

What The Bible Says
in 52 Penny Pulpit Essays From 2009

By Pastor Ed Rice

A Rural Pastor With A Royal Message

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*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom;
teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns
and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*
. Colossians 3:16

**What the Bible Says
in 52 Penny Pulpit Essays for
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What the Bible Says for 2010

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Msg #901 New Beginnings

The Holy Bible is a book with 'new beginnings' as a theme. For a Christian it says: "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2Cor 5) After redemption, a theme of Exodus, we enter into a promised land to live and serve our God, the theme of Joshua. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." (Rom 15). God first commissions Joshua as leader and a Christian as a witness.(Acts 1:8) A leader, and a witness, will keep an eye on the goal, meet the needs of others, and persuade complete participation. There are 'natural leaders' but the rest of us need to work on these three attributes to fulfill God's commission. Next God gives Joshua his goal and walking orders; the Christian's are in Matthew 28. What a promise Joshua had from God, if you get your foot there it's yours. A Christian does not 'get there' just sitting on his promises, the first word of our commission is also to 'GO!' God tells Joshua He will never leave him and charges him for courage and trust. The Christian is so promised and charged as well. God emphasizes that Joshua and we keep "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" near to our heart and meditation "that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein." Obedience is paramount for success. First Joshua clears up some internal divisions; and likewise Christ charges us to clean up and sanctify every area of our heart, soul, mind and strength for His service. These similarities are not a coincidence; purpose to read His whole book in this next year and you can have a Happy New Year.

300 Words for Week #901, Jan 01, 2009

Msg #902 Promise Land Problems

The land which God promised to give to Israel had foot holds of Canaanites, Hivites, and Girgasites. Genesis 10 says the Gaza strip was held by Philistines then. The land of milk and honey promised to a Christian is likewise occupied by enemies of the promise, and there will need to be offensives into enemy territory. Crossing the Jordon into the land of promise is not parallel to crossing onto streets of gold, as in some spiritual songs, but a crossing into conquest and conflict where a Christian must destroy the occupants of lust of the flesh-ites, the eyes-ites and pride of life-ites. Just as Israel's conflict over their promised land will continue until their Messiah comes as King of kings, so a Christian's conflict with the world, the flesh and the devil will continue until the coming of their Lord of lords. In their very first battle the walls of Jericho fell "Not by might nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord." So too the devil's toughest strongholds in a new converts life will fall, not by might nor by 'grit your teeth and make a resolution' but by faith and obedience. Faith is not the power of positive thinking nor hoping so hard that something happens; it is trusting God's Word and leaning on God's promise. "Faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom 10:17) When Joshua fought the battle of Jericho, he trusted God and obeyed his commands, then had only to clean up after a defeated foe. When a Christian takes the same steps of faith and obedience, God will defeat the strongholds of addictions and depressions and leave only the clean up to the saint. This year get into the Word and grow your faith.

300 Words for Week #902, Jan 11, 2009

Msg #903 What's Buried in Your Tent?

Going into the promised land was beset with occupants who would keep the rightful owners from enjoying the milk and honey of God's promises. In Joshua 7 the promised victory over Ai was beset by the hidden sin of Achan. When a Christian hides away disobedience to God's commands they will also find victorious Christian living beset by defeat. When our milk and honey filled victorious walk with Christ goes sour dig around your tent and you will find such a disobedience buried there somewhere. In each of us is a tract of stubbornness and ignorance, of sin and disobedience deep within. Break up some fallow ground in your life. Dig it out stone it, burn it and put it away under a heap of stones. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy." (Prov 28:13) The way that Achan rationalized away his sin and buried it in his tent is not different than the rationalizing that a Christian does as he uses worldly entertainments, indulges in vices and cheats in his business dealings. The way God put his finger on Achan's sin and dug it out of his tent is not different than God probing into your life to reveal a disobedience. The way that Joshua stoned it all, burned it all, and buried it all in stones, should not differ from your handling of your stubborn tract of sin. If your sin is booze the stones to bury it with are in memorizing Proverbs 20:1, 23:29-35, and 31:4-5; Anger - Prov 15:1,18,16:32 and 19:11. For any vice your pastor can find the verses you need to bury it in. Confess that sin, forsake it and move on to the new victories and new conquests that await.

300 Words for Week #903, Jan 18, 2009

Msg #904 Football Mania

Joshua 9 chronicles six Palestinian occupants pitted against Israel's dwelling in the promised land; five were sold on the annihilation of Israel, but the Hivites decided for a peaceful coexistence with God's chosen nation. Not only does this seem like a headline in a paper today, it has an exact application to a Christian's walk in God's promised land. A vice is a legal but destructive addictive habit that vies for the annihilation of the soul. Advertisers and governments use, sell and tax the 5 legal vices because of their dominate control over your old nature. They need to be completely removed from a Christian's life so he can "abide in the vine" and live in the new nature of Christ. That leaves the Gibeonites who "wilily" covenanted to be left in the land but in bondage and servitude as "hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation." (Josh 9:27) The Gibeonites surrender aptly pictures the Christians dealing with foot ball mania. You may substitute other manias of sports, hunting, fishing, boating, racing or collecting, but they each bring a Christian to violate God's first commandment and refuse his saying "I will love the Lord my God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind." It may not be a vice pitted for your soul's destruction but it sure is pitted for your soul's distraction. The Gibeonites were put in bondage to serve the congregation, but they were still a foot hold whereby the other kings tried to get in. Be careful here, read Joshua 9 and 10 and make sure your manias are put in proper bondage or remove them all together from your new life in Christ.

300 Words for Week #904, Jan 25, 2009

Msg #905 Vices In Control?

After the Gibeonites had made a league to cohabit Israel's promised land with Joshua there remained 5 other kings pledged to the destruction of God's chosen people. "And the LORD said unto Joshua, Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee." (Josh 10:8) Five vices pledged to the destruction of a Christian's life are alcohol, tobacco, gambling, fornication and drugs. These addictive bondages each beg the question "Who is in control?"; and for a true Christian there is only one correct answer: vices need to be removed from your life like Joshua removed the kings from the promised land. "Fear them not: for I have delivered them into thine hand." In the Scriptures that follow that promise "Joshua made war a long time with all those kings. There was not a city that made peace with Israel, save ... Gibeon; all *others* they took in battle." (Josh 11:18-19) For Joshua's victories God sent hornets and hailstones and even had the sun stand still in the sky. God will give you victory over vice and set you free of that bondage. Do not compromise; put it out of the promised land; be free of vice. "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ... If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:31-32, 36)

300 Words for Week #905, Feb 01, 2009

Msg #906 Born Again's 5 Parts

Romans 8 is a parenthesis in Paul's soteriological dissertation wherein 5 aspects of ones salvation are listed for consideration. “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” No matter who you are you are not “in Christ Jesus” unless you are #1 'Converted.' Jesus said “Except ye be converted, ... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 18) Conversion takes “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 20:21) The converted one is immediately #2 'Immersed' into Christ. Then you are #3 'Justified' or judicially declared to be without condemnation. When justified immediately #4 “the Spirit of God dwells in you.” (Rom 8:9) And if the Spirit of God dwells in you then #5 God “shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Rom 8:11) If you are a born again believer then all five of these happened to you instantaneously. If they did not happen you are not born again into the Kingdom of heaven, nor a Christian. Pretending to be what your not makes you a charlatan who will hear the Lord Jesus Christ say “I never knew you: depart from me, ... into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matt 7:23, 25:41) That is very serious business from the lips and soteriology of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Romans 8 Paul consoles those who ARE born again, who “walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit,” for “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” (Rom 8:1,16) Romans 8 is a great consolation to a Christian, but if you are missing the walk or the witness you still need to be converted.

300 Words for Week #906, Feb 08 2009

Msg #907 The Peace of Jerusalem

The Bible exhorts us to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, *and* prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace *be* within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.” (Psalm 122)

As I viewed it from atop Mount Carmel last week the Promised Land dwarfed to a proper dimension while God's chosen people loomed into a proper perspective. Overlooking the lush green Jezreel Valley, Nazareth, Caesarea and Megiddo it was clear that God still loves Israel with a mighty love. Christians love what God loves, but unregenerate depraved man and his religions hate what God most loves. Man made religions are diabolical in their hatred and massacre of Jews. Today, Islam is open about its annihilation goals for Judaism and Israel. In 1492 as God cracked open a door for Christians to escape persecutions in Europe, God threw open the doors for Jews to enter their homeland and escape Catholicism's sword in Spain. In the 40s even America turned back boat loads of God's Chosen People attempting to escape the diabolical slaughter of Jews in Europe. A Christian standing on the Promised Land of the Bible, will more love what God loves, the people to whom this land was promised. In 10 days I learned clearly that every time a Jew sinks his plow in that ground the earth brings forth her increase, and every time an archaeologist sinks his shovel into that ground, Bible truths are found exactly accurate and profoundly pertinent. “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee. ... Peace *be* within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek thy good.”

300 Words for Week #907, Feb 15 2009

Msg #908 Husbands on Valentines

Just like an owners manual would the Holy Bible gives sound direction for God's intentions in our love and marriage relationships. The liberal progressive's world view of the backwardness of God's design should never sway a Christian from these firm well proven directions laid out in the 3rd chapter of Peter's first epistle. For Valentines day we need not mention that there are 6 verses detailing the wife's behavior and only one for the husbands, nor emphasize the requirement for wives "being in subjection unto their own husbands" or Peter's example of Sara's obedience to Abraham, nor her calling him 'lord', because for Valentines day it is usually the husband that needs prodded out of his lacking of romance and selfish nature. Take note then that the single verse for husbands in this chapter starts with the word 'likewise' and refers back to Christ's behavior and love toward his beloved bride, the Church. With perfect love He suffered without complaint, 2:21, He did NO sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, 2:22, who was reviled, but reviled not again, and threatened not, 2:23, who bare our sin, 2:24, and became the Shepherd and Bishop (overseer) of our souls, 2:25. Such is a tall order for us, that we should do likewise, but it is indeed His requirement for our marriage relationship. Sure it is great to get her flowers and candy, but this year we should endeavor to give her a Christ like husband, that is being ever more conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is the destiny of those who are 'in Christ' and moving in that direction early can make your home a taste of paradise here on earth.

Msg #909 The Valiant Men's King

The Scriptures continually challenge us to “choose you this day whom ye will serve” (Josh 24:15) and that “no man can serve two masters.” (Matt 6:24) There were some valiant men from Jabeshgilead squeezed into the end of Samuels first scroll, who illustrates these principles admirably. Their king and saviour had died in battle on Mount Gilboa, and the Philistines took his desecrated body and hung it on their trophy wall in Bethshan. The Bible records that “All the valiant men arose, and went all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Bethshan, and came to Jabesh, and burnt them there.” Why would the valiant men of Jabeshgilead risk their lives to rescue the dead body of their dead king and what do you suppose a Christian might do for their Living King? Reading Samuel's chapter 11 from this scroll tells exactly why for each. Jabeshgileadites never forgot the mess they were in. They were to have their right eye plucked out unless they found a saviour. (1Sam 11:2) Jesus said it would be better to have the eye plucked out than “*that* the whole body should be cast into hell.” (Matt 18:9) Never forget the mess you were in. They never forgot the message they received. (1Sam 11:9) Paul wrote our message down: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;... how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” And they never forgot the mercy they were shown. (1Sam 11:11) Christians should ever serve the Living King and never forget the mercy they were shown.

300 Words for Week #909, Mar 01 2009

Msg #910 Forgive, Serve, Give Thanks

Jesus' departure from Galilee and final course to Jerusalem where he would be presented on what's called Palm Sunday, as the spotless lamb that taketh away the sin of the world, is riddled with lessons which capture and summarize every purpose in his coming. Luke 17 begins the holy journal of that journey, and its prelude contains three powerful lessons. Jesus first taught his disciples that offenses would come, take care they not initiate them, and be instant in forgiving those who do. These charges are contrary to our old nature and will take the faith of a mustard seed. Jesus would soon fulfill each in cross bearing. Then Jesus, the supreme servant of Isaiah 53, gave instruction on how to be a faithful servant unto death. Christians need reminded that we are to minister to others, not brow beat, command, or ridicule them. A servant that does only the commands is an unprofitable servant. (vr 10) Upon entering Samaria Jesus heals 10 lepers. Nine of the ten follow in strict obedience to his commandment and are healed and restored to the congregation by law. One of those ten turned back to Jesus, glorified God, gave thanks, was then found at the feet of Jesus, and was made whole. That one was a Samaritan and I hope he typifies your relationship with your Lord and Saviour. There are many 'Christians' running about with pharisaical obedience, cumbered about with much serving and too busy to thankfully sit at Jesus' feet. There you will find this healed leper. Jesus preceded his journey to the cross with lessons on coming offenses, forgiveness, and servant hood. He would soon live these lessons. His first miracle on this journey was to heal 10 lepers. He would soon heal our leprosy on a tree. Give thanks.

300 Words for Week #910, Mar 08 2009

Msg #911 Galilee to Calvary

As Jesus walked from Galilee to Calvary he taught four important lessons about approaching God. Luke 18 opens with two prayer parables teaching that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint.” . If a lowly widow can use consistency and persistence to get the ear of an unjust judge, we can get the ear of the all just judge. The question framed is “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” Next, a parable for those who “trusted in themselves that they were righteous.” You contend “That's not me!” but our old nature is replete with phariseeism and deplete of mercy begging publicanism. God promises “every one that exalteth himself shall be abased,” but previously promised “The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.” In keeping the emphasis on the salvation, which Christ is about to purchase, Luke now journals two encounters. “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” It will take child like faith, trust, and belief to enter the kingdom of God. Little children are both astutely persistent and remarkably humble. Jesus said “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” The forth driving principle for entering the kingdom, attaining eternal life is illustrated in the “certain ruler” who asked him for it. Like him, there are many who will not let go of every thing else and cling only to Christ. He had kept all the other commandments, but this one he refused. If clinging to possession or pride, let it go, humble yourself as a child and beg like a publican. Enter the kingdom of heaven.

Msg #912 Follow Him to Calvary

The twelve disciples, after spending three years at the feet of their Lord, were not in sync as Jesus took his journey to Jerusalem where he would be offered as the passover lamb for the world. They were following Jesus but were not following him. Jesus often remains far ahead of us as we strive to follow. On the journey Jesus told the rich young ruler, "Sell all that you have, come and follow me, and gain eternal life." The disciples said "We have followed you for three years now, what do we get?" He told the parable of the vineyard workers where those who labored for only one hour got the same pay as those who labored through the heat of the day. (Matt20:12) Jesus told them that he would be mocked, spit upon, scourged, and crucified in Jerusalem, but they could not see it. (Mark10:34) He touched the eyes of blind men and "immediately their eyes received sight." (Matt20) He told his disciples that he would rise again on the third day, but they remained blind to this promise. He commanded another blind man to be brought unto him, "And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee." (Luke18:42) James and John had a contention about who would be the greatest in the kingdom and wanted to sit on Jesus' right and left hand. "But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask:" and he called a publican down from a tree outside of Jericho and stayed with him that night because "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke19:10) Jesus' miraculous and instructive journey from Galilee to Calvary was punctuated by confused misunderstanding disciples. We follow him, but often we don't follow him.

Msg #913 A Ten Pound Servant

The parable of the ten pounds given at the threshold of our Lord's triumphal entry is not to be confused with the stewardship parable of Matthew 25 nor the vineyard parable of Mark 12. Ecumenical forces of modernists strive to create a synoptic dilemma of these separate teachings of Christ and thereby loose the power of them all. As the Christ, the son of the living God, approaches Golgotha, this parable divides mankind into four categories, three found in the 10 servants, and one in the citizens that cry "We will not have this *man* to reign over us." You will fit into one of these four categories, because the 'certain nobleman' has indeed gone off to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return, exactly as Jesus taught he would. The servants become part of the kingdom via John 3 "Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God." and Matthew 18, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted,... ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Once a 'born again' 'convert' you are a servant of His and will fit into his categorization of the 10 fold 'Well done servant' or the 5 fold 'Likewise' servant or perhaps the 1 fold 'take it away' servant. This parable was aimed at those who missed his teaching in Luke 17:21 that his kingdom is presently 'within you.' Good servants stand with a towel over the arm to "Wait on the Lord, and keep His way." Practice that and you can become a category 10 servant. What of the citizens who "would not that I should reign over them?" Jesus said "Bring them hither, and slay *them* before me." Don't be found in that crowd, be converted, ... be born again.

300 Words for for Week #913, Mar 29 2009

Msg #914 The Anointed Messiah

No apostle gives more detail about the last week of Christ's work than does John who begins chapter 12 with a declaration of Jesus' arrival in Bethany 6 days before passover. Exodus 12 declares that to be the 8th day of the month of Abib, and gathered at that Friday supper in the large house of Simon the leper where Lazarus sat and Martha served, were those closest to Jesus. Here, Mary of Bethany reenacts the anointing of the feet of Jesus as first done by the woman forgiven much and loving much. (Luke 7) Ecumenical modernists fussing over synoptic foolishness try to make these two anointings the same and miss the perfect picture. Though there are several other Marys who will in 10 days unsuccessfully gather to anoint the body of the Passover Lamb, this one did it at his first coming to Jerusalem. Her present precious perception and performance annoyed the other disciples. When you get close enough to Jesus to know him and what he is about, when you love much because you have been forgiven much, when you anoint him Messiah and know him as your Passover Lamb and your anointed King, when the odour of that ointment fills the house, some will have indignation and trouble you. Concerning this reenactment of the harlots worship, "Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." You can reenact this same adoration perception and anointing worship. You might suffer indignation and trouble but if you have heard him say to you "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" you can let the odour of the ointment fill the house and not be troubled at all.

Msg #915 The 10th of Abib

The Harmony of the Gospels and the events leading to the crucifixion of “The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” find a hinge pin in the 10th day of the month of Abib. Exodus 12 established the selection and separation of the passover lamb which they took out from the sheep to “keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.” As our Passover Lamb, Jesus was separated at his Sunday triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem, and was 'kept up' to be shown as the lamb without spot or blemish until the 14th day. This triumphal entry is recorded in all 4 of the Gospels; in Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19 and John 12, but the apostle John spends an inordinate amount of ink covering these last 5 days of Jesus' ministry and spotlessness. Don't let traditions muddy up the clear testimony of the Apostles. Any Bible student who can read a calendar and harmonize these clear Scriptures about this most crucial sacrifice made on the 14th day of the month, can know that he spent three days in death before his Sunday morning resurrection. On that Sunday two disciples talked to Jesus about his crucifixion and said “to day is the third day since these things were done.” (Luke 24) John clarifies that they hurried his body to the tomb before the 'high day' sabbath of Lev 23:6-7, not the Saturday sabbath that tradition misreads in their Catholic Latin bibles. A born again Christian needs to be a diligent student of the perfect sacrifice that fulfilled all Scripture and secured his eternal soul. “Study to shew thyself... a workman that needeth not be ashamed.”

Msg #916 The First Day of the Week

The Bible says “The first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.” (John 20:1) Christians, who have had their life changed like Mary Magdalene did, have been revisiting this empty tomb every Sunday morning since. Don't break precedence. In us the power of God and the presence of eternal life are found in the resurrection celebrated each Sunday. Paul says “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: ... That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection.” (Phil 3) Oswald Chambers clarifies that eternal life is not a gift FROM God, it is the gift OF God; so too, power is not a gift FROM the Holy Ghost, it is the power OF the Holy Ghost. The eternal life is the life of God in you, the power is the Holy Spirit in you. Both are purchased in the resurrection of Christ. The appearances of the resurrected Christ are listed in 1Cor 15 and it is true that today there are many Christians running around who have not 'seen' the Christ. When you 'see' Christ you will “reckon ye, also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6) When you keep your focus on Him you will “yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” With His power “sin shall not have dominion over you” and the preacher will not have to twist your arm to get you to assemble together with other believes “very early in the morning the first day of the week.”

Msg #917 Believing the Word of God

The gospel of John in the Holy Bible is organized and equip with an exceptional prologue and epilogue making the Gospel of John the finest literary work ever banned from our 'public' school. The events covered by John after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and leading to that epilogue are precious and tremendously enlightening. They expose reactions of Peter and John, Mary Magdalene, 10 disciples, and finally "Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymas." In this concluding account, Thomas seems to replace Peter's loud mouth and audacious manner as he says "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." But Jesus heard him as he brazenly expressed his unbelief. Jesus' hurt is real and his rebuke is harsh. We would not likely express such torrid unbelief in words, but Christ is as deeply hurt when we do not believe the record of the apostles. Scholarship says it is just a book by men about God, but God says that ALL Scripture is given by 'inspiration' of God. The Bible is aptly removed from our children's lives by their school and removed from our churches by ecumenical doubting scholars who think to change God's words and correct 'man's book.' But "Every promise of the Book is mine, every chapter, every verse, every line." Don't let the ACLU atheists steal, nor the ABS modernist version making scholars twist God's Words from your life. To get a copyright on a 'version' one must 'significantly deviate' from any previous translation, and they surely do! Fight 'truth decay' read His Holy Bible, un-copyright, to your children, and children's children today. Get a pre-copyright authorized King James Bible.

300 Words for Week #917, Apr 26 2009

Msg #918 Man's Depravity

In the Bible's doctoral thesis on the righteousness of God and the salvation of man, we learn about the depravity of man unfolding in our nations leadership. The thesis, written as the Apostle Paul's epistle to the Romans, establishes as its first premise that every human has the knowledge of God's eternal power and Godhead manifest within them, has the invisible things of God clearly seen in creation, and is without excuse. This, in itself, defies Augustinian and Calvinist theology about the 'total depravity' of man, but verse 21 starts the 6 steps that mankind, in his rebellion against God, and in his own sinful nature, takes towards total depravity. It appears our own governor has arrived at that bottom rung, pandering to those who are given over to “vile affections” and “taking pleasure in them that do the same.” How can one of such superb intellect and education rally with homosexuals “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, ... who are given up unto vile affections, ... changing the natural use into that which is against nature, ... men with men working that which is unseemly?” It is only comprehended when you look at the six rungs in the ladder of depravity. *“Because that, when they knew God, they 1) glorified him not as God, 2) neither were thankful; but 3) became vain in their imaginations, and 4) their foolish heart was darkened. 5) Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And 6) changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.”* The thing about ladders is that they can take you up as well as down. So which rung are you on? And which direction are you moving? Be top rung with God.

300 Words for Week #918, 03 May 2009

Msg #919 Identified With Christ

To learn the doctrines of Luther check with a Lutheran, Calvin a Presbyterian, Henry VIII an Episcopalian, but if you would learn the doctrine of baptisms a Baptist is a ready source. Late in the 19th century staunch believers set out 5 fundamentals of the Christian faith¹, but late in the 1st century the apostles laid out the Christian's 7 “first principles of the oracles of God.” We should hold staunchly to the former but forever be students of the latter. The 4th principle is “The doctrine of baptisms,” which I would not have you ignorant of. (Heb 6:2) There is no water in this world that can make you a Christian; no holy water which can wash away an original sin; and no sacrament of baptism found in the Holy Scriptures. Matthew 3 clarifies John the Baptist's 'baptism of repentance' which demands confession of sin and repentance, (not 'penance.')

That is preparation for the kingdom of heaven. Mark 1 clarifies who it is that will “baptize you with the Holy Ghost,” and that baptism, as part of the new birth, makes you a quickened born again believer. In Luke 3 the baptism of Jesus is a baptism of the identification OF the Christ, in John 1 the identification OF the Christ, the Lamb of God, and in Acts 2 it is the identification WITH the Christ. When you, as a believer, are baptized by immersion, as Christ was, you picture the death burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and are now identified WITH Christ and “accepted in the beloved.” Not the picture of washing, as errantly taught by Protestants, but the picture of identification, as taught in Holy Scriptures. Not a port of entry to Christianity, but a public identification that you have indeed been 'born again.'

300 Words for Week #919, 10 May 2009

1 From a Bible conference of Conservative Protestants meeting in Niagara in 1895, a statement was issued containing what came to be known as the five points of fundamentalism: The verbal inerrancy of Scripture, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, a substitutionary theory of the atonement, and the physical resurrection and bodily return of Christ. from “The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church”

Msg #920 Being The Ideal Mom

The last recorded Proverb of Solomon contains 5 lessons that king Lemuel's mom taught him, illustrated with the famous description of the 'virtuous woman'. Famous, because this proverb of wisdom has been meticulously passed on for 3,000 years of our history, but to often today separated from the 5 important lessons to be taught by moms everywhere. Don't be a womanizer, nor drinker (or use any other mind altering drugs), speak up for those who can't, judge right, and marry right. When God created a cow, an ewe, or a doe he created an animal that could produce offspring, but when God created woman he specifically designed and built for man, and from man, both a wife and a mother of children. There are no design flaws in woman, but mans fall into sin marred moms from the ideal that God references in this proverb. When one gets the sin issue fixed, through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, which "cleanseth us from all sin," (1John1:7) and becomes a "new creature" with "old things ... passed away; ... and all things become new" (2Cor 5:17) it is important to revisit these lessons and ideals. They are each now possible. In God's design the woman is priceless and trusted, doing her husband good and not evil, is industrious at home, in farming and commercially, is strong and meticulous, up early and up late, she makes things rather than buying things, is compassionate, ready for anything a winter could bring, makes the finer things for her home, speaks only wisdom and kindness, and looks well to the ways of her household with no idleness. (Prov 31:11-31) Wow! Praise the Lord for moms, who by the power of Christ, can be what God would have moms to be. Happy Mothers Day.

300 Words for Week #920, 17 May 2009

Mothers Day Penny Pulpit Supplement

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,

Sunday, mothers day, my older brother, Charles Owen Rice, went home to be with his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Today we will bury his body in resurrection ground to await the return of the Christ. In the spring of 1958 a Baptist preacher of the gospel, Cecil Palm, striving to get a Baptist Church started in Gang Mills NY, knocked on the door of 40 Platt Street. Doris Romiano Rice answered the door and said “No thank you, I am Catholic,” but Levi Rice pulled himself out from under the car in the drive and said “I’d be interested in that.” In a garage, under the preaching of Cecil Palm, my mom and dad were marvelously born again to receive a new life in Christ that year, and their new life brought the Rices a whole new home. My older brother Chuck was saved and baptized in Ford’s Pond the next year, and I, and my sister, Barb were saved the next, to be baptized in the spring when the ice was out of that same pond. Chuck’s going home was unexpected in time, but not unexpected in eternity. The apostle said “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. “ If you have got life, marvel in it and tell someone else about it. If you do not have eternal life, trust in Christ today, it is just that easy.

May God bless you with eternal life, or in your eternal life.

Pastor Ed Rice

Msg #921 Temptations

Immediately after his identification the Holy Spirit 'drove' the Lord Jesus Christ into the wilderness to face temptations. Since the foundation of the earth man had not done well with temptation. The 1st Adam had fallen under the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1Joh 2:16). The Christ, God's 2nd Adam (Rom5, 1Cor 15) would now face three temptations tugging at the same physical, spiritual and mental strains. James clarifies "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:13-15) and the Apostle Paul helps us understand that "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*." (1Cor 10:13) The temptations of man that caused his fall and make up man made religions everywhere are 1) "Ye shall not surely die..." God lied to you, His Word is not accurate; 2) "Your eyes shall be opened, ... ye shall be as gods,... knowing good and evil; and 3) Disobedience is good for food, pleasant to the eyes, desired to make one wise,... follow in the steps of your wife and eat it. Satan's temptations are not new, are effectively used against man for these 6,000 years, and are defeated in the victory accomplished by God's 2nd Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ.

300 Words for Week #921, 24 May 2009

Msg #922 Calling him Lord

One gets a resourceful insight when they examine how Christ first acquired disciples. Andrew and John were first disciple's of John the Baptist and were sent by him to follow 'the Lamb of God!' They already had a noble inquiring start as disciples and John became the most beloved disciple of the Lord Jesus. Andrew 'heard Him speak' and followed Jesus, and soon became one of the ordained apostles. After 1 day with Jesus, 'he first findeth Simon Peter, his brother, and saith unto him "We have found the Messiah." When Jesus would have departed for Galilee with these three, they went to find their boyhood friend, Philip, and Philip found Nathanael, an 'Israelite indeed.' These five already knew God's word to Moses, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of they brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken; ... and it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him." They knew God's word to the prophets "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." They knew their need of a savior, which being interpreted is 'Jesus'; they knew the promise of the coming anointed one of God, the Messiah which being interpreted is the 'Christ'; they swelled with desire to call him their Rabbi, master, and owner, which being interpreted is 'Lord.' These became chosen and precious disciples because they were first seeking and longing for the Lord Jesus Christ, by all three names. What is it that you are seeking for?

300 Words for Week #22, 31 May 2009

Msg #923 Manifest Christ

Jesus' first miracle is much noised about but little understood. It is the miracle most mentioned by those trying to excuse their booze dependence, but Jesus turned the water into 'NEW' wine not into booze, and he clearly stated "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise ... Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." Jesus was not at the wedding in Cana to condone your alcohol consumption but to "manifest forth his glory!" At this very first gathering with his disciples, on 'the third day' after his baptism, Mary, his mother, who of all people knew him to be the Son of God, as she likely quoted Isaiah 41:17-18 in her head, said to Jesus "They have no wine." Now for the disciples sakes, and the servants, Jesus, the source of living water, used 6 old Jewish ceremonial washing pots, not to deliver a pitcher of wine, but to deliver his first picture of his living water. Out of the old covenant there was to come the new, "and his disciples believed on him." In the panoramic view given in the gospels, John is careful to detail in chronological insights that Matthew, Mark and Luke painted with broad brush strokes. This detail is not about wine, but revelation; not your weaknesses but his manifest glory. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Msg #924 Clean the Temple

Jesus' first entry into the temple for the passover feast resembles his first entry into his temple - a new believer. "In the Old Testament God builds His temple for His people, but in the new He builds His people for His temple." "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." When one is first born again in Christ, Jesus comes in to find within his temple "those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting." Things done 'for religion', 'religiously', and for love of money will need to be scourged and driven out. Jesus wants His temple to be called a house of prayer. When Jesus tells one not to smoke this or drink that, not to watch that or listen to this, they often ask "With what authority can you purge this temple?" "Destroy this temple and in 3 days I will raise it up." ... "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's." When you are part of the body of Christ he has the authority to purge His temple. If you won't be purged and be "a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," then perhaps your not His temple at all and have never been converted or born again. When converted you can sing with the saints "The things I used to do, I don't do them anymore, there's been a great change since I been born again." The things I used to drink, ... The shows I used to watch, ... it is great when there's been a great change. Dangerous when there's not.

Msg #925 Jumping Jehoshaphat

Jumping Jehoshaphat is an expression that came from a kings leap into compromise. “And Jehu, ... the seer, ... said to the king Jehoshaphat, shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD? Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the LORD.” (2Chron 19:3) 'Christianity' has jumped into a great compromise with worldliness. Lucifer was the lead musician in heaven and the lead that led him into our Churches is usually a lead guitar. Churches have become entertainment centers for crowds and the purpose that drives them is not Godly. Christ responds even more harshly to us than he did to Jehoshaphat, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” (James 4:4) An adulterer is one who has left their first love and gone after another. To the first Church addressed in the Revelation of Jesus Christ he says “I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else ...” (Rev 2:4-5) In a day when 'Christianity' is laden with compromise we need to hold ever closer to our first love, and not grow weary in the well doing of our 'first works.' If compromise has already entangled us and we find ourselves the enemies of God, He calls us to repent, and, praise the Lord, “if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1John 1:9) Don't compromise, don't quit and don't can't. “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.” (1John 2:6)

Msg #926 A Christian Father

“Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.” (Proverbs4:1) A father who models his behavior after the inerrant infallible Word of God will have five characteristics and a divine model for good success. As a born again Christian father he has made (or will make) a life long covenant relationship with his children's mother. That covenant, called marriage, provides an essential security to his children. He will love and cherish their mom more than self, as Christ loves his Church. That love provides an essential emotional security for his children. He works and provides the physical needs of the home. God commanded “that if any would not work, neither should he eat.” (2Thes3:10, Prov21:25) Thus he provides an essential physical security to his children. A Christian father “ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;” they are “the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well.” (1Tim 3:4,12) As a commander in the home he keeps a balance of 'nurture and admonition' that will not 'provoke his children to wrath' nor rebellion. (Eph 6:4) Enforced consistent boundaries on children's lives produces an essential security of character, and its lack produces frustrated, angry, rebellious children. Lastly, a Christian father is a teacher using lecture, illustration, object lesson and example to balance knowledge, wisdom and understanding in his children. Yeah, our Heavenly Father provides the example and eternal security saying “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” He loves us with an unconditional love, and provides for our every need, as He provides consistent commandments and boundaries for our lives. Our Heavenly Father is a teacher and has revealed himself in 66 books so that we can grow in knowledge of Him. Happy Fathers Day. Keep growing.

Msg #927 A Josiah Revival

The Bible says Josiah, the next to last king of Judah, saw great revival in his kingdom when he prioritized five things that one could easily pay heed to today. First he began to seek after the LORD God. (2Chron 34:3) There is not much seeking after the LORD God in our society today and Christians, who seek after a lot of things, do not much seek after Him. Josiah then purged his kingdom of idols and immorality and began to repair the house of God. When they did so, they found great riches in the house of God. We need such a purging and even a sorry Church in need of repair can show great value in edification and in preaching of God's Word if you would get there weekly. The Bible says “not forsake the assembling” with other believers. Being in a Bible believing Baptist Church can take your sorry focus off yourself and make you conscience of others. Josiah next valued the Word of God and kept its every precept. We sing 'Read your Bible, Pray every day, if you want to grow' yet many won't, and some say “I can't understand it!” You don't need another watered down version, you need to search for the LORD God, purge out your kingdom, and rebuild the house of God in your life. That is when Josiah valued the Bible, and understood it very well indeed. It says of the passover that he kept, “And there was no passover like to that kept in Israel from the days of Samuel the prophet' neither did all the kings of Israel keep such a passover as Josiah kept.” (2Chron 35:18) When you do things in the right order you can take careful heed to the testimonies of the LORD God.

Msg #928 Eternal Question, Eternal Answer

The first dissertation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh profoundly deals with the most pertinent question of life “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” The answer, given to Nicodemus in John 3 before he could even ask the question, is preceded by three illustrations and is then given in our favorite Scripture verse. All of John 3 is caught up in this dissertation and every human should have opportunity to comprehend this answer to their eternal need. Since believers are chosen to be the witness to 'every creature’ with this message we should be students of this chapter. His first illustration shows that entering the kingdom of God and receiving eternal life is a 2nd birth, a spiritual new birth. This is not to be confused with a natural flesh and water birth, as Nicodemus confused it, it is spiritual and cannot be seen. Note here that John 3:12 includes no baptism. Jesus is emphatic that being born again has nothing to do with any natural element, any will of the flesh or any will of man. (1:13) It is spiritual not physical. In Jesus' 2nd illustration (vr12-13) a man has to ascend to heaven and the Christ, the Son of man, the Son of God is the only mediator that can do that. In his 3rd illustration (vr14-15) that serpent of sin is cast in brass of judgment, lifted up and nailed to a cross. Looking at man's sin in the judgment of death constitutes a belief that Jesus took what we had coming, then we can simply 'look and live.' Often we think John 3 has only one verse to memorize when it contains Jesus' whole dissertation to answer the question “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Tell someone else.

Msg #929 Discern Spiritual Things

Jesus curtly rebukes Nicodemus for not understanding spiritual things. This rebuke and this gospel are to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Jesus' first dissertation on eternal life crescendos in John 3:16 with such power that many fail to read the rest of the chapter. In it we find that the rebuke fits you and I. The verses immediately after verse 16 contend that man is condemned without Christ and that he loves darkness rather than light for his deeds are evil. "After these things ... there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." Nick could not separate a natural birth from a spiritual birth, and Pharisees could not separate baptism from purifying. Christianities ignorance with holy water, infant baptisms, and attempts to wash away sin with water of baptism still entangles lives today and we are deserving of Jesus' curt rebuke about not understanding spiritual things. "What can wash away my sin? ... What can make me whole again? Nothing but the Blood of Jesus!" When asked if one is 'saved' many responses start with "Well I was baptized in this or that Church." If baptism could wash away a single sin, Jesus had opportunity to say so in John 3. Instead, as he states it "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. ... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:31-36) It takes a new birth, not an old baptism.

Msg #930 A Higher Plane

When Jesus told his disciples “ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and Judea, and in Samaria ... “ he traced out the path he made in John 3-4, and when “he must needs go through Samaria” in chapter 4, his gospel was as misunderstood as it was in chapter 3. Jesus keeps speaking of spiritual water that provides eternal life, and the woman at the well keeps grasping only physical water that could last her forever. In Jerusalem Nicodemus thought only of a physical rebirth, in Judea the Jews thought only of a physical purifying with water, and now in Samaria, as would be in “the uttermost part of the earth,” man entangles the physical 'doing of something' with the spiritual 'Christ did it all for us.' Even his disciples did not differentiate between the physical and spiritual when Jesus said “I have meat to eat that ye know not of,” or when Jesus saw behind them all of Sychar coming to hear him and said “Lift up your eyes; and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” The lost and the disciple alike spend their efforts on the physical plane and rarely make that transition to “higher ground.” “Lord lift me up and let me stand, By faith, on heavens table land, A higher plane than I have found; Lord plant my feet on higher ground.” In Sychar of Samaria many, and then many more, believed on him because they left the physical belief and attained the spiritual. Many will miss heaven by 18 inches, the distance from the head to the heart. And many disciples labor for Him in the physical without abiding in him in the spiritual. Trust is larger than believe. Abide is larger than serve.

Msg #931 Belief in the Christ

Before Jesus did his second miracle he rebukes mankind for their excessive dependence on signs and wonders. His five disciples, believing him the Messiah, had seen the water turned to wine after they believed. The Pharisees had questioned his authority when he purged the temple of money changers, but did not comprehend his answer. Nicodemus had heard his dissertation on eternal life that night; the purifying Jews heard it the next day. The Samaritan woman and all Sychar heard it at the well and now Jesus, approached by the nobleman says unto him "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The 5 disciples had believed that he was the Messiah. Nic believed. Samaritans of Sychar believed. This statement was made just prior to the first believing Gentile's belief. This first healing miracle of Jesus the Christ was turned into a test of whether the nobleman would believe the word of the Lord. He did, and when he saw the hour his son began to amend he, and his house, believed on the Messiah, which being interpreted is the Christ. If your not saved, what would it take to cause you to believe? The nobleman ran to Jesus when he was sure he would loose his son. Jesus rebukes the need for signs but extends this man's faith until he believed His Word. When you believe the Word of the Lord you will believe in the Christ that God sent. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Believe today.

Msg #932 John 5s Gospel Witness

The first recorded public discourse of the gospel of Jesus Christ is recorded in John 5 and it is marvelous to review its authority and clarity. The Apostle John is careful to sequence the daily events in the life of Christ after his baptism. These include the initial gathering of some disciples, chap 1; his first miracle and cleansing of the temple, chap 2; his presentation of the gospel to Nicodemus, chap 3; and then his presenting of himself as the Messiah to believing Samaritans and a nobleman in chap 4. His disciples now go back to fishing and he into the wilderness for 40 days of fasting. Fifty days after the passover he goes to Jerusalem for Pentecost and there performs his 3rd miracle at the pool of Bethesda. It is interesting that with the very first miracle the Jews find out about, and only the third he had done, the Jews wanted him dead; stoned for working on the Sabbath. The 3 points in Jesus' message start with "Verily, Verily," and amply cover the 'what' 'why' and 'how' of His gospel. (vr. 19-27) You are commanded to believe it because of the powerful witness of John the Baptist, of Christ's works, of God the Father, and of the Scriptures. (vr. 28-47) They did eventually kill the Messiah, the only begotten Son of God and Son of man, but in so doing they fulfilled the very gospel message that he here presented. For almost 2,000 years now man in majority has been mucking with the simplicity of the gospel presented in those three points. It is replete throughout the Bible that "He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. (1John 5:12) Join a minority, get life.

Msg #933 Receiving Christ

When Jesus presented himself as the Messiah, which being interpreted is the Christ, his persecution by the Jewish religious crowd (John 5) and rejection by those of hometown Nazareth (Luke 4) was immediate. He had not yet shown himself with signs and wonders, these would start at Capernaum after he regathered his disciples. The Apostle John words it in his prologue "He came unto his own and his own received him not." (John 1:11) "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, reaching the gospel of the kingdom of God." (Mark 1:14) It was then and is now a popular thing to reject the gospel of Jesus Christ. The religious crowd reject it by doctoring it up with unbelief, penance or sacraments, while the rest pursue materialism entrapments and expect that God will one day scale their good against their bad and let them in anyway. And many, especially in our Creator denying day, just pursue sex, drugs and rock-n-roll without giving a thought to eternity. There will always be a few, however, who know the truth. "Then said one unto him, Lord are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." (Luke 13:23-24) If you are saved you need to show the gate to neighbor and kin. If your seeking to enter in, you likely know someone who is saved, and they would gladly show you this gospel gate. The Apostle John's prologue continues, "But as many as receive him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John 1:12) Be reconciled to God today.

Msg #934 There is a Hell

The Bible says that there is a heaven and there is a hell and that you will spend eternity in one place or the other depending on what you do with God's Only Begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In Matthew Jesus tells the scribes and Pharisees who rejected him as the Messiah "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (23:33) In Mark, in verses completely removed from the modernist's bibles, Jesus describes hell as a place "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (9:44,46) In Luke Jesus tells us to "Fear him which ... hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." (12:5) In John Jesus describes hell as a place of condemnation where the "wrath of God abideth on him (that believeth not the Son)." (3:18,36) In Acts the only salvation from the horrid place of hell is to "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and they house." (16:31) And in Romans that salvation from hell is available to all, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (10:13) No description, however, that Jesus gave of hell is more powerful than his first hand description of "the rich man (who) also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments ... and he cried and said ... I am tormented in this flame." (Luke 16:22-24) Hell is a place of "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt 25:41) but people will end up there when they reject God the Creator's only Begotten Son. (John 3:16-18) Many will end up there for Jesus tells us "Nay: but except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3,5) Be saved today.

Msg #935 Our Prayer Time

After a week or more of 'revival' services with his disciples street preaching and door to door witnessing that Bible says that "it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." The context is not that Jesus would teach them 'how' to pray, but that he would teach them 'to' pray. Four profound prayer lessons ensue in Luke 11. First, Jesus had a 'certain place' and constant dependence on prayer which here prompted the disciple's request. We should get that certain place and constant dependence. Next Jesus gave the disciples a rendition of his model prayer which he taught to the multitude during his sermon on the mount. Thirdly Jesus gave illustration of how a friend might meet your need, not because of friendship but because of 'importunity'. In Jesus' example importune prayer is not for selfishness, not "that ye may consume it upon your lusts," (James 4:3) but for the serving of others. Importune prayer is not for circumstances that are of our own making, and importune prayer is for serving others with resources that we do not have in ourselves. We need prayers like that. Finally Jesus gives an example where a child asks his father for what is good thrice, and are assured that a father would never give what would do a child harm. The lesson here is not that God gives us what we want or will, but what we need in order to serve others. "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" When we pray like Jesus prayed, He will give us "the Holy Spirit" that meets all our need.

Msg #936 Elect for Service

A little letter written to 'strangers scattered throughout' and called 1 Peter, outlines that a functional Gentile Christian should 'know', 'grow', 'shew' and 'go'. Peter, the Jew, is writing from Babylon, the cradle of the Gentile world, and writing to Gentile believers because they are now part of the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Fourth century Rome used their Latin to say Peter wrote from Rome, and those followers of Augustine of Egypt thought people were elect to receive salvation and used their Latin to spread this error, even to reformers of the 1500s. Peter wrote from Babylon, he wrote to Gentiles that became elect by entering into the only Elect One, and he wrote so they would be obedient to their election. First to 'know' that they were redeemed by faith in the blood of Christ and nothing else. (1:18-21) Then to 'grow' through the word of God. (2:2) Modernist bibles using Egypt's Alexandrian derivations say this is growing 'into salvation.' But Peter is very clear; you cannot grow into salvation, you must be born into it, (1:23) just like Jesus said. (John 3:5) After you 'know' and 'grow' you "should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (2:9b) Here again Peter emphasizes that just as Israel was a chosen people, born again Gentiles are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." Nowhere in the Bible are people elect for salvation (Augustinian error) but believers are always elect for service. Once placed in the 'Elect One,' Jesus Christ, we are to 'go,' ... "to follow in His steps." (2:21, Matt 28:19) Peter and God wanted you to know that, as believers, we have big, elect shoes to fill. Don't miss it.

300 Words for Week #936, 06 Sep 2009

Msg #937 Labor is not in vain

In Paul's first letter to the Church at Corinth he gives an encouragement that is often needed for Christians in our labors for the Lord when he writes “forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (2Corinthians 15:58) He wrote this to a church which was having trouble staying pure in a vile society, having trouble staying untangled from a corrupt government, and having just received 15 chapters of admonishment for being carnal. As Paul charges them to be steadfast, we also need to be steadfast in our gospel message, our stand on the truth of God's Holy Word, and our testimony of purity in a vile society. As he charges them to be unmovable, we also need to be unmovable, looking back and being sure we have not moved into compromise and looking ahead to ensure we are not moving that way. And we also need to be “always abounding in the work of the Lord”, recalling what work Christians were commissioned to do; “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Matt 28:19-20) Source waters of a mighty river have no idea the work and good that are done downstream. You have no idea the lives that are touched by your close walk with the Lord. Christians are told “He that believeth in me (Jesus), as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38) Keep it flowing for “your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

Msg #938 Be a Minister

In II Corinthians 4 a Christian finds Paul's instructions for being in the ministry nestled between two charges that every Christian is to be a minister of the new testament and one who reconciles men to God. "Our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament... seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech." (3:5b,6,12) "And all things are of God. who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation: and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." (5:18,19b) As ministers of the gospel one needs to renounce "the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully." While many have compromised the truth of the Word of God and made churches women run entertainment centers of rock and roll with modernist bibles, an 'able minister of the new testament' is to use the truth of the gospel message to reconcile others to God through Christ. Christians preaching this 'narrow gate and straight path' will be in the minority and find 'trouble', will be 'perplexed', be 'persecuted' and 'cast down'. But keep preaching God's simple plan of salvation to your neighbors and kin and you will not be 'distressed', in 'despair', 'forsaken', nor 'destroyed'. If your saved, you are called to tell others about the grace that saved you, and to be a witness of Christ. In the perplexing troubles where others cast down and persecute, continue to be His witness. God can save anybody, even pray for them which despitefully use you, and be a minister of reconciliation who shares the Word that is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword. Don't faint now.

300 Words for Week #938, 20 Sep 2009

Msg #939 The Sound of the Trumpet

Leviticus 23 is a chapter on the Jewish feasts which God established so his people would never forget what he had done and always know what he was doing. It is marvelous to study in hindsight and prophetic foresight. The three feasts, passover, Pentecost and trumpets, mark out three major events in God's plan; the death and resurrection of His passover lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, the coming of His Spirit to empower his Church 50 days later, and the final chapter of this age when the trumpet will sound. The two portrayals already fulfilled are worth studying to know that the final chapter will be fulfilled just as he promised. The symbols in these feasts are significant illustrations for His passover and His Church. So too each symbol in the feast of trumpets is pertinent to his second coming. The feast of trumpets held in the 7th month of the year, symbolizing the 7th month of this world, when the prophet Joel says "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand;...Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness *is* great." (Joel 2:1, 3:13), foreshadows all the events of the end times, wherein Christians are looking for, yeah longing for, the sound of the trumpet. That trumpet, referenced for the rapture of the Church in Thessalonians and Revelation, is actually the sound of Christ's voice which also sounds 7 times in the 7 year tribulation to follow. We need to be "rightly dividing the word of truth", ... "and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

Msg #940 Intimacy With God

God reveals intimate details of his plans and purposes in his Holy Scriptures. He says of Abraham, who was a “friend of God,” “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” (Gen18:17) Intimacy in friendship is measured in the sharing of expectations, hopes, plans and dreams. God does not hide these from a born again Christian, who by the Light of the Lord Jesus Christ dwelling in him is a friend of God. But his plans and purposes for this world need to be studied out. Even Daniel wrote “I Daniel understood by books the number of years, ... in the desolation of Jerusalem.” (Dan 9:2) When Christians 'hit the books' to understand the Revelation of Jesus Christ, Biblical Prophecy unfolds from all 66 corridors of his most precious Book. Early false teachings that God's promises to Israel are not to be taken literal close off many corridors and pollutes every denomination's eschatology. The cults, which arose opposing such false renderings, mapped out paths that depart even further from God's revealed truths. Every born again Christian should be a student of Biblical Prophecy, it is ennobling, and enables a intimacy with God who says “Shall I hide from my friend that thing which I do?” In pursuit of this study a Christian needs only two tools; an open mind that will believe all that the prophets wrote, and an open Bible, that contains all that the prophets wrote. Studying Biblical Prophecy is fraught with obstacles and false teachers who deny the pre-tribulation rapture of the church, or the literal 1000 year reign of Christ. Use the two tools and your earnest desire for an intimacy with God for He has revealed his whole plan in the pages of his 66 books.

Msg #941 Israel's Redeeming

The sixty six chapters of Isaiah parallel the sixty six books of the Bible so meticulously that comparing the last of each is very insightful. It can lead one to a profound understanding of the big picture of all upcoming Biblical Prophecy the same way one puts together a jigsaw puzzle's frame. Isaiah 66 begins by describing God's majesty and Israel as an infinitesimal people who "delighteth in their abominations." But it decrees that God will redeem His chosen nation Israel and restore them, and their city of Jerusalem, to be the rulers of the world, with Jesus the Christ setting upon the throne of David. Therein is the theme of His last book. In the big picture every nation will be pitted against this tiny, seemingly insignificant, historically hated group of people called the Jews. Even our own present administration stooped to calling them a nation of 'occupiers' of Palestine (that is not even a nation!), and now tries to force Israel to abandon their own properly possessed promised land on the west bank of Jordan. It is diabolical. But in His 66th chapter God promised that those Gentiles that "Hear the word of God and tremble at His word," will be sustained and satisfied with her consolations, and upcoming glory. While all others hate and plot for her destruction, born again Christians are marked by a love and reverence for the Jew and a desire for the peace of Israel in this troubled, hateful world. A world that is drawing towards those judgments outlined in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. We are yet longing for the coming of that Judge, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Occupy until he comes. 1Thes 4 comes before His wrath is poured out to redeem His nation Israel.

Msg #942 Visions of the Future

Daniel chapter 2 and 7, 8 and 9, contain a unique progressive revelation of Jehovah God's involvement in world empires and new world orders. The visions and dreams of images and beasts, heads and horns move emphasis from Daniels present distress to our own future demise and planet moving judgments. These are more fully described in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Liberals calling themselves 'progressives' and trying to save the trees, decrease carbon emissions and become vegetarians do not have a clue about the Jew that they love to hate, nor the pending world judgment coming into the Middle East. Christians need to know what their Father is doing, and parallel the images and beasts, heads and horns into our current events. Of them, Jesus Christ tells us "whoso readeth, let him understand," (Matt 24) and Paul echoes "Know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, ... Ye are all the children of light ... Therefore let us not sleep ... but let us watch and be sober." (1Thes 5) There have already risen leaders whose "power shall be mighty, but not by his own power, and he shall destroy (Israel) wonderfully, and shall prosper and practice ... and through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart and by peace shall destroy many" (Daniel 8) As we deal with yet another one of these, "Let not your heart be troubled" (John 14) Remember our commission is still to :Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.: Don't be side tracked.

Msg #943 Armageddon

The Holy Bible clearly documents three world wars yet to unfold on the nations of this world and the second and most renown is called in the Hebrew tongue “Armageddon.” (Rev 16) It is no surprise to the Christian that all three wars center around a Mt. Zion, in the Israeli city of Jerusalem. All three involve Jehovah God defending and redeeming His chosen people Israel. The first (Ezekl 38) prepares the way for the world dictator on a white horse. (Rev 6) Jesus described him as “The abomination of desolation.” (Matt 24) The rebel filled nations of this world hate the Biblical prophecy which declares that Israel, and their throne of David, shall soon be the theocratic ruler of the whole world. Their messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, is to step from the clouds onto the Mount of Olives which divides into a great valley (Zech 14, Rev 14) wherein all the nations of the earth are gathered together (Zeph 3) to annihilate God's nation of Israel. (Isa 26:20-21, Rev 12:17) Any newspaper today gives full credence to such an unbelievable scenario which causes true Christian's mistrust of governments and complete trust in Holy Scripture. Our vocal prayer is “Even so, come, Lord Jesus,” and His reply is “Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” (Rev 22) The Apostle Paul, while preaching all this to the Church at Corinth, answers his own question “Why do we therefore labor?” thus: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ,” ... “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord we persuade men,” ... “For the love of Christ constraineth us,” ... “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.” (2Cor 5) Tell someone about your reconciliation to God today.

Msg #944 My Rights

The Bible says “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: ... Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:12,18-19) That sin nature that Adam brought into the world by disobedience, and passed on to all man is nothing more than “MY claim to MY right to MY self.” And the cure to that disposition of sin came when one man, Jesus Christ the righteous, relinquished all claim to any right to himself and died on the cross of Calvary for our sin. How unfortunate, how disheartening, how insulting when a Christian, redeemed by the blood of that perfect sacrifice, set free from the penalty and power of sin, once again makes claim to their right to their selves and ignores their new Lord and Saviour completely. Lord may I die to self today and relinquish all claim to my rights to myself and walk in your presence without sin. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Rom 6)

Msg #945 God's Chosen

When one reads the 212 verses of the Old Testament which reveal Jehovah God's intention to gather and restore Israel to their promised land and rule the world through them with his only begotten Son sitting on the throne of David in the city of Jerusalem on Mt. Zion, one can see the vanity of Christendom when they think this book is about them. For a very short period in the His-Story of the world Gentiles have full access to the Kingdom of God and may be 'grafted in' to His purposes of restoring His chosen people Israel. Commissioned only to preach the gospel to every creature, the 'Church' has vainly swollen its head and ego to where 'they' actually hated and persecuted God's chosen people. 'They' say "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:" (Rev 3:17) It is not our task to bring peace on earth (Micah 4:3), nor make the lion lie down with the lamb. (Isa 65:25) It is but to "be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) As believers we need to revisit our role as 'such a worm as I' and 'only a sinner saved by grace'. Christ says to 'Christendom' "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Read through the 212 verses (www.GSBaptistChurch.com/last_oct) and then realize anew the scope of "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We need to be about our Fathers business.

300 Words for Week #945, 09 Nov 2009

Msg #946 Be a Priest Today

God chose Israel for some very hallowed purposes and the Apostle Paul eloquently explains that we Gentiles have been temporarily grafted into those purposes and ought to make full use of our time and purpose here. (Rom 11) In these last of the last days evangelical Christianity is turning its back on this dispensational understanding that was never grasped by Catholicism nor her Protestant children. God told Israel “Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” (Exod 19) If you are a born again believer you have been chosen and grafted into this purpose of God to be a royal priesthood. First Peter 2:9 says “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:” As much as nations were to look to Israel and see Jehovah God's law and written Word, individuals are to look to you and see Jehovah God's mercy, grace and Living Word. A priest is not a black robed, backward collared guy doling out portions of penance, except in catholic and some protestant circles. A priest is to be a visible, Bible toting, Christ loving, mediator preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. A priest is a guardian of the Holy Word of God, a visible portrayal of the Lord Jesus Christ, and a holy sanctified minister of reconciliation. Be a priest today.

Msg #947 A Christian Nations Thanksgiving

The Bible says that Jesus did not do many works in Nazareth because of their unbelief. (Matt 13:58) Since the 60s the secular humanists in charge of our 'public' schools and its curriculum have taught unbelief to three generations of voting America. The Bible says "Then began (Jesus) to upbraid the cities wherein most of his might works were done because they repented not." (Matt 11:20) They saw Jesus give sight to the blind, heal the sick and raise the dead. They had certain proof of who He was, but they would not repent. Our children are meticulously taught to secularize the miracle of the Mayflower, the revival in our Revolution and the wonder of a Washington. God has already blessed America which will not repent. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day." (Matt 11:23) Capernaum became an abandoned shell of a city when its economy collapsed. The Godless course of our nation is not set in its voting booths but in its grade schools. "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." (Matt 13:15) Our plight is not new but Christians should take courage for "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear." (vr 16) Of leaders Christ said "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind," but of children "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Happy Thanksgiving?

Msg #948 Sacrifice of Praise

God wrote Hebrews so born again Hebrews would know they are no longer Hebrews. Now they have a more perfect sacrifice, a more perfect priest, a more perfect covenant and the perfect Saviour. Hebrews is not a complex book but it does leave the 7 foundations of our faith, listed in chapter 6, and presses on to the more meatier concepts of Christianity. In so doing it concludes with sacrifices that you and I are called to make. "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to his name." (13:15) David, the practical example of a believers walk, said "I cannot offer a sacrifice which cost me nothing." We should recognize a cost in every sacrifice. There is a praise of thanksgiving that bubbles from our lips when we perceive a blessing or answered prayer from God. Praise the Lord. We should never be selfish little ingrates. But a sacrifice of praise, is when the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name, cost us something. More aptly it is a praise and thanksgiving for a calamity or disaster, a cancer of other incurable, a loss or a life. Thanks in these circumstances is a sacrifice. Other sacrifices mentioned in the next verse pale in the emphasis on this sacrifice of praise. It is to be continual and have a sacrificial cost. The song recalls "If He should take all that I have, God has been so good to me." Street preachers Woosley and Pickett were burned at the stake for preaching Tyndale's 1526 Bible. After kissing wives and children goodbye their dying lips sang hymns of praise to their redeemer. Let us not forget. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually.

Msg #949 Rare Good Soil

In upstate New York acres of once active farm land now lies fallow with golden rod and thorn brush. The stone fences lining these fields give testimony to the great efforts that great grandparents put into clearing the land and preparing the soil of these hills for the precious seeds they planted. The fall plowing of the richer soil is now past and our December attention turns to the Christmas season. Jesus said some precious seed about His miraculous birth would fall on wayside soil. (Matt 13:19) There people understood it not and the tinsel and Santa Clause sweep the seed away. Some seed of the Messiah's birth is received joyfully in stony soil. (vr 20) But their shallow souls have no root and anon they depart from their faith. Some receive the seed that 'God was made flesh and dwelt among us' in thorny ground. (vr 22) There the colored lights and deceitfulness of riches choke the word and they become unfruitful. But he that heareth the word and understandeth it is like that rich plowed ground that bears much fruit. We have become mechanized and lazy in our soil preparation these days and much of our state lies fallow and thorn ridden, bearing no fruit. The fruitless failures mentioned here by Christ involve failed understanding, shallow minds and diverted attentions. We don't see fruit from the land like our great grandparents. Nor do we labor with difficult soils. May God touch the fallow minds and cause them to understand, give them depth, and capture their attention so seeds of truth will bear fruit. They will stand beside Christians celebrating Christ's birth this year. Will you plant the seed of Christ's glorious gospel in their ear? May your joy of Christmas be real and bear much fruit this year.

Msg #950 Christmas Introduction

At first the 17 verses beginning the Gospel According to Matthew seem to be a strange introduction to a book which is an introduction to the New Testament. The 17 actually trace the overriding theme of the whole Old Testament; i.e. there is a chosen seed line which will usher in the 'seed of woman' which will bruise the head of "that old Serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan." (Gen 3:15, Rev 20:2) Unbelieving critics of the Bible call Matthew a synopsis and suppose there is a synoptic problem with the Gospels, but those believing in God's verbal plenary inspiration know this as the perfect introduction for God's perfect chosen seed. Ecumenicals removed the very word 'seed' from their modernist bibles, although it occurs over 200 times in the original Hebrew. Those who are careful about verbal inspiration, and those who can read Hebrew, can trace this promised 'seed' even if the NIV user cannot. God introduces the Christmas story, i.e. His Son's birth, with 4 groupings of 14 generations of the legally chosen seed that ushers in the Messiah, Joseph being only the legal father. Thus He introduces the Gospel According to Matthew, and the whole New Testament. It is also interesting to note that God concludes the Christmas story with 17 verses tracing 1/2 the chromosomes of His chosen seed in Luke 3:22-28. This record of the 'seed of woman' is recorded all the way back to the first Adam. This year get yourself an accurate Bible that properly translates the Hebrew word for 'seed'; like the KJB, never mind the unbelievers with synoptic problems and read the miraculous 17 verse introduction and the physical 17 verse DNA trace conclusion of the birth of God's only begotten Son, the Messiah, the Christ. Merry Christmas.

Msg #951 Thats The Gospel Truth

The Gospel According to Luke explicitly lays out all the preparations for the birth of the Messiah and King, Jesus the Son of God. By his own testimony Dr. Luke, the beloved physician of the Apostle Paul, (Col 4:14) was not an eyewitness or an apostle, but he heard from each and understood all these things from the beginning. (Luke 1:2) A very literate physician writing to a Greek friend is God's perfect choice in presenting the humanness of God's only begotten Son, and so Luke presents that perspective. Therein the miraculous birth of John the Baptist precedes the more miraculous birth of the Son of God. Therein the Archangel 'Gabriel', twice named and sent to man in Daniel, is twice named and sent to man in Luke. Therein the virgin birth is explicitly declared and Isaiah 7:14 is justified as properly translated despite the scoffing ecumenical modernist translators with contradictory 'dynamic equivalence'. In the Gospel According to Luke the world events that move Jesus' birth to Bethlehem, the local events that move it to a barn with a manger, and the regional events that put spring time shepherds in the field with their lambing flocks, are all nestled in the doctor's perfect Greek. In Luke's writing to a Greek Gentile the Jewish law for circumcision, the purification of Mary (pronoun 'her', not pronoun 'their' as the modernist 'scholars' mistranslated) and the lawful sacrifice for a first born son all find clear expression. So does the actual DNA lineage of the Son of God which came through King David's son Nathan, not King Davids son King Solomon. For a believer Luke presents awe inspiring details; but for an unbeliever, fodder for their scoffing. This year wish both a very Merry Christmas and aptly celebrate the birth of your Messiah.

Msg #952 A Spirit for the New Decade

The heart of the Christmas story is actually the cardinal principle of all Christianity and it was heralded by the angels to the shepherds two thousand years ago. The heart of Christmas is not “giving gifts,” not “helping others” nor “love your brother,” it is, as announced, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” This Saviour, Christ and Lord is indeed the core of Christianity. Its cardinal principle is not “do unto others,” nor “love your enemy” nor “give and it shall be given unto you,” it is that Jesus, born of a virgin, in the city of Bethlehem, was the Christ, the begotten son of God called for in Psalms 2; the child that is to be called “the Everlasting Father” of Isaiah chapter 9; and the virgin born seed of woman promised in Genesis 3 and Isaiah 7. Christianity differs from every other religion in that it is a relationship with this promised Messiah (Hebrew), the Christ (Greek), the Holy Anointed God-Man (English) This relationship with God through His Messiah can indeed cause one to “do unto others;” can indeed cause one to “love your enemies;” and can indeed cause one to “give selflessly unto others.” The world and the Devil want to pressure these characteristics as the “Spirit of Christmas” and remove the Christ altogether. But when you receive this promised Messiah into your heart as your Saviour and Lord you get the true “Spirit of Christmas” that lasts all year round. Start the next decade with the Christ of Christmas who said “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Happy New Year.

300 Words for Week #952, 28 Dec 2009

