

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

April 2011

“Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth” (2 Thessalonians 1:2, 3). Things in this tired old world seem to be wrapping up, and it is very likely that you and I will see the final events in our lifetimes. “See that ye be not troubled” by the things you see come upon the world, but rejoice, “for your redemption draweth nigh” (Matthew 24:6; Luke 21:28).

**WV Camp Meeting:** It will be held June 14-18 in Welch, West Virginia. Make plans early to attend. For more information call 304-732-9204.

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## The 144,000

by Lynnford Beachy

The book of Revelation is filled with symbolism! Many study hours have been devoted to unlocking the secrets of Revelation, and for good reason, for there is a blessing promised for doing so. John wrote, “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Revelation 1:3).

Because of the difficulty in understanding the symbolism of Revelation, there are a wide variety of opinions on this book. Some have even decided that it is not necessary to read Revelation because the events described therein will happen after the supposed “secret rapture.” This idea is based on a faulty premise, the “secret rapture,” an event that will never take place. (For more

information on the secret rapture theory, please read the February 2009 issue of *Present Truth*.)

Among the many symbols of Revelation are references to the 144,000. Many are confused about this group. The Jehovah’s Witnesses, for example, teach that the 144,000 are the only ones who can be born again, and the only ones who will ever be able to go to heaven, while the vast majority of

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Christians are left destitute of the new birth and the privilege of entering heaven. But what does the Bible say about the 144,000? Who are they? Can you be one of them? These are some of the questions for which we would like to find answers as we study this subject.

The first place we read about the 144,000 is in Revelation chapter 7. It says, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" (Revelation 7:1-4).

Has this already taken place? Have the four winds been let loose? There is a lot of turmoil taking place in the world, but it is not yet to the extent the Bible describes will take place right before the second coming of Christ. There is another parallel event that must happen along with the sealing of the 144,000, and that is people receiving the mark of the beast. This crisis has not yet been fulfilled, for the Bible says that "no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:17). The 144,000 are set in contrast to those who receive the mark of the beast. The time for the fulfillment of this

is at hand. It will take place very soon, but it has not yet happened.

## **What is the Seal?**

The 144,000 are said to receive a seal in their foreheads. Notice how this is expanded in the following text: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads" (Revelation 14:1). This seal is not a tattoo, or outwardly visible mark. Rather, it is the Father's name written in their foreheads. But what is that? Some have thought that this is literally referring to a person knowing and using the correct pronunciation of God's name. But is that really what this is talking about? The Bible says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble" (James 2:19). Satan believes there is one God, and he knows how to pronounce his name, but that knowledge does not sanctify him or benefit him. Certainly, the seal of God is not just knowledge of God's literal name.

The word "name" in the Bible often refers to more than just the sound of a word. *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* defines it as follows: "the name is used for everything which the name covers, everything the thought or feeling of which is aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering, the name, i.e. for one's rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds etc." The Hebrew equivalent for "name" means, "reputation, fame, glory" (*Brown- Driver, Brigg's Hebrew Lexicon*). The name of a person in the Bible represents his character. When Jacob

(which means “supplanter”) was victorious with God, his name was changed to Israel (which means “he will rule as God” or “soldier of God”) (Genesis 32:28). Jacob’s grandfather’s name was changed from Abram (“exalted father”) to Abraham (“father of a multitude”) when God promised him he would be the father of many nations (Genesis 17:5).

God demonstrated to Moses what is really meant by God’s name. Moses asked God, “I beseech thee, shew me thy glory” (Exodus 33:18). God replied, “I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee” (Exodus 33:19). On the mountain, “the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation” (Exodus 34:5-7). God’s name is His character which is described in His law, the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments were spoken with God’s own lips from Mount Sinai and written with His own finger on tables of stone (Exodus 20:1-17; 31:18). These Commandments are a transcript of God’s character. Contained in the heart of these Commandments is a law that bears all the characteristics of a seal. A seal of any government contains the name, office, and territory of its

ruler. The fourth commandments contains all of these. It says, “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days *the LORD* [Yahweh - name] *made* [Creator - office] *heaven and earth* [territory], the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it” (Exodus 20:8-11).

Here we find that God has placed His seal upon His law, and when the 144,000 receive the seal of God, which is the Father’s name, they will reflect God’s character, which naturally results in obedience to His Law, including His Sabbath law. This will be a visible identifying mark of the 144,000. God said, “And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God” (Ezekiel 20:20). For more information on the Sabbath, request the tract, *100 Facts About the Sabbath Question*.

Yet, obedience to the Sabbath alone is not enough to qualify a person to receive the seal of God. When the Bible says that the 144,000 have the Father’s name written in their foreheads it means that they have the entire character of God reproduced in their lives, especially His love. This can only be accomplished through the indwelling presence of the Father and His Son (John 14:23). Christ is the “express image” of His Father’s “person” (Hebrews 1:3), and as such, His character is the same as that of

His Father. In fact, when people beheld the life of Jesus, He gave the credit to His Father by saying, “he that hath seen me hath seen the Father;... Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works” (John 14:9, 10). To have the character of God reproduced in our lives is to have the life of Christ living within us. This is a reality for every true born-again believer in Christ, yet this experience is not finished at conversion. The Christian walk is a progressive experience. “But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Proverbs 4:18).

The 144,000 are said to have the Father’s name written in their foreheads. They are spoken of in a singular manner, in that their experience is different than any other group who have gone before. John wrote of them, “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Revelation 12:17). The 144,000 are the remnant seed of the woman (the woman being the church). A remnant is the last remaining pieces of material after a job is completed. The 144,000 are the last generation of God’s people, and will be alive to see the Lord return in the clouds of glory (1 Thessalonians 4:17). They are described as keeping the commandments of God. This would be expected if they have the character of God reproduced in their lives so fully that God sets His seal upon them.

Zephaniah wrote, “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid” (Zephaniah 3:13). Here we learn three more characteristics of the 144,000. They “shall not do iniquity,” they will not “speak lies,” and “none shall make them afraid.” There is a sense in which all Christians from Christ’s time until now do not do iniquity, as Paul said, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19). This should be the experience of every true disciple of Christ. Yet, the 144,000 are spoken of in a special sense as not doing iniquity. Their experience in this area will have gone further than those who have gone before them.

## **Perfection**

The Christian walk is an ever advancing experience. Paul wrote, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For *the perfecting of the saints*, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*:... But speaking the truth in love, may *grow up into him* in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13, 15).

Paul spoke of “the perfecting of the saints,” that we will all come “unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of Chris,” and that we “may grow up into Him.” Paul speaks of

perfection here as something that has not yet been accomplished. In fact, Paul wrote of himself, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12-14). Paul claimed that he had not yet become perfect, and that he pressed toward the mark of perfection. He was expecting perfection, but had not attained it yet. What was he looking for?

Paul also claimed, “I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day” (Acts 23:1), “And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts 24:16). Paul claimed that he lived in good conscience void of offence toward God and men, yet he made it clear that he was not yet perfect. Perfection to Paul was something to be sought for, and to be grown into. He likened perfection to reaching the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Jesus said, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). Jesus set the standard of perfection as high as it could be. We are to be just as perfect as God is perfect. This can only be accomplished with God in us, completely filling every aspect of our lives.

Paul wrote, “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his

Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, *that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.* Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen” (Ephesians 3:16-21). God’s people can be filled with all the fullness of God, and when this happens they will have reached “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” and will be perfect even as the Father in heaven is perfect. Then, and only then, can it be said of God’s people that the Father’s name (character) is fully written in our foreheads, and the seal of God is given to them. This is the experience of the 144,000.

## *Perfect vs. Perfect*

The word perfect is used in two different ways in the Bible. God said of Job, “...there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?” (Job 1:8). God called Job perfect, yet he had some lessons to learn, and at the end of the book God rebuked and corrected Job (Job 38-41). The aspect of Job that was perfect was his complete dedication to God. His heart was committed to serving God no matter what. In fact, Job said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him” (Job 13:15). Job had the attitude expressed by one of his friends, Elihu,

“That which I see not teach thou me: if I have done iniquity, I will do no more” (Job 34:32).

Job was perfect, yet he had some perfecting that needed to be done in his life. He was completely dedicated to God and had surrendered everything that he knew to be displeasing to God. Yet, there were things in his life that he did not know displeased God, and he needed to grow into that knowledge. Job was perfect in the sense of being fully surrendered, but not perfect in the sense of coming to the full knowledge of God’s will in every aspect of his life.

Let me give you an example. When I first became a Christian, I surrendered my life to God, and gave up all that I knew to be displeasing to Him. I was overwhelmed with gratitude to God for loving a filthy wretch like me, so I was happy to give every part of my life to Him. I immediately stopped smoking marijuana, stopped drinking, using curse words and foul language (though for a short time a few would slip out), stopped listening to openly satanic music, stopped lying, cheating, stealing, etc. These were things I knew to be wrong, even when I was in the world. I weeded out all of the “bad” music out of my collection, and held onto the rest. I still listened to Iron Maiden, Ozzy Osborne, Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, Anthrax, Megadeath, etc. It took about three months for me to be gently taught that these were not appropriate for Christians either. I was completely surrendered to God in all of His revealed will to me, and when He revealed more to me, I abandoned those other things as well.

I was a true born-again Christian even when I held onto those things that I was unaware were displeasing God. My heart was perfect toward God, but my experience was not complete; my life still needed perfecting, and still does to this day.

Notice how the Bible describes perfection in some of the kings of old: “But the high places were not taken away out of Israel: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect all his days” (2 Chronicles 15:17). There were some problems in Israel that Asa should have taken care of, yet his heart was “perfect all his days.” Asa surrendered his life to God, but was never convicted and convinced that he should have taken away the high places where pagan worship had been done. He was fully surrendered to God, but lacking knowledge in certain aspects of God’s will. In fact, Asa died prematurely because he was misguided. “And Asa in the thirty and ninth year of his reign was diseased in his feet, until his disease was exceeding great: yet in his disease he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians. And Asa slept with his fathers, and died in the one and fortieth year of his reign” (2 Chronicles 16:12, 13). Though he had some problems, The Bible says that Asa’s heart was “perfect all his days.” Here we learn that a perfect heart does not equal perfect actions. Why is this? A perfect heart does not equal perfect knowledge. It takes a combination of a perfect heart and perfect knowledge of God’s will to produce perfect actions.

In contrast to King Asa, the Bible says of king Amaziah, “And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, *but not with a perfect heart*”



(2 Chronicles 25:2). Here is a king who did the right things for the wrong reasons. His heart was not fully surrendered to God, so he could not be called perfect.

It is a dangerous thing to ignore God's prompting upon your heart, and live contrary to what you know is right. This is not the experience of a true born-again Christian. When you do this, you are putting a road block in your ever-advancing Christian walk. If you are knowingly acting contrary to God's will you will not truthfully come to Him and ask him for more knowledge of His will. Each time you come to him there will be a nagging feeling that you are doing something displeasing to Him, and this will taint all of your Christian activities. You may do what is right, "but not with a perfect heart." This is a very dangerous place to be. If you find yourself in that condition, please, I beg of you, surrender to God what you know to be wrong, and move forward with God. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Revelation 2:5).

## **The Old Covenant**

Under the old covenant there were certain limitations and frailties. In the book of Hebrews, Paul outlined these frailties, emphasizing the superiority of the new covenant. He wrote of the Levitical priesthood, "Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that *could not make him that did the service perfect*, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the

time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and *more perfect tabernacle*, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:9-14). Continuing, Paul wrote, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Hebrews 10:1).

When Paul elaborated on the frailties of the old covenant, the prominent shortcoming was that it could not make anyone perfect. This is the main defect of the old system. But the new covenant, on the other hand, is able to make people perfect. This is because it makes a change from the inside. "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (Hebrews 10:16). Perfection is possible in the new covenant. Some in Old Testament times had the new covenant experience of having the transformation from within. David, had a transformed heart. God said he was, "a man after his own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14). Enoch definitely had a transformed heart. The Bible says of

him, "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5:24). Enoch walked with God so perfectly that God took him to heaven without seeing death. Paul wrote, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Hebrews 11:5).

Elijah is another man in the Old Testament who pleased God. The Bible says of him, when he was walking with his friend, Elisha, "there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2 Kings 2:11). These are the only two of whom the Bible reveals went directly to heaven without seeing death. They must have had, and still have, a very close relationship with God, and a transformed heart. These are not the only ones who will go to heaven without seeing death. Paul wrote, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). The 144,000 are the remnant group of God's people who will be alive when Jesus returns, and they will never die. In this respect, Enoch and Elijah are representative of the 144,000.

## **Where are We?**

When we look at the facts about the 144,000, where are we today? Have the 144,000 already been manifested? Are

they alive today? Are you one of them, or do you know one of them? The fact is, the 144,000 have not been sealed yet. The four winds of strife have not been completely let loose. But these things will happen for sure, and based upon what the Bible says about the last days, and the way the world is today, it will happen very soon. Is your experience similar to the biblical description of the 144,000? Can it be said of you, "The Father's name is written in your forehead"? Do you "keep the commandments of God" and not "speak lies"? Are you perfect in the sense that Paul said he was striving after? Have you reached "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"? If not, are you moving in that direction, or are you stagnant in your relationship to God? Please consider these things, because very soon there will be a polarization of the people on this earth. Then there will only be two groups of people; those who obey God regardless of consequences, and those who will not.

Very soon things are going to get much more difficult for God's people. The Bible says of a last day religious/world power, that it will "cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:15-17). Imagine what it would be like not to be able to buy or sell. Things will get difficult very quickly. If you are waiting for some better time to devote yourself wholeheartedly to the Lord, there is no better



time than the present. We know that the last generation of God's people are going to live up to a very high standard amid difficult circumstances. They will be perfect even as God, the Father is perfect. They will be "filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:19). They will have reached "the measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ."

If you or I expect to be alive and ready to meet the Lord when He comes we must endure unto the end, which will require perfection. Jesus said, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Mark 13:13). Unfortunately, there will be a group of professed Christians alive when Jesus returns who think they are prepared, but will come up short. Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:21-23). Notice the shortcoming Jesus mentioned here. He said, "ye that work iniquity." Remember that the Bible says the remnant "shall not do iniquity" (Zephaniah 3:13).

Here we learn that when the Lord returns there will be professed followers of Christ who will continue to practice iniquity, while the true followers of Christ will have stopped completely. They will have not only abandoned all of their known sins, but will have sought

the Lord to reveal more sins until there are no more sins to reveal. They will have the attitude of David, who said, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalms 139:23, 24), and "Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Psalms 19:12). The 144,000 will earnestly seek for God to remove all of their sins, until God will triumphantly proclaim over them, "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

Knowing the facts regarding the last generation of God's people it behooves us to ask, Where are we in relation to this? If you know you have to move to Alaska before next winter, and the only way to get there is by horseback, what kind of preparations would you make now? You would have to begin planning and moving in that direction now. We know that the 144,000 are going to be ever advancing in the light of God's Spirit, until there are no more unknown sins to reveal to them. If we want to be ready to meet the Lord in peace we must be actively and aggressively seeking for God to mold our characters into the glorious likeness of His own. We must ever say, "Not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Romans 13:11).

This is a simple process, it just requires the exercise of your will to choose to release every bad trait to God, ask Him for His power expressed in His

word, believe that you receive it, and live like it is a reality. It takes the ABCs of prayer,

- Ask for God to honor His promises,
- Believe that He does what He said, and
- Claim that you have received the promise.

God has given His word to mold and shape our characters. His word will work in you if you let it. Peter wrote, “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:3, 4; see also Philippians 2:13; Colossians 1:29; Ephesians 3:20; Hebrews 13:21).

## Great Men of Old

When we think of great men of old with outstanding faith, we often place them on a pedestal as people with far superior faith than ours. But they were men just like us. James wrote, “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months” (James 5:17). There is no reason that we, today, cannot have the same type of experiences as those great men of old.

The Bible says of Noah, “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (Genesis 6:9). “And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will

destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch” (Genesis 6:13-14). Noah was a perfect man who walked with God. He had a very close relationship with Him, and could recognize when God was speaking to him. God asked him to do a really strange thing, but he was acquainted enough with heeding God’s instructions in his life that he knew it was God talking to him, telling him to build a huge boat on dry land at a time when there was no such thing as rain. Noah became a laughing stock to his community, but he continued, certain that God had told him to build the ark.

Abraham was asked to do something extremely difficult. The Bible says, “And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Genesis 22:1-2). Here God asked Abraham to do something contrary to anything he had learned from God before, but Abraham was so sure that God was talking to him that he obeyed immediately. From the record found in the Bible we find that Abraham was fairly secretive about his plans, for his son, and those who accompanied him on his three day journey to Mt. Moriah were unaware of his plans to slay his son. There is no record that Abraham’s wife knew of this plan nor that he consulted with others to see if this was the will of God, but he was

confident that God was speaking to him, and he was sure God would work it all out for good. “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure: (Hebrews 11:17-19).

How familiar would you have to be with God’s voice in your life to have the faith of Abraham? What if God told you to do something today, would you know how to recognize His voice? Abraham and Noah walked with God. They had a daily experience with God. They had been so accustomed to seeking God’s guidance in their lives, and heeding His instructions, that when big decisions were to be made, they knew what God wanted of them. The Bible says, “And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend” (Exodus 33:11).

There are similarities between Moses’ experience, and that of the 144,000. John wrote, “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And *they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb*, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship

before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest” (Revelation 15:2-4).

The 144,000 are going to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, Jesus Christ. There is something about their experience that is similar to Moses and the Lamb. The Bible says of the 144,000, “And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth” (Revelation 14:3). When it says that no man could learn that song, does it mean that the 144,000 will be stingy with the lyrics and will not let anyone else know the words? No! No man could sing the same song because no man had the exact same experience. A song is sung to reflect an experience, and cannot be sung by someone who does not have that experience. Angels, for example, could not truthfully sing, “I once was lost in sin, but Jesus took me in,...” because angels have never experienced this.

The 144,000 are going to have an experience similar to Moses and Jesus Christ. What do Moses, Jesus Christ, and the 144,000 have in common? They are all willing to give up eternal life for the benefit of others.

When the Israelites rebelled against God and worshiped a golden calf, God tested Moses by saying, “Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation” (Exodus 32:10). But Moses replied, “Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written” (Exodus 32:32). Moses knew

that if his name was blotted out of God's book, then he would miss out on eternal life, but he was willing to give up his eternal life for others. That is a huge sacrifice. What about Jesus? Did He make the same decision? Yes! When Jesus was on the cross, He prayed, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

The 144,000 will have an experience equivalent to Moses and the Lamb. They, too will have "loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11). Many serve God out of selfishness for what they can get out of the relationship, but the 144,000 will serve God because it is the right thing to do, regardless of whether or not they gain any benefit. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). The three young Hebrews who were thrown into the fiery furnace said to the king, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But *if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up*" (Daniel 3:17, 18). The 144,000 will have this same kind of dedication to God. They will serve God even if it appears that they lose eternal life.

## Following the Lamb

John wrote, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with

their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. *These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.* These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:1-5).

The Bible says that the 144,000 follow the Lamb, Jesus Christ, wherever He goes. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). The 144,000 will hear the voice of Jesus, and follow Him wherever He goes.

Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20). The first step to allowing Jesus into your heart is to hear His voice speaking to you.

Don't misunderstand here. God does not speak to everyone as openly as he did with the prophets of old. The Bible says of Moses that he spoke with God face to face as a man speaks to his friend. God said, "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he

behold” (Numbers 12:6-8). Here we find that there are different manners in the way God speaks to people. Yet, Jesus’ disciples will hear His voice in some way. I know that the Lord spoke to me to reveal to me that I was a lost sinner going to hell if I didn’t turn around. I am certain of this, and I know when it happened, and remember the instructions I was given, which included instructions to move to Indiana, which is where I learned the truth about God. I did not hear an audible voice, but a very strong impression in my mind, that I am certain did not originate from myself. Since then the Lord has spoken to me in the same way about many subjects. Often He speaks by putting a Bible verse in my mind. He may speak by circumstances as He did when Gideon laid out a fleece (Judges 6:36-40).

God said, “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left” (Isaiah 30:21). Jesus speaks to everyone, but they do not all listen. Jesus is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

## Christ’s Experience

Jesus was so dedicated to doing the will of His Father, that He could say, “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” (John 8:28,

29). Jesus had to have always known the will of His Father to know that He always pleased Him. He knew His Father’s will all the time, because He sought for it. Jesus said, “I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” (John 5:30).

Jesus knew the will of God so precisely that He could say, “For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.” (John 12:49-50). “The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (John 14:10).

I have three children. Throughout the day I give them over 100 instructions, in precise detail. I tell them, “Come here,” “Pick up your toys,” “Don’t touch that,” “Don’t do that,” etc. If your friend would give you such detailed instructions, you would soon get annoyed. But God gave Jesus instructions much more detailed than that, so precisely that Jesus said everything He ever did, and everything He ever spoke came from His Father. This did not annoy Jesus at all, in fact it was a pleasure, for He said, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:8). His continual attitude was, “Not my will, but thine, be done.” (Luke 22:42). He always sought His Father’s will instead of His own.

This is the experience that Christ had, while living on this earth, and if He lives in you, this can be your experience today, and this will be the experience of



the 144,000. Paul wrote, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Galatians 2:20). "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John 2:6). Walking as He walked means to live as He lived. "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16). Walking in the Spirit means to always do what the Spirit instructs you to do, at every step in your life. This is what Jesus did, and still does, in whomever He lives.

## **The Early Church**

Notice how precisely the Lord led His early church. The Bible says of Paul, "When they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." (Acts 16:6-7). The Spirit of God gave specific instructions to these early Christians, telling them where to go and what to do.

"The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and

join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." (Acts 8:26-31). After some instruction, this man was baptized.

Here, specific instruction was given to Philip. He didn't know why he was to go toward the south, but he went. After he arrived, he was told to go to the chariot. Not knowing why, he ran to the eunuch, and found him needing instruction. I am amazed by this, and challenged. If God led His early church in such a precise manner, and His church today is not having this experience, who has changed, God or His church? The answer is obvious. God wants to instruct us in just as precisely a manner, but many of us are too far removed from Him that we do not recognize when He speaks to us. We are too busy doing our own will that we do not know what God's will is for us. We seek God's will in big decisions, like selling our house, or moving to another state, but fail to seek Him in the small things. Because we are so out of tune with Him in the small things we often do not know his will in the big things.

Jesus said that He sought the will of His Father, and He did this every moment of every day. We are told, "Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17). If we are not constantly seeking God's will, then we cannot possibly do God's will all the time.

Seeking God's will is not waiting for it to hit us over the head. Often we think, like the rich young ruler, that if we avoid killing people, stealing from them, etc.,



then we are doing the will of God. But when Jesus asked the rich young ruler to sell everything he had and give to the poor, he refused. (Matthew 19:16-22). This man was not accustomed to seeking and doing the will of God in a detailed manner. He thought that as long as he kept God's written commandments he was okay. Friends, God wants a much closer relationship with us than that.

When Philip was asked to go to meet the eunuch, if he had refused, it would have been sin, even though he would not have been directly violating any of God's written commandments. He would have been violating God's spoken command. Jesus said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4). That word includes any instruction that God gives you.

Jonah was told to go to Ninevah and preach. He refused, and got on a ship to Tarshish instead. Normally it is not a sin to take a ship to Tarshish, but at this time it was. Anytime we walk contrary to God's revealed will for us, we are committing sin. The 144,000 will never walk contrary to God's will after they have been sealed. Their whole heart will be surrendered to God, and they will have grown in the knowledge of God's will. They will "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Colossians 4:12).

With our cooperation, God is able to subdue our sins so thoroughly that every thought is brought into obedience. "(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of

God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4-5). The 144,000 will definitely have this experience.

## Conclusion

We have learned that the 144,000 are the last generation of God's people living upon the earth. Bible scholars are divided on whether this number is literal or symbolic. There is evidence to support both positions. Some have claimed that they are literal Jews, physically descended from Abraham. This, because the Bible says they are sealed from each of the tribes of Israel. Yet, since Christ died, the term, Israel, has broadened to include Gentile Christians. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:27-29; see also Romans 9:6-8; John 8:38-44; Romans 10:12; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 3:11). Regardless of your genealogy, you can be part of the 144,000 if you live at the right time and have the characteristics they manifest.

But to be part of that number we need to be moving in that direction, pressing toward the mark of the high calling in Christ (Philippians 3:12-14). Do not be comfortable with a stagnant experience. Jesus said, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34; see also Mark 4:18, 19).


The Bible says, "Prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Revelation 6:17). Friends, I pray that you will be ready on that day. If you plan to fly to the moon, there is a great deal of preparation that needs to be done ahead of time. You cannot just wake up one morning and tell your spouse, "Honey, I think I am going to fly to the moon today!" It takes time to increase in knowledge of how to get there. Friends, if you wait too long to begin the preparation, it will be too late to get ready. Remember the parable of the ten virgins. Five foolish virgins waited too long and could not enter the kingdom of God. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be a Christian. It is not enough to want to do right, you must take the next step and submit your entire life to God.

One necessary element of the 144,000 is that they will "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Constant communication with God is the only way to "do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

The manifestation of God's children is soon to be a reality. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22). "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Romans 8:19). What steps are you taking now to reflect more fully the character of God in your life?

One thing that is certain to change us is our perception of God's character. As we behold the glory (character) of God,

we "are changed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:18). To know God, is to love Him, for God is the source of love (1 John 4:7, 8). Love is the motivating factor in the Christian experience and will be perfected in the 144,000 (1 John 4:16, 17). This can only be done by knowing the love that God has to us, which was most fully manifested in that He sent His only begotten Son to truly die for us; a truth that is denied by the trinity doctrine. (For a thorough study on the truth about God in contrast to the trinity and similar errors, please contact us and request the book entitled, *God's Love on Trial*.) The Bible says, "The people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32). The 144,000 will know their God, which is the source of their strength.

God is eager to proclaim to you, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isaiah 60:1-3). Very soon, this will be a reality. God's people are going to shine so fully with the glory of God that Gentiles and kings will seek for them to find out how to get what they have. Please decide now to be part of this glorious rising. Submit your entire life to God. If you can think of some sin that has been holding you back from a full surrender to God, I beg of you, abandon it and experience the full joy of knowing you are right with God. "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psalms 34:8). 

# **You May Freely Eat?**

by Jim Raymond

## **Food: Friend Or Foe?**

“Superfood!” This familiar anthem will lead yet another marketing charge against your food budget. All the hoopla tends to blind us to the humble, unsung heroes growing in the trenches of farms and gardens that keep up the fight against the various diseases favored by a western lifestyle. The research which is the subject of this writing sings a song that affirms the protective benefits of common fruits and vegetables against a specific cancer foe.

It is a summary of one study which reveals the food patterns associated with length of survival from epithelial ovarian cancer (the fifth largest killer-cancer of women in the USA). Prior to succumbing to cancer, the participant subjects in this study were already subjects involved in another long term research project where they reported which foods they usually chose to eat.

When a number of these diet reporting women were diagnosed with Epithelial Ovarian Cancer, the researchers asked 351 of them to be part of a new diet-versus-cancer study. The researchers wanted to see if the types of foods usually eaten during the 3 to 5 year span, before they knew they had cancer, would help or hurt their survival.

To meet the objective of the study, the researchers sorted each of their food choices (and the weekly number

of servings) into the major food groups described by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 (DGA). The major DGA food groups include: fruits, vegetables, grains, meats, dairy, fats and oils, sweets, and alcohol. Grains, meats, and dairy groups were each further divided into two sub-divisions called “suggested” or “other” groups. The “suggested” sub-group included those food choices considered more healthful than the “other” foods in these three subgroups.

The statistics used to identify which food types helped and which foods hurt survival time calculates a “Hazard ratio” for each of the major and minor food groupings. Each Hazard ratio indicates whether a food grouping played a helpful, a neutral, or a hurtful role towards survival time.

Food groups and subgroups that helped (lengthened) survival time are:

The major Fruits and Vegetables group (excepting starchy items).

Fruits include: apples, applesauce, pears, cantaloupe, oranges, orange juice or grapefruit juice, grapefruit, other fruit juices, fortified fruit drinks...

Vegetables include: tomatoes, tomato juice, broccoli, spinach, mustard greens, turnip greens, collards, coleslaw, cabbage, sauerkraut, carrots or mixed vegetables containing carrots, green salad, sweet potatoes, yams...

Specifically the Yellow and Cruciferous vegetables subgroups

were the most helpful and buoyed performance of the major Fruit and Vegetables group.

Yellow vegetables include: Carrots or mixed vegetables containing carrots, Sweet potatoes and yams...

Cruciferous vegetables include: Broccoli, spinach, mustard greens, turnip greens, collards, coleslaw, cabbage and sauerkraut...

Food groups and subgroups that hurt (shortened) survival time are:

Generally hurtful was the Meats (Other) group which includes: hamburgers, cheeseburgers, meat loaf, beef-steaks, roasts, beef stew or pot pie with carrots or other vegetables, liver, including chicken livers, pork, including chops, roasts, fried chicken, fried fish or fish sandwich, hot dogs, ham, lunch meats, bacon, sausage...

Especially hurtful were the Red meat and the Cured/processed meats subgroups.

Red meats include: hamburgers, cheeseburgers, meat loaf, beef-steaks, roasts...

Cured/processed meats include: ham and lunch meats, hot dogs, bacon, sausages, pepperoni...

Surprisingly the sub-group, Milk (all types) which includes only the liquid milk types (Whole, 2%, 1%, Skim) showed up on the hurtful side.

This finding is very interesting because the dairy choices which were not milks included: cottage cheese, other cheeses and cheese spreads, yogurts, and even ice cream.

The results for milk make it very difficult to claim that casein (the primary milk protein) is always bad for

you as some very prestigious pundits are currently claiming. I have no affinity to milk nor to either of its two major proteins (whey and casein), but I think the science should be allowed to speak for itself. I can't help but wonder if the hurtfulness could be due to the presence of water soluble growth hormones or the like. This could be a reason that the milk showed up as bad and the cheeses did not (even though both contain casein). I hope we see further research to find out what hurtful substance might be dissolved along with the whey protein in the watery part of the milk. If the offender is water soluble, it would be significantly diluted in the precipitated casein protein from which cheeses are made making these products less hurtful.

So, relative to Epithelial Cell Ovarian Cancer, the research shows that a good diet, which generally advantages the recommended foods for optimal nutrition and cancer prevention, has protective survival benefits that continue through diagnosis and even through the typically devastating medical treatment events. (This study appears in the March 2010 issue of the Journal of the American Dietetic Association.)

To put this study to work in your life, pay attention to these relevant points:

Firstly, remember that even though this study shows some strong evidence for specific food choices, these results are relative only to this study's one specific cancer type. It is not a definitive study for all food choices or diets.

This point does not negate the results. Instead, the results take their rightful place alongside all other study results to become a part of the milieu of evidence. Out of this milieu come the questions for additional research. Practice guidelines (like the DGA food groups) are another outcome of the research based on the current weight of evidence.

I hope you notice that this process is not unlike Bible study and “religious” practice in our on-going growth in grace.

Secondly, there could be a problem with grouping various food items together because some innocent foods may be assumed guilty by association. For instance, in the DGA the major meats grouping include beans and other legumes. Legumes did, in fact, show up as slightly helpful in the details of this study. These discovered “contradictions” in the body of evidence, and in the practice guidelines, help the “growth in grace” to improve current practice and future guideline editions (at least that’s the way it is supposed to work).

For optimal health, continue to choose a wide variety of colorful fruits and vegetables, and not exclusively the yellow and cruciferous ones. Most of the others are generally supportive of good health and may protect us from other types of cancers and other maladies. Current guidelines (for the “average” adult) suggest 35 servings (½ cup each) of vegetables a week; select 4 servings from the yellow group, about 6 servings from the dark green and cruciferous group. The remaining 25

weekly servings can come from Legumes (6), starchy (6), and salad and sandwich type vegetables (13).

Lastly, don’t forget to eat your fruit! The DGA here suggests about 28 servings a week. Using this information you can plan your weekly menus. If doing this together would be helpful let me know (email only please: [jim@presenttruth.info](mailto:jim@presenttruth.info)).

If you are looking for help building an anticancer strategy for your life, you may want to consider the book: “Anticancer: A New Way of Life”, by David Servan-Schreiber, MD, PhD (Published in USA by Viking, ISBN 978-0-670-02164-2).

I refer you to this book only because of its phenomenal educational value relative to having a multifaceted approach to overall health and for the behind the scenes insights toward cancer prevention. Its general dietetic recommendations strongly lean the right direction, but still fall a bit short of being optimized for ultimate mind, body, and spiritual health and even for optimal cancer prevention. Likewise, I do not agree with the conciliatory bent towards making the lifestyle components “supplemental” to traditional cancer treatment methods. If I was looking for a treatment or a cure, I would certainly look for something significantly more aggressive in the immune system enhancement side of the “Alternative Medicine” arena!

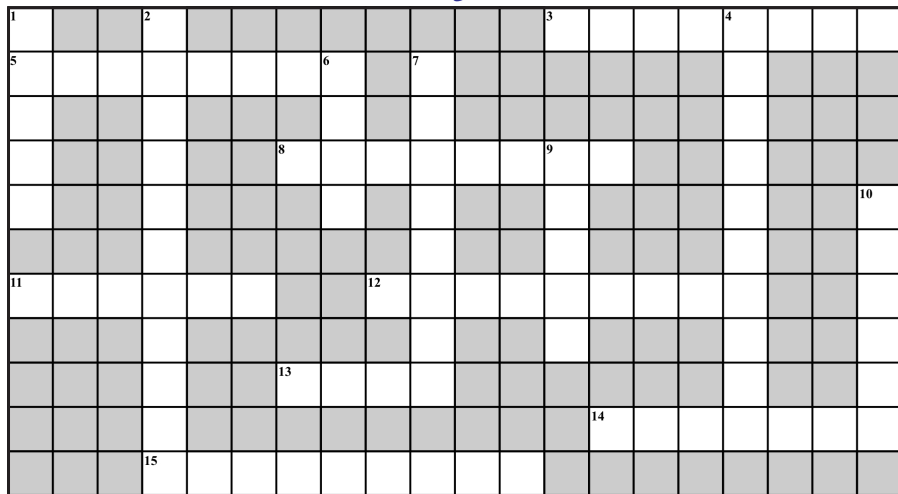
Your mother proved she knew all about this topic every time she reminded you to, “Eat your superfoods!”

*Blessings! JR*

*Present Truth*  
**Something for the Young at Heart**

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies based on the book, *Bible Handbook*, by Stephen Haskell. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line. (The KJV is required.)

*Our Duty to God*



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue

- "Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole \_\_\_\_ of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13—**6 Down**
- "I have \_\_\_\_ the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." Job 23:12—**5 Across**
- "Thou shalt \_\_\_\_ the LORD thy God with all thine heart..." Deuteronomy 6:5—**13 Across**
- "...and with all thy soul, and with all thy \_\_\_\_, and with all thy mind..." Luke 10:27—**8 Across**
- "Only fear the LORD, and serve him in \_\_\_\_ with all your heart." 1 Samuel 12:24—**9 Down**
- "Therefore \_\_\_\_ God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20—**14 Across**
- "Ye cannot serve God and \_\_\_\_." Matthew 6:24—**11 Across**
- "Whosoever he be of you that \_\_\_\_ not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:33—**15 Across**
- "Whosoever will come after me, let him \_\_\_\_, and take up his cross, and follow me." Mark 8:34 (2 words)—**2 Down**
- "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have \_\_\_\_ in heaven: and come and follow me". Matthew 19:21, 28, 29—**7 Down**
- "So then because thou art \_\_\_\_, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth". Revelation 3:16—**3 Across**

**Note:** There are three conditions mentioned in this verse, and we all fall into one of these categories. I pray that you will be found hot for the Lord. A mixture




of hot and cold is the most dangerous position.

➤ “Thou shalt not \_\_\_\_ to offer the first of thy ripe fruits...” Exodus 22:29—**1 Down**

➤ “Honour the LORD with thy \_\_\_\_, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase.” Proverbs 3:9—**12 Across**

➤ “That ye would walk \_\_\_\_ of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.” 1 Thessalonians 2:12—**10 Down**

➤ “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or \_\_\_\_ ye do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31—**4 Down** 

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## Sin Shall Not Have Dominion Over You (Part 6)

by Charles Fitch

(Charles Fitch was a pastor of the Free Presbyterian Church of Newark, NJ. In 1840 he wrote a series of letters to the headquarters of his church defending his belief in God's power to save us from sin. Here are those letters. *Editor*)

### Letter to the Presbytery of Newark

Dear Brethren:

After being made acquainted with my views and feelings on the subject of sanctification, you have passed a resolution declaring them to be important and dangerous error, and admonishing me to preach them no more. I must therefore say, brethren, and I hope to do it with all meekness and humility, and lowliness of heart, that I cannot regard your admonition; and for the following reasons:

**Reason One:** It is now several years, since, after a season of spiritual gloom and sadness, I came fully to the conclusion, that there was something in the religion of Jesus Christ, to which I had been a stranger. I had seen myself to be a sinner before God, richly deserving His everlasting indignation. I had seen that God would be holy, just and good, and worthy of universal and eternal adoration, while punishing me with everlasting destruction from His presence and from the glory of His power. I had also seen in Christ a Saviour,

who, after atoning for all mankind on the cross, was able, on the merits of that atonement, to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him; and on that Saviour I had cast myself as my only hope, and trusted in Him, and Him only, as my Deliverer from the wrath of God.

Trusting thus in Him – my crucified Saviour – for my salvation, I was for a time filled with great joy and peace in believing, and went on my way rejoicing. But years passed away, and to these lively emotions of joy in the Lord, I had been almost an entire stranger, except for a short season immediately succeeding my first conversion to Christ – when I did taste in a good degree, the peace which those are sure to find, who come with a heart penitent for sin, and trust in the merits of a crucified Saviour for pardon and everlasting life. But I had come now to the full conviction, that my religious state was very far from what it ought to be. This arose partly from what I had learned in the Bible respecting “the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in us the hope of glory,” “the peace of God that passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and mind of the Christian through Christ Jesus,” “and the joy unspeakable and full of glory to be found in Him, Whom not having seen we love, in Whom, though now we see Him not, yet believing we rejoice” (Colossians

1:27, Philippians 4:7, 1 Peter 1:8); and partly from what I learned about that time of the experience of some Christians, to which experience I knew myself to be a stranger.

I came then to a settled determination to know, with the help of God, more of spiritual things. Since that time, which is now some years, I have, as never before, “Cried after knowledge, and lifted up my voice for understanding, seeking her as silver, and searching for her as for hid treasure, that I might understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” (Proverbs 2:3-5). I have sought for spiritual bread and for the water of life, with an earnestness which I know I have never felt for any of the possessions of this world. I have sought these in the Bible, in the experience of eminent Christians who have gone to their reward [The righteous dead are asleep waiting for the resurrection. For more information on this, please request the tract, “What Happens After Death?”], and in the writings of living Christians who seemed to know most of spiritual things. I have sought them in personal conversation with those who seemed to know most of the deep things of God, and I have sought them on my knees, with many tears, and with earnest wrestlings in the name of Christ for the teachings of the Holy Ghost. For a long time there was no definite blessing that I had in my mind, as the object of pursuit, except that I might have more of the Holy Ghost, and be far better prepared than I had ever been to live to the glory of God. But I was made acquainted in the providence of God, with some of those Christians, who believe that it is the privilege of all disciples of Christ, to be, through the “Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath loved us and given Himself for us, redeemed from all iniquity, and purified unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of Good works” (Titus 2:13, 14); and we “through the blood of the

everlasting covenant to be made perfect in every good work to do His will, by His working in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ.” (Hebrews 13:20, 21) – “to be sanctified wholly, and to have their whole spirit, and soul, and body preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, through the faithfulness of Him who hath called them” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24) – “to be cleansed from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1), “through the promises of God which are all yea and amen in Christ, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Corinthians 1:20), and thus “through the exceeding great and precious promises, to be made partakers of the Divine Nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” (2 Peter 1:4). When I first knew this class of Christians, and first read their writings, I was greatly opposed to their views of truth, and from what I learned of the mistakes and excesses of some who had professed to hold this truth, and to enjoy the experience of it, I was led to regard the whole subject with very great aversion. But I have learned, that truth is not to be held accountable for the excesses into which these mistakes may lead them, nor for the sins of those who hold the truth in unrighteousness.

While I was thus crying after knowledge, and lifting up my voice for understanding, the Lord began to teach me more and more of the love of Christ, so that I was not only restored to my first love, but made to know, in my experience, that “the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Proverbs 4:18), and that “whoso followeth Christ shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12). The “peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keeping the heart and the mind through Christ Jesus, and the joy unspeakable and full of glory,” of which

## Present Truth

the Bible speaks (Philippians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:8), became realities to my mind; and I had learned the blessed truth, that "all the promises of God in Christ are yea and in Him amen, unto the glory of God by us" (2 Corinthians 1:20); that it is the Christian's privilege, by trusting in Christ for the fulfillment of the promises, to enjoy the fulfillment of every one of them, just as the awakened sinner has fulfilled to him the promise of pardon, when, and only when he believes for this in Christ.

I had then inquired what has God promised, and what is He willing to do for me, if I believe for it in Christ. I examined the Bible with this principle in view, and found that God had said, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with Mine eye." (Psalms 32:8). This promise I knew to be yea and amen in Christ unto the glory of God by me, and I therefore prayed and trusted in Christ that God would instruct me, and teach me in the way that I should go, and guide me with His eye, into all truth respecting the doctrine of sanctification. When I read the promises on this subject, I found them full and explicit. "I will circumcise thy heart and the heart of thy seed to love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Deuteronomy 30:6). "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and make you clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh, and I will put My spirit within you

and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them. And I will save you from all your uncleanness." (Ezekiel 36:25, 27-29). "And I will make an everlasting covenant with you that I will not turn away from you to do you good, but I will put My fear in your hearts that ye shall not depart from Me." (Jeremiah 32:40). "And this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 10:16, 17). I also found that Christ our Redeemer was called Jesus because "He would save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21); that "He was manifested to take away our sins, and that whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not." (1 John 3:5, 6).

### To be Continued...

(This article was taken from pages 30-33 of the book entitled, "Sin Shall Not Have Dominion Over You," by Charles Fitch. *Editor*)

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### Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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**Editor:** Lynnford Beachy, PO Box 315, Kansas, OK 74347, phone: (304) 633-5411, Florida Office: 577 Eden Park Ave, Altamonte Springs, FL 32714, phone: (407) 291-9565, Smyrna office: (304) 732-9204, fax: (304) 732-7322, e-mail: [newsletter@presenttruth.info](mailto:newsletter@presenttruth.info).

***Smyrna Gospel Ministries***  
**Present Truth Department**

577 Eden Park Ave  
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714  
U.S.A.