



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,

**“In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength”
(Isaiah 30:15)**

Many of you dear readers have recently graduated from schools, colleges, and universities and may be anxious about the future. I would like to emphasize the fact that there is indeed strength given to us by being quiet before the Lord. We are so prone to do and say and get very busy taking matters into our own hands rather than allowing the Lord to work out things for us while we patiently and humbly wait before Him. It is one thing to talk about this and quite another to actually wait before God. It is always better to wait until we know or understand the mind of the Lord. This will subdue our spirit and make us completely dependent upon Him for guidance every step of the way. It will also enable us to see what might be wrong in our thoughts and ideas and help correct our thinking and adjust our ways. **In waiting and praying, we need not only to feel the need of what we ask but to realize the presence of Him to whom we speak. Prayer is not only asking the right things but having the sense of the person to whom I present my requests. If we do not have that, His love and power for us will not be realized, and we will feel the anxiety that comes with that uncertainty. Let us quietly and confidently wait on the Lord to direct our steps and strengthen us so our joy in the Lord will be renewed and our faith will be rewarded.**

I trust that you will enjoy the great articles in this issue during the summer months. It is our prayer that the Lord will use them to help you to grow and be established in Him. Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement. We love hearing from all of you.

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on Toward the Mark. Make sure that you visit our new and improved website!!

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

Emil S. Nashed

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If you would like to join the mailing list to receive the electronic version of Toward the Mark, simply visit www.towardthemark.org or send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com to be added. If you would like copies 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"

"THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH"

(Habakkuk 2:4)

I want you to notice these words, "The just shall live by faith." If you want to know what it was for a Jew in those days to live by faith, read Habakkuk 3:17–19. That is a fine example of it.

This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament, and I believe each time the emphasis should be on different words.

The Just

Look at Romans 1:17. Gentiles, not Jews, are addressed here. The whole point of the Epistle to the Romans is justification. God is the justifier of all who believe on Jesus, and although once dead in trespasses and sins, yet through the blood of Christ, God can now justify them, and they are looked upon as "the just." So the stress here should be on the first two words "The just shall live by faith."

Faith

Now turn to Galatians 3:2. Here the great controversy is between "law" and "faith." The apostle mentions both words in this verse, and he is seeking to teach them that the motive power for our walk is faith, not the bondage of the law; so we read, "The just shall live by faith."

Live

In Hebrews 10:38 we find the same words, but this time as showing what the practical effect should be in our daily lives. We are to "live by faith." The just must put his faith into practice and "live by" it. In the succeeding chapter we have illustrations of this, showing how different men under varied circumstances did "live by faith." Some were very long lives, with little of faith recorded, perhaps little to record, but the Holy Spirit notices and approves what was there. Then, in Hebrews 12:2, He directs their

gaze to heaven, to One who did not exhibit this faith by occasional paroxysms, but who “began” and “finished” in faith. Blessed Savior! Well may the writer say, “Looking unto Jesus...consider Him.”

What a wonderful book this Bible is. The Holy Spirit speaking through different channels and speaking the same words, but in each case teaching us varied lessons and attracting us, by contrast, to Christ.

(Extracted, Dr. H. J. W. Barlee)

CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD AND ADVOCACY

Priesthood is that I may behave well;

Advocacy is when I do not behave well.

Priesthood keeps my heart in constant dependence in my walk—its exercise is that I may not go wrong.

Advocacy is when I have gone wrong.

J. N. Darby

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!

1. What is the name of the mountain where Solomon built the temple?
2. Which king of Judah became a leper when he acted as a priest in the temple?
3. What is the name of temple gate where the lame man, who was healed by Peter, was sitting daily to ask for alms?

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

JACOB'S DREAM!

In the Scriptures we often find God speaking to men in dreams, even as Elihu said to Job, "For God speaketh...in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men" (Job 33:14, 15), and it was in this way that the Lord spoke to Jacob. This seems to have been Jacob's first personal dealing with the Lord, though he had spoken to his father Isaac, saying, "The Lord thy God" (Genesis 27:20).

Like many another young man he was acquainted with the Name of the Lord, having heard it from the lips of his parents and having used it himself, although not having had as yet any personal acquaintance with the Lord.

Jacob had shown that he valued the birthright and the blessing of the Lord, even if he had obtained them in a very wrong way. **God took notice of this even as His government took account of Jacob's wrongdoing. God valued Jacob's desire for His blessing, but He also dealt faithfully with his evil ways.**

The Ladder that Reached to Heaven:

As Jacob dreamed, he saw a ladder set up on earth that reached to heaven, plainly teaching Jacob that there was a divine link between earth and heaven, and this link was maintained in God's providence by angelic means, for the angels of God were "ascending and descending" on the ladder. Above the ladder was the Lord Himself, showing that the angelic ministry was directed by Him, the angels He sent forth on their earthly missions returning to Him to give account of what they had done for Him. It seems that the Lord alludes to this in John 1 when He said to Nathaniel, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter [or Henceforth] ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (John 1:51). **Angelic ministry is now under the control of the Lord as Son of Man, as is seen in Acts 5:19; 10:3; 12:7-11; and Hebrews 1:14.**

What the Lord Said to Jacob:

Every word spoken by the Lord was in richest grace. There was not, as we might have expected, a solemn rebuke to Jacob for his reproachful conduct. The Lord had not overlooked Jacob's sins, but He was at this time declaring His sovereign grace. This is evident from the opening words of the Lord who declared Himself as "The LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac" (Genesis 28:13). The One who in His sovereign choice had called Abraham, and had chosen Isaac, was intervening to bless Jacob in spite of all he was naturally.

The first thing promised to Jacob was "**the land** whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed." This was the renewal of the promise given to Abraham and Isaac, which has already had a partial fulfilment, but which awaits complete fulfilment when, under Messiah, Israel will possess the land of promise.

The next part of the promise concerns the **natural seed**: "And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south." Scripture attests abundantly to the fulfilment of this part of the promise, and today, after all the attempts of different nations and individuals to exterminate the seed of Jacob, it is reckoned that there are over thirteen million of them in the world. Just before Christ reigns there will be the destruction of two-thirds of those in the land (Zechariah 13:8), and the rebels from among those returning to the land will be purged out (Ezekiel 20:38), but how vast will be the numbers of the seed of Jacob when they multiply unhindered during the millennium.

Then the Lord said to Jacob, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." This will assuredly be brought to pass when Israel is blessed under Christ in the coming day. Even the inveterate foes of Israel, Egypt and Assyria, will be blessed in relation to the seed of Jacob, for it is written concerning the millennial day, "Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Isaiah 19:24, 25). No doubt the latter part of this can be applied to Christ, as it is in the promise made to Abraham (Galatians 3:16), for it is under Christ's reign, and because of His death upon the cross, that the blessing comes to Jew and Gentile, both now and in the world to come.

How surpassingly gracious to Jacob are the words of verse 15, “And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land: for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.” This was an unconditional promise from God to Jacob, and its complete fulfilment did not rest on anything that Jacob was or could do, but entirely on the grace and strength of the One who promised. God had undertaken, without any desire or request on the part of Jacob, to be with Jacob, to keep him wherever he would go, and to bring him back to the land from which he was going. **God vouchsafed His presence to Jacob until He had accomplished all He now promised. Such is the grace of the God of Jacob; such is the grace of the God we have learned and know in Jesus, One who blesses unconditionally, and who will never leave us till He brings us home to our heavenly country.**

Jacob’s Response:

We might have thought that with such a wonderful vision accompanied with such amazing promises from God that Jacob would have awakened with joy, but it was not so, for “he was afraid.” The realization that he was in the presence of God brought terror to the heart of the man who had deceived his father and robbed his brother. He had not come voluntarily into God’s presence, for he said, “Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.”

The presence of the Lord is not an attractive place to a wrongdoer: it is the last place he desires to be in, for God’s presence exposes what he really is. It is different with a repentant sinner who not only has seen himself exposed, but who, in the same light, has seen what God is in all the grace and goodness of His heart.

The poor sinner of Luke 7 did not feel the presence of Jesus to be a dreadful place, nor did the prodigal the presence of his Father when he had been kissed, robed and shod. All fear is driven from the heart that truly knows the love and grace of a Savior God.

Having been in the presence of God, Jacob felt that the place in which he was must be “the house of God...the gate of heaven,” but the feelings of his heart were so different from those of the Psalmist who wrote, “My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God” (Psalms 84:2).

God's house is indeed the gate of heaven, the way into the enjoyment of the things that God has revealed by His Spirit, the things, too, revealed by the Son on earth who came to speak "heavenly things."

Jacob, Moses, and David among the Old Testament saints could tell us of God's house, but they could not enter within "the gate of heaven" as those who have boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:19), and who "have access by one Spirit unto the Father" (Ephesians 2:18). What they said, and what has been written in the Old Testament, is full of instruction for us in a typical way, but the full truth of the house of God and of access into the presence of God awaited the coming of the Lord Jesus and His entry into heaven as Man.

Overcoming his first fear, "Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it, and he called the name of the place Beth-el," which means the house of God. **The pillar was a testimony to the wonderful event, to the beginning of a new chapter in Jacob's eventful history, to his having rested in the presence of God, and to the rich promises of the God of all grace.** Jacob signified the sacred character of all that happened that memorable night when he poured the oil on the top of the pillar. **The old name of the place was Luz, meaning a curve, and it indicated what Jacob's life had been, far from straight, but now for Jacob it was Bethel, the dwelling place of God, and it had a very significant place in Jacob's later history (Genesis 28:19; 31:13; 35:1-16).**

Jacob's Vow:

How very feebly did poor Jacob answer in his vow to the unbounded and sovereign grace of God. Instead of simply thanking God for His grace, and rejoicing in it before Him, he started by saying "If God will be with me." **There was not the slightest reason for saying "if," since God had promised to be with him unconditionally.** God had promised to keep him wherever he would go but had not spoken of either bread or raiment, which evidently were prominent in Jacob's thoughts. Simple faith in the Lord's promise would have assured him of all his needs from day to day.

Again, God had promised to bring him back to the land, so that there was no need for any vow from Jacob. In his present state Jacob, like so

many Christians, was thinking that something was required from him, although God had not spoken a word regarding this.

Still, with all his lack of simple faith in God, there was with Jacob the desire for the things of God, so that he added, “And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God’s house.” Like David in a future day, he desired to have a dwelling place for God, and there was the divinely given unction that enabled him to discern that the most suitable place for this dwelling was the place in which God appeared to him. It was to this very place that God recalled Jacob, saying, “Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make an altar unto God” (Genesis 35:1), and on hearing this word, “Jacob said unto his household...Put away the strange gods that are among you” (v. 2). This call to Bethel aroused in Jacob the realization of the holiness of the God who had called him to His house and worship.

Finally, Jacob said, “And of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.” Although Jacob had only asked for bread and raiment, he evidently felt that God would give him more, surely knowing that such a God would not be with him without prospering him. Of all that God would give him Jacob undertook to give back to God a tenth part. Here was Jacob striking a bargain with God, and certainly to his own advantage, but God knew the real and right desires of His poor servant, even if expressed in this way. Alas, many have been richly blessed in material things by God but have not even risen to Jacob’s tenth.

In Christianity all we possess is sometimes viewed as belonging to God, and we are but stewards of what God has given us (Luke 16:11, 12): but our present possessions are also viewed as our own (Acts 5:4), with the responsibility of using them aright. Those who are rich are not exhorted to give a tenth, but are to “be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate” (1 Timothy 6:18). All who give are to do it with simplicity (Romans 12:8), even if we are not able, like the poor widow, to give all our living (Mark 12:41–44), or like the disciples of the Lord who left all to follow Him (Luke 18:28).

EXERCISE

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

KEEPING RANK!

In the wisdom of God, we are living in the last days, of which the Apostle Paul speaks as “perilous times” in 2 Timothy 3:1. It behooves us to recognize the true character of the days in which we live, so that we might seek the Lord’s mercy to preserve us and His grace to maintain us, until He comes to rapture us home to His Father and our Father. It must be evident to every spiritual eye that the enemy is doing his utmost to rob the saints of every bit of truth and to mar their testimony to it; but God is able to keep His own from the withering, evil influences that are all around, and to enable them to manifest their true character as strangers and pilgrims here (1 Peter 2:11).

When David, God’s anointed, was in rejection and hunted by Saul, there were faithful men who jeopardized their lives for him. Observe what the Spirit of God says of these men in 1 Chronicles 12. They came to David (v. 1), **they were mighty men** (v.1), **they were armed** (v. 2), **they could use both hands in conflict** (v. 2). Such are the men God desires today; those drawn to Christ in true affection, who are strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, who wear the whole armor of God, and who have the arms of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.

Among David’s warriors were the men of Issachar, **“Who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do”** (v. 32), and men **who could keep rank, who had a perfect heart** (v. 38). Do we understand the times in which we live? Have we the mind of the Lord regarding these difficult days? And with these things are we seeking to go on together according to the mind of God, with perfect heart, seeking only to be for His pleasure in the conflict of these last days? How many things can turn us aside from doing the will of God, turn us away from the ranks where the truth is being kept for the glory of the Lord.

The features of faithful men are also given to us in Exodus 18:20–21. They were to be taught in the word of God, they had to know how to walk, and how to work: they needed to be able men, fearing God; men of truth, hating covetousness; men who could bring peace to the people by righteous judgments. Surely there is a word for us in this Scripture, which has been written for our instruction and encouragement. **These are the traits we should covet, so that we might be for God’s pleasure in these last days.** The way we have been called to is a narrow way, even as the Lord said, “Strait is the gate and narrow is the way...and few there be that find it.” The path is not easy, but His grace suffices; there are many trials and exercises, both in the individual walk and in the assembly, but the resources of Christ are unfailing. Paul knew these temptations and exercises in a special way. After enumerating many of his trials he spoke of “the care of all the churches.”

Then in 2 Timothy 2 we get what should be true of the Christian—**the features of the man of God. He is to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (v. 1), he is to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (v. 3), he is not to get entangled with the affairs of this life (v. 4), he is to strive lawfully (v. 5), he is to be a laborer in God’s service (v. 6), and he is to consider the word sent from God, so that the Lord might give him understanding in all things. Remembering that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead, according to Paul’s Gospel, the man of God will not seek to waste his strength on the things here that are to perish but will direct all in view of the resurrection side of death. God’s man is a separate man (v. 21), separate from all that is inconsistent with the truth and holiness of God; and his associations will be with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart (v. 22).** How very important these Scriptures are, when the inspiration and truth of the Scriptures are being denied on every hand; and when even true believers are careless regarding what is due to the Lord in His assembly, and to God in His house. **Scripture is to be our guide; it is God’s infallible Word. Even Peter had to be withstood; so that we must not rest in God’s servants, but in His living, unerring Word.**

What resources and blessing God has given us for these last days! In 2 Timothy 1 God has given us the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus (v. 1); He has saved us and called us, and this according to His

own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (v. 9). If the church has grievously failed, God abides faithful; and it is on God that Paul relies in view of the last days; and he shows us that everything remains in Christ Jesus. Nothing can revoke God's purpose, or overturn God's foundation; His word is our sure guide until the end, and His work can never be destroyed. If we see the great mass of the Christian profession giving up the truth and many who once valued the truth, no longer walking in the power of it, we can, like Paul, fall back on God and His faithfulness, realizing that all is safe in Christ Jesus.

With such resources and encouragement, we can surely seek the Lord's grace to keep us going on until the end. At the close of his pathway, the Apostle could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7). Did he say this when all was bright and prosperous in the church? No! the very opposite was true, because all in Asia had turned away from him, and this would include the saints of Ephesus and Colosse. But he had the comfort of a few faithful ones, and above all, the help and comfort of the Lord, who stood with him when all deserted him. May we all seek to be faithful, like Paul, of whom it could be truly said that he KEPT RANK.

J. Muckle

ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURE SEARCH!

1. Mount Moriah (2 Chronicles 3:1)
2. Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26:16–23)
3. The Beautiful gate (Acts 3:2)

REST

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

GRACE, MERCY, PEACE

This threefold cord is wonderfully strong when each of its strands is woven rightly with the others. The first is doubtless most wonderful of all, in many respects, but the child of God does well to cultivate deeply his appreciation of all of these precious endowments of a loving God and Father.

A concordance will show us that peace is spoken of in Scripture far more often than the others; and that both peace and mercy have a much larger place in the Old Testament than in the New; while grace holds the largest place in the New. This has much to teach us. Is it not peace for which man naturally yearns the most deeply?

Does not the Old Testament, in all of its testing of human nature, lay bare to us the painful struggle through which man grasps for the peace that constantly eludes him? Doubtless the word is used greatly in the Old Testament in reference to man's temporal relationships with man, and merely in connection with material circumstance, but the entire history bears its depressing witness that settled, stable peace of this kind is a mere idealistic vision, hopeless of being reached on earth, until the blessed Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ, establishes His own kingdom.

But how much higher and sweeter that peace which has been made by the blood of the cross of Christ (Colossians 1:20). The believer is the eternal possessor of this peace: “being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:13). No longer does he grasp for it: he has it. Yet this peace from God and with God would be impossible apart from the mercy of God.

Why is there no peace on earth? Because of man's sin. It is this that makes him more and more miserable, more self-

centered, more grasping, more intolerant of others, more hard and stubborn. And not until he is brought down (though by means of his troubles) to honestly take the place of the publican, who prayed honestly, “God be merciful to me a sinner” (Luke 18:13), will he know true peace; for this is the peace of God’s forgiving mercy.

But little as one may realize it at first, this wonderful transaction of the soul with God involves more than mercy and peace. “But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace are ye saved); and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:4–7). Let us observe here that God’s rich mercy is because of His great love. Love is His very nature, and love acts in mercy toward a wretched sinner, even when dead in sins, moving God’s heart to work in the most helpful way possible. **Mercy is that tender compassion of God toward the deep need of the soul in its circumstances of misery or of guilt. Mercy can forgive and delights to do so.**

However, immediately the apostle speaks of our being quickened together with Christ,” he adds “(by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

If in mercy God has looked upon us and given life when we were dead in sins, His grace has gone further still, conferring upon us favor that lifts us far above all our former circumstances, saving us, delivering into a realm of perfect joy and peace, circumstances of heavenly blessing, in Christ. This is more than compassionate mercy. For a mere humanitarian could show mercy to another who was in dire circumstances, clothe him, feed him, perhaps give him work, but to take him to his own home as his own son and invest

him with his own wealth would be a far different matter. This is what grace does: It not only forgives; it provides abundant blessing on a far higher level than the circumstances out of which it delivers. Is this not the reason that grace is much more markedly a subject of the New Testament than of the Old? For the Old Testament regards man as on an earthly level, no doubt in need of peace, in need of mercy, but never knowing the grace that is the marvelous result of the death of Christ for sinners. The New Testament reveals the fulness of the heart of God in wondrous desire to have guilty sinners not only redeemed from their bitter bondage and misery but brought in peace into the very circumstances of heaven, the immediate presence of God, known as Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

In an absolute and full sense then, the believer knows God's grace, mercy, and peace as his eternal possession by virtue of the death of Christ on his behalf.

Yet Paul, in greeting Timothy, his child in the faith, wishes him "Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Timothy 1:2). Does it not teach us that the believer has constant need of appropriating in practice those things that are truly his in principle? If, for instance, we know the preciousness of peace with God, this does not guarantee our constant enjoyment of "the peace of God." **For this our hearts must be set on the proper Object, our souls must be in a state of lowly receiving Himself our daily supply for our daily need; for it means the tranquility of soul that rests thankfully in calm submission to the will of God.**

Does the Lord Jesus not speak of this when He says, "My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27)? This was a peace that could meet circumstances of unutterable sorrow, of cruel injustice from ungodly men, yet with calm, unshaken confidence and holy submission. May our souls know this far more than we do!

But for ourselves, in our present state, how is this possible without the mercy of God? Indeed, constantly we need this compassion of His heart that comforts, helps, and encourages us when pressures increase and tend to cast down the soul. Is it not wonderful to know the sympathizing, tender care of our merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God? We must seek this daily, if our souls are to derive comfort from it, or rather, we must seek Him, and thus learn the sweet, pure blessedness of His sympathy and care.

As we have seen, however, grace is higher yet. Grace is the active, energetic favor of God which delights to fill our cup to overflowing, “abundantly above all we can ask or think.” If we have known it in principle, we ought also to know it in daily practice; and by this we should be in practice lifted up above our circumstances. Grace is a power which Paul found sufficient to strengthen his soul to bear “infirmities, reproaches, persecutions, distresses, for Christ’s sake,” and to do so most gladly (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10). Grace enabled him to preach “the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Ephesians 4:7), and to serve God acceptably (Hebrews 12:8). It is the active, positive power for good: for having brought salvation, it also teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world” (Titus 2:11, 12). Let us think then of grace, not merely as an attitude of kindness on God’s part, but as His great, active favor in furnishing us with every provision for our purest good.

It is well that every one of us should linger long and drink deeply of the fresh fountain of “the grace of God” with its fullness of provision; “the tender mercy of our God,” bearing its sweetness of comfort; and “the peace of God” with its quietness of contentment.

L. M. Grant

IS TRUTH WHAT I BELIEVE?

Hundreds of people sought Abraham Lincoln's attention. Greed, lust for power, and hunger for the spotlight brought many people to the president. Lincoln, a keen judge of character, became skilled at exposing their hypocrisy and lies. A favorite method involved posing a riddle to the scam artist. Lincoln would ask, "If you call the tail of a calf a leg, then how many legs does the calf have?" When told the answer was five, **Lincoln would respond, "The calf only has four legs. Calling the tail a leg doesn't make it one."**

Many people claim there are different ways to get to heaven that are equally "valid." They think as long as people are sincere in their beliefs, they can believe anything they want, and God will accept them. A Christian who owned a gas station near Chicago had a neighbor that insisted that any sincere, good person could believe what they want and then go to heaven when they die. One day the neighbor who was going on a trip stopped at the gas station and began to chat with the Christian. When they were through discussing "religious" things, the customer asked directions from Chicago to New York. The Christian who was trying to make a point answered, **"Drive in any direction you want. As long as you are sincere, you'll get there."** The neighbor said that cannot be right. The Christian said, "My point exactly". **Pretending that conflicting and contradictory claims can all be true doesn't make them true.**

No one has ever lived who is wiser than the Lord Jesus Christ. His words, when asked the way to God the Father's house, were, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). Head in any other direction, trust in the instruction of any other person, count on receiving eternal life in any other way and we will never arrive in the Father's house in heaven. The Lord Jesus Christ is not merely an interesting or wise historical figure with a "personal opinion," but the always-existing Son of God who came to save mankind from their sins. The Jewish people clearly understood His declaration of Himself as God when He said, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). He said, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He was put on the cross, He paid for the penalty of my sins there by enduring God's Judgment, He died and shed His blood, which "cleans us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Then He rose from the dead, went back to heaven, and sent an invitation to us: **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).** The excuse many people today make for not believing on the Lord Jesus is, "Who knows what is really true?" The driver wanting to get to New York wouldn't have been any more satisfied with the answer "Who knows?" than he was with "Any direction you want." You can come only through Him to Heaven, to be saved from the judgment and the condemnation of the Just and Holy God on everyone that rejects Him and His gift of love. **Will you respond to the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Lord and Savior Today?**