



# ***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,

**“That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God”** (Please read 1 Peter 4:1-9).

The Spirit of God brings before us a pure Object for our minds and hearts: the Lord Jesus. It does not matter how young we are, nor does it matter how old we are: We have the same Object for our hearts, because Christ is the only One who can fill and satisfy our hearts. If we are not satisfied, we may have to pass through experiences of trial. **As Peter is presenting the wilderness pathway to us, he looks back and sees the Lord Jesus here in this wilderness and how He suffered in the flesh. What does it mean: atonement? No, that is not what Peter means here. He is speaking of what Christ suffered, going through this world.** “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” The Lord Jesus suffered to the extent that He died on the cross, but the side of it here is, “Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind.” **The Lord Jesus suffered in the flesh, surrounded by evil which opposed Him at every turn. He is the sinless ONE. In Him there was NO sin, HE knew NO sin, and He did NO sin.**

**As a Man here in this world, the Lord Jesus had one thing before Him, and that was to please the Father. Thus, you and I must have that one thing before us.**

“For the time past of our life may suffice us.” Peter says, “It is enough.” We know what we have been in the past; it is enough. What are we going to do the rest of the time? Are we going to live the rest of the time to the lust of the flesh, or to the will of God? Of course, we are in the world, which thinks it strange that we do not run to the same excess of riot, but the Scriptures speaks of temperance in all things. Many things are necessary down here, and let us not be indifferent. Let us find a balance in Scripture for our lives, not going from one extreme to another. Let us just follow in the path.

**Let us have the determination to no longer live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.** How much time do we have? It may be an hour, a day, a month, or ten years, yet we do not know, cannot see how it could be that long. May it be our desire that when the Lord Jesus comes, He may find us walking in the path in which He walked—the path of faith. **For The Rest of the Time.**

Praying that the Lord would use the articles in this issue to build you up and help you grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am grateful for the emails I receive from far and near expressing how much they have benefited from the *Toward the Mark* articles and how some are using it for their group Bible studies.

Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement. 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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***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"*

### **A CHAMBER FOR THE MAN OF GOD**

**A BED, A TABLE, A CHAIR AND A CANDLESTICK**

2 Kings 4:8–11

This fourth chapter of 2 Kings is one of the most delightful and instructive in the Old Testament. It begins with a famine, and it ends with a feast, plainly proving that God has come into it by the way. Elisha, the man of God, who stood for God and showed what His goodness and grace were to a needy and sinful people, is the great figure in it, but he does but illustrate the fullness that there is in our Lord Jesus to meet every need that any man or woman can have. Thus we will view him. Elisha shall show us what the Lord Jesus is as the dispenser of the grace and blessings of God.

The chapter opens with a bankrupt widow, a speaking picture of a burdened, unforgiven sinner, but Elisha met her need, and not only was her debt paid—the past all settled—but she had “the rest” to live upon: the future was all secured and provided for. So it is with all who have turned to the Lord Jesus Christ in their need—they are justified freely by the grace of God—cleared for ever of their guilty past—but their future is also secured: the grace of the Lord is sufficient for them.

But the figure changes, the bankrupt widow, now forgiven and free, gives place to a great woman with great possessions. And this very change has been wrought in and for us. Christians, we who were once bankrupt sinners, are now a great people through the grace of God. I hope we are not great in our own eyes, and I hope that we do not desire to be great in the eyes of the world; yet we are great in the eyes of heaven, for we are the children of God. Hear the words of Holy Scripture: “The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God, and IF CHILDREN THEN HEIRS; HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8). No angel has so high a place as that, nor can any claim so great a destiny. I saw

crowds of people waiting in the streets the other day and learnt that the king's daughter was expected to pass, and when she did, she was given a respectful and loyal tribute by the crowds, and perfectly right—honor to whom honor—she is a great person in the land, and the people acknowledge it. As you and I walk in the streets nobody notices us; we have no honor in this world, for we are nobodies in its estimation; but the day is coming when we shall enter our own land, the golden gates to the Father's house will be thrown back for us, and in that day the angels of God will line the shining way and welcome us home—the sons of God brought to glory by redeeming blood. This is the dignity that God has put upon us; may our ways be consistent with it. Let us live as the children of God should, as those who have great resources and a great destiny.

We owe everything to our Lord, and it is right we should consider Him and His desires. What does He desire? Above all things He wants our company. True love can be satisfied with nothing less from us. Notice in our picture that **THE MAN OF GOD PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF THE GREAT WOMAN CONTINUALLY**. It is thus that our Lord acts. He seeks for a place within our hearts and lives. And the Holy Ghost has come to take of the things of Christ and show them to us, and thus He passes by us continually to win a place for Himself in our hearts. It is thus that we see Him in Revelation 3: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," He says, "if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him and he with Me." The man of God did not force himself upon this woman's hospitality, but when she constrained him, he went in and ate bread with her. It has been said, and truly said, that "we get as much of the company of the Lord as we desire." If we constrain Him, He will not deny us His company; it is this that His heart yearns for, and it is a joy to Him when yearning for Him awakens in our hearts.

I gather that these occasional visits of Elisha to the Shunammite's house were wonderful times for her, insomuch that she determined to have him there not as an occasional visitor but as one of her household, a constant guest. And we, have we not known seasons of joy when we admitted the Lord to our hearts? In sorrow we have sought Him, and He has blest us with His own comfort; in times of depression, He has cheered us, and turned our mourning into songs of praise. He has

touched our hearts with His love, and we have been ashamed of our neglect of Him but rejoiced in His grace that abides ever the same. These seasons may not have lasted long, but they were wonderful while they did last. He gave them to us that we might long after Him more and do what this great woman did for Elisha.

She said to her husband, “Behold, now I perceive that this is a holy man of God, which passes by us continually. Let us make a little chamber on the wall...and it shall be when he comes to us that he shall turn in thither.” Her perception was right—she was a wise woman. Oh, that we may be all like her in regard to Christ; but if we are to be, as she prepared a chamber for Elisha, so we must prepare a chamber for Christ. The heart is the chamber—your heart, dear Christian. It may not be very large, but it may be the guest-chamber of the King of glory. But how can the heart be prepared for Him? Let us learn the lesson that the story of this wise woman teaches.

She was a practical, thorough kind of woman, and I have no doubt that the first thing she did was to use the broom and clear out the cobwebs that were hidden in the dark corners and sweep out of the chamber all that was unsuited to the desired guest. Test yourself here, dear Christian. Are there lurking in your heart things that you cherish that keep the Lord out of it? Ah, if you do but see Him passing by, and get one glimpse of His glory, these cherished things will be filth and rubbish to you; you will feel them to be encumbrances, occupying time and space that the Lord would fill, and you will want to be rid of them. **Do you say, “I have tried often to give up habits and things that I know are wrong but have only failed, until I have almost despaired”? Yes, I know that experience, and I know what you need—a true sight of the cross upon which Jesus gave Himself for you to redeem you from all that iniquity that holds you and to purify you to Himself, to be His own peculiar treasure. You need that backward look to the cross and then an upward look to the glory into which He has gone, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you can give you both, and the Holy Spirit will be the power within you to bring you into conformity to Christ. It is in the presence of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the power of the Spirit that we are enabled to condemn and turn out of our lives what is**

**contrary to Christ, and best of all, and most needful of all, to judge and turn from sinful self.**

The Lord Himself will come to our aid if we place ourselves without reserve in His hands, and we may take up David's words and say to Him, "Search me, O God, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me." Lord, take your candle and go through every chamber of my life from its topmost turret down to its deepest vault. Light with your own light the dark recesses in it and show me things as they appear to you!

Now comes the furnishing of the chamber. Into the one that she prepared for Elisha the great woman put A BED, A TABLE, A STOOL AND A CANDLESTICK.

**The bed** is the place of rest. You remember the words, "Come to Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest to your souls." The yoke of the Lord means submission to His holy will, and His will is good and perfect and acceptable. It is not against us but for us, and when we yield ourselves to it the inward conflict and restlessness give place to quietness and rest. And as we learn of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, the envying and jealousy and ambitions of men that make them fret and fume do not trouble us; we can leave ourselves and our concerns in God's hand and in confidence in Him find rest. This is the first thing; we have no chamber fit for the Lord to dwell in if this is absent, but in such a heart He will find His pleasure and rest.

**Then follows the table**, and this speaks of communion. "I will sup with him and he with Me," said the Lord. He desires to enter into our things, our joys and sorrows, for He loves us and is interested in us as our dearest and truest Friend, and He desires to bring to us His own comfort and grace in all that may cause us grief, but He would also lead us into His things, for He wants us to sup with Him, to have communion with Him in His things as His friends. A heart that is at rest from itself and consequently free to hold communion with Him is a heart that is delightful to Him.

**The stool came next**, and we must not overlook this. Mary understood the need and blessedness of the stool, for she sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word, and we can only be maintained in communion with Him as we sit at His feet and learn of Him. The old restlessness will reassert itself if we neglect this; but as we sit at His feet, we shall abide in Him and His words will abide in us, and we shall ask what we will, for hearing His word and speaking to Him in prayer go together. At His feet we learn of Him, and the more we know Him the more we love Him, and He has said, "If any man love Me he will keep My words: and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him." The chamber will not be tenantless if we show our love to the Lord by hearing and keeping His word.

**Then the candlestick** will be there. Our bodies will be full of light, having no part dark; sincerity and truth will mark us, and we shall shine for Him who dwells within our hearts. The light that has shone in will shine out.

Into this chamber swept and furnished the man of God came and lay there, and the Shunammite was a happy and honored woman. May the spiritual reality pictured in this Old Testament story be true in every one of our lives!

J.T. Mawson

## **SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES!**

1. Who was the soldier in charge of David's bodyguards?
2. Which is the only Gospel that records a Roman soldier piercing the body of the Lord Jesus with a spear?
3. What material were the uniforms of the armies that followed the Logos made of?



## MEAT

*"Sanctify them by the truth"*

### "IN CHRIST"

As there seems to be some confusion in regard to the standing of the believer, we propose briefly to examine it, in the hope of establishing some of our readers in the truth.

**1. We ask then, in the first place, is the believer's standing found in Romans 5:2? That he is there justified through faith, has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, is brought through Christ into the present enjoyment of God's favor, and rejoices in the hope of His glory, is plainly stated; but does all this—immense as are the blessings indicated—set forth the believer's standing?**

If so—for so far the believer has not died with Christ; we mean, thus far in the teaching of the epistle—he might still be in the flesh; for as yet it is only the question of sins, of guilt, that has been dealt with. Abraham was equally justified with us, and, though not brought into the same blessings, his standing would then be similar, similar in that he was also in the flesh. The difference, we apprehend, would lie rather in the character of his blessings. It is quite clear that we have in this scripture the believer's judicial position, or, to speak with greater accuracy, the position into which God in His grace has judicially brought him, consequent upon the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ; but we cannot accept this as giving us the truth of our standing.

**2. Two scriptures seem to us to speak very distinctly on this subject. The Lord, speaking to His disciples, says, "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:20). The apostle Paul writes, "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Romans 8:9).**

Now it is evident that our Lord is speaking of the time after the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, the One who should abide with His own forever, dwelling with them and being in them. He adds, moreover, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a

little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live ye shall live also.” It is then that He says, “At that day ye shall know,” etc. This surely is Christianity—the Holy Spirit on earth and dwelling in the believer, and through this the believer able to apprehend the position of Christ, that He is in His Father, the believer in Christ, and Christ in the believer. So in Romans 8 there are three connected things—our being in Christ, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, and Christ Himself in us (vv. 1, 9, 10). And in the ninth verse the apostle expressly contrasts the being in the flesh with being in the Spirit, the latter conditioned by the Spirit of God dwelling in us. If therefore it is true that every believer who has peace with God has the indwelling Spirit, and that everyone such is “in Christ,” we are forced to the conclusion that our standing is represented only by these words. **According to the contrast drawn by the apostle, every unbeliever is “in the flesh,” and every believer is “in the Spirit”; also “in Christ,” according to the first verse.** (We do not here enter into an examination of the precise force of the expressions.) “In Christ,” then, we understand to set forth the standing of every believer who has been sealed of God by the Holy Spirit. That there needs an experience and practical condition for the entering into and enjoyment of this blessed truth—that God now sees us, not in Adam, in the flesh, but in Christ—is seen from the position of Romans 7 in relation to Romans 6 and 8; but that is altogether another question.

3. Another thing should be observed. **The term “in Christ” is not necessarily of the same force in Romans as in 2 Corinthians 5 and Ephesians; but it has to be expounded in each place in accordance with the distinctive teaching of the epistle.** For example, “in Christ,” in Ephesians 2:6, undoubtedly implies union with Christ; but this could hardly be said of Romans 8:1, nor, indeed, of John 14:20. As another has said, speaking of this last passage (we quote from memory, but, we think, correctly), “It is not union, but nature and life, and our place in that nature and life.” In the same way God’s righteousness has a different force in Romans 3 from what it has in 2 Corinthians 5:21.

**In Romans it is “upon all them that believe,” and this too in the place where those that believe are; but in 2 Corinthians 5 we are made God’s righteousness in Christ in the place where He is.**

4. Again, if the standing of the believer is found in Romans 5:2, the relative significance of the place Christ occupies at the right hand of God is missed. **With all reverence be it said that a man, Christ Jesus, though the Eternal Son, is in the glory of God. And just because He is there as man, it is also our place, in the wonderful grace of God, according to His eternal counsels.** It is not too much to say that Christianity cannot be understood apart from the recognition of the truth that Christ is glorified as man. This decides at once the question of the believer's standing. It cannot, on this very account, be lower than "in Christ" in the place where Christ is. That is the believer's standing now; by-and-by he will be conformed to that standing, for God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

5. Having then seen that our standing as believers can only be expressed by the term "in Christ," we freely admit, nay, insist upon, the fact that the believer's standing is ever the measure of his responsibility. But a right condition of soul is never begotten by contending for responsibility. **It is grace that restores and establishes, and the more fully grace is understood and enjoyed, the more perfectly will the walk of the believer correspond with his standing. To know his standing is a condition for a right walk; but, even if the standing is known, the state will never be right as long as the eyes of the believer are upon himself.** The danger, therefore, of the contention that "in Christ" is state or condition, and not standing, lies in the occupation of the believer with himself, and in his consequent efforts (always useless, because they suppose power on his part) to attain to a right condition of soul. The result is only legality.

6. To sum up, then, two things are to be noted. Through the work of Christ for us we are brought into a new position. We were under condemnation, but in virtue of His atoning sacrifice we now stand in the abiding favor of God. God who, in all that He is, was against us on account of our sins, is now for us on account of the efficacy of the precious blood. But this is not all. **On the cross God dealt also with what we were, as well as with what we had done.**

**We have been crucified with Christ, and thereby sin has been condemned in the flesh. (Galatians 2; Romans 8.)**

**But if the cross closes up the history of the first man in responsibility, Christ in resurrection has taken the place of the second man; and, consequently, every believer is brought, through the death and resurrection of Christ, into a new place before God. Now it is this new place, that is, “in Christ” (not now in Adam) that represents our standing.**

E. Dennett

## **EVERYTHING ESTABLISHED IN THE SECOND MAN, THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!**

Whatever has been ruined in the first man will be gloriously established in the Second Man. Adam fell and was ruined: Christ is the glory of God. The Law was broken: It shall presently be written on men’s hearts. The priests fell: Our Great High Priest can never fail. The Kingdom failed: His throne is for ever and ever. It will be a thousand times more glorious than what was lost—infinity more so. And so with the church—He will have it for His bride, He will be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe in that day.

J. N. Darby

## EXERCISE

*"Exercise thyself unto piety"*

### "OVERCOMING THE WORLD"

#### ABRAHAM THE OVERCOMER

**In seeking to interpret the beautiful types of the Old Testament we must always apply this necessary safeguard, "Types are illustrative of truths, not expressive of them."** The propriety of this will be seen when we consider how infinitely greater is the substance—Christ, of which they are but shadows. How immeasurably superior is the fulfilment—Christ—to that which is but the figure. How soft and subdued is the light that emanates from those types. It is not yet the noonday splendor of the full revelation of God the Father, as made known in the Son; it is still the starlight of types, symbols, and shadows; but the eye of faith can penetrate these shadows and contemplate with ever increasing delight the glorious Substance of whom they speak.

**We now address ourselves more particularly to the extremely fascinating type of the Lord Jesus set forth in Genesis 14:18–20. Here in typical language, God would demonstrate the rich provision He has made for us in His Son as set forth in the Melchizedek priesthood, enabling us to avail ourselves more intelligently of our privileges and thus answer more acceptable to the desires of His heart for us in these darkening days.**

It is a stringently typical scene that meets the eye, shorn of all extraneous matter unnecessary for the object in view, while that which is necessary to express the mind of God as to the complete and final character of the Kingly Priesthood of the Son is drawn in strong and convincing lines. The prominent thought before me is that of overcoming; the features of which are seen in such a high degree of emphasis and distinction in the deeply instructive life of Abraham, the friend of God.

**To be an overcomer, due regard must be given to where we live, to our environment. Is it not rather significant that the Spirit of God**

mentions in Genesis 13:12 that Abraham dwelt in the land of Canaan and that Lot dwelt in the cities of the plain? Then again, in Genesis 14:12, as though to give point to what He had just recorded concerning the carrying away of Lot into captivity, the Spirit significantly adds, “For he dwelt in Sodom.” One cannot dwell in Sodom without being affected by the vitiated atmosphere and polluting influences of a place whose inhabitants were wicked and great sinners before God. Poor Lot, by his associations, was helpless in the presence of the world. He could not stand; he was involved in Sodom’s troubles; he was not walking in the pilgrim and priestly path; hence he was brought into bondage.

Abraham, in marked contrast, dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which is in Hebron. Mamre means “fatness,” or “vigour”; Hebron is “companionship,” or “fellowship.” These surely suggest that spiritual vitality and energy resulting from the strengthening and encouraging contact with those who have been called into the

fellowship of God’s Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. This is further emphasized in the names of Abraham’s allies, Mamre the Amorite, Eshcol, and Aner. Worthy confederates, surely, of Abraham the overcomer: Eshcol, “a cluster of grapes”; Aner, “a waterfall.” Would not these names speak to us of that spiritual invigoration, joy, and freshness, resulting from being in the good of the Spirit’s presence and the enjoyment of Christian fellowship?

**Abraham’s portion lay outside the whole field of conflict; he had no links with any of the world’s confederacies.** He was not taking sides with the four kings of the Babylonish empire, or with the five kings of the cities of the plain; he had no need to enter the conflict to defend himself; it was for the express purpose of delivering a brother who had come under the power of the world. This is a great matter, beloved saints of God. Are we set for the deliverance of a brother who has succumbed to the flattering of a patronizing world? Are we exercised about the liberation of those who, to make the path easier, would make a compromise with the world, or who would lower the standard of truth to placate or accommodate the religious world, with its vile imitation of Christ, and its distortion of Christianity.

Lot is delivered by Abraham from the power of an enemy too strong for him, but in the light of subsequent events, he is not really free, for he goes back to Sodom; and were it not for the rich mercy of God he would have perished in the overthrow of those wicked cities of the plain. **But Abraham is still the Hebrew, the passenger—one passing through, “as hireling fills his day”**; and as he comes to the King’s valley, he is met by this unique person, Melchizedek, King of righteousness, King of peace, who brings forth bread and wine for the support and refreshment of the overcomer.

But the moment of victory, beloved brethren, is one of peculiar danger! Having overcome the world in its more hostile character, how easy it would be to be ensnared by its offers as typified in the king of Sodom. **The King’s valley is where we meet our true Melchizedek—in the low place, in the spirit of true humility, conscious of our need of the priestly ministrations of our great High Priest.**

*My faith looks up to claim that touch divine,  
Which robs me of this fatal strength of mine,  
And leaves me resting wholly, Lord, on Thine.*

Strengthened and refreshed by the bread and wine provided by Melchizedek, Abraham is now prepared to meet the king of Sodom and to refuse any honor at his hand, lest he should say that he had made Abraham rich. This is the spirit and the path of the overcomer, beloved. **What of the bread and wine provided by our true Melchizedek—the memorial of those sufferings by which alone we have been eternally enriched; and as those who have tasted it, surely it implies the refusal of a portion here. If Christ could not accept the kingdoms of this world at the hands of Satan, but only from His Father, no more can we accept enrichment at the hands of the world that gave Him but a cross. Do not temporize with the world in its seductive proposals—“that friendly outstretched hand of thine is stained with Jesus’ blood.”**

**See how beautifully God comes in at the beginning of Genesis 15, as much as to say, you have refused a portion in this world, “I am thy shield and exceeding great reward.” With the wonderful light brought to us by the Holy Spirit, we can truly say, “Thou art my portion, O Lord”; and again, as true Ephraimites, “What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him and observed Him; I am like a green fir tree. From me is Thy fruit found...for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them” (Hosea 14:8–9).**

### **ANSWERS TO SCRIPTURE SEARCH!**

1. Banaiah (2 Samuel 8:18)
2. The Gospel of John (John 19:34)
3. Fine linen, white and pure (Revelation 19:14)



## REST

*"Shall I not seek rest for thee that it may be well with thee?"*

### *A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD!*

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be  
losing  
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God's own  
choosing:

Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is He;  
Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same,  
And He must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to  
undo us,

We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph  
through us;

The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure,  
One little word shall fell him.

That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth;  
The Spirit and the gifts are ours through Him Who with us  
sideth;

Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;  
The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still,  
**His Kingdom is forever.**

Martin Luther

## **KATRINA: WHO IS TO BLAME?**

When hurricane Katrina's storm surge broke through the levee and flooded New Orleans, a few years ago, devastating the city, who was to blame? The engineers who designed the levee? The individuals who built their homes, businesses and dreams on land that was subject to massive flooding? The federal government for not making the city safe against a level 5 storm? The local government for not ordering a general evacuation earlier?

Blame is a heavy load to carry, and apparently there was enough of it to go around for the devastation which occurred in New Orleans. It is an all-too-human trait to want to pass blame around as much as possible in deep hardships, but the question of who to assign blame to for the destruction may not have a simple solution.

Here is another question which is far more important than any question concerning Katrina could ever be: When a soul dies without having turned to God in repentance, who is to blame for the misery it will have for all eternity? Does it make sense to place blame on any of the following? Education systems that exclude the concept of a Creator God? Families that fail to impress on young minds that every human being is ultimately responsible to God for their actions? The giant entertainment industry that seeks to keep minds so absorbed that they have no time for serious thoughts about eternity? A culture permeated by an atheistic worldview?

These things are all sadly true, but the responsibility to receive Christ as Savior rests forever with each person. Even though all these things are stacked against it, God has given clear and plentiful witness that Jesus Christ is the Savior men need. From glory He came to be born as a man on earth. In His life He clearly fulfilled distinct, remarkable, and innumerable Old Testament prophecies. His teachings were with words of matchless love, grace, and power. God confirmed the message of the Lord Jesus through the miracles He performed. Of all men who ever lived, His words alone perfectly matched His deeds and life.

After three and a half years of ministering to the needs of those around Him, He let Himself be taken and nailed to the cross. His sacrifice is the greatest act of love the world will ever know. He is now seated at God's right hand in heaven. He will come back to earth in judgment, but before then, during the time of His absence, He is calling souls from this sinful world to believe on Him and receive the gift of eternal life.

Men nailed the Lord Jesus Christ to a cross of shame to get rid of Him. But God raised Him to the highest place in heaven. His name is now far higher than any other. He is the One that sinners must look to if they hope to be saved and go to heaven. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22). He is the One—the only One—who brings life to the world. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men...I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 1:4; 10:28).

The word "responsible" means "able to respond." Every member of the human race is able to respond to His love. If they choose never to do so, they alone will bear the blame and consequences of their decision forever. They are completely without excuse if they never come to Him.

**"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved....." (Acts 16:31)  
What is your RESPONSE?**