



TOWARD THE MARK

*“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE
OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”
PHILIPPIANS 3:14*

*A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES*

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Dear Reader,

“If He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch” (Luke 12: 38). Year after year and watch after watch has passed, and our Lord has not yet come. Still, however, His word, “I come quickly,” abides in all its eternal freshness and truth; and long ago the Spirit said, “The night is far spent, and the day is at hand.” How soon then He may be here!

The time of the *second* watch arrived, and passed away, and the Bridegroom did not come; but “at midnight,” the closing moments of the second watch, He sent forth an awakening cry: “At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom; go ye out to meet Him.” Then there was a general awakening, and many hearts in different parts of the earth were stirred towards Him. The coming of the Lord for His church, that blessed hope, was once again shining bright before the eyes of His faithful people. We are told it was at midnight when this cry went forth, that the *third* watch began. **According to the Jewish mode of reckoning, it extended from midnight to three in the morning. The *third* watch clearly has been far advanced. We are therefore now at the end of the third watch. The Lord’s coming for us cannot be far off.** Though we look not for events, but for the Lord Himself, yet many events show that “the day,” which sets in after we are gone, is “approaching.” He is the Hope of the Church of God. His last presentation of Himself to His Church on earth, to comfort and attract our hearts heavenward to Himself, was, “...the Bright and Morning Star” and He added, **“Surely I come quickly.”** What should our warm and constant response to such grace be then but, **“Even so, come, Lord Jesus”?**

How very solemn, then, as well as cheering, are the words of our Lord: “If He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so [that is, watching], blessed are those servants.” May we hear His voice to us in these encouraging words, and not only wait for Him, but watch; for, said He, “What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” (Mark. 13:37.)

Dear Friends, we are thankful to the Lord for His faithfulness and goodness toward us in the past year. I am grateful to those faithful saints who have quietly been a source of help and encouragement to me in producing *Toward The Mark*. The Lord is their rewarder. Also, I want to thank all of you dear readers for your overwhelming response to the magazine. It is our prayer that the Lord will use *Toward the Mark* to help you to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Him.

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on *Toward the Mark*.

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

Emil S. Nashed

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I have the pleasure to inform you that a mailing list has been set up for Toward the Mark. If you would like to receive an electronic version simply send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com or visit www.towardthemark.org to be added to the mailing list. If you also want a copy of older issues, please mention it in your e-mail.

Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or the J.N. Darby translation.

MILK

"The truth shall make you free"

ADDRESSES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA

REVELATION 2 AND 3

THYATIRA

(Revelation 2:18-29)

There are three major points of distinction between the third church, Pergamos, and the fourth, Thyatira.

First of all, the Lord refers to His Coming again in the messages to each of the last four churches, beginning with Thyatira. The conditions found in them will persist to the end of the dispensation, when He comes again.

Secondly, in each of the last four churches, there is an identifiable remnant of individuals; each called an overcomer, true to God, amongst the main body of nominal adherents.

The third significant distinction is that to Ephesus, Smyrna and Pergamos, the call to hear what the Spirit says to the churches precedes the promise to the overcomer. To Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, the promise to the overcomer comes first. The implication seems to be that a point arrives in the history of the church when the true, faithful element in the professing church becomes a small minority of the total. The masses are now beyond the Spirit's appeal. From this point on, only an overcomer will listen to His voice.

It is well to see these clear distinctions as we now look at the address to Thyatira.

Verse 18 "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet *are* like fine brass."

Thyatira is about fifty miles south and east of Pergamos. It is situated on level ground in the centre of a broad vale. It is easily

accessible from all directions. There might be a moral parallel there. The well-known saying "All roads lead to Rome" should be borne in mind in the light of remarks made later.

Angel

The letter was addressed to the "angel," the responsible element in the local assembly; those who both acted responsibly in the assembly and also were prepared to accept responsibility in assembly affairs.

The Son of God

In chapter 1, He is presented as Son of Man. **To Thyatira, He is presented as Son of God. Necessarily so! This is to emphasize the supreme authority of the Son (Psalm2). His dignity, majesty, and authority must be stressed when His place of supremacy is challenged by another.** At Thyatira, the supreme place due to Him was usurped by another (perhaps indicative of the Papacy).

Eyes like unto a flame of fire

He knew all that was going on in this the darkest period in the history of the church, well named "The Dark Ages." The system was enshrouded in moral and spiritual darkness, **but nothing could be hidden from the searching scrutiny of His all-seeing eyes.** He was fully aware of the terrible corruption which was coming into the church. The very name Thyatira means "cesspool." Who but the Son of God could assert the rights of God?

Feet like fine brass

Fine brass, refined in the fire. This would be appreciated by the highly-skilled local coppersmiths, who produced just such an alloy of especially high quality. What is brought prominently before us here, as in chapter 1:15, is the judicial glory of Christ. **His feet are shod for righteous judgment.**

Verse 19 "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last *to be* more than the first." I know He, the omniscient Son of God, knows all things (cf. John 21:17).

Thy works

“I know thy works.” These works, which the Lord Himself approves, can only be achieved where there are the underlying qualities of love, devoted service, faith, and patience in the hearts of the workers.

charity

“I know...thy love.” **All else must spring from this.** The law was well summed up, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind” (Luke10:27). **Man, natural man, cannot achieve this himself. But love, divine love, expresses itself in the works of true believers.**

Service

“I know...thy service.” The Son of God Himself was conscious of the detailed activities of each of the local workers.

Faith

“I know...thy faith.” They had simple trust in the God they served.

Patience

“I know...thy patience” or endurance. The sense of the Lord’s approval when under pressure brings inner peace and contentment (2 Thessalonians 3:5; 1 Timothy 6:6).

the last to be more than the first

Their activity did not wane or wither under the prevailing corruption, nor fade with the passage of time.

Verse 20 “Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

The name of Jezebel is used here characteristically rather than personally; not to identify by name any individual or group concerned, but to draw attention to the character of the corruption that was taking place. 1 Kings 16-21 details the sordid story of the original Jezebel. Not content with being the consort of the king of Israel, Jezebel, a Zidonian Baal-worshipper,

led God’s earthly people into pagan idolatry. She actively opposed and killed the prophets of the Lord.

She claimed to bring God’s message, as a prophetess, but the hearers were encouraged to commit moral fornication, that is, to be unfaithful to God. The teaching is traced back to its satanic origin (v. 24, “the depths of Satan”). **Satan will use every possible means to bring into the church whatever he can to create havoc, to reduce the church to the level of the world, to depose the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, where possible, to destroy the testimony to His Name. Let us be constantly aware of his “wiles.”**

My servants

The church at Thyatira was corrupted by illicit moral union with the world. **Idolatry is not confined to literal worshipping of material images. It includes yielding to anything that replaces or challenges Christ as the supreme object of the heart.**

Individuals are each responsible to God as such. Leaders who lead astray naïve individuals (whom the Lord is graciously pleased to call “My servants”) and/or allow such to be led astray, have a greatly increased responsibility, and will be judged accordingly (cf. Matthew13:13; Revelation18:1-3).

Verse 21 “And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.”

Repentance is essential. The Lord says “I gave her space to repent...she repented not.” Sadly, the call and opportunity for repentance went unheeded. “The woman” did not repent, but those caught up with her were also called upon to repent as individuals.

Verse 22 “Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

I will cast her into a bed

“She,” who has seduced His servants, will meet “her” punishment in the midst of the very corruption which “she” has encouraged. Those who are “her children,” following “her” lead, will also be

subject to His holy judgment. Their end is death, not merely physical death of the body, but moral and spiritual death of the soul.

Verse 23 “And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.”

Her children

She is a mother of harlots (17:5). **“Her children” here are the systems produced, not the individuals in the systems. Individual responsibility is not negated by being in a system.** Thankfully, even in an evil system, and in the darkest days, God raises up individuals who will stand for Him in an evil day. **At Thyatira, the general picture was very black, but there were those even there who were prepared to stand for God.**

I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts (cf. Jeremiah 17:10).

He sees, and knows, not only the deeds, but also the motives. This is why He alone can issue a righteous judgment. **It is a fact of history that Rome was the imperial capital of the known world from about 750 B.C. to about 500 A.D. It is also a fact that Rome became the acknowledged ecclesiastical (and political) capital of the religious world in the so-called “dark ages” from about 500 A.D. to about 1500 A.D. Sadly, the description of Thyatira matches exactly the spiritual and moral conditions in that period.** No sober, serious minded student of scripture and history can honestly avoid this realization. In particular, the terms used describe exactly the attitude and claims of the Roman Catholic Church. Recognition of the evils of the system does not diminish the need for Christian love for individuals beguiled by the system.

This section foretells the end result of man’s building, seen full-blown in chapters 17 and 18. We also see God’s judgment upon it, pronounced here and executed in chapter 18. Happily, this book also gives us the end product of God’s building in this world, in chapters 21 and 22.

Verse 24 “But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.”

There is always an element of innocent believers who are unaware of the implications of what they are involved in. Every allowance must be made for such, but they are exhorted to be true to the little they know.

Verse 25 “But that which ye have *already* hold fast till I come.”

hold fast

Hang on, go on, keep going, don’t give up.

Verse 26 “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.”

Overcomers

The church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). **The privilege and responsibility of being an overcomer devolves on those who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ as Lord (1 Corinthians 1:2). Note: The term overcomer is invariably used in the singular. It is the fruit of intensely personal individual exercise**

My works

These are works that please Him, as the works He did while He was on earth pleased the Father (John 8:29).

Power over the nations

The Pontiff claimed, and continues to claim, supreme authority on earth. He who resists the claims of the Pontiff gains what the Pontiff claims — power over the nations; not now, but in the world to come.

Verse 27 “And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.”

A rod of iron

Iron denotes disciplinary power, whereas brass denotes judicial power (Revelation 1:15; 2:18). This power is acknowledged to be a delegated power and authority (John 5:22, 27) in contrast to the Pope, who claims supreme, unchallengeable authority.

Verse 28 “And I will give him the morning star.”

The morning star shines brightly, immediately before the dawn when the surrounding background is at its darkest. It is the herald of the coming day, depicting the light of His Coming. This is a moral picture. The overcomer is given the light in his soul of the coming of the Lord to end the system, by executing His judgment upon it. This light was given even in the Dark Ages. God preserved, even in the darkest days of the church’s history, a testimony unto Himself in those individuals who had right thoughts of the Coming of the Lord. The Pope insists on reigning now. The faithful individual who has the Morning Star given to him has no desire to reign now. He is prepared to wait for the Lord to reign (2 Th. 3:5; 2 Tim. 2:12). As always, God gives the faithful individual light as to the future to regulate his attitude and conduct at the present time.

Verse 29 “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

The cry continues to go out. As part of the present testimony to His Name, what is my response to be?

Ernie Brown

MEAT

“Sanctify them by the truth”

THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Answers to nine questions of vital importance to all true believers:

- 1-Have you received the Holy Spirit?**
- 2-Does He indwell all believers?**
- 3-What does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Spirit?**
- 4-Can we grieve Him away?**
- 5-What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?**
- 6-What does it mean to be led by the Spirit?**
- 7-What does it mean to be filled by the Spirit?**
- 8-What is the unpardonable sin?**
- 9-Can a believer blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?**

In the first chapter of the Book of the Acts we have the record of our Lord returning to heaven from which He came when He came into this world in Manhood. He had revealed God in His *life* while walking on this earth; and he had effected redemption by His *death* when He gave His holy body and shed His precious blood. Now, His work accomplished, He was about to leave this world and go to the right hand of God (Acts 2:33). Ere He parted from His disciples, He told them that when He took His seat in heaven, He would send down to them the Holy Spirit in order that they should be enabled to represent Him in this world. Before going to the cross He had assured them that He would send the Spirit to them (John 15: 26), and now, after His death upon the cross, He reaffirms that promise just as He is about to leave them and be taken up to heaven (Acts 1:11). In this we have the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Turning on to Acts 2:1-4, we see that promise implemented on the day of Pentecost, a word which means fifty days. We read that the Lord had walked with them forty days after His resurrection (Acts 1:3), then ten days after He had been taken to heaven, we have the day of Pentecost, fifty days, a reference to

Leviticus 23:16. **On this day as we read, the Holy Spirit came down with force and filled each one gathered in that upper room, one hundred and twenty of them as Acts 1:15 records. This great event marked the beginning of Christianity in this world.** The Lord Himself had made preparation for this while in this world and it was established by the coming of the Spirit in that Spirit filled company.

Flowing out of this wonderful beginning, the apostle Peter, supported by the others, stood up and preached the gospel in the power of the Spirit, urging the people to turn in repentance toward God and to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior, assuring them that if they did so, they too would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). “Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” The simple order in this verse is: repentance, remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. Repentance is towards God; remission, or forgiveness as the word means, is by the work of Christ; and then follows the gift of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit. The translators used both words but they are precisely the same. **It is evident from this verse that no one can have the gift of the Spirit until their sins are first remitted, and the only ground upon which God will forgive any one of their sins is by that person individually accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior.** Peter assured the people that God holds out forgiveness to *all* (v. 39) but it must be accepted by faith. No one can blame God if they do not possess this forgiveness, for He holds it out to all. To possess this wonderful gift we must lay hold of it for ourselves by turning to the Lord Jesus in our need and saying in such terms as the hymn writer suggests, “Jesus I will trust you, trust you with my soul; guilty, lost, and helpless, Thou can make me whole; Thou hast died for sinners, therefore, Lord, for ME.” Only those who have so trusted Jesus as Savior enjoy the forgiveness of their sins. Following forgiveness, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This chapter is crystal clear on these matters as a careful perusal will verify.

2- Does He indwell all believers?

To answer this, we select two passages out of many which prove that the Holy Spirit does indeed dwell in *all* believers. **Our first passage is Ephesians 1:13:** “In Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.” **Here is a further proof that those who believe the gospel do receive the Holy Spirit.** In this passage long after the day of Pentecost, the apostle Paul assures these Ephesian believers that they had received the gift of the Holy Spirit *after* having believed the gospel.

Our second Scripture is in 1 Corinthians 12: 13, again note, written many years after Pentecost: “For by one Spirit are we *all* baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” **There ought to be no doubt in any of our minds that all who have their sins forgiven by accepting Christ as their Saviour, have the gift of the Holy Spirit. He dwells in the heart of every believer, and dwells there forever (John14:16).**

3-What does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Spirit?

A seal is a mark of identification and ownership. Sealing by the Spirit is not that the Spirit puts a mark upon us, but rather that He Himself is the seal as dwelling in the hearts of all who believe. This is clearly taught in Ephesians 1:13-14: “In Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, *Which is the earnest* of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.” Again, in 2 Corinthians 1:22: “Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.” **Here once more we learn that the Spirit is the earnest as dwelling in our hearts being the Divine seal that we belong to God.**

4- Can we grieve Him away?

Our Scripture quoted in the preceding paragraph assures us that we are sealed “until the redemption of the purchased possession”

which means until the coming of our Lord to take His inheritance. Again we read in John 14:16: “He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you *forever*.” **Once the Spirit takes up His abode in the heart of a believer, He is there to stay.** We can hardly think in the light of both of these passages of Scripture that He could ever be grieved *away*.

Yet we can grieve Him, and because of this we are exhorted not to do so in Ephesians 4:30: “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” **Taking this verse in its setting from verse 25 to verse 32, it appears that we can grieve the Spirit by lying, uncontrolled temper, yielding to the temptations of the devil, stealing, corrupt talking, bitterness, wrath, clamor, and evil speaking. He dwells in our hearts to preserve us from all these things. We may lie to the Spirit as we read in Acts 5:4-9, we may quench the Spirit as recorded in 1 Thessalonians 5:19, and we may grieve the Spirit as in this passage we have been quoting, but He abides in the heart of the believer for ever.**

5-What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

For an answer to this question we turn to Romans 8:1-4: “**No condemnation**” is the fruit of the work of Christ (v. 1). “**Life**” is the fruit of the work of the Spirit (v. 2). “**Condemned sin**” is the fruit of the work of God (v. 3). “**Walk**” is the fruit of believers (v. 4). The sequence here is, what Christ has done, then, what the Spirit has done, then, what God has done, then, what we do. Our walk follows the working of each Divine Person to fit us for the Christian pathway through this world. We are told in verse 4 that walking after the Spirit will enable us to fulfill the righteous requirements of the law. These were summed up by a lawyer and agreed to by our Lord as being love to God on the one hand and love to one’s neighbor on the other (Luke. 10:26-28). **It means we give to God first what is right in His sight and we do to our fellow being what is right towards him.** This is walking by, or in the Spirit. Many details could be gathered from other parts of Scripture, but doing always what is right both Godward and manward is the evidence of a believer walking by the Spirit.

6-What does it mean to be led by the Spirit?

To be led by the Spirit is also mentioned in this chapter (Rom. 8:14: “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” This word translated “led” has many applications but the main idea running through all is “to take care of.” **The Spirit takes care of us by leading us into right paths and having such a guide manifests that we are “sons of God.” A prince while he is a minor is ever in the care of a tutor who knows how the prince ought to conduct himself according to his station in life. He must act at all times as the son of a king. In like manner the Spirit dwells in our hearts instructing us as to the conduct which becomes us because we are “sons of God.”** We have the living voice of the Spirit in our hearts Who ever seeks to guide us; leading or tutoring us because we are “sons of God.” Thus we are led by the Spirit.

7-What does it mean to be filled by the Spirit?

Being filled with the Spirit is outlined for us in Ephesians 5: 18-21. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (v. 18). **A man filled with wine does things he would not do when sober; under the power of wine he exhibits another character. So a man filled with the Spirit exhibits another character quite different from what once marked him before he possessed the Spirit.**

When filled with the Spirit; **He will talk about the things of God in the language of Scripture.** “Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (v. 19). **He will be moving along the Christian pathway rejoicing,** “singing” (v. 19). **His heart will be in tune with the Lord,** “making melody in your heart to the Lord” (v. 19). **He will be ever thankful as a recipient of the grace and mercy of God,** “Giving thanks always” (v. 20). **He will be submissive and not wanting to assert his will,** “Submitting yourselves one to another” (v. 21). These are some of the marks of a believer who is filled with the Spirit.

8-What is the unpardonable sin?

We are told in Matthew 12:24-30 what this unpardonable sin really is. **It is attributing the works of God to demoniacal power.** Beelzebub was regarded as the prince of devils and the Pharisees actually said our Lord was empowered by him in doing these mighty works. Twice they accused Him of this, in Matthew 9:34 and here again in Matthew 12:24. The Lord had just healed a blind and dumb man and they said this good work was done by evil influence. What can be done with such people who attribute the works of God to Satanic influence? This judgment pronounced by our Lord came upon them at the stoning of Stephen who accused them of always resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7). This is the *only* sin which will not be forgiven, “but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.”

9-Can a believer blaspheme against the Holy Spirit?

We answer unequivocally, **NO. Having the Spirit dwelling in their hearts puts them at once beyond this danger.** Many who have failed in some way in their service for the Lord have had the devil tell them that they have committed the unpardonable sin, **but there is only one unpardonable sin and it is not the failure of a believer.** It is a diabolical attack upon the power of the Spirit of God and no believer could be guilty of this. The Lord Himself said, “*it shall not be forgiven,*” not they. No, it is this sin and this alone. Were we to ask any believer as indeed we have done of some who thought they had committed *an* not *the* unpardonable sin, “Have you said the work of God is the work of the devil?” In every case the answer has been, NO. How could one who *has* the Spirit blaspheme against Him! It is Pharisees of whom the Lord said, “Ye are of your father the devil” (Jn. 8: 44), who are guilty of this sin, but never a simple believer on our Lord Jesus Christ.

To sum up these questions. All believers have the Spirit and He abides with them for ever. He is the power by which we rightly serve God and He will abide in our hearts until the coming of our Lord. May we constantly walk in the Spirit and so be in this world well-pleasing to our God.

G. Davison

Exercise

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

CHILDREN

Privilege and Responsibilities

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3).

“Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord” (Col. 3:20).

For the expression of the relationship of “children,” the original biblical language has two words: “teknon” and “huios.” “Teknon” expresses the nearness of that relationship in affection, and “huios” expresses the rights and claims of and the duties connected with being a child.

It is the same in English and other languages. If parents wish to express their parental love to a child, they say, “My child.” The very word “child” at once reminds the hearts of father and mother back to the days of the infancy. From the first moment of its existence, when its first feeble, weeping cry announced its arrival in a world of sin and sorrow and sent a thrill through the parent’s heart, through the first years of its helpless infancy, drawing forth the tender pity of the father, and requiring the care of a mother’s love by day and night. That single word “child” recalls, as it brings out, all those affections of a parent’s heart, of which the child has been the happy recipient.

But when the object of that tender, loving parental care has developed into maturity, and the young man or woman stands before the parents, the parents may have to put before them their duties as “sons” or “daughters” and “heirs.” If the child has lost sight of and neglected these responsibilities the father’s grave word, “my son,” appeals to

the conscience of the forgetful young recipient of parental love and liberality. If the exhortation word has reached the conscience of the child, and produced its proper effect, the old cheerful term, “my child,” will come as a balm for the heart, like the first sunbeam after the stormy cloud.

And may I ask you readers, many of whom are in this happy, but none the less responsible relationship: Does that sweet word, “my child,” when coming to you from the lips of a fond parent, recall to your heart the many days and nights of unceasing loving parental care, patience, and forbearance, bestowed upon you from the first moment of your existence, through all the years of your often capricious and boisterous childhood?

If that word, “my child,” speaks to your heart, does it also speak to your conscience, of how your parents’ love and tender care may be repaid? That love, that watched during the long hours of the night or over your sick bed; or toiled for you in the sweat of the brow in the heat of the day; or braved the frost and the storms and waves that you might be fed and clothed. That love that watched over your precious soul, raised you up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and wrestled in prayer to God for your soul by day and night. Have you yielded to God and to your parents the fruits?

An Excerpt from J.A. Van Poseck’s “Light in our Dwelling”
Contributed by K.G.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. What was the first colour mentioned in the Bible?
2. Who was the first metal craftsman?
3. Where were the disciples first called Christians?

Rest

“Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?”

A GREAT WHILE BEFORE DAY

“And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35).

I got a great lift recently in reading the first chapter of Mark’s Gospel. When I came to verse 35, I had to stop and give thanks to God, for as by a flash of light from heaven **I was made to realize that I could never be up too early for the Lord. My troubles may begin with my first conscious moment, but He has risen up before them, and is always ready for them. He is always ahead of them and of me. And with Him there is the needed grace to carry me through every trouble, whenever and wherever they may arise.**

The statement I have quoted is a most beautiful one. The Lord had many towns to visit, had much service to do in them, had many needs to meet and sorrows to sooth; the miseries of the multitudes would surge about Him when the day awoke, **but they would not take Him by surprise or overwhelm Him, for He had risen up before them all, and was prepared for every one of them; the supplies in Him were equal to the day’s demands. He viewed the whole range of those demands in communion with His Father. Each individual case passed before Him, and was the subject of His intercession in that solitary place into which *He went to pray.*** Isaiah 50:4 comes forcibly and blessedly to the mind at this point: “The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned [disciple] that I should know how to speak a word in season to [succour by a word] him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned [learner, or disciple].”

Wonderful description of our Lord's life of service on earth! But not less wonderful than His life now, *for He ever liveth to make intercession for us*; and intercession is communion (cf. Gen. 18.33); communion between the Intercessor and God with whom He intercedes about the subjects of His intercession. And the intercession is made and heard before the need arises in its strength. "I have prayed for thee," He said to Peter while yet He was all unconscious—fast asleep as to having any need at all.

Great is the encouragement that the contemplation of Him in His life of service while on earth yields for us, for in that service HE SHOWED HIMSELF, and He does not change; His readiness to meet all need is the same now as then and the grace with which He does it is unabated. **If the millions of God's saints who are burdened and groaning, whose light for God is almost extinguished under a load of care, are to be raised up and revived, if they are to lift their heads as overcomers and sing instead of sigh they must realize this great fact. The Lord rose up before their need, He knew it all before it awoke to perplex and worry them;** this must not be a mere article of their faith to which they give an indifferent and perhaps a reluctant assent, **but a deep conviction in their souls which will make them yield themselves and the day's burdens to Him at the beginning of it, which will make them cast all their care upon Him.**

I am in no sort of doubt that I am on the right line here, and I urge this great fact, this blessed, encouraging, peace-giving fact, upon my readers, your needs are never ahead of the Lord; they may have surprised you, but they have not taken Him by surprise.

I preach in this paper an all-sufficient Christ—ever ready, ever able, and ever willing; who rose up a great while before the day of your troubles awoke. And I further urge each reader to read what I write for himself, and without reference to another, to read as though this paper were a

particular and private message addressed to himself alone; and to say, "This burden that has grown so heavy and presses upon me so sorely was all known to the Lord before I felt it at all, and He rose up before it, if not to remove it, to carry me through it. I will go to Him about it, and lay it all from my side at His feet, for I and it have been and are the objects of His particular interest and thought."

It is a marvelous thing to draw near to Him with a sense of this in the soul; to know that before I awoke in the morning He had risen up and was thinking of me, and was waiting and prepared to hear and answer my waking cry. It fills the soul with awe and with gratitude: with awe because of what He is, with gratitude because He is all that He is for me. Is this a selfish view of things? It is only as we view things in this way that we shall be delivered from self and selfishness—for it is help from the Lord that delivers—the grace that is in Him, that stoops from the height of His glory to the depth of our need. It is Himself and His abundant sufficiency that lifts us out of our selfishness and sets us free to praise Him and live the day's life without murmuring and disputing.

J.T. Mawson

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURES SEARCH!

1. Green (Gen. 1:30)
2. Tubal-Cain (Gen. 4:22)
3. Antioch (Acts 11:26)

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD

A group of students was asked to list what they thought the list of the Seven Wonders of the World should include. There were some differences of opinion, but the most votes went to the following:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Egypt's Great Pyramids | 5. Empire State Building |
| 2. Taj Mahal | 6. St. Peter's Basilica |
| 3. Grand Canyon | 7. China's Great Wall |
| 4. Panama Canal | |

You may not recognize each of the seven wonders, and you may also question some of the choices. What would your choices be? Think about it for a minute. One quiet student seemed to be having a problem as she worked on her list. "What's your problem?" they asked her. "It's difficult to make up your mind. There are so many things to think about," she replied. "Read us your list so far and we'll help you with it." Here was her list:

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. To see | 4. To taste | 6. To laugh |
| 2. To hear | 5. To feel | 7. To love |
| 3. To touch | | |

The room suddenly went silent as the students realized how they had truly overlooked the simple, amazing wonders that we all take for granted. All of the items on the student's list are God-given wonders that most of us enjoy every single day of our lives. All of the choices on the group's list are man-made, with the exception of one, and most of us will never see many or any of them. The man-made wonders were designed and constructed using the marvelous brain that God designed and gave to each one of us.

One more God-given wonder is your never-dying spirit and soul that God has lovingly given to you so that you may spend eternity in heaven with His beloved Son Jesus. However, He holds you responsible for a decision you must make. After your time here on earth is over, your soul will spend eternity in one of two places — Heaven or Hell. If your sins are forgiven, the happiness of heaven is where you will be with Jesus who loves you and died for you. If your sins are not forgiven, the total darkness of hell is where you will spend eternity in anguish and remorse with the devil and his angels. The Bible says, "I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life" (Deuteronomy30:19). What is your decision?

If you choose life, you only need to tell the Lord Jesus that you are truly sorry for your sins and that you believe that He died for you and made God's necessary payment for your sins when His blood was shed. **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears My word, and believes on Him that sent Me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John5:24).**

There's nothing more to do and nothing to buy!