour Jesus Christ. Eph.2:7, **"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ**

**Jesus."**

All "marks/branding" of this world will be removed forever at the great transformation of the Rapture and the first resurrection, as this mortal puts on immortality and this corruption puts on incorruption. And as a Saint of God, if we've ever, by presumption, gotten a tattoo in this life, it will be erased, forgiven and forgotten. Praise the LORD! But, I think those God-given tattoos, like the ones spoken of by the Apostle Paul: **"For I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus"**, I think those will remain! Surely, the touch of God upon our bodies is not a temporal marking. It wasn't for our Saviour. John. 20:25-28, **"The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the**

**print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."**

Yes, tattooing is Scriptural! But it is in the hands of the Maker, that we should leave the tattooing. Isa. 49:15-16, **"Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."** Ω



**John Gill (1697-1771)  
comments on  
Lev. 19:28**

**"...nor print any marks upon you : I am the Lord."**

Aben Ezra observes, There are some that say this is in connection with the preceding clause, for there were who marked their bodies with a known figure, by burning, for the dead; and he adds, and there are to this day such, who are marked in their youth in their faces, that they may be known; these prints or marks were made with ink or black lead, or, however, the incisions in the flesh were filled up therewith; but this was usually done as an idolatrous practice; so

says Ben Gersom, this was the custom of the Gentiles in ancient times, to imprint upon themselves the mark of an idol, to show that they were his servants; and the law cautions from doing this, as he adds, to the exalted name (the name of God): in the Misnah it is said F8 Ibid. sect. 6. , a man is not guilty unless he writes the name, as it is said, Lev. 19:28; which the Talmudists F9 T. Bab. Maccot, fol. 21.1. and the commentators F11. interpret of the name of an idol, and not of God:

**"I am the Lord"** ; who only is to be acknowledged as such, obeyed and served, and not any strange god, whose mark should be imprinted on them.

## The Parable of Two Sons

Pastor Lewis Kiger  
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### Scripture reading:

**Matt. 21:28-32**

In the poverty-stricken times of the Great Depression there was a decrepit run-down house on the side of a steep hill overlooking the main road that lead to and from a small Appalachian town. Every Saturday evening a small group of men would gather on the crooked steps of the dilapidated old shack and play bluegrass music. Delighted to escape from the harsh realities of life, people would gather around at the base of the rocky hill and listen for hours.

What no one realized, was that the whole thing was a façade. Not one member of the poor mountain band knew how to play a single instrument. Between them, they couldn't play one true chord, but it wouldn't have mattered anyway; because none of their instruments even had strings on them! Shrewdly hidden behind a broken glass window, one of the men would sit repetitively cranking the dial on a nearly worn-out phonograph (record player) while the other men sat outside and

strummed their stringless instruments.

Of course, the people on the hillside below had no idea the men were simply pretending the whole time. The fame-seeking performers were able to fool everyone and garner much attention, in spite of the whole thing being a sham.

In a very real sense, this is exactly what Jesus is addressing in the parable of the two sons. The religious elite were gifted actors at fooling people, at putting on a show, but they couldn't fool Jesus.

In reality, all they were doing in service to God was going through the motions. Outwardly, they may have seemed to be genuine, but inwardly their hearts were far from the Lord, and even though they were able to dupe many people they could not deceive the Christ. These Jewish pretenders claimed they were making sweet music that honored *God*, but it was in fact—just theatre, a pretense.

In Matthew 21 the anger of these Pharisees against Jesus had reached a feverous pitch. They gathered together to confront him and to try and

find something to accuse him of. Refusing to take part in their incredulous mind-games, Jesus instead uses the opportunity to ask the Pharisees to listen to a story and then render a decision based on what they hear. Little do they know, that their judgment will reveal their deceptive behavior.

The parable begins in verse 28 with the Lord asking a question of His self-righteous hearers, "What do you think?"

He then continues by saying, a certain man had two sons and he asks his elder son to go perform a task; but the stubborn son flatly refuses to go. However, it isn't long until the son is grieved that he disobeyed his father, repents and goes and performs his assigned duty. The father then turns to his next son and assigns him a similar task and though this son quickly agrees to go, he never does obey his father's command.

Jesus, having finished this story, looks at His hearers and in verse 31 asks them to decide which of the two sons actually did their father's will. The Pharisees reluctantly admit that it was the first son, rather than the second. They concede that even though the older boy had originally refused, afterward he repented and went and was the obedient son.

Jesus then sharply rebukes

them for their stubborn blindness. For they can accurately judge this parable, but they cannot rightly judge their own hearts. He tells them the crooked tax collectors and the harlots are like the first son, who initially refuse to submit to the Father, but afterwards find repentance and obey. The

religious elite are just like this second son, who say they are doing the Father's will, but are not.

Jesus charges them with the sin of saying one thing and doing nothing.

Folks, saying and doing are two very different things. God knows who are actually following him and delight to do His will—and He knows who are just going through the motions. You may be able to fool everyone else, but you cannot fool God.

The judgment this parable forces us to render is this:

Are you like these religious Pharisees who make an outward show of obedience, but whose heart is far from God?

Or are you like the repentant son who found forgiveness and has obeyed the Father?

All of us can put on an act for a short period, and either look good or sound good, but time will prove if it's just a show for an audience or heartfelt obedience. **Ω**



## Three Things You Did Not Know About Spurgeon's Wife

By Selah Ulmer  
Kansas City, Missouri



Charles Spurgeon married Susannah Thompson on January 8th, 1856. She would become his truest partner, deepest confidant, and "the greatest of all earthly blessings." Susannah described their life together as "two pilgrims treading this highway of life together, hand in hand,— heart linked to heart." But who was this woman who captivated the heart of the Prince of Preachers?

Here are three things about Susannah you might not know.

### **1. Susannah Had to Learn a Hard Lesson About Marriage**

Susannah married a man entrusted with great burdens. As one of the most influential men in England, Charles carried the heavy weight of ministerial responsibility on his shoulders. His work required hours of his time, energy, and output every week. While it would have been easy for Susannah to become bitter towards the demands of Spurgeon's ministry, she instead made the commitment not to ever become an obsta-

cle to her husband's kingdom endeavors.

During her engagement, Susannah learned a difficult lesson. Charles was invited to preach at an afternoon service and asked Susannah to accompany him. As she recalled:

*"We went together, happily enough, in a cab...But, by the time we had reached the landing, he had forgotten my existence; the burden of the message he had to proclaim to that crowd of immortal souls was upon him, and he turned into the small side door...without a moment realizing that I was left to struggle as best I could."*

Susannah was bewildered and angry that her fiancée would so easily forget her. She promptly returned home to express her griefs to her patient mother who gave Susannah some helpful marriage advice. She said that Charles was no ordinary man and his whole life must be dedicated to the service of the Lord, and that Susannah "must never, never hinder him by trying to put (herself) first in his heart."

Though difficult to hear,

Susannah decided to align her desires with his and put the Lord's work first in her own heart. Moments after she made this decision, Charles frantically rushed into the house, terribly worried about what had happened to his precious Susannah. The two had a good laugh, but Susannah left with a heart change that would affect the rest of their marriage.

From that day forward, Susannah concerned herself with the eternal implications of her husband's ministry. She *declared*:

*"It was the ever settled purpose of my married life that I should never hinder him in his work for the Lord, never try to keep him from fulfilling his engagements, never plead my own ill-health as a reason why he should remain at home with me...I thank God, now, that He enabled me to carry out this determination."*

## **2. God Forged Susannah's Character on the Anvil of Affliction**

In addition to supporting Charles in his seasons of depression and illness, Susannah suffered from severe medical issues herself and spent much of her adulthood as an invalid. She often experienced such intense seasons of pain that she could barely move.

The details of her illness are still coming to light, but

we know that her condition became severe enough to require surgery. One of the leading surgeons in Scotland performed an operation on Susannah that didn't go to plan. The result of the botched surgery was devastating. *"Suffering instead of service,"* she said, *"became my daily portion."*

But Susannah believed God was using her brokenness to refine her character. Her physical agony drew her into closer proximity with a Savior who suffered for her and with her.

Even in the most excruciating circumstances, Susannah demonstrated gratitude, joy, peace, and patience. She reflected, *"We talked of the Lord's tender love for His stricken child...I remember feeling that the Lord was very near to us."*

Susannah's heart, rooted in thanksgiving, trusted God to accomplish His strength through her weakness. *"How very good [God] is to unworthy me,"* she believed.

## **3. Susannah Founded a World Wide Ministry**

In 1873, Susannah finished reading her husband's book *Lectures to My Students*. When Charles asked her how she liked it, she replied, "I wish I could place it in the hands of every minister of England." He responded, "Then why not do so? How much will you give?"

This question propelled Susannah into action. She organized a charity called "The Book Fund" to provide complimentary copies of *Lectures* to poor ministers throughout England. At first, Susannah lacked the financial resources needed to make this dream a reality. But she joyfully bought one hundred copies herself and mailed them out to pastors in need. When she was too ill to attend the functions of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Susannah investing her time instead in the continuation of the Book Fund.

Susannah's act of scrappy, sacrificial vision launched into motion a charity that continued until her death.

As letters of thanks poured into Susannah's home, word quickly spread throughout England and numerous donations were sent to sustain her project. In one year's time, Susannah distributed 3,058 theological books to impoverished pastors. Nine years later, she distributed 71,000 copies.

### ***Leveraging Our Lives***

Susannah's enduring legacy beckons each of us to follow in her steps. Her strenuous determination in the midst of personal pain, her indefatigable endurance and resourcefulness, and her tenacious holy hustle reminds us that anyone

and everyone can make a difference for Jesus Christ.

Susannah did not found her Book Fund by marshalling funds from others. Instead, it began when she made the decision to sacrifice her own time, energy, and resources. Little could she have known that God would pour his blessing on her project.

It's impossible to determine how much spiritual fruit resulted from the Book Fund. How many souls were saved? How many lives were changed? Perhaps one day we'll know. But because of her efforts, pastors were encouraged, missionaries were emboldened, families were strengthened, and churches were better equipped to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth. When Susannah passed away in 1902, she had distributed throughout England a total number 199,315 theological resources.

Today, may we learn to leverage our lives for the expansion of the gospel. May each of us develop a God-sized vision so big that only He can accomplish it. And with Susannah, may we use our brokenness and our blessings to make much of Jesus Christ, who, as Susannah testified, is "a very present help in trouble."

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## We Must Be Holy

J. C. Ryle  
(1816-1900)

**W**e must be holy on earth before we die — if we desire to go to heaven after death! If we hope to dwell with God forever in the life to come—we must endeavor to be like Him in the life that now is. We must not only admire holiness, and wish for holiness—we must **be** holy.

Holiness cannot *justify* and *save* us. Holiness cannot cover our iniquities, make satisfaction for transgressions, pay our debts to God. Our best works are no better than filthy rags, when tried by the light of God's law. The righteousness which Jesus Christ brought in, must be our only confidence—and the blood of His atonement, our only hope. All this is perfectly true, and yet *we must be holy*.

We must be holy—because God in the Bible plainly commands it. **"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy"** (1 Peter 1:15, 16).

We must be holy—because this is one great end for which Christ came into the world. **"He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again"** (2 Cor. 5:15).

We must be holy—because this is the only sound evidence that we have a saving faith in Christ. **"Even so, faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also"** (James 2:17, 26).

We must be holy—because this is the only proof that we love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. What can be more plain than our Lord's own words? **"If ye love me, keep my commandments. . . He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."** (John 14:15, 21).

We must be holy—because this is the only sound evidence that we are God's children. **"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God. . . . Whoever doeth not righteousness is not of God."** (Rom. 8:14; 1 John 3:10).

Lastly, we must be holy—because without holiness on earth, we should never be prepared and fit for heaven. It is written of the heavenly glory, **"And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie"** (Rev. 21:27). Paul says expressly, **"Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."**

(Heb. 12:14).

Ah, reader, the last text I have just quoted is very solemn. It ought to make you think. It was written by the inspiration of God—it is not my private fancy. Its words are the words of the Bible—not of my own invention. God has said it, and God will stand to it: **"Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."**

What tremendous words these are! What thoughts come across my mind as I write them down! I look at the world—and see the greater part of it lying in wickedness! I look at professing Christians—and see the vast majority having nothing of Christianity, but the name! I turn to the Bible, and I hear the Spirit saying, **"Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."**

Surely it is a text that ought to make you consider your ways, and search your hearts. Surely it should raise within you solemn thoughts, and send you to prayer.

You may try to put me off by saying you *feel* much, and think much about these things—far more than many suppose. I answer, This is not the point. The poor lost souls in hell, do as much as this! The great question is, not what you *think* and what you *feel*—but what you *do*. *Are you holy?*

You may say, It was never meant that all Christians should be holy, and that holiness such as I have described is only for great saints, and people of uncommon gifts. I answer, I cannot see this in Scripture. I read

that **"every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself"** (1 John 3:3). **"Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord."**

You may say, It is impossible to be so holy, and to do our duty in this life at the same time—the thing cannot be done. I answer, You are mistaken—it can be done. With God on your side, nothing is impossible. It has been done by many: Moses, and Obadiah, and Daniel, and the servants of Nero's household, are all examples that go to prove it.

You may say, If you were so holy—you would be unlike other people. I answer, I know it well—it is just what I want you to be. Christ's true servants always were *unlike* the world around them a separate nation, a peculiar people; and you must be so too, if you would be saved.

You may say, At this rate, *very few will be saved*. I answer—I know it. Jesus said so eighteen hundred years ago. Few will be saved, because few will take the trouble to seek salvation. Men will not deny themselves the pleasures of sin and their own way for a season; for this they turn their backs on "an inheritance that is imperishable, uncorrupted, and unfading!" **"You will not come to Me,"** says Jesus, **"that you might have life"** (John 5:40).

You may say, These are hard sayings—the way is very narrow. I answer, I know it! Jesus said so, eighteen hundred years

ago. He always said that men must take up the cross daily, that they must be ready to cut off hand or foot—if they would be His disciples. It is in true religion, as it is in other things, "There are no gains without pains." *That which costs nothing is worth nothing!*

Reader, whatever you may think fit to say, you must be holy—if you would see the Lord in eternal glory. Where is your Christianity, if you are not holy? Show it to me without holiness, if you can. You must not merely have a Christian *name* and Christian knowledge, you must have a Christian *character also*. You must be a saint on *earth*—if ever you mean to be a saint in *heaven*. God has said it, and He will not go back, "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." "*The Pope's calendar*," says one, "*only makes saints of the dead; but Scripture requires sanctity in the living.*" "Let not men deceive themselves," says Owen, "sanctification is a qualification indispensably necessary, unto those who will be under the conduct of the Lord Jesus unto salvation. He leads none to heaven—but whom He sanctifies on the earth. This living Head will not admit of dead members!"

Surely you will not wonder that Scripture says, "**You must be born again**" (John 3:7). Surely it is clear as noon-day, that many of you need a complete change—new hearts, new natures—if ever you are to be saved. Old things must pass

away, you must become new creatures! Without holiness, no man, be he who he may—no man shall ever see the Lord.

Reader, consider well what I have said. Do you feel any desire to be holy? Does your conscience whisper, "I am not holy yet—but I would like to become so"? Listen to the advice I am going to give you. May the Lord grant you may take it and act upon it!

Would you be holy? Would you become a new creature? Then *begin with Christ!* You will do just nothing, until you feel your sin and weakness—and flee to Him! He is the beginning of all holiness. He is not only *wisdom* and *righteousness to His people*—but sanctification also. Men sometimes try to make themselves holy first—and sad work they make of it! They toil, and labor, and turn over many new leaves, and make many changes—and yet, like the woman with the issue of blood—they feel nothing bettered, but rather worse. They run in vain, and labor in vain! Little wonder, for they are beginning at the wrong end! They are building up a wall of *sand*—their work runs down as fast as they throw it up. They are bailing water out of a *leaky* vessel; the leak gains on them; not they on the leak. Other foundation of holiness, can no man lay, than that which Paul laid, even Christ Jesus. Without Christ, we can do nothing. It is a strong but true saying of Traill's, "*Wisdom* outside of

Christ—is damning folly! *Righteousness* outside of Christ is guilt and condemnation! Sanctification outside of Christ—is filth and sin! *Redemption outside of Christ*—is bondage and slavery!" **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"** (1 Cor. 1:30).

Would you be holy? Would you be partakers of the Divine nature? Then go to Christ! Wait for nothing! Wait for nobody! Do not linger! Think not to make you yourself ready. Go, and say to Him, in the words of that beautiful hymn—

*"Nothing in my hand I bring,  
Simply to thy cross I cling!  
Naked, flee to thee for dress;  
Helpless, look to thee for grace!"*

There is not a brick nor a stone laid in the work of our sanctification, until we go to Christ. Holiness is His special gift to His believing people. Holiness is the work He carries on in their hearts, by the Spirit whom He puts within them. He is appointed a Prince and a Savior, to *give* repentance as well as remission of sins. To as many as receive Him—He gives power to become sons of God. Holiness does not come by blood—parents cannot give it to their children. Holiness does not come by the will of the flesh—man cannot produce it

in himself. Holiness does not come by the will of man—Holiness comes from Christ! It is the result of vital union with Him. It is the fruit of being a living branch of the true vine. Go then to Christ, and say, "Lord, not only save me from the *guilt* of sin, but send the Spirit, whom You did promise, and save me from its *power*. Make me holy! Teach me to do Your will." Would you continue holy, when you have once been made so? Then *abide* in Christ. He says Himself, **"Abide in me, and I in you. . . He that abideth in me, and I in him the same bringeth forth much fruit"** (John 15:4, 5).

Jesus is the Physician to whom you must daily go, if you would keep well. He is the Manna which you must daily eat, and the Rock of which you must daily drink. His arm is the arm on which you must daily lean, as you come up out of the wilderness of this world. You must not only be *rooted*, you must also be *built up* in Him.

Reader, may you and I know these things by experience, and not by hearsay only! May we all feel the importance of holiness, far more than we have ever done yet! May our years be *holy* years with our souls, and then I know they will be *happy* ones! But this I say once more, "We must be holy!" Ω

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