

FOR HIS GLORY

Volume 16, Issue 1

January, 2013

“And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken away from you” (2 Kings 2:9). Here is proof that Elijah had been *testing* his companion when he had bade him “tarry” at the previous stopping-places, for certainly he would not have offered such an invitation as this had he been contravening his express desire. The Prophet was so pleased with Elisha’s affection and attendance that he was determined to reward him with some parting blessing. And what a testing of his character was this, “Ask what I shall do for you”! One of the Puritans has called attention to the significance of Elijah’s, “before I am taken from you” for it had been useless for Elisha to invoke his master afterward. He was *not to be prayed unto* as a “mediator of intercession” as deluded Papists blasphemously teach concerning saints and angels. Christ is the *only* One in Heaven who intercedes for God’s people on earth! How attentively we need to read the language of Holy Writ: that single word *before* gives the lie to one of the cardinal errors of Rome! —A. W. P.



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE “BORN-AGAIN”

By C. H. Spurgeon

Every man who trusts the Lord Jesus has been born-again. The question was once argued in an assembly of Divines as to whether a person first had faith or regeneration, and it was suggested that it was a question which must forever be unanswerable. The process, if such it is, must be simultaneous—no sooner does the Divine Life come into the soul than it believes on Christ. You might as well ask whether in the human body there is first the circulation of the blood or the heaving of the lungs—both are essential ingredients in life, and must come at the same time. If I believe in Jesus Christ I need not ask any question as to whether I am regenerated, for no unregenerate person ever could believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; and if regenerated I must believe in Jesus, for he who does not do so is clearly dead in sin.

See, then, the folly of persons talking about being regenerated who have no faith. It cannot be; it is impossible. We can have no knowledge of such a thing as regeneration which is not accompanied with some degree of mental motion and consciousness. Regeneration is not a thing which takes place upon matter; it is a thing of spirit. The birth of the spirit must be the sub-

ject of consciousness, and though a man may not be able to say that at such and such a moment he was regenerated, yet the act of faith is a consciousness of regeneration. The moment I believe in Jesus Christ, my faith is an index to me of a work that has gone on within, and the secret work within, and the open act of faith without, God has joined together, and let no man put asunder.

Those who believe not are unregenerate, though they may have been sprinkled by the best priest who ever had Episcopal hands laid on his head. If a man believes not he is unregenerate whether baptized or not, but if he believes, he is regenerate, though he may never have been baptized at all. Baptism may outwardly express regeneration after it has been received, and then the symbol becomes valuable; but without faith there can be no regeneration, even though Baptism is administered a thousand times!

Observe what kind of new birth it is which all Believers have received. It is one which comes “not of bloods,” (so the original has it), neither by the blood of circumcision, nor of the Passover, nor especially by the blood of descent. Sin runs in the blood, if you will, but Divine Grace

(See *Born-Again* on page 3)

Godly Advice For the New Year

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Remember, Christian, you are not a child of chance. If you were, you might, indeed, fear. You will go nowhere this year except where God shall send you. You may be thrust into the hot coals of the fire—but God shall put you there.

You shall, perhaps, be much depressed in spirit—but that heaviness shall be for your good, and shall come from your Father. You may have the rod, but it shall *not* be the rod of the wicked—it shall be in God’s hands.

Oh, how comfortable the thought that everything is in the hands of God, and that all that may occur to me during the future years of my life is foreordained and overruled by the great Jehovah who is my Father and my Friend!

Now stop a moment and realize the idea that God has gone before, mapping the way. And then let me ask you if you could now, this morning, be allowed to draw a fresh map—would you do it?

If He should condescend to say, “Now your circumstances this year

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CHRIST DESPISED AND REJECTED

By Robert Murray M'Cheyne (1813-1843)

"He came unto His own and His own received Him not."

JOHN 1:11

In this Chapter John describes, in three different ways, the coming of the Son of God into the world and His rejection by those whom He came to save. In verse 5 he says, "The light shines in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." When Jesus came to this world it was like the rising of "the bright and morning star." But the heart of men was covered over with murky vapors like those that settled over Egypt in that night when the "darkness might be felt," so that the heavenly radiance of Immanuel was not allowed to shine upon their souls. To those who knew Him He was "the light of men," "the Morning Star," "the Sun of Righteousness," the "morning without clouds"—but all the rest of the world comprehended it not.

Is it not still the same? "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in wickedness." On many souls Christ has arisen with healing in His wings so that we can say to them, "Arise; shine, for your light is come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." But, ah, the most have never admitted the sweet, soft, peace-bringing beams of Jesus to shine into their dark hearts. "The god of this world has blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them." They know not where they are going. Their feet are ready to stumble on the dark mountains. "The path of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they shall stumble."

Again, in verse 10, it is written, "He was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Strange visit to this fallen world! He who "hung the earth upon nothing"—He who said, "Let there be light, and there was light"—He who "formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"—He "by whom were all things created that are in Heaven and that are on earth"—that glorious Being came to His own world, "God manifest in the flesh." Surely all His creatures will run to worship and adore Him! Surely they will "worship and bow down; they will kneel before the Lord their Maker." Not so: "the world knew Him not."

They knew Him not at His birth. He left the hallelujahs of the heavenly world for the manger at Bethlehem. A few shepherds from the fields of Bethlehem came and kneeled to Him and the Wise Men saw and adored the infant King—but the most despised Him. "He is despised and rejected of men." "She wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, for there was no room for them in the inn." They knew Him not during His life. Few believed on Him. They called Him glutton, wine-bibber, deceiver. Once they sought to cast Him over the rocks. Often they plotted to kill Him.

He who had all things now lacked everything. "Certain women ministered to Him of their substance" (Luke 8:3). He had no money to pay His tribute. The creatures of His hands had a warmer bed than He. "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head." "Every man went to his own home; Jesus went to the Mount of Olives." Another time He sat wearied on a well and said to a poor woman, "Give me a drink." He that was God over all, blessed forever, could say, "I am a worm and no man." The world knows Him not to this hour!

The offense of the Cross has not ceased. The way of salvation by Christ for us is still despised by most. He who is a Sanctuary to all them

who believe is a stumbling stone and rock of offense to most. O my Soul, can you believe on Jesus when the world despises Him? Can you be one of the little flock? Can you enter in at "the strait gate, and walk in the narrow way," with an unbelieving world on every side?

Again, in verse 11 it is written, "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." In John 19:27, the same words are rendered more fully, "to His own home." To see the full meaning of the passage before us, we must adopt the same reading here: "He came unto His own home and His own family received Him not."

The Jews were, as it were, His own family. And when He came to them it was like coming to His own home. It was He who called their father Abraham and separated them from among the nations to be a peculiar treasure. "He said, Surely they are My people, children who will not lie; so He was their Savior. In all their affliction He was afflicted and the angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old" (Isa 63:8-9).

He was the substance of all their types. He was the true pillar-cloud that guided their fathers; the true Bread from Heaven. He was the Rock that followed them. He was the true Isaac, the Child of promise, the Prophet like unto Moses, the David, the Beloved, the true Solomon, the Prince of Peace. Though to all the world He may appear "without form or comeliness, having no beauty that they should desire Him" yet surely His own Israel will receive Him as "the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys." Ah no! "*He came unto His own and His own received Him not.*"

They cried, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him, crucify, Him." "His blood be upon us and upon our children." The rulers derided Him. The very thieves railed at Him. They shot out the lip, they wagged the head, they give Him vinegar to drink. To this day His own receive Him not.

Ah, think, Sinner, Who it is you are despising! Did you ever see the son of a king lay aside his robes and his glory, become a poor man and die in misery—and all for nothing? Do you think the Lord Jesus Christ left His Father's love and the adoration of angels—became a worm and died under wrath—and all for no purpose? Is there no wrath lying upon your soul? Have you no need of such a Savior? Why, then, do you delay to flee to Him?

**"Away with Him,
away with Him!
Crucify Him, crucify
Him! His blood be
upon us and upon
our children."**

**Jesus Christ is the ONLY
way to God the Father!
Not Mary. Not Mohammed.
Not a future Messiah.
JESUS CHRIST
is the ONLY way.
(John 14:6).**

Born-Again

(Continued from page 1)

does not. We are not born Christians by the mere fact of our being the children of godly Christian people. Neither are we born Christians “of the will of man.” The best men in the world cannot create us anew; if they pray for us ever so much, the power of their will apart from the will of God cannot avail. We are not born “of the will of the flesh,” that is to say, our own free will does not cause it. If a man could will himself into a state of newness of heart, the fact of his being willing to be in such a state would, I suppose, be evidence of his being in that state already, but the human will is powerless in itself to produce regeneration. We must be born-again from above; the Holy Spirit must, by His Divine Energy, enter into us and make us new creatures, for such a heavenly birth is essential to Eternal Life.

Now, I think I hear some troubled conscience saying, “When you said just now that if I trusted in Christ I would be saved, I rejoiced, but when you say we must be born-again, that saying seems so mysterious that I am troubled.” My dear Friend, there is no need to be troubled. If you trust in Christ, then you *are* born-again. I have already told you that there is no possibility of a soul ever truly relying upon the Savior unless there has been a previous new birth to produce his faith. If you are, tonight, able to put your whole trust in Jesus Christ as God’s dear Son, and to take Him to be yours, though your new birth may be too mysterious a thing for you to know much about, for, “the wind blows where it likes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell from where it comes, and where it goes,” yet, your faith is a sufficient index that

(See *Have Your Received Christ?* on page 6)

PRAY THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL BURDEN PROTESTANT PREACHERS TO UNDERSTAND THE BLASPHEMY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

What are you *doing* my Friends? What are you doing, my Brothers and Sisters, for Christ? But I will not censure you—I censure myself if I censure you. But I will confess my own iniquities and leave you to confess yours. I do try to serve my Master, but I do not serve Him as I would. Each act that I perform is marred, either by lack of prayer for a blessing upon it, by lack of faith in my Lord, or by pride in looking back upon it. I find too continually a tendency to serve *myself* instead of serving Christ—a constant longing to get through the work rather than to do it acceptably. And oh, when I think upon it, I must say I am an unprofitable servant! Have mercy, O gracious Lord, on my good works as well as on my bad ones, for my good works are but bad in the best and cannot be acceptable in themselves.—(See *Sermon #262, Volume 5—DISTINGUISHING GRACE—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.*)

ADVICE FOR THE NEW YEAR!

(Continued from page 1)

shall be just what you like. You shall have your own way and go your own route to Heaven”—would you dare, even with God’s permission, to draw a new chart? If you should have that presumption, I know the result—you would find that you had gone the wrong way!

You would soon be glad enough to retrace your steps, and with many tears you would go to your heavenly Father and say, “My Father, I have had enough to do with the helm of this ship! It is hard work to hold it. Do what You will with me—steer which way You please, though it be through the deepest floods and the hottest flame; I am weary; I sleep at the tiller. I cannot guide the ship. My tears fall fast from my eyes, for when I think I am wise, I find myself to have committed folly. When I thought I was promoting my own advantage in my scheme, I found I was rushing into a sea of losses.”

God, then, has gone before you in the decree of His Predestination. And remember, God has gone before you in all your future journey in the actual preparations of His Providence.

I say again, you are not going through a land that God has not prepared for you. O Israel, there was a well of Elim made for you long before you came out of Egypt—and there are palm trees that have been growing there that they might just come to the fruit-bearing state, and have fruit upon them when you get there!

O Israel, God is not going to extemporize a Canaan for you! It is ready made, it is even now flowing with milk and honey! The vines that are to bear you grapes of Eshcol are already there and coming to perfection. God has forestalled your trials and troubles for the next year. The Lord Jehovah has gone before you.—(See *Sermon #230, Volume 5—THE VANGUARD AND REAR-GUARD OF THE CHURCH—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.*)

Spurgeon on Long Handles

There are many great men with long handles to their names who know little of the Gospel, while some of the poor unlettered ones spell out the whole secret and become perfect masters in divinity. If they had degrees who deserve them, diplomas should often be transferred and given to those who hold the plow handle or work at the carpenter’s bench. There is often more divinity in the little finger of a plowman than there is in the whole body of some of our modern divines! “Don’t they understand divinity?” you ask. Yes, in the letter of it. But as to the spirit and life of it, D. D. often means DOUBLY DESTITUTE.—(See *Sermon #265, Volume 5—THE MEEK AND THE LOWLY ONE—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.*)

A Study of Ephesians 4:23-24a

PUTTING ON THE NEW MAN – PART 2

First and foremost, the renewed spirit of the mind in the Believer gives him the ability to understand spiritual things. He is no longer blind to the truth of the Bible. With this new gift from God, the Believer not only understands the Bible, but sees its spiritual truths. He thinks in a new spiritual dimension.

But equally as important and wonderful is the fact that this renewing of the spirit of the mind causes the Believer to be able to think in a new direction and a new way. Whereas before, as an unbeliever, the thoughts always went away from God, and into that which was opposed to God, they now go in the right direction.

When it comes right down to it, the Believer is one who begins to think in a whole new way. For instance, the Believer and the unbeliever look out at the starry sky on a clear night. They both see stars and they both, perhaps, see beauty there. But the Believer sees something more; he sees there a manifestation of the Glory of God. He looks at the same flowers and mountains and trees as the unbeliever, but he sees something more. He feels as the hymn writer who says, “This is my Father’s world, and to my listening ears all nature sings and round me rings the music of the spheres.” He feels that he knows exactly what is meant by the words “This is my Father’s world, He shines in all that fair; in the rustling grass I hear Him pass; He speaks to me everywhere.” With the Psalmist he says, “The heavens declare the Glory of God.”

If you asked an unbeliever and a Believer for a report about what they see, their reports would, in one sense, be very much the same. They see the same colors, shapes, and sizes, but for the Believer there is a new dimension added. Because a new spirit controls the mind, he is enabled to see God’s handiwork in all that is around him.

There is one more aspect of this renewed spirit of the mind which is most important, and oh so helpful for the Believer in the fight against sin. This new spirit of the mind is of great assistance in viewing rightly the *consequences* of sin. Some unbelievers simply cannot pass up a dirty joke; others could not make it through a day without drinking an excessive amount of alcohol. Perhaps a man couldn’t drive by the bar on the way home from work without stopping in, but when that person becomes a Believer, things begin to change. The Believer no longer sees those things as sources of pleasure—he sees those things as STEALING HIS JOY rather than contributing to it. His outlook is completely new.

Here again is the great difference between the appeal of true Christianity and mere morality. Morality says, “Make yourself a better person.” Christianity says, “Come and receive a new spirit of your mind, and you will look at everything differently, and become a new person.”

The world says, “Do this and do that,” but it can’t tell you why you should. But the Believer isn’t asked to do something without knowing what he’s doing. It is not blind obedience; rather, it is the only thing that makes sense. Thinking about what God says, and bringing it to bear on one’s whole outlook is *the Christian way*.

In fact, we should point out that a Christian who is doing things, or not doing things, and does not know why he is doing or not doing them is a poor Christian indeed. Today, there are too many churches and Christian organizations which are like the cults. They don’t tell their people why they should live a certain way; they simply say that if you want to be part of us you must do these things and not do others. Too many Christians have a list of taboos that they inherited from some or-

ganization. They might tell them they must not dance or drink alcoholic beverage or go to a movie, without ever telling them why. Or else, even worse, they categorize all such things as sin without any Scriptural support.

There are always people who want other people to do things their way. There is probably some of that in all of us. But in the Church, it is absolutely essential that we not give Believers the idea that they are conforming to a standard of man or doing things because *man* wants them to. He is to have a reason for the hope that is in him, and that reason must come from God Himself through His Word.

Another conclusion we must draw from our verse is that anything we do as Christians ought to be the result of a renewed spirit of the mind. In other words, what we do ought to be based on what we *think*. When you think a new way, you WILL act a new way. “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he,” says the Proverbs 23:7.

You see, the Apostle is not simply saying to us, “Now that you claim to be a Christian, you must stop doing everything that anyone says is bad, and put your best foot forward, and wear a new uniform.” That is an outward thing.

Now you may think that there must be something wrong with a preacher who says what I’m about to say, but I believe, nonetheless, that it is true. I believe that the Church has a better opportunity right now with our country at an all-time moral low than when the majority in this country were church-going people. And the reason why I say that is because now the difference between Believers and unbelievers is easier to see. But where we as the Church must be very careful during such a time as ours, is that we do not send the wrong message to the world around us. Our message to our fellow Americans is not simply, “Clean up your life.” Our message to our country is this—The reason why we are in such a mess and people’s lives are in the mess they are in is that we do not think right, and do not want the right things. Before the multitudes in America will want to stop abortion, and homosexuality, and drug abuse, and extra-marital sex, and sexual perversion, and all of our other gross sins, they must be *renewed* in the spirit of their minds.

—PF

HAVE
YOU
PRAYED
FOR YOUR
PASTOR
TODAY?

A New Year's Message For 1943—And The Year 2013

By A. W. Pink (1886 – 1952)

As we launch out into another year the very uncertainty of what the morrow may bring forth fills many with uneasiness and trepidation. But how different should be the state of God's children! If the poor worldling is concerned with *what* lies before him, it is the blessed privilege of the Believer to be occupied with *Who* goes before him, the One who is his Captain, his Guide, his Forerunner. "The LORD! *He* it is WHO goes before you" (Deut 31:8). What a difference that makes!

The Lord has gone before you in the grand decree of His *predestination*. Your future has all been marked out for you. You shall not tread a step which is not mapped on the grand chart of God's foreordination. All your circumstances have been Divinely ordered for you. Ah, Christian Reader, what an immense difference this makes that you are not a child of *chance*—that your lot is not decided by the caprice of fickle fortune. Infinite Wisdom and Infinite Love have arranged everything!

You will go nowhere during this year but where God has decreed. A predestinating God has appointed "the bounds of your habitation" (Acts 17:26). You may be thrust into the furnace of affliction, yet you will not be deserted. You may be brought low, yet it will be for your future blessing. You may be chastened, yet the rod is in the hands of your Father.

The Lord has gone before you in the preparations of His *Providence*. "My God shall supply all your need" (Phil 4:19). Full provision has *already* been made for it. Jehovah does not have to improvise. No unexpected emergency can overtake Him—"known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). Therefore is it written, "And it shall come to pass that before they call I will answer" (Isa 65:24).

Before we reach a place God has provided for us—wherever the road leads—all has been made ready. "...Who went in the way *before you*, to search you out a place to pitch your tents in" (Deut 1:33). And He will not do less for His people today!

Here is comfort for the preacher, too—"The LORD, *He* it is that does go before you," to prepare hearts for the message, for the reception of the Truth.

The Lord has gone before you *in Person*. The path which He calls you to tread has first been traversed by Himself. None other than the Lord of Glory became Incarnate, entered this world of ours and tabernacled here for 33 years in the flesh that He might be the

(See *Brother Pink* on page 10)

PRAY FOR GRACE
TO BE
HOLY



"Reflections" is a Christian meditation sent by Action Uganda Ministries and is meant to instruct, encourage and edify.

"For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." Romans 8:13 NKJV. Mortify means 'to put to death' and betokens the act of God on the Believer through the death of Christ, and it is an act of the Believer himself, as being responsible to God's act, to put to death "the deeds of the body."

Why Mortification Is the Work of the Spirit—

It is then, the work of the Spirit. For *He is promised of God to be given unto us for this work*. The taking away of the stony heart—that is, the stubborn, proud, rebellious, unbelieving heart—is in general the work of mortification that we treat of. Now this is still promised to be done by the Spirit, "I will give My Spirit, and take away the stony heart" (Ezek 11:19; 36:26), and by the Spirit of God is this work worked when all means fail (Isa 57:17-18).

We have all our mortification from the gift of Christ, and all the gifts of Christ are communicated to us and given to us by the Spirit of Christ— "Without Christ we can do nothing" (John 15:15). All communications of supplies and relief, of any Grace whatever, from Him, are by the Spirit, by whom He alone works in and upon Believers. From Him we have our mortification—"He is exalted and made a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto us" (Acts 15:31); and of our repentance our mortification is no small portion. How does He do it? Having "received... the promise of the Holy Spirit," He sends Him abroad for that end (Acts 2:33).

The resolution of one or two questions will now lead me nearer to what I principally intend. The first [question] is: How does the Spirit mortify sin? I answer, in general, three ways.

By causing our hearts to abound in Grace and the fruits that are contrary to the flesh, and the fruits thereof and principles of them. So the Apostle opposes the fruits of the flesh and of the Spirit: "The fruits of the flesh," says he, "are so and so" (Gal 5:19-21); "but," says he, "the fruits of the Spirit are quite contrary, quite of another sort" (vs 22-23). Yes, but what if these are in us and do abound, may not the other abound also? No, says he, "They who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (v 24). But how? Why, "by living in the Spirit and walking after the Spirit" (v 25)—that is, by the abounding work of these Graces of the Spirit in us, and walking according to them. For, says the Apostle, "these are contrary one to another" (v 17); so that they cannot both be in the same subject in any intense or high degree. This "renewing of us by the Holy Spirit," as it is called (Titus 3:5), is one great way of mortification; He causes us to grow, thrive, flourish, and abound in those Graces which are contrary, opposite, and destructive to all the fruits of the flesh, and to the quiet or thriving of indwelling sin itself.

By a real physical efficiency on the root and habit of sin, for the weakening, destroying, and taking it away. Hence He is called a "spirit of judgment and... burning" (Isa 4:4), really and consuming and destroying our lusts. He takes away the stony heart by an almighty efficiency; for as He begins the work as to its kind, so He carries it on as to its degrees. He is the fire which burns up every root of lust.

(See *REFLECTIONS* on bottom of page 11)

HAVE YOU RECEIVED CHRIST?

(Continued from page 3)

you are really a partaker of the new birth.

I do not want to open the boiler of a steam engine for the sake of knowing what quantity of water there is in it—I am perfectly satisfied by looking at the gauge. Now faith is the gauge of the human soul—where there is faith there is new life—where there is no faith there is no life. There is no need to dissect a man, anatomize him, and cut him up in order to find out his spirit—you would destroy him in doing so; but when you see the man has action, motion, energy; when you put your hand upon his chest and feel the heaving of the lungs—you know that there is life. Now, if I may say so, faith is the heaving of the spiritual lungs; if you believe in Jesus Christ you are a living man; you have been born, “not of the will of man, but of God.”

I should like to ask one question before I am done—*have all of you received Christ?* “Yes,” or “No”? You good people up in the gallery there, I am not going to ask you where you generally worship, nor to what Church you belong, but have you received Christ? “Well, Sir, we were baptized.” I do not care a farthing at this moment whether you were baptized or not! I leave that question till we have settled an earlier one. Have you received Christ? “Well, we take the sacrament.” Never mind that; have you received Christ? Do you trust Him and Him only? To the point now—can your soul say—

**“On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand”?**

Have you received Jesus Christ, each one of you?

And if you have not, why not? Is there anything so hard in receiving Him? I have sometimes thought I should like to tell the tale of the Cross for the first time to a number of savages who would just have sufficient culture to understand it—God was made flesh and dwelt among us, and rather than men should suffer, God suffered Himself, and because Justice required punishment, “He bore the punishment instead” of sinners. Why, I think I see their eyes glistening, and I think their hearts must melt! But you have heard the tale so often that it has become an old story to you!

However, I would like to put the question to you again—have you received Jesus Christ? “Well, I have not had much experience,” laments one, and another says, “I do not know much,” and another cries, “We have had family prayer for 20 years,” and another says, “My name is down for 20 guineas in several charitable institutions.” Well, all that is very well, but I do not care about any of these matters tonight. All I want to know is, have you received Christ? “Oh!” says one, “Of course! I was always brought up to it.” But you cannot be “brought up to it.” You must be brought *down* to it by being born-again; there must be a change in your *nature*.

We do not preach the Gospel, as I have said before, to the depraved and debauched alone; we preach it to you good, excellent people—you whose honesty in trade, and whose moral character set you on high among your fellows, as upon a pinnacle. Even YOU must be born-again; Ladies and Gentlemen, *you* must be born-again, as well as the lowest of the low, and the poorest of the poor. We have the same Gospel to preach to Her Majesty the Queen, as we have to the sinners in a refuge, or the rogues in a reformatory. We know of no difference in this matter between any of you. A difference of morality there is, and we are thankful for it—but *you* must be born-again as much as the worst rebels in the world!

I stood a few hours ago at the bedside of one of our Brothers in Christ who seemed sorely sick and at the point of death. He could not speak aloud, but the soft and gentle words which he whispered in my ear were very pre-

cius. He had not his peace to make with God in his last hour; he had not then to seek Christ, but was full of perfect peace and rejoicing in unbroken calm. “He will not leave me, will He?” he asked—“He cannot deny Himself; I may sink, but I cannot sink lower than He will go, for underneath me are the everlasting arms.” Oh, my Brothers and Sisters, the mere letter of Gospel Doctrine will not do to die on; you must have the spirit of it in your heart, or you cannot be comforted by it! Believe me, it is stern work to die. A Christian dies peacefully, but it is no child’s play, even to him. Some of us, when we have been sick and racked with pain, know that we have had to search for our evidences with much care and anxiety. I have turned over many a moldy old deed that laid by in the chest of my evidences to try if I could—

**“Read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,”**

and glad enough have I been to light on some such word as this—

**“Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee,”**

and to sing—

**“Nothing in my hands I bring,
Simply to Your Cross I cling.”**

—(From *Sermon #669, Volume 12—OPEN HEART FOR THE GREAT SAVIOR—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)*

THIS IS TRULY AMAZING GRACE!

By C. H. Spurgeon

Ah, it is an amazing thing, we may have been the instrument of sending others down to the pit of Hell, and alas, we cannot restore them from their endless woe—yet we may, by Grace, *amazing Grace*—be delivered ourselves from the horrible doom of sinners! The mercy of God may be extolled in us, and His justice in them! There is the infidel, the atheist, who has poisoned the minds of others, and sent them down to Hell, and yet Almighty Mercy saves him at the last hour. He cannot save his dupes, he cannot pull up his followers from the pit of Hell, but he is himself saved. What a stupendous wonder of Divine Sovereignty and Grace!—(See *Sermon #676, Volume 12—MAN’S THOUGHTS AND GOD’S THOUGHTS—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)*

PURITAN QUOTES

“See that your chief study be about the *heart*, that there God’s image may be planted and His interests advanced. That there the interest of the world and flesh are subdued, the love of every sin cast out, and the love of holiness succeed. And see that you content yourselves not with seeming to do good in outward acts when you are bad yourselves, and strangers to the great internal duties. The first and great work of a Christian is about his heart”—RICHARD BAXTER- 1615-1691.

IS RIGHTEOUSNESS IMPUTED, IMPARTED, OR INFUSED?

By Daniel E. Parks, Pastor

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, 74 Estate Cane Carlton, Frederiksted, VI 00840, USA

One often hears in Christian circles the terms “imputed righteousness,” “imparted righteousness” and “infused righteousness.” What do these terms mean? And are they Scriptural?

I. The doctrine of “imputed righteousness” teaches that God graciously charges to the account of Believers in Christ the righteousness worked by Christ. This doctrine is Scriptural. It is at length expounded in Romans 3:21-4:25. Here we are taught that the righteousness worked by Christ during the days of His Incarnation is imputed to, or charged to the account of Believers by God in justification.

The justified acknowledge Christ to be not only “Jehovah Our Righteousness” (Jer 23:6), but also their *only* righteousness (Psa. 71:16). And they pray to be “found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Phil 3:9).

It may aid one in understanding this doctrine if he will always bear in mind that in justification, righteousness is imputed, not imparted. And justification does not *make* one righteous, but merely *declares* him to be so. And the imputation of righteousness does not change one inwardly and subjectively—this being the work of sanctification, not justification.

II. The doctrine of “imparted righteousness” teaches that God bestows righteousness to Believers. This term and its doctrine are problematic. If by the righteousness imparted one refers to the righteousness worked by Christ, this term is a misnomer. That righteousness was a merit earned by *Christ*. And the merit of one person cannot be imparted to another. Just as surely as the guilt of Adam was imputed, not imparted, to all his race, the righteousness of Christ is imputed, not imparted, to all His people.

Some theologians use the term *imparted righteousness* to identify the righteous nature imparted by God to Believers when He regenerates them. They thereby become “partakers of the Divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). This “Divine nature” (not God’s essential Nature) is the new one placed in men in regeneration and which is always in conflict with the old Adamic nature. It is the “seed” of God placed in man which

“cannot sin” (1 John 3:9).

While the doctrine here set forth is Scriptural, it is problematic to call it “imparted righteousness.” That which is imparted is a righteous *nature*, not righteousness. Another problem associated with the term *imparted righteousness* is that many who use it mean by it the heresy of *infused* righteousness.

III. The doctrine of “infused righteousness” teaches that God justifies in accord with a righteousness merited by Christ instilled into the Believer and maintained by good works. This doctrine, especially prominent in the Roman Catholic Church, is anti-Scriptural, but in accord with its doctrine of *justification by works*. It affirms the Believer receives both imputed and infused righteousness, the latter becoming his inherent righteousness and one is justified on the basis of what he personally does with it.

This doctrine may be illustrated by three statements made by a certain gentleman upon hearing a Gospel message on the subject of the wedding garment of Christ’s bride (Rev 19:8). His first statement was an objection to the preacher’s declaration that the imputed righteousness of Christ is the *only* righteousness of the saints, on the ground that they possess also imparted righteousness.

His second statement was his declaration that he furthermore possessed a “personal righteousness through Christ.” His third statement was his response when told Isaiah 64:6 declares “all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags”—“I would not call that which is done through the Holy Spirit a filthy rag!” In other words, he believed he was capable of performing works God would declare to be “righteous,” not, “filthy rags.”

It was very clear that what he called imparted righteousness manifested itself as infused righteousness and that his “personal righteousness” was “self-righteousness.”

Saints at the final day will be clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ alone (Rev 9:8; Isa 54:17; 61:10; Phil 3:9). In what will you be clothed?

ABOUT THAT BOOK OF REVELATION...

By Charles H. Spurgeon

Remember that as every Word of promise from Christ shall stand, so shall *every Word of prophecy*. There is a whole Book of Revelation which I do not understand, but which I fully believe. I am very glad to find something in the Bible which I cannot comprehend, but which I may believe, for I do not call that faith which limits its belief to what it can understand. I want you, dear Friends, to have great faith in the Book of Revelation—it is all true, although you cannot interpret all its mysteries. And it will all come true—every word of it—in God’s good time! The Lord shall come, the Lord shall reign, the Lord shall judge, the Lord shall justify and glorify His people—and the Lord shall bid the ungodly depart from Him under the curse. I pray that we may all be helped to believe every Word of it.

When I read the Bible, I like to read it in the spirit of the little boy whose mother told him something, but his schoolmates laughed at him for believing it. They asked him how he knew that it was true and he said that his mother told him so, and his mother never told a lie. They tried to prove that it could not be so, but he said, “Look here, my mother said so, and it is so if it isn’t so.” And if I find anything in the Word of God—and somebody with wonderful wisdom tells me that it cannot be so, he is quite sure of it—I laugh his “cannots” into oblivion and reply—“It is so if it isn’t so! Your supposed proof is nothing to me! If God has said it, and all the tongues that ever wagged should deny it, I would still say, ‘Let God be true, and every man a liar.’” Hold then, dear Friends, to the Words of Christ even though you do not always understand them.—(See *Sermon #2636, Volume 45—THE PERPETUITY OF THE GOSPEL—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)*

SOME THOUGHTS ON PRAYER

By Charles H. Spurgeon

The cry of a young raven is nothing but the natural cry of a creature, but your cry, if it is sincere, is the result of a work of Divine Grace in your heart. When the raven cries to Heaven it is nothing but the raven's own self that cries; but when you cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner"—it is God the Holy Spirit crying in you! It is the New Life which God has given you crying to the Source from where it came to have communion and communication with its great Original.

It needs God Himself to set a man praying in sincerity and in truth. We can, if we think about it, teach our children to "say their prayers," but we cannot teach them to "pray." You may make a "prayer-book," but you cannot put a grain of "prayer" into a book, for it is too *spiritual* a matter to be encased between pages. Some of you, perhaps, may "read prayers" in the family. I will not denounce the practice, but I will say this much of it—you may read those "prayers" for 70 years, and yet you may never once pray, for prayer is quite a different thing than mere words.

True prayer is the trading of the heart with God, and the heart never comes into spiritual commerce with the ports of Heaven until God the Holy Spirit puts wind into the sails and speeds the ship into its haven. "You must be born-again." If there is any *real* prayer in your heart, though you may not know the secret, God the Holy Spirit is there. Now if He hears cries that do not come from Himself, how much more will He hear those that do! Perhaps you have been puzzling yourself to know whether your cry is a natural or a spiritual one. This may seem very important, and doubtless is so—but whether your cry is either the one or the other, still continue to seek the Lord!

Possibly you doubt whether natural cries are heard by God; let me assure you that they are. I remember saying something on this subject on one occasion in a certain Ultra-Calvinistic place of worship. At that time I was preaching to children, and was exhorting them to pray. I happened to say that long before any actual conversion I had prayed for common mercies, and that God had heard my prayers. This did not suit my good Brothers of the superfine school; and afterwards they all came round me professedly to know what I meant, but really to cavil and carp according to their nature and practice.

"They compassed me about like bees; yes, like bees they compassed me about!" After a while, as I expected, they fell to their usual amusement of calling names. They began to say what rank Arminianism this was; and another expression they were pleased to honor me with, was the title of "Fullerist"—a title, by the way, so honorable that I could heartily have thanked them for appending it to what I had advanced. But to say that God should hear the prayer of natural men was something worse than Arminianism to them, if, indeed, anything could be worse! They quoted that counterfeit passage, "The prayer of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord," which I speedily answered by asking them if they would find me that text in the Word of God, for I ventured to assert that the devil was the author of that saying, and that it was not in the Bible at all.

"The *sacrifice* of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord" is in the Bible, but that is a very different thing from the "*prayer* of the wicked." And moreover there is a decided difference between the word *wicked* there intended, and the natural man about whom we were arguing. I do not think that a man who begins to pray in any sense can be considered as being altogether among "the wicked" intended by Solomon, and certainly he is not among those who turn away their ears from hearing the Law, of whom it is written that their prayer is an abomination.

"Well, but," they said, "how could it be that God could hear a natural prayer?" And while I paused for a moment, an old woman in a red cloak pushed her way into the little circle round me, and said to them in a very forcible way, like a mother in Israel as she was, "Why do you raise this question, forgetting what God Himself has said! What is this you say, that God does not hear natural prayer? Why, doesn't He hear the young ravens when they cry unto Him? And do you think *they* offer *spiritual* prayers?" Straightway the men of war took to their heels; no defeat was more thorough; and for once in their lives they must have felt that they might possibly err. Surely, Brothers and Sisters, this may encourage and comfort *you*.

I am not going to set you just now to the task of finding out whether your prayers are natural or spiritual, whether they come from God's Spirit or whether they do not, because that might, perhaps, discourage you. If the prayer proceeds from your very heart, we know how it got there, though you may not. God hears the ravens, and I do believe He will hear you, and I believe, moreover, though I do not now want to raise the question in your heart, that He hears your prayer, because—though you may not know it—there is a secret work of the Spirit of God going on within you which is teaching you to pray.—(See Sermon #672, Volume 12—THE RAVEN'S CRY—read/download, by God's Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)

GOD'S MIGHTY ACTS

By Charles H. Spurgeon

There is a special feature to which I would call to your attention with regard to the works of God in olden times. They derive increasing interest and wonder from the fact that they were all *sudden* things. The old stagers in our Churches believe that things must grow gently, by degrees. We must go step by step onward. Concentrated action and continued labor, they say, will ultimately bring success. But the marvel is, all God's works have been sudden! When Peter stood up to preach, it did not take six weeks to convert the three thousand. They were converted at once and baptized that very day! They were that hour turned to God and become as truly disciples of Christ as they could have been if their conversion had taken 70 years!

So was it in the day of Martin Luther—it did not take Luther centuries to break through the thick darkness of Rome. God lit the candle and the candle burned—and there was the light in an instant—God works suddenly. If anyone could have stood in Wurtemberg and have said: "Can Popery be made to quail, can the Vatican be made to shake?" The answer would have been—"No. It will take at least a thousand years to do it. Popery, the great serpent, has so twisted itself about the nations and bound them so tightly in its coil that they cannot be delivered except by a long process." Not so," however, did God say! He smote the dragon sorely, and the nations went free. He cut the gates of brass, and broke in sunder the bars of iron—and the people were delivered in an hour—freedom came not in the course of years, but in an instant!—(See Sermon #263, Volume 5—THE STORY OF GOD'S MIGHTY ACTS—read/download, by God's Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)

C. H. Spurgeon Speaks on the Ordinance of Baptism

Pardon me for a moment, if I should risk the displeasure of some I love by referring to an ordinance of the church about which we are likely to disagree. The sacred rite of Baptism is administered in a great number of churches to little infants upon the sponsorship of their guardians or friends, while many of us consider that Holy Scripture teaches that *Believers only* (without respect to their age at all) are the proper subjects of Baptism and that upon a personal profession of their faith in Christ.

I see a man take up an unconscious infant in his arms and he says he baptizes it. When I turn to my Bible I can see nothing whatever of this sort there. It is true I find the Lord Jesus saying, “Suffer little children *to come* unto Me,” but that affords no precedent for carrying a little child to the *minister*, that could not come, that was too young to walk, much less to think and understand the meaning of these things. Yet more, when Jesus said, “Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven”—they *did come* to Him!

But I do not find that He baptized or sprinkled them at all. He gave them His blessing and they went away. I am sure He did not baptize them, for it is expressly said, “Jesus Christ baptized not, but His disciples.” So, then, it is quite clear that passage does not favor the Paedo-Baptist.

I am informed however, that the reason why children are baptized is that we are told in the Bible that Abraham’s children were circumcised. This puzzles me. I cannot see any likeness at all between the two things. Who were the persons circumcised? They were Israelites. Why were they circumcised? Because they were Israelites. That is the reason.

And I say I would not hesitate to baptize any Christian, though he is a babe in Christ, as soon as he knows the Lord Jesus Christ. Were he only eight days old in the faith, if he proves that he is an Israelite in the spirit himself, I will baptize him!

I have nothing to do with his father or his mother in religion. Religion is a personal act all the way through. Another man cannot believe for me nor can he repent for me. And another person cannot give for me the answer of a good conscience toward God in Baptism and have it done in my name. By the Grace of God we must act on our own individual responsibility in religion or else the thing is virtually not done at all.

I do believe many godly people sincerely worship God at this altar of infant baptism. But I am equally clear that it is my duty to do my utmost to break it down, for it is not God’s altar. God’s altar is Believers’ Baptism. What said Philip to the Eunuch? “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” “Lo! here is water,” said the Eunuch.

Yes, but that was not all. There must be *faith* as well as water, before there could be legitimate Baptism. And every Baptism that is administered to any man, unless he asks it himself on profession of his faith in Christ, is an altar at which I could not worship—for I do not believe it to be the altar of God, but an altar originally built at Rome, the pattern of which has been adopted here, to the marring of the union of the church, and to the great injury of souls.

Now, all I ask from those who differ from me in opinion is

simply to look at the matter honestly and calmly. If they can find infant baptism in the Bible, then let them practice it and worship there. If they cannot, let them be honest and come and worship at the altar of Jerusalem, and there alone.

An old woman was once promised a Bible if she could find a text that sanctioned infant baptism. She could only find one and that was, “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.” The minister gave her the Bible for her ingenuity, admitting that it was an ordinance of *man*, and no mistake.

I quote this instance of infant baptism as only one out of many corruptions that have crept into our churches. It is quite clear that all denominations cannot be right. They may be right as to the main points essential to salvation, though in their discrepancies with one another they betray errors. I do not want you to believe that I am right. Rather turn to *Scripture* and you see what is right. The day must come when Episcopacy, Independency, Wesleyanism, and every other system must be read by the Word of God—and every form given up that is not approved before the Most High!

I hope I shall always be able to lift up my voice against that charity growing up in our midst which is not only a charity towards persons but a charity towards doctrines. I here fervent charity towards every Brother in Christ who differs from me. I love him for Christ’s sake and hold fellowship with him for the Truth’s sake—but I can have no charity for his errors, nor do I wish him to have any for mine.

I tell him straight to his face, “If your sentiments contradict mine, either I am right and you are wrong, or you are right and I am wrong. And it is time we should meet together and search the Word of God to see what and who is right.”—(See Sermon #238, Volume 5—REFORM—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)

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*Christians are dying
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Brother Pink Writes His Readers in 1943— Surely Appropriate for Us Today!

(Continued from page 5)

Captain of our salvation (Heb 2:10). “When He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them” (John 10:4). “Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21).

What comfort is there here—that the trials we endure for the Truth’s sake—that the unkind treatment we meet with from professing Brethren because we *dare not compromise* are an essential part of the process of our being conformed to the image of God’s Son! Shall we be called upon to pass through the Valley of the Shadow of Death? Well, the Christian has nothing to fear, for Christ has gone before him and extracted its sting!

The Lord has gone before you in the directions of His *precepts*. “Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path” (Psa 119:105), revealing the way of peace and blessing through this dark world. Especially is that true of its perceptive portions, for they make known the paths of righteousness which we are to tread.

Ignorance of God’s will concerning the way we should go is inexcusable—for He has already clearly and definitely made known His will. The highway of holiness does not have to be made by *us*—it is there plainly enough before us in the Word, and it is ours to walk in it. “You shall guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory” (Psa 73:24).

The Lord has gone before you in the provisions of His *promises*. What are the Divine promises but so many anticipations of our varied needs and guarantees that God stands pledged to supply? They are so many proofs of His Omniscience which foresaw what would meet our requirements. They are so many tokens of His loving kindness to manifest His tender concerns for us long before we had any historical existence.

They are so many evidences of His faithfulness that He will withhold no good thing from them who walk uprightly. Whatever tomorrow may hold, the Divine promises assure the Christian that the Lord has gone before and made every provision for him.

The Lord has gone before you into *Paradise*. Did He not expressly announce before He left this scene, “In My Father’s House are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you: I go to prepare a place for you”? (John 14:2). Not for Himself but for His redeemed! Nor would He entrust this task unto the angels! How it tells of the love of the Bridegroom for His bride! Christ has entered Heaven on our behalf, taking possession of it in *our* name: “where the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus” (Heb 6:20).

Here, then, is real substantial comfort and what shall be my response? “The LORD, He it is who does go before you” (Deut 31:8). Then, first, my eyes should be constantly fixed upon Him: “*looking unto Jesus*” (Heb 12:2)—looking away from all else, trusting none other.

Second, it is my business to *follow* Him—for what other purpose is a Guide?—“when He puts forth His own sheep, He goes before them and the sheep follow Him” (John 10:4). And as they do, so they find that He makes them to lie down in green pastures, that He leads them beside the still waters. Ah, who would not follow such a Shepherd?! O that the Lord may say of us as He did of Caleb, “he has followed Me fully” (Num 14:24).

Third, *fear* should be entirely *banished* from my heart. And will it not be so if faith really lays hold of this: “The LORD, *He* it is who does go before you, He will be with you, He will not fail you, neither forsake you; fear not, neither be dismayed”?

The Lord has gone before *the preacher*. This little message would hardly be complete if we fail to include a special word for the minister of

the Gospel. Nor has God overlooked him at this very point. “Behold *He* goes before *you*” (Matt 28:7) is addressed immediately unto the servants of Christ, and it is for their faith to appropriate the same. According as they do so will their hearts and hands be strengthened.

If you are really the servant of Christ, your Master has not called you to draw a bow at a venture, but has appointed your specific place in His vineyard and has ordered everything in connection therewith. That does not mean all will be smooth sailing. It did not mean that for the Apostles, as the book of Acts shows. But it *did* mean that they were not left without a Pilot. *He* not only went before them but gave assurance, “Lo, I am *with you* always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:20). That is the grand consolation of this writer. May it be yours, too.—Adapted from Brother Pink’s *Studies in the Scriptures*, January, 1943.

DO YOU LONG TO DEPART AND BE WITH THE LORD?

It may be there are some of you now present who call yourselves Believers, who look into a future state with shuddering and awe. Possibly there may be but few here who have attained to the position of the Apostle, when he could say that he had a *desire* to depart and to be with Christ.

I believe that our view of our own death is one of the readiest tokens by which we may judge our own spiritual condition. When men *fear* death, it is not certain that they are wicked, but it is quite certain that if they have faith, it is in a very weak and sickly condition.

When men *desire* death, we may not rest assured that they are therefore righteous, for they may desire it for wrong reasons. But if for right reasons they are panting to enter into another state, we may gather from this not only that their minds are right with God, but that their faith is sanctified, and that their love is fervent.—(See *Sermon #274, Volume 5—PAUL’S DESIRE TO DEPART—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.*)

**Pray daily for Pastor Curt Daniel of Faith Bible
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WHEN JOHN GOT TO HEAVEN

“When I get to Heaven, I shall see three wonders there. The first wonder will be to see many people there whom I did not expect to see. The second wonder will be to miss many people whom I did expect to see. The third wonder and greatest of all will be to find myself there.”

JOHN NEWTON

Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org—www.pro-gospel.org
PO Box 940871, PLANO, TX 75094

B.C., Monroe, MI, writes:

Catholics often write telling you that you are ignorant and don't understand Catholicism. I have reviewed your articles and find them completely accurate using the measuring rod of Scripture. I had 16 years of Catholic education including 4 years at a Catholic seminary and was two years away from becoming a priest. The Church of Rome built her secular power over kings using the "Donation of Constantine," and the "Decretal of Isadore." Both of these documents are admitted forgeries as stated in the Catholic Encyclopedia. The history of Catholicism is filled with murder (The Inquisition), idolatry (Marian worship), and shame (the lives of several popes such as Alexander VI, who bribed to secure the papal office, and then fathered a child through an incestuous relationship with his daughter.). Paul's response to incest in the Corinthian Church was to remove the Believer from the Church and to turn his flesh over to Satan that his soul might be saved in the day of Christ (1 Cor 5:1-7). It is ironic that the few voices identifying Catholicism as another gospel and warning Evangelicals against union with Catholics are former Catholics like we. My prayer is for Catholics to see the corruption of their church and turn from it to receive Jesus as their only means of salvation.

R. R., Philippines, writes:

Thanks for your book, *Preparing Catholics for Eternity*. We need it because Catholicism is dominant in our country. If you could only see how the RCC operates here, you would pity my countrymen. She's like a chameleon as she imitates evangelicalism with Christian praise songs, cell groups, *Life in the Spirit* seminars, etc. In the 1980's a lot of Catholics got saved. To counter this, the RCC intentionally copied things Christians do to hold back its members from leaving for Bible-believing Churches. I see many sincere Catholics here, and want to reach them with truth in love. Your book will open their eyes as they study objectively the teachings of the RCC in light of the Holy Scriptures. May you continue to use the gifts God gave you to spread the Gospel of Grace. I am now hearing from folks who attended my class on Roman Catholicism. They have shown *Preparing Catholics for Eternity* to their Catholic friends and relatives, and as a result they have requested more books to give to them. My mother-in-law is finally beginning to question the claims of Catholicism. She even went to our church and loved the clear, Biblical teaching. However, she still goes to Mass for fear that if she does not, she will go to Hell. How tragic, but since God is ever faithful, we are trusting Him to somehow reach her through His Holy Spirit. Plenty of seeds have been planted, that's for sure! May God continue to bless you in this most important ministry.

S. B., Internet, writes:

I am currently in the Catholic church and I am trying to leave, but it has been more difficult than I had expected. Your website has been helpful and I was wondering if you could answer a question? I attended Catholic school but fell away from the church and didn't start going again until after the death of my mother in 2009. My father and stepmother attend the same Catholic church I do, and are extremely devout. They expect my participation and attendance in everything with my three children. I teach religious education, but am ashamed to admit that I had never read the Bible until

this year. It was shortly after this that I started to question things. The Bible was not aligning with what I had been taught in the Catholic church. The more and more I read the Bible, the more contradictions I began seeing on the message of salvation. I really feel like my eyes and ears have been opened to the truth, and I am so thankful for that. But with that, has also come tremendous struggles. I finally got up the courage to sit down and have a conversation with my father. He was absolutely devastated that I was struggling with issues such as purgatory and the sacraments. He wanted to know why I was now questioning things after all these years, and I told him that I never had a reason to until I started to read the Bible for myself. My father said that I need to be looking to the Catholic church for answers. So I attended a Faith Formation meeting which was basically about how Catholics should handle questions from fundamentalists. The thing that bothered me the most was that the person leading this meeting said that the Catholic church is not a Bible-teaching church, and that we should not be trying to interpret the Bible for ourselves because it is a theological book, and is not meant to be taken literally. He also said that the Bible was written by Catholic monks. When the issue of the sacraments came up, the speaker said that it's not in the Bible because tradition precedes the Bible. I was left completely confused and once again doubting myself. In your opinion, can a Catholic be saved and still be in a Catholic church? Thank you.

Brother Mike responds: Dear S. B., Your experience of reading the Bible for the first time was very similar to mine. I had a crisis of faith when I knew I had to make a choice between believing the Word of God and the traditions of my religion. It was then that God granted me repentance from the fatal errors of Catholicism and enabled me to believe the Word of God. The Spirit of God brought me to life after being spiritually dead for over 30 years. To answer your question, the only way a Catholic, or anyone else, can be saved is when God extends His Sovereign Grace to a repenting sinner who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. When this supernatural event takes place, the new creature in Christ is sanctified by the Truth and called to walk in the Truth. This is not possible if you remain in a false religion. The Spirit of Truth will lead you out of spiritual darkness as you grow in the Grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We would be happy to point you to a Bible-believing church in your area where you can worship God in Spirit and Truth. We will pray for God to draw you, your dad, and your stepmother to Christ (John 6:44). To God be all glory and honor!

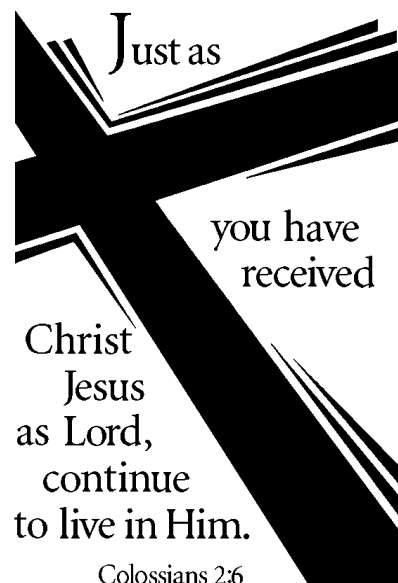
**PRAY DAILY FOR OUR LEADERS AND OUR
MEN AND WOMEN IN THE MILITARY.**

REFLECTIONS

(Continued from page 5)

He brings the Cross of Christ into the heart of a sinner by faith, and gives us communion with Christ in His death and fellowship of His sufferings: of the manner whereof more afterward.—John Owen (1616-1683) From *Overcoming Sin and Temptation* by Kelly Kopic and Justin Taylor. Published by Crossway Books, Wheaton, IL 2006 Pages 60-61.

**For HIS Glory
Prison Ministry
Emmett and Ann O'Donnell
P.O. Box 291301
Kerrville, TX 78029-1301**



Pray for the spouses and children of men and women in prison.

In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, every issue, our only purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

CAN YOU SING? ...REALLY?

**By C. H. Spurgeon
Luke 19:37-40.**

All true praise must come from true hearts; if you do not learn of Christ, you cannot render to Him acceptable song. These disciples, of course, were of different sorts; some of them had but just enlisted in the army—just learned to sit at His feet; some had worked miracles in His name, and, having been called to the Apostolic office, had preached the Word to others, but they were all disciples.

I trust that in this congregation there is a vast majority of disciples—well, then, all of you, you who have lately come into His school, you who have long been in it, you who have become fathers in Israel, and are teaching others, the whole multitude of disciples, I hope, will praise God! I could wish—God grant the wish—I could wish that those who are not disciples might soon become so. “Take My yoke upon you,” He said, “and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart.”

A disciple is a learner. You may not know much, but you need not know anything in coming to Christ. Christ begins with ignorance and bestows wisdom. If you do but know that you know nothing, you know enough to become a disciple of Christ Jesus. There is no matriculation necessary in order to enter into Christ’s college; He takes the fools and makes them know the wonders of His dying love. Oh that you may become a disciple! “Write my name down, Sir,” you say to the writer with the inkhorn by his side, and be you from now on a humble follower of the Lamb.

Now, though I would not have those who are not disciples close their mouths whenever others sing, yet I do think there are some hymns in which they would behave more honestly if they did not join—for there are some expressions which hardly ought to come from unconverted lips. Better far would it be if they would pray, “Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.” You may have a very sweet voice, my Friend, and may sing with admirable taste and in exquisite harmony any of the parts, but God does not accept the praise where the heart is absent.

The best tune in the book is one called *Hearts*. The whole multitude of the disciples whom Jesus loves are the proper persons to extol the Redeemer’s name. May you, dear Hearer, be among that company! (See Sermon #678, Volume 12—PRAISE YOUR GOD, O ZION!—read/download, by God’s Grace, all 63 volumes of C. H. Spurgeon sermons, and over 475 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org.)