

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

April 2007

“To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints.” (Colossians 1:2-4) I pray that you are doing well. My family and I really enjoyed the Florida camp meeting. I want to thank all of you who attended. It would not have been the same without you.

## Transparency

by Lynnford Beachy

Before sharing this message I prayed to God to put upon my heart the burden that is upon His heart for us as a church. This is what He put on my heart, so I believe this is what is on His heart for you today.

I would like you to think about the people in your church (or if you do not have a church, the friends you know) and ask yourself, “Who are these people to me?” Family? Friends? Brothers and Sisters? Now look at your right hand and then your left. What are they to each other? Indispensable! It would be hard to lose either one of them, wouldn’t it? They’re both important to you.

The Bible says, “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13) Whoever we are, male or female, black or white, rich or poor, Jew or Gentile, from one extreme to the other and covering everything in between, we have been made to drink of one Spirit. When we are baptized by the Spirit we receive the Spirit of God, and we become one body; we become members of each other, that’s who we are.

Who is each person in the body of Christ to you? They are just as important and necessary to you as your right hand is to your left! That’s how close we are supposed to be to one another, that’s how important we should see each other. “Now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.” (1 Corinthians 12:18) As you think of those who have received Christ, is everyone the same? Does everyone look the same? Does everyone dress the same? Does everyone talk the same? Do we wish that they did?

Sometimes we look around and say, “If they only looked or acted a little bit more like me.” But here it says that God hath set everyone in the body as it hath pleased Him. So, as we look around at other members of the body of Christ and see somebody a little different than us, does that mean God is displeased? Not necessarily! It has pleased God to put those people in the body of Christ. He set them in the body in a particular way and a particular place for a purpose and it pleased Him to do that. Not every part of the body looks the same. Look at your right hand and then look at your foot. Is there a difference? They have a different function, a different purpose, and they look different. They don’t dress the same but they are both still very important to the body, aren’t they?

It says, in verse 19, “If they were all one member, where were the body?” Suppose your hand looks exactly like your foot, or maybe your ears look just like your hands. That would be kind of strange, wouldn’t it? It wouldn’t be a body; you wouldn’t be able to function correctly. So, we need each of our diverse members.

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Paul continued, "But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness." (1 Corinthians 12:20-23)

So, when we look around and we think "Maybe this part of the body of Christ is not as necessary as the other parts." The truth is, it is just as necessary as you are. We all need to realize that, and look at each other in that light.

Paul explained, "For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another." (1 Corinthians 12:24, 25)

## **An Illustration**

A few months ago I smashed my finger and the fingernail turned purple. I had to be careful with it because it got to the point where it was about to fall off, and I didn't want it to rip all the way off. It hurt every time it moved just a little bit, so I was careful with it. Sometimes I put a Band-aid on it, not to stop the bleeding (for there was none), but to keep it from catching on something and being pulled off. I was careful to protect this part of my body that was hurting. I had to watch over it, and that's the way we should be as a church, as part of the body of Christ. If you see some part that is hurting, or struggling, you should take more care to help strengthen that part, to protect it. God says that we should have the same care one for another.

My left hand pitched in and did things for my right hand, to help out because it couldn't do the same things it used to be able to do. I found myself using my left hand sometimes, when I would normally have used my right. When part of your body is suffering the rest of the body needs to help out. That's the way we should operate as a church, as part of the body of Christ. Not just as a local church in your local area. The body of Christ is not only the small group you fellowship with. It is all over the world, such as orphanages in Africa, and refugee camps. There are some of the members that got hit by hurricanes. Some are in accidents and you meet them on the road. The body of Christ is all over, and we just cannot think that we are it, that this is all there is, because God

has His people everywhere. They're just as important to the body of Christ as we are; we need to recognize that.

The Bible says we should have the same care one for another, just as your left hand pitches in when your right hand is hurting, we should pitch in and help when one of our members is hurting.

Paul continued his discourse, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way." (1 Corinthians 12:26-31)

Do you know what Paul says next? The next verse commences 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, explaining how we should treat one another. This is the more excellent way. What I want you to see is that each of us are just as important to you as your right hand is to your left. We need to remember that.

Solomon wrote, "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

Have you ever been somewhere alone and have had no support, or no help from anywhere, while you were going through a difficult time? It's hard to be alone, isn't it? We need each other to help us. "Woe to him," the Bible says, "that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." Two are better than one, because when one of us is in trouble or one of us falls, we need to help them up. We need to be there for them, we need to do our part for the body of Christ.

An excellent Proverb says, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." (Proverbs 27:17) If you use a knife and you never sharpen it, what will happen to it, eventually? It will get dull and it won't be good for anything. Just as iron sharpens iron, so we need to sharpen the countenance of our friends. If we are alone and we don't have that interaction, if we are not rubbing shoulders with others who are able to help us, to encourage us, and strengthen us; to sharpen us, then we

will be in trouble. We really need each other for that purpose, to help us be better people.

Sometimes when iron sharpens iron it doesn't feel so good. When a friend sharpens the countenance of his friend it may not be the easiest thing to take, but there is a purpose for it, there is a plan. Paul said, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:2) When we see somebody who has something to carry, something on his heart and mind, we need to help him carry it, we need to encourage him, and strengthen him, and even take the load if we can. We should say, "What I can do to help? I want to help carry this burden." That is the way my left hand functioned when my right hand was hurting, and I'm so glad that it did because my right hand needed some help.

Have you ever tried to put a bandage on a finger on your right hand by only using your right hand? That's pretty hard to do. You need your left hand to pitch in and bear that burden. That is the way we need to be with one another. We need to bear each other's burdens.

Another excellent Proverb says, "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." (Proverbs 18:24) If you want people to be friendly to you, you have to be friendly to them. If you want people to bear your burdens you must bear their burdens. If you want people to encourage and strengthen you, you must encourage and strengthen them. Jesus said, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." (Luke 6:31)

## **Share your burdens**

Can we bear one another's burdens if we have no idea that there is a burden? No! To fulfill this instruction, we really need to share our burdens with each other; share what is on our hearts and minds with others in the church. You know, if my left hand had not received the message that my right hand was in need of help, it would not have been able to help? There are cases when somebody doesn't have any food for their family, and somebody, from out of nowhere, comes by and drops a box of food on their porch. Has that ever happened? Of course it has! It may have even happened to one of us. How did it get there? How did the left hand know what the right hand was in need of? The Spirit of Christ! The head was in control.

In order for us to bear one another's burdens we need to share our burdens, share what's on our hearts. We need to be transparent.

Jesus said, "But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of

evil." (Matthew 5:37) It says let your common conversation be yea, yea, if it be yes let it be yes. If it be no let it be no. Be clear, don't beat around the bush, be clear with what you are saying, be transparent.

James wrote, "Confess your faults one to another..." (James 5:16) Did it say, "Confess your sins?" Are we supposed to go to a priest and confess our sins? No! It says, "Confess your faults one to another." Why should we do this? If we are having a problem, if we have a fault, should we just hide it under the rug? Often pride prohibits us from being open about our struggles. We may fear that we will be judged, that others will not understand and will condemn us. But the Bible says we need to be open. We need to be able to share our burdens with others. If our pride is in the way it needs to be removed. James says, "Confess your faults one to another," and then he says, "...and pray one for another." How can I pray for you for a particular thing you're having a problem with, if I don't know what it is? We need to be open and transparent enough that we can share what is on our hearts, what is on our minds, and what is in our lives that we are struggling with, so we can pray for one another. That's part of the healing process, bringing it out in the open.

If one of the members in your church came up to you and said, "I was with some friends last night, and I drank a few beers. Please pray for me." How would you react? Would you tell someone else about how bad he is? If you were the one who drank the beers, would you go to someone in your church and tell them about it, asking them to pray for you? We need to be open enough to share our faults with others so they can pray for us.

As long as it stays under the surface it festers and a lot of times it gets worse. James said, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)

When Peter was in prison, do you know what the disciples were doing? They were having an all-night prayer meeting. They were bearing one another's burdens by praying for Peter because they knew that he was in prison and that he was going to be killed if God did not intervene. God answered their prayers. Peter knocked on the door, and they couldn't believe that he was actually there, even though they had been praying for him all night. The only way they could have prayed for him is if they knew that he was in trouble.

We need to be open enough, transparent enough, that we can share our burdens with each other without expecting to be shot down, or ridiculed, or condemned, so that

we can pray for one another. Fear of condemnation and judgment keeps us silent far too often. That fear needs to be removed. We need to do our part to remove that perception of us in others. If I come across as if I'm going to judge you and condemn you if you tell me something, then I have to work on coming across in a different way. I have to ask God for His Spirit to help me be humble, kind, and loving, and to make it known to others.

My right hand, when it was hurting, didn't have any shame or problem letting my left hand know that it needed some help. My left hand did not sit back and say, "I am not going to help you because you were dumb enough to get smashed. I'll just let you suffer with it." My left hand was good enough to help out. I keep using this illustration because, in reality, that's how close we are to one another, that is how important we are to one another, whether we realize it or not.

## **Do not be a hypocrite**

Jesus admonished, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone." (Matthew 23:23)

A hypocrite says one thing and does another. Jesus said of them, "They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi." (Matthew 23:4-7) They like to feel important, they like to feel that everything is perfect with them and make it appear that way to others. If we are this way, it fosters in others the idea that they cannot share their burdens with us without being condemned. When the publican went up to pray the Pharisee said, "Thank you God that I'm not like that guy over there." He pointed a finger; he condemned the publican, but who was the one who left that place justified? It was the publican, not the Pharisee. (See Luke 18:9-14.)

Jesus admonished, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which

indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." (Matthew 23:25-27)

When you wash the dishes do you wash the outside only? Certainly not! The inside is the most important. If we focus on externals, then we are going about it the wrong way. We need a new heart and then the outside will be clean. Jesus said, "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." (Matthew 7:18)

If we are transparent with people, and confessing our faults to one another, we cannot be hypocrites. Solomon wrote, "An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbour." (Proverbs 11:9) A hypocrite says, "You should do this," and then they go and do something else. If you claim to be a Christian, and your life shows that you are not, do you think your neighbor is going to be drawn to the Lord because of you? No! Instead, he is going to be pushed away.

Paul wrote that we are to speak, "the truth in love." (Ephesians 4:15) Can iron sharpen iron if they don't have any contact with one another? No! They have to have contact with one another and sometimes that contact is abrasive. Our countenances are not going to be sharpened if we do not speak to each other in love. Sometimes this includes talking with one another about things that may be difficult to talk about. Most of the time somebody else can see your defects better than you can, and therefore it is for your best interest to listen to what they have to say. Jesus called the Pharisees blind. They couldn't see, they thought things were okay, when they were planning to murder the Son of God.

When we speak the truth with our neighbor we need to speak with them in love. Before we go to speak with someone about a touchy subject, we need to ask ourselves if we are willing to die for that person. Jesus said, "How canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye." (Luke 6:42) We need to make sure that our hearts are right before we go and talk with other people on sensitive issues.

## **Keeping things small**

Jesus said, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone:..." (Matthew 18:15) How many people? You and him alone! Does that mean you should go and tell his fault to

his best friend or your best friend? No! Before you open your mouth to anybody else you better make sure you talk to the person first and you follow the instructions given in Matthew 18. "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."

When there is a problem between two people it is much better to solve that problem between those two people alone. If it starts spreading to others the problem will soon get much bigger, and to fix it will take a lot more work. It will become much harder to correct than it would have been for you to have first gone to the person yourself, alone. Jesus said, if you do this you have gained your brother. Isn't that what we want to happen? If we see a brother having a problem, our first and primary goal is to help that person, not to push him down. When a finger on my right hand was hurt, my left hand did not spread rumors about it, but labored until it was restored. That is our duty as Christians.

I heard a story about a pastor's wife whose maid was sick, and she dressed in the maids clothes and was hanging the laundry out to dry. Her husband came home and, finding his wife outside, came up to her and hugged and kissed her. The neighbor lady saw him kissing whom she thought was the maid. Very quickly the whole church found out that the pastor was having an affair with his maid. It took a lot to repair the damage done by one talebearer. "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth." (Proverbs 26:20) The damage caused in this way is almost impossible to erase, and it all could have been cleared up by following the counsel Jesus gave in Matthew 18.

Jesus continued, "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." (Matthew 18:16, 17) You see the church is the last one on the list here to find out about it. First, it should be you and him alone and then, if that doesn't work, it should be you and one or two others. Should those one or two others go and tell it to the church? No! It should still be kept as contained as possible, and if they will not hear then, and only then, it should go to the church. "...but if he neglect to hear the church," then does it say, "You should kick him out and never talk with him again." Is that what it says? No! Then it says, he should be to you "as an heathen man and a publican." How do you treat heathens and publicans? You try to convert them, and continue to work with them and help them. That is the way we should treat them.

You wouldn't want to lose your hand would you? If you get a cut in your hand and it starts getting infected will your foot say, "Oh well, let it fall off, we don't need that anyway, it looked kind of funny. It was different than me anyway." That would be pretty bad wouldn't it? We need to help what is hurting.

Solomon spoke of the same principle when he wrote, "Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away." (Proverbs 25:8-10) When you have a problem with someone make sure it is dealt with in as small a manner as possible. When you get cancer you want to get rid of it as soon as possible. You do not want to wait until it has covered and filled your whole body and then try and do something about it. You want to deal with it in the smallest way possible. Shouldn't you do the same with your brothers and sisters "for whom Christ died?" (1 Corinthians 8:11)

To those who reveal secrets, God says, "Thou sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother's son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes." (Psalms 50:20-21) Is God that way? Does He sit and talk bad about others? Who does that? Satan is "the accuser of our brethren." (Revelation 12:10) He's saying bad things about you behind your back, but this shouldn't be among God's people.

## **Do not judge others**

Paul wrote, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." (Romans 14:1-3) Paul is talking about certain things that people eat. Now, I don't believe He is talking about unclean animals, as if we should eat them. But certain people eat herbs. He is talking about vegetarians. I am a vegetarian, and I know many others who are. As vegetarians should we despise and judge people who are not? Was Jesus a vegetarian? No! He ate fish Himself and gave fish to His disciples. He even prepared fish for his disciples after his resurrection. (Luke 24:42, 43; John 21:9-13) Now let me make it clear, I think it is good and healthful to be vegetarian. It is healthier, especially with all the pollution today. I'm sure Jesus would not go to McDonald's and get a

hamburger. One reason for sure would be the fat and blood in a hamburger, which we are forbidden to eat. You cannot get a hamburger without fat and blood. (Acts 15:29; Leviticus 3:17)

But I am not sure Jesus would eat some of the animals that are being produced here in this country, even if all the fat and blood were taken out of them. There are still a lot of diseases, much worse than it was back then. Even the fish in the sea aren't nearly as healthful as they were back then because of all the pollutants in the ocean.

Even so, it is not a sin to eat fish. If so, then you would have to say that Jesus was a sinner. If it is against your conscience and you believe it is a sin, then it is a sin for you. James wrote, "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." (James 4:17) So what may be a sin for one person may not be a sin for somebody else. If you are convinced it is a sin and displeasing to God to eat a piece of meat, then to you it is a sin and you had better not eat it. You would be offending your conscience. So, when we look around and say, "So-and-so is not exactly like I am," does that mean they are a sinner and in need of correction? Not necessarily. There are certain things that are cut and dry such as fornication. If somebody in the group is committing adultery we can know for sure that this person is in open sin and needs help. He is not to be despised, judged, and condemned, but helped. That is the role of the body, to help where it is needed. We really need to be careful about the way we deal with people. Before we go and address somebody or talk with somebody about a fault we perceive they have we had better make sure it is really a fault, that it is not something that is just peculiar to us.

Not every body is the same, so when we look around at the body of Christ who is a little different than we are it doesn't mean it should be our mission to go and fix that person unless we know for sure that this is a serious issue like adultery, murder, lying, stealing, etc. There are some that are very obvious. Those types of things do need to be dealt with and when they are dealt with they need to be dealt with in as small of a manner as possible to keep it from spreading.

I want to encourage you to look around and see your right hand, see your left hand, and remember that is who we are in the body of Christ. We are members of that same body. We belong to one another, and we need to bear one another's burdens. We must be open and transparent, to be willing to share our burdens with others, our faults, if need be, then to help others when they share them with us. May God bless you as you put these principles into practice. ✍

## *A Poem on Evil Speaking*

"Of things which we so careless name,  
How little kindles to a flame;  
The unruly tongue no man can tame.  
"They say' (and so it must be true)  
What would, did we but rightly view,  
Prove false and vanish as the dew.  
"Abroad from lip to lip it flies,  
And reaches, soon, a wondrous size,  
As mountains, oft, from mole-hills rise.  
"Or as the torrent in its flow,  
Or as the winter's rolling snow,  
Lose nothing as they onward go.  
"Far better rob one of his gold;  
For this could be restored four-fold;  
But never what is wrongly told.  
"As in the lightning's path we find  
Its scathing tracks are left behind;  
So is this influence on the mind.  
"Then deem it not a little thing;  
A whisper borne on silent wing,  
May reach a heart that feels its sting.  
"Nor think ye lightly of the deed,  
Broadcast to fling the poisonous seed,  
That springs to many a deadly weed.  
"Thou hypocrite! why vainly try,  
From motes to free thy brother's eye:  
First, in thine own, the beam descry.  
"As if a fabric thou couldst rear,  
Of other's faults, thyself to clear;  
More guilty thus dost thou appear.  
"If temples for God's Spirit meet -  
No fountain with pure streams replete,  
Sends forth both bitter and the sweet.  
"O, that we could this lesson learn;  
From everything away to turn,  
But what does only us concern.  
"Then should we know, and see, and hear,  
The more of joy, the less of fear,  
And half our trials disappear.  
"A richer harvest we should reap,  
A better record angels keep,  
And many smile, where now they weep.  
"By this we quench Love's holy light;  
We scatter when we should unite.  
And darken all that else were bright.  
"But they in charity abound,  
Who, faultless, will the throne surround,  
And in their mouth no guile be found.  
"How much we've spoken ill or well,  
Whether to wound or soothe it fell,  
Eternity alone can tell!  
"O then how wilt thou be o'erwhelmed,  
Though well the current thou has stemmed,  
If by thy words thou art condemned!"

*Selected*

# *Fundamental Principles of Health*

by Curtis Kline

## Health, Healing, Faith, and Works

“Wilt thou be made whole?” (John 5:6)

Hello Friends. This month we will be exploring the connection between health and faith and works. So many times in my experience I see the power of God limited by man’s lack of faith. Jesus said, “As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” (Matthew 24:37) This statement of Christ depicts a great falling away, a condition of godlessness, and a subsequent lack of faith for those of us living in these last days of earth’s history.

Let us take a look at how this lack of faith can translate into an absence of God’s healing power for people in these last days. Most of us have been trained in a system of education that is not conducive to Bible faith. The reality is that many of us live with our minds in a box. The length is the realm of our knowledge, and the width is the realm of our experience. It seems that because of false education many cannot conceive the reality of anything existing outside of this box. Now, I know many are shaking their heads at this point and saying that it is not true, but let’s be honest and take a closer look at an example of what I’m saying. When the disciples were told by Jesus to feed over 5,000 people with five loaves and two fishes we can almost imagine the look on their faces when they considered the utter impossibility of this feat. As a matter of fact, when we look at the ministry of Christ we see Him performing the “impossible” again and again.

So many times in the area of health, we have been trained, educated, and inundated with erroneous concepts. One of the greatest of these concepts is the word “incurable.” Many may question me on this point, but fortunately for those who were pronounced as “incurable” Jesus did not accept the verdict passed down on them through the channels of science and medicine. My question for us today is, “How can we accept such a concept as ‘incurable’ and say we believe the biblical concept that ‘with God all things are possible?’” Consider for a moment, though, those who do subscribe to this concept of ‘incurable.’ For such individuals, their condition may very well be incurable because through their unbelief they have made void the possibility of the power of God to work in their lives. For surely “without faith it is impossible to please him.” (Hebrews 11:6) These people have no more possibility of a cure than the disciples had of feeding the multitude. It was the faith of Christ, and only the faith of Christ, that allowed the power of God to be manifested on that day.


Now that we have taken a little look at health and faith, let’s look at how works play into the picture. God has given

us bodies that are His temple. We have a responsibility to take care of the body that the Lord has given us to our best ability. He has given us a brain and His holy Word. In His Word is the key to the proper care of the body. Let us not presume to neglect His Word or to wrest and twist the scriptures concerning this point. When we take a very close look at anatomy, physiology, and cellular biology we see that the optimal function of the human organism is dependant upon following the instruction and principals given concerning health in the Word of God. Although, in one sense, we should never limit God’s ability to heal and maintain our bodies and to keep us in health and happiness, free of disease and sickness. Let us also, on the other hand, not neglect the instruction and council from God concerning the maintenance of the body and then presumptuously look to God for restoration and healing. Remember, my friends, that “faith without works is DEAD.” (James 2:20) I have heard many say that these laws were for the Jews or even suggest that it doesn’t matter what we put into our bodies based on some New Testament scriptures taken out of context.

Most importantly, let us remember that there is no greater hindrance to our eternal salvation than intemperance, perverted appetite, and other health destroying habits. We do not fully understand the obligation we have towards God in presenting to him clean, pure, and holy bodies. The blood that feeds the brain must be pure, for the brain is the citadel of the mind.

In closing, let us look to God for strength to keep that, which has been committed unto us. Let us closely study His Word in regard to diet and health and “work out your [our] own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:12, 13)

Blessings to all

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 1:2) “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” (Hosea 4:6) 

(The above article was provided by Curtis Kline, Director of Bible Health Solutions. For more in-depth information he can be contacted at (814) 724-4316 or curkli@yahoo.com. While we believe the principles in this article can be helpful, we are not responsible for any negative effects resulting from the use of remedies or recommendations herein. Use them at your own risk.

*Editor)*

## WAGGONER ON ROMANS—THE GOSPEL IN PAUL'S GREAT LETTER (PART 13)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

(We are continuing a series of articles commenting on Paul's epistle to the Romans. We pray that they will be a blessing to you. *Editor*)

### CHRIST'S YOKE IS EASY, HIS BURDEN LIGHT

#### Chapter 6

In beginning the study of the sixth chapter of Romans, it must be remembered that we have but a continuation of the fifth. The subject of that chapter is superabounding grace, and the gift of life and righteousness by grace. As sinners we are enemies of God, but are reconciled, that is, freed from sin, by receiving the righteousness of Christ's life, which has no limit. No matter how greatly the sin may abound, grace does much more abound.

#### Crucified, Buried, and Risen "With Christ"—

##### Romans 6:1-11

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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**An Important Question**—"Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" The student will doubtless recall a similar question in the third chapter, verses 5, 7, and the answer in verses 6, 8. It is another form of the question, "Shall we do evil, that good may come?" The answer must be apparent to all, "Not by any means," for this is really the force of the words improperly rendered, "God forbid."

Although grace superabounds where sin abounds, that is no reason why we should willfully pile up the sin. That would be most emphatically to receive the grace of God in vain. (2 Corinthians 6:1)

**The Reason Why**—"How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Romans 6:2) It is simply

an impossibility, and there is really no question as to whether or not we may do it; for it is certain that if we are dead to sin, we can not live in it at the same time. A man can not at the same time be both dead and alive.

Now the previous chapter has emphasized the fact that we are reconciled to God by the death of Christ, and are saved by his life. Reconciliation to God means being freed from sin; so that being "saved by his life" (Romans 5:10) means that we have "passed from death unto life." (John 5:24) The life of sin that was enmity has been ended in the life of Christ.

**"Baptized into Jesus Christ"**—Baptism is the symbol of putting on Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27) "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles." (1 Corinthians 12:12, 13)

**Where Christ Touches Us**—It is in death that we come into contact with Christ. He touches us at the lowest possible point. That is what makes our salvation so sure, and so sure for every one without any exception. Sin and sickness are tributary to death. Death is the sum of all the evils possible to man. It is the lowest depth, and it is there that Christ comes in contact with us. We become united to Him in death. As the greater includes the lesser, the fact that Christ humbled Himself even to death proves that there is no ill possible to us that He does not take upon Himself.

**Baptized into His Death**—"So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." (Romans 6:3) And what is it to be baptized into His death? Verse 10 tells us: "For in that he died, he died unto sin once." He died unto sin, not His own, because He had none; but He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree." (1 Peter 2:24) "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities." (Isaiah 53:5) Since in that He died, He died unto sin, it follows that if we are baptized into His death, we also die to sin.

**A New Life**—"Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more." (Romans 6:9) "If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." (Romans 6:8) It was impossible for the grave to hold Christ. (Acts 2:24) Therefore, just as surely as we are baptized into the death of Christ, so surely shall we be raised from a life of sin to a life of righteousness in Him. "For if we have been

planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.” (Romans 6:5)

**Crucifixion with Him**—As Christ was crucified, therefore, being baptized into His death means that we are crucified with Him. So we read, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Galatians 2:20) Crucified, yet living, because crucified with Christ, and yet He lives. Christ said, “Because I live, ye shall live also.” (John 14:19) How can we live a new life? We have no power at all of ourselves; but Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father; and in His prayer to the Father He said, “The glory which thou gavest me I have given them.” (John 17:22) Therefore, the power that raised Jesus from the dead is exercised to raise us from the death of sin. If we are willing to allow the old life to be crucified, we may be sure of the new.

**“Our Old Man” Crucified**—We shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. If we are crucified with Christ, our sins must also be crucified with Christ, for they are a part of us. Our sins were on Him as He was crucified, so of course our sins are crucified if we are crucified with Him.

But here is a difference between us and our sins when crucified. We are crucified in order that we may live again; our sins are crucified in order that they may be destroyed. Christ is not “the minister of sin.” (Galatians 2:17) It was the life of God that raised Him from the dead, and in that life there is no sin.

**A Separation From Sin**—The reader will notice that the separation from sin is in death. That is because death is in sin. “Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” (James 1:15) Therefore nothing less than death will effect a separation. We could not separate ourselves from sin, because sin was our very life. If it had been possible for us to effect the destruction of sin, it could have been only by the giving up of our lives, and that would have been the end of us. That is why there will be no future for the wicked who die in their sins; their life having been given up (or rather, taken from them), they are out of existence. But Christ had the power to lay down His life, and to take it again; and therefore when we lay down our lives in Him, we are raised again by His endless life.

Remember that He does not give us our own life back again, but that He gives us His own life. In that life there never was a sin; and so it is that our crucifixion and resurrection with Him is the separation of sin from us. This thought must be borne in mind when we come to study the next chapter.

**Living with Him**—When shall we live with Him? Why, as soon as buried and risen with Him, of course. Our life with Christ in the world to come is assured to us only by our living with Him now in this world. We are separated from sin, by death with Him, in order that we may be joined to life in Him. The reader is asked to bear this in mind also until we come to the study of the next chapter.

**“Buried with Him by Baptism”**—Baptism, therefore, is burial. If people were content to follow the plain reading of the Scriptures, there never would be a question concerning “the mode of baptism.” No one from reading the Bible could ever get any other idea than that baptism is immersion. “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12) Baptism represents the death and resurrection of Christ, and by it we show our acceptance of His sacrifice; and the very act is an actual burial, in order to make the lesson the more impressive.

**Why the Change in Baptism?**—How is it that there has been a change from Scripture baptism to sprinkling? The answer is very easy. Baptism is a memorial of the resurrection of Christ. But “the church,” by which is meant the bishops who loved the praise of men more than the praise of God and who wished to curry favor with the “better class” of the heathen, adopted the pagan sun festival. And in order to appear to justify themselves in so doing, they claimed that the rising sun which was worshipped by the heathen was a symbol of the resurrection of “the Sun of Righteousness,” namely, Christ, and that by observing Sunday they were celebrating His resurrection.

But they did not need two memorials of the resurrection, and so they dropped the one that the Lord had given. In order, however, not to appear to throw baptism away, they claimed that the heathen sprinkling with “holy water” which they very naturally adopted with the heathen sun festival, was the baptism enjoined in the Scriptures.

The people trusted in the “fathers” instead of reading the Bible for themselves, and so it was very easy to make them believe that the Bible was obeyed. It is true that there are some who follow the Word in regard to immersion, who also observe Sunday; but the two practices are inconsistent. The Word is neglected in one particular (observing Sunday) in order to provide a memorial for an event which they already celebrate in accordance with the Word (baptism). Scriptural baptism is falling into disuse among many who observe the first

day of the week. It must be the case that sooner or later they will wholly give up one or the other.

**Instruments of Righteousness—Romans 6:12-23**

Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The Reign of Sin**—In the fifth chapter we learned that the reign of sin is the reign of death, because death comes by sin. But we also learned that the gift of life is offered to all, so that whoever has Christ has life. Instead of death reigning over such, they themselves “shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:17) The exhortation, “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body,” is therefore equal to an exhortation to abide in Christ, or to keep His life. We gained the life by faith, and so we are to keep it by faith.

**Whose Servants Are We?**—That is very easy to answer. “To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.” (Romans 6:16) If we yield ourselves to sin, then we are the servants of sin, for “whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” (John 8:34) But if we yield ourselves to righteousness, then we are the servants of righteousness. “No man can serve two masters.” (Matthew 6:24) We can not serve both sin and righteousness at the same time. No man can at once be both a sinner and a righteous man. Either sin or righteousness must rule.

**Instruments**—We have in this chapter two terms to describe people, namely, servants and instruments. It

takes both to illustrate our relation to sin and righteousness. Sin and righteousness are rulers. We are but instruments in their hands. The kind of work a given instrument will do depends entirely upon the one who uses it.

For instance, here is a good pen; what kind of work will it do? It will do good work if it is in the hands of a skillful penman, but in the hands of a bungler its work will be poor. Or, in the hands of a good man it will write only what is good; but in the hands of a bad man it will exhibit that which is evil. But man is not a mere tool. No, not by any means. There is this difference between men and ordinary instruments: the latter have no choice as to who shall use them, while the former have full choice as to whom they will serve. They must yield themselves, not once only, but all the time. If they yield to sin, they will commit sin. If they yield to God, to be instruments in His hands, they can do nothing else but good so long as they are yielded to Him.

**A Parallel**—In the nineteenth verse we are exhorted to yield ourselves as servants of righteousness just as we have yielded ourselves servants to sin. This being done, we are assured in the following verses that just as surely as the fruit was sin and death when we were yielded to sin, so surely will the fruit be holiness when we yield ourselves servants to righteousness. Yea, even more sure; for “where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 5:21) Righteousness is stronger than sin, even as God is stronger than Satan. God can pluck out of the hands of Satan the soul that cries out for deliverance; but none can pluck God’s children out of His hand.

**Not under the Law**—Many people are fond of quoting this expression, thinking that it forever absolves them from any observance of the law of God. Strange to say, this expression is used as a cover only for non-observance of the fourth commandment. Repeat the fourth commandment to a man who objects to keeping the Sabbath of the Lord, the seventh day, and he will say, “We are not under the law.” Yet that same man will quote the third commandment to a man whom he hears swearing, or the first and second against the heathen, and will acknowledge the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments. Thus it appears that men do not really believe that the statement that we are not under the law means that we are at liberty to break it. Let us study the whole verse, and its different parts.

**What Is Sin?**—"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) "All unrighteousness is sin." (1 John 5:17) This is definite; let us hold it well in our minds.

**What Is Righteousness?**—Righteousness is the opposite of sin, because "all unrighteousness is sin." But "sin is the transgression of the law." Therefore righteousness is the keeping of the law. So when we are exhorted to yield our members as instruments of righteousness unto God, it is the same as telling us to yield ourselves to obedience to the law.

**The Dominion of Sin**—Sin has no dominion over those who yield themselves servants to righteousness, or to obedience to the law; because sin is the transgression of the law. Now read the whole of the fourteenth verse: "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." That is to say, transgression of the law has no place in them who are not under the law. Then those who are not under the law are those who obey the law. Those who break it, are under it. Nothing can be plainer.

**Under Grace**—"Ye are not under the law, but under grace." We have seen that those who are not under the law are the ones who are keeping the law. Those therefore who are under the law are the ones who are breaking it, and who are therefore under its condemnation. But "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." (Romans 5:20) Grace delivers from sin.

Distressed by the threatenings of the law which we have broken, we flee for refuge to Christ, who is "full of grace and truth." There we find freedom from sin. In Him we not only find grace to cover all our sin, but we find the righteousness of the law because He is full of truth, and the law is the truth. (Psalm 119:142) Grace "reigns" through righteousness (or

obedience to the law), unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

**The Wages of Sin**—In the second chapter we learned that those who reject the goodness of God are treasuring up to themselves wrath. Now wrath comes only on the children of disobedience. (Ephesians 5:6) Those who sin are laying up wages for themselves. "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) Sin has death in it, therefore, "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:15) There can be no other end to sin than death, because sin is the absence of righteousness,

## *Upcoming Meetings in Your Area*

My family and I are planning an extensive trip from Arizona, through Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Southwestern Canada, Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, and then back to Arizona starting in May of this year. If you are along this route, and would like to have meetings in your area, please let me know soon so you can be included in the schedule. The schedule will be printed next month. *Editor*


Here is the currently-planned 2007 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

**June 12-16** . **West Virginia Camp Meeting at Smyrna**, 304-732-9204.

**July 11-15** . **Northwestern Pennsylvania Camp Meeting**, contact Calvin and Paula Bickel, 814-676-8660.

**Sep. 28-Oct. 1** . **Rainier, Oregon Camp Meeting**, contact Kristen and Cora Dreyer, 503-556-4190.

Between these meetings we will be available to visit people in their homes and to have additional meetings. Check upcoming issues of *Present Truth* (available on our website) to keep informed about these meetings and others in your area. If you would like to host meetings in your area, please contact us. (See contact information on page 12).

Many of these meetings will be broadcast live over the Internet and by telephone conference. To listen to these sermons go to [www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com), download and install the free software, then click on the "Explore the skypecasts directory" link on the Skype homepage. You will see a list of all of the skypecasts available at that particular time. You can also check those "Starting soon," in case you arrive early. Look for the broadcast entitled "God's Love on Trial." Often we will be broadcasting at seven o'clock Friday evening, eleven o'clock Sabbath morning, and Sabbath afternoon and evening at three and seven o'clock. (These are local times for wherever I am scheduled to speak, currently mountain time. You can also call from any phone (long distance charges may apply). **In the US call: 605-475-8500**, Austria: 0820 4000 1572, Belgium: 070 35 9987, Spain: 0902 88 60 48, Switzerland: 0848 560 152, Ireland: 0818 270 032, Italy: 0848 390 172, France: 0826 100 275, Germany: 01805 00 76 46, Australia: 283 078 824, UK: 0870 738 0760. You will be prompted to dial this room number: **5225823**. You can dial directly from Skype at: +99008275225823. (When you use Skype, it is a free call from anywhere in the world.) I often will be broadcasting using my cell phone, and while I am still able to broadcast our meetings over the Internet, they will not be listed in the Skype directory unless someone can help me do this. **If you have a highspeed Internet connection, and would like to help with these broadcasts, please let me know (you do not need to be at the meetings to help).** You can call me at 304-633-5411. 

and righteousness is the life and character of God. Persistent and final choice of sin is therefore choice of complete separation from the life of God, and so from all life, since He is the only source of life. Christ, who is the wisdom of God, says, "All they that hate me love death." (Proverbs 8:36) Those who suffer death at last will be only those who have worked for it.

**The Gift of God**—But we do not work for eternal life. No works that we could do would make the smallest part of payment towards it. It is the gift of God. True, it comes only through righteousness, but righteousness is a gift. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained [prepared] that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:8-10)

Listen to *God's Word, God's Way* proclaiming the messages of *Present Truth* on the radio. This radio program, featuring Pastor Willis Smith from Cleveland, Ohio, covers much of the eastern United States. You can hear it on 1220 AM and 1440 AM, Saturday evenings, from 8:00-9:00 p.m. EST, and again on Sunday evenings, from 9:00-9:30 p.m. EST.

"O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" (Psalm 31:19) When people sin, God gives them only what they have bargained for. But if any yield themselves as servants of righteousness, he provides the righteousness for them, and gives them eternal life with it, all as a free gift. "The way of transgressors is hard," (Proverbs 13:15) but the yoke of Christ is easy, and His "burden is light." (Matthew 11:30) **(To be continued)**

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