

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

August 2011

“Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philemon 1:3). Natural disasters have been increasing. As a result of man’s sin, God cursed the ground for our sake. God said, “the curse [has] devoured the earth” (Isaiah 24:6). This world is coming to an end, but God promised, “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isaiah 65:17). This world and everything on it is temporary. I pray that you will be found in the new earth God has promised to make for us.

The Personality of God – Part 3

by Lynnord Beachy

In the first two parts of this series we examined what the Bible says about God, the Father and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. We learned that “there is but one God, the Father” (1 Corinthians 8:6). who is “the only true God” (John 17:3). We also learned that God has a real Son, who is God’s “firstborn,” “holy child,” and “the only begotten Son of God” (Colossians 1:15; Acts 4:30; John 3:18).

Yet, this is not the end of the story. Jesus promised to send “another Comforter” (John 14:16). In His final discourse to His disciples, the night before His death, Jesus told them about a gift that would be given to help them after His departure.

Jesus said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;...” (John 14:15, 16). The purpose of the gift of the Comforter is that He may abide with the disciples forever. This was excellent

news to the disciples, for they were sad to hear of Christ’s soon departure. Jesus continued His discourse, stating that He would send “the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17).

Jesus said that the world could not receive the Spirit of truth, because it did not see him nor know him. The world does not see that this gift is available to them, nor does it know the Person who is the Comforter.

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Immediately following this explanation Jesus said something startling. He told His disciples, “but ye know him.” How could the disciples know the promised “Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit” (v. 26),* if Jesus had not yet prayed for the gift, and it evidently had not yet been given? John stated, “the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified” (John 7:39).

Jesus explained, “ye know him; for [or because] he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17). Who was dwelling with the disciples? Jesus Christ! Jesus explained that soon this Person who was dwelling *with* them would be *in* them. It certainly would be better for the Comforter to dwell in the disciples rather than dwelling outside of them. That is exactly what Jesus said a short time later. In the same discourse, Jesus said, “I tell you the truth; It is expedient [profitable] for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you” (John 16:7).

Jesus said that His disciples would be better off if He left them, went to His Father, and sent the Comforter to dwell in them. He also pointed out that the coming of the Comforter depended upon His departure, and glorification. As long as Christ was living on the earth as a man, it was not possible for this promised Comforter to come to live in the disciples.

As we continue reading in John 14 we find that Jesus did not end His conversation in verse 17. In the next verse He said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18).

This sheds a great deal of light on the subject. It explains why the Comforter could not come until after Christ went away and was glorified, for Christ said that He, Himself, would come back to His disciples to comfort them.

Let’s continue reading Christ’s discourse to see how He reinforced this point. He said, “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” (John 14:19, 20). A few moments earlier Jesus had said to His disciples that the Comforter “shall be in you.” Now, Jesus says that when the Comforter comes, “Ye shall know that I am in you.” Jesus assured His disciples that He would not send someone else to comfort them, but that He would come Himself to be their Comforter. Isn’t that beautiful! The disciples had become close friends of Christ; so close that John felt comfortable leaning on His bosom. It was a comfort to them when Christ was near. Now Jesus tells them some wonderful news. He tells them that after He goes to His Father, He would come back to them as the Comforter, and they would know that it was He who was dwelling in them—they would recognize that the same Person who was dwelling with them was now in them, by His Spirit.

Next, Jesus said something that caused one of His disciples to inquire of Him how this could take place. Jesus said, “He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be

* Every time in the Bible where you find the term, “Holy Ghost,” it should have been translated “Holy Spirit.” Sometimes the translators of the Bible chose to translate πνευμα αγιον (*pneuma hagion*) into “Holy Ghost,” and other times they translated the same phrase as “Holy Spirit.” Holy Spirit is the most accurate translation, and I will use it throughout this article, including in the Bible verses I quote.

loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:21-23).

Many people believe that in John 14, Jesus was trying to teach His disciples that God is a trinity, that the Holy Spirit is a third member of the God family. Yet, when Jesus was asked to explain Himself He did not say, anything similar to “God is a trinity of persons.” Instead, Jesus made it abundantly clear that after He left the world, He would come back to make His abode in the hearts of His disciples. Not only would He return, but His Father would come with Him, so that both of Them would live in the hearts of His children, not physically, but by God’s Spirit. In this way, the disciples could have intimate communion and fellowship with both the Father and His Son. John emphasized this when he wrote, “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).

At the beginning of Christ’s discourse at the last supper He said, “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:1, 2). If the coming of the Comforter was more than both the Father and the Son, He would have told us. If God was made up of three persons, He would have told us. If the only true God was more than

only the Father, Jesus would have told us. Instead, at the end of this discourse He said that His Father is “the only true God” (John 17:3). If Jesus wanted us to believe that God is a trinity, He did a very poor job of explaining it. He had many opportunities to explain that God is a trinity, yet He never did. Not only did He fail to tell us God is a trinity, He made statements over and over again that are not in harmony with the doctrine of the trinity. If He wanted us to believe that God is a trinity, He made many statements that would serve only to confuse rather than to clarify. But “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Corinthians 14:33). Jesus wants us to believe that “there is one God; and there is none other but he,” “God the Father,” who is “the only true God” (Mark 12:32; John 6:27; 17:3).

John expressed the lovely truth of God, the Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, living in us in several other verses. He wrote, “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 1:9). In 1 John 2:22, 23 he wrote, “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but). he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.” It is truly a blessing to have personal fellowship with both the Father and His Son, and I am very thankful that God has made this available to us.

The Promised Comforter

As Jesus was about to ascend to heaven, He commanded His disciples “that they should not depart from Jerusalem,

but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me” (Acts 1:4). Jesus pointed His disciples forward to the day when the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon them with great power. He continued, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

The disciples waited in the upper room at Jerusalem for the Spirit to be poured out, as promised. Then it came, and they preached the gospel of Jesus Christ with power to the many Jews who were assembled at Jerusalem. Concerning the outpouring of the Spirit, Peter said, “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:32, 33).

The gift that was poured out at Pentecost is still available to us today, and we can have it if we recognize and accept it. Yet, the gift of the Holy Spirit was not always available in the same way. In fact, the Bible tells us that God has provided something better for us, than He did for all those who lived before Christ came to this earth. We read about this in Hebrews chapter 11. After giving an account of the mighty faith of the patriarchs and prophets, the chapter ends by saying, “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:39, 40). That is wonderful! God has provided something better for us, than He provided for all those mighty men

and women of faith in Hebrews. They all died without receiving the promise of the Comforter that Jesus spoke about in John 14 and in Acts 1.

Please do not get me wrong, the Holy Spirit was working upon the hearts of people long before the day of Pentecost, helping them to overcome sin. The Patriarch David wrote, “Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me” (Psalms 51:11). This shows that the Holy Spirit was at work before Christ came to earth. Not only that, but to be more specific, the Bible says that the Spirit of Christ worked in Old Testament times. Peter wrote about the prophets, “Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (1 Peter 1:10, 11). The Spirit of Christ was living in the prophets, long before the day of Pentecost, but, according to Scripture, there was something special about the coming of the Comforter at Pentecost; something different and better than had ever been poured out before. Let us read about this better gift.

Something Better

In Hebrews 2:18 we find the key that explains what was better about the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It says: “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to *succour* [help] them that are tempted.” Here is the answer! This is something better that is available to us, today, that could not have been available to the prophets of old. Even though the Spirit of Christ lived in the proph-

ets, Christ had not yet been tempted, and therefore He could not help them in the same way that He can help us now. The word “succour” in this verse was translated from the Greek word βοηθησαι, which means, “to aid, to relieve, to help,” and, as *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* puts it, it also means, “to run to the cry of those in danger.” I like that definition! The verse is telling us that because Christ has suffered being tempted, He is able to come to us swiftly to help us, when we cry unto Him for help with our temptations. The Bible says, “Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalms 50:15). When we are being tempted, we are in serious trouble, and if we call upon the Lord for help, He will come to our aid immediately, and give us the victory we so desperately need. Christ is able to do this for us in a way that He could not do it for the prophets of old, because today, He has already experienced what it is like to be tempted. This is why Jesus called the Comforter, “another Comforter.” The Greek word αλλον, which was translated “another” in this verse was used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, in 1 Samuel 10:6. Here, it says of Saul, “And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man” (1 Samuel 10:6). Saul became another man, because of the experience he went through. Jesus became another Comforter because now He has experienced what it is like to be tempted.

Think about something for a minute. Suppose your teenage son died in a plane crash, and the next week, your spouse died in a car accident. Now suppose that I come up to you and say, “I know ex-

actly what you are going through,” even though I had never been through that experience. Would I be able to comfort you with these words? Certainly not! If I have never experienced what you are going through, it is very hard for me to understand what you are feeling, or how to help you through it. Even if I was sent by someone who had experienced the type of hardships you are going through, my comfort to you could not be the same as if the one who had experienced your turmoil would comfort you himself.

Many Christians believe that Jesus came to this earth as a man and experienced what it is like to have trials and temptations, and then returned to heaven to send someone else to comfort us. If that were true, why didn’t He just send him in the first place? Someone who has experienced our griefs is more qualified to comfort us than a different person who is just sent in his behalf.

The Bible says that Jesus Christ, “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus Christ experienced what we are going through when we are tempted and, because of this, He is able to help us when we are tempted in a greater way than He could before He came to earth. It is He who said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” Praise the Lord that our Comforter knows what we are going through in our struggles with temptation. We are given a precious promise in 1 Corinthians 10:13. It says, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” The way of escape that God has ordained for us is to call upon the Lord for help. Whenever we are

tempted, if we call upon Him, He will help us. And God has promised that He has made this way of escape for every temptation. That old saying, “the devil made me do it,” is absolutely false. The devil cannot make you do anything. He can use strong enticements, but he can never force you to sin. There is always a way of escape, and our Comforter is eager to give us the victory.

Jesus said that when the Comforter is come, “he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment” (John 16:8). This is exactly what the Bible says Jesus would do when He comes back to us as our Comforter. The Bible says, “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). And in the book of Acts we read, “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:26). After God raised His Son from the dead, He sent His Spirit into our hearts, to bless us in turning us away from our sins. Jesus Christ is the best Person qualified to do this job, because He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Praise the Lord that we have a Comforter who knows what we are going through in our struggles with temptation, and can help us through it better than anyone else.

This is the gift that God is eager to give to all those who ask (Luke 11:13). This is the gift that “the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him” (John 14:17). The world does not recognize that this gift exists; they do not know who their Comforter is, and therefore, they cannot receive Him. Friends, God does not want you to be like the rest of the world, He wants you to know who your Comforter is, so you can receive the full benefits of this

blessed gift. Jesus said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is our Comforter. In fact, John told us exactly that in 1 John 2:1. Notice what he wrote here: “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an *advocate* [παρακλητος; Comforter] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” The other four times παρακλητος was used in the Bible it was translated, Comforter. In Greek there is no distinction between the *advocate* in this verse and the *Comforter* in John’s other writings, and here John plainly tells us that the Comforter is Jesus Christ.

The Bible says of Jesus, “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Hebrews 7:25). Jesus is our intercessor, our mediator. The Bible says, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). How many mediators do we have between us and God? One! Yet, the Bible says, “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26). The Spirit makes intercession for us as our Advocate and Comforter. This Spirit that makes intercession for us is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In this verse the Spirit is referred to with the pronoun “itself.” In English this seems strange because we would not refer to a person as “it” or “itself,” yet the Bible refers to the Holy Spirit this way several times.

Paul wrote, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Romans 8:16). Peter wrote,

“Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow” (1 Peter 1:11). Here the Spirit of Christ is called “it.” John the Baptist did the same thing when he said, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him” (John 1:32).

The reality is that it is no more improper to refer to the Spirit of Christ as “it” as it is to refer to “the mind of Christ” as “it.” In fact, in Greek, the word πνευμα, which was translated “Spirit,” is a neuter noun, and as the grammatical rules demand, all pronouns referring to the Spirit are neuter, even though several times most English Bibles render these pronouns as “he” or “him.”

The Greek word for Comforter is masculine, and therefore all pronouns referring directly to the Comforter are masculine. However, this does not indicate that the Holy Spirit is a literal male individual separate from the Father and His Son. For example, an angel said, “And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe [βρεφος *neuter*] wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger [φωτην *feminine*].” (Luke 2:12) Here is an example of how the gender of Greek nouns cannot be relied upon to determine the personality of nouns. The Greek word that was translated babe is a neuter noun even though the babe is a male person. In the same sentence the Greek word that was translated *manger* is a feminine noun even though a manger is an inanimate object. If there had been any Greek pronouns in this verse referring to either the babe or the manger, the pronouns would most likely have been the same gender as the nouns they represent.

I say “most likely” because there are some cases when these grammar rules

were broken by Bible writers to demonstrate the personality of the person represented by a Greek pronoun.

Bible writers adhered to the rules of Greek grammar regarding pronouns much of the time. For example, John wrote, “For the Lamb [αρνιον *neuter*] which [to *neuter*] is in the midst of the throne shall feed them,...” (Revelation 7:17). Here John strictly adhered to the rules of Greek grammar and used a neuter pronoun for “the Lamb” even though it had already been established that the Lamb is the Son of God. But later, John wrote, “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb [αρνιον *neuter*] stood on the mount Sion, and with him [αυτου *masculine*] an hundred forty and four thousand, having his [αυτου *masculine*] Father’s name written in their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1). Here John broke the rules of Greek grammar and referred to the Lamb using masculine pronouns even though the word “Lamb” is neuter in Greek.

John was not the only Bible writer to break the rules of Greek grammar to demonstrate the literal personality of the one represented by a pronoun. Mark wrote, “And he took the damsel [παιδιου *neuter*] by the hand, and said unto her [αυτη *feminine*], Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise” (Mark 5:41). For more examples like these, read Matthew 2:13, 14, 20, 21; Luke 1:59, 80; 2:21.

There was biblical precedent for John to have broken the rules of Greek grammar when referring to the Holy Spirit to give it personality by using masculine pronouns in reference to it. But he never did this! Some trinitarians have argued that John actually did break the rules of grammar by using masculine pronouns to refer to the Holy Spirit. But, in these cases John was actually referring to the

masculine noun, *Comforter*, rather than to the neuter noun, *Spirit*, and was not breaking any rules of grammar. These supposed broken rules of grammar are in John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7, 8, 13, 14, but all of these masculine pronouns refer back to the masculine noun *Comforter* rather than to the neuter noun *Spirit*. In reality John did not break the rules of Greek grammar to refer to the Holy Spirit with masculine pronouns. In all places where John was actually using pronouns to refer to the Spirit, he used neuter pronouns.

John wrote, “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another **Comforter** [παρακλητον *masculine*], that he may abide with you for ever; Even the **Spirit** [πνευμα *neuter*] of truth; **whom** [ο *neuter*] the world cannot receive, because it seeth **him** [αυτο *neuter*] not, neither knoweth **him** [αυτο *neuter*]: but ye know **him** [αυτο *neuter*]; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:16, 17). For more examples of where neuter pronouns were used for the Spirit read John 7:39; Acts 5:32; Romans 8:16, 26; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 6:19; & 1 John 3:24. I have read every verse where a pronoun is used for the Holy Spirit, and I have not found a single case where masculine pronouns were used for the Spirit. It would appear that none of the Bible writers understood the Holy Spirit to be an actual separate person from the Father and Son.

Christ in You

When you have the Spirit of Christ, you have Christ Himself. Paul wrote, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith” (Ephesians 3:17). In this way you can be “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). Without this experience, Jesus said, “ye have no life in you.” “He that hath the

Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12).

Paul exclaimed, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). This is our only hope of salvation. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Romans 8:9). We must all be able to say, with Paul, “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). “Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

When Christ was here, He cried out to God, addressing Him as, “Abba, Father” (Mark 14:36). This term expresses a close, personal relationship with His Father. This same relationship is given to us. “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). When we receive this Spirit, we also cry, “Abba, Father.” Paul explained, “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). It is Christ in you crying “Abba, Father.” By giving us the Spirit of His Son, God is giving us that close, personal relationship with Himself that His Son has with Him. That is beautiful!

The best gift that God ever gave is the gift of His only begotten Son, whom He gave to die for our sins that we might live forever (John 3:16). Not only did He give His Son to die for us, He gave Him to live within us as our Comforter. Praise God for such a wonderful gift! I pray that you will utilize this gift to the full potential of Christ in you, and that you will be ready to meet Jesus in peace when He returns for His people.

To be Continued...

Houston Experience - August 6, 2011

by Morgan Polsky

(On August 6, 2011, Rick Perry, the governor of Texas who will be running for president, held a prayer rally at the Reliant Stadium in Houston, Texas. Approximately 30,000 people attended the event. A small group of believers went to the stadium to distribute literature and to talk and pray with people. Morgan was one of those missionaries, and here is his story. *Editor*)

Truly God is good to His people. Houston was a blessing as the small group of believers were gathered to bring the precious truth which we hold to the people. The small group of us included, Lynnford Beachy, Josiah Beachy, Joseph Lahud, and myself (Morgan Polsky). Steve Spence a literature veteran also was there with a brother named Derrick and his two sons.

Before I share the event experience there was a special experience with a young lady named Amanda. I had to exchange some Canadian dollars for US dollars so I needed to go to the mall to a Travelex, which is a foreign exchange kiosk at the mall. When I got there I found that the young lady who worked there was a Christian, so I shared with her about the event taking place and how we came to hand out literature. I explained our position and she wanted to know more about our faith. So we had an hour-long Bible study at her work. She recognized the Sabbath truth and the truth about our Father and His Son. I also explained the truth about righteousness by faith and she said that it made sense. She had never heard these truths which we hold so dear.

Amanda also bought a *Great Controversy* hardback and I gave her a *Desire of Ages* paperback. Amanda was very appreciative. I too was very appreciative of her. We closed in prayer. She thanked me and I thanked the Lord and her. These times to share are so wonderful, it sharpens our understanding and increases our faith.

Regarding the event, there were some questions whether we were going to be able to share the literature due to the event being on private property and the way the parking was set up. There were an estimated 30,000 people inside and we were eager to get the literature in as many people's hands as possible. We did not have a lot of literature, but we felt that what we did have was sufficient even if one soul was reached with this truth. We realized that these people were sincere and they came to pray for our nation. We pray that those who received the literature will take their stand on the side of truth.

There were some protesters on the property and we were able to speak with some of them and tried to minister to them. They were not very open to listen, but we each had conversations that were fruitful in planting seeds with them.

We planned to distribute the bulk of our literature at the end of the meeting, as people were going home. When we began handing out the literature Brothers Lynnford and Josiah Beachy were asked to leave the premises. They relocated to a position off the property where they were still able to distribute literature but at a slower pace. Brother

Joseph and I however, were having great success by one of the gates near the parking lot right at the exit of the building. We had actually given away all of our literature and needed to get the remainder of the bags from Lynnford and Josiah. We were able to hand out most of that as well. Praise the Lord for softening the staff's hearts to let us stay. Steve Spence and Derrick distributed a few thousand *National Sunday Law* books.

The day ended with another blessing. We were able to encourage and share with a young lady named Rebecca. The day before the prayer conference, a man by the name of Glen asked me for some help, and in return agreed to distribute tracts to a group in the motel's parking lot. Rebecca received a tract from Glen and then approached me with her hand stretched out for a handshake. She said, "Hi, my name is Rebecca. I heard that you are Christians and I would like to talk about some things." I said, "That would be great, but I would like to have another brother in our presence."

After the event was over and we were back at the motel, I went to the room where her group was staying and let her friend know that we were back and whenever she wanted to talk that would be great. I knew that Satan wanted to prevent the meeting so I asked Br. Lynnford to pray with me that she would come over to talk and that Satan would be defeated in his purposes. Sure

enough, God answered our prayer. Five minutes later she came over and we had our discussion. We spoke for hours. We had our room door open and our window curtain open to remove any appearance of evil. We were all able to share parts of our testimony and encourage Rebecca in the Word of God. It was her birthday the next day and we were able to give her a stack of books and pamphlets to read. She was very appreciative. She mentioned that she was not going to come over, but decided to come at the last minute. We told her that we were praying for her to make the right decision, and that God answered our prayer. Praise God for answered prayers!

Answered prayers sure do bolster our faith. We ended the discussion with prayer and exchanged information. Please keep these two young ladies (Amanda and Rebecca) in prayer. Praise God for a wonderful Spirit filled experience. May we plan on more literature evangelistic events to share God's truth in the near future.



Joseph and Morgan praying with a lady on the street

The Work in Texas' Day of Prayer

by Joseph Lahud

The next morning, Sabbath, August 6th was very hot, the expected temperature was to be over one hundred eleven degrees. We visited the stadium early in the morning to plan where we could be most effective in distributing literature. Due to the limited amount of materials we had on hand, we decided that it would be best to distribute it at the end of the conference, handing out the material as the people exited. The materials we had were: *All in the Name of the Lord* (by the late Bill stringfellow), *A Time to Choose* (by David Clayton), some *God's love on Trial* (by Lynnford Beachy), and some other small tracts. We also had some of our ministry booklets (Revelation Messengers Publishing), some of these were: *A Treatise on the Sabbath, Sunday, the First Day, Has the Sabbath been Changed*, and *The New Covenant and the Law*.

The call to the Texas trip came through Brother Morgan Polsky. This young man who is very much on fire to serve the Lord has traveled in and out of the country, ministering to others the message of the Gospel. His love for Christ, energy, and dedication is contagious. Brother Morgan invited us to help him distribute free literature at the "Day of prayer" conference. It was to be held at the Reliant stadium in Houston Texas. The title for the event was "The Response." "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and

find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:12, 13). These are the words of our heavenly Father through His prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah was not the most popular prophet in His time or ours. Any message that speaks of reform is typically not very well received. This is our challenge today.

Brother Lynnford, his son Josiah and I drove from Oklahoma to Texas on Thursday August fifth, arriving at about seven that evening. There were opportunities to minister to several guests at the motel where we shared a room with Brother Morgan.

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There were over 30,000 people in attendance. We decided that we would place ourselves at the most predominant exit gates, away from the many protesters rallying nearby. The protesters were composed of various groups, each displaying its views and agendas through hand held signs, attended also with shouting their slogans. There were groups protesting Governor Rick Perry's presence at a religious gathering, as he was the keynote speaker. There were gay activist groups rallying for their rights, there were "Christians" with a loud bullhorn shouting at the Gay groups. There were anti-Christian groups shouting at the Christians, there were several groups advocating the separation of Church and State, and others promoting their anti-God message. One sign said "Two hands working are better than a thousand hands clasped in prayer." There was a young man dressed in a Santa Claus outfit; he was handing out free bottles of water. We had the opportunity to speak with several of these protesters.

We carried backpacks filled to bursting capacity with our precious literature. It was decided that we would thank the attendees for coming and praying for our nation, and then handing them a piece of literature. This worked well, as most people received it gladly. At times we were surrounded by outstretched hands reaching for a booklet, which were taken from our fingers as fast as we could give them out. We were able to speak briefly with several people, discussing the materials we were distributing. I pray that those books will be read, and seeds planted which will bring forth much fruit.

As we walked back to our vehicle, we shared some materials with people we met on the street. We had the opportunity to pray for several of them. The most encouraging experience was with Rebecca, a young woman who Brother Morgan had met earlier. She was part of a sales team offering framed artwork. Finding out that we were there to promote Christian literature, she let Brother Morgan know that she was struggling spiritually, and she wanted to meet with us later that evening after work. We met in our motel room with the front door open from 7:30 PM, until about 11 PM. She was very sincere in sharing her religious background and disappointment with her Church experience. We shared many things with her, emphasizing the truth that God has a wonderful plan for her life. Each one of us providing Scripture verses regarding the great love which Christ has for her. Even little Josiah had words of truth and wisdom to add to the conversation!

When we closed with prayer, Rebecca had openly committed her heart to Christ! We exchanged our contact information and she left. Immediately after this meeting, Brother Morgan, Lynnford, Josiah, and I prayed, thanking the Lord for His power to save and His care for us, and committed our efforts to His glory. We said goodbye that night for Brother Morgan was leaving very early the next morning. We were all very encouraged for the opportunity to serve God's kingdom that day. In the morning, Brother Morgan left for California to teach a class at the Waldensian

Center, and we headed back to Oklahoma.

Several days later we received an email from Rebecca. She told us how the next day after we prayed for her she had lost her job, her car had broken down, and she had lost her place to live. We wrote back to her, Kendra Beachy also having communicated with her, encouraging her to remain steadfast and to trust in God's faithfulness, reminding her that the enemy of our souls was going to try everything he could to steal her new found faith. However, to our great joy, Rebecca sent us word three days later, declaring God's faithfulness! She had a new job, her car was repaired, and she had a new place to live! Shadowing all of these things was her great

joy and excitement in sharing her testimony that God had truly performed a miracle in her life!

Rebecca's account should encourage all of us. We are entering into very difficult times. Many of us are facing struggles in many areas and circumstances. Let's gain strength from the word of God and each other, "And they overcame him Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11) Through faith in Christ, we can declare the promise of hope to this world: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jeremiah 29:11).

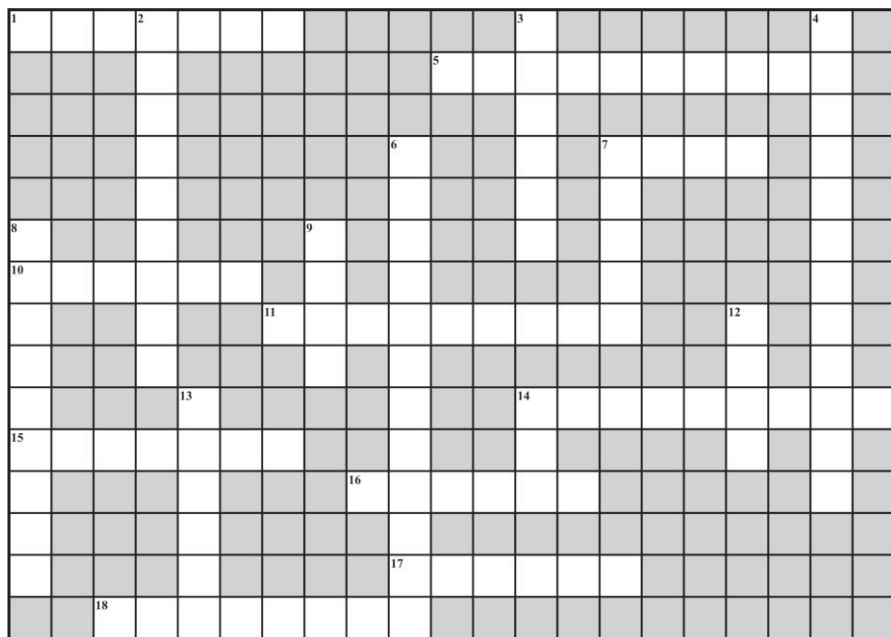


Morgan (left), Joseph (center), and Lynnford (right) Loaded with Literature

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.)

The New Earth - Part 2



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

The Capital City

- John "saw the holy city, _____, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Revelation 21:2 (2 words)—**4 Down**
- An angel came to John "saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's _____. Revelation 21:9—**12 Down**
- John wrote, "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that _____, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Revelation 21:10 (2 words)—**11 Across**

- The city "had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve _____, and names written thereon..." Revelation 21:12—**10 Across**
- "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand _____. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." Revelation 21:16—**18 Across**

Note: The measurement given here is 1,500 miles. There are differences of opinion regarding whether this measurement is of the whole circumference of the city or just one side. If it is the

whole circumference then it would be 375 miles on each side and 375 miles high. That is a huge city! A square this size would not fit in the state of Texas. If the measurement is only for one side, then the city would not fit within the continental United States. The most astonishing measurement is the height, which would be at least 375 miles tall. The International Space Station orbits the earth 173-286 miles above the surface. Currently, the tallest building in the world is the Burj Dubai at 2,723 feet (just over ½ mile, nearly twice as tall as the Empire State Building). This tower is tiny compared to a 375 mile tall city. Some scholars think that this massive measurement is figurative because it is too huge to be literal. But, God is making a new earth, and the God who made the vast universe could certainly make the new earth big enough to house a city of this size with a special place for you (John 14:1-3). I hope to see you inside that wonderful city.

- “And the building of the wall of it was of ____.” Revelation 21:18—**13 Down**
- “The city was pure ____, like unto clear glass.” Revelation 21:18—**7 Across**
- “And the foundations of the wall of the city were ____ with all manner of precious stones.” Revelation 21:19—**8 Down**
- “And the twelve gates were twelve ____.” Revelation 21:21—**3 Down**
- “The street of the city was ____ gold, as it were transparent glass.” Revelation 21:21—**9 Down**
- “And I saw no ____ therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the ____ of it. Revelation 21:22—**17 Across**
- “And the city had no need of the ____, neither of the moon, to shine in it.” Revelation 21:23—**14 Down**
- “For the ____ of God did lighten it,

and the Lamb is the light thereof.” Revelation 21:23—**7 Down**

- Though the city doesn’t need the light of the sun or moon, “the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be ____, as the light of seven days.” Isaiah 30:26—**14 Across**
- “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the ____ ____, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month.” Revelation 22:2 (3 words)—**5 Across**
- In the new earth “it shall come to pass, that from one ____ ____ to another...” Isaiah 66:22, 23 (2 words)—**1 Across**
- “...and from one ____ to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD.” Isaiah 66:23—**15 Across**

Note: The Tree of life will yield twelve manner of fruit, with a new type each month. Every new month God’s people will gather before Him to worship and to eat the new fruit. *Young’s Literal Translation* says, “from month to month, And from sabbath to sabbath,...”

- “Blessed are they that do his ____, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14—**6 Down**
- “For without [the city] are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and ____, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.” Revelation 22:15—**2 Down**
- “The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the ____ death.” Revelation 21:8—**16 Across**

You May Freely Eat?

by Jim Raymond

A Spoonful of Sugar

“A spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down” claims the fictitious, Mary Poppins. Fact is, sugar is often better than the medicine.

When this is true, it is caused by the Placebo Effect. The Placebo Effect is defined as a reaction to a placebo (a benign and ineffective substance) manifested by a lessening of symptoms or the production of anticipated side effects.

An old study comparing morphine to placebo in post-surgery patients reveals the potential of the Placebo Effect. In this short-term double blind (neither patients nor nurses knew which medicine was in the syringe) cross-over study, close to 1000 surgery patients were given either an injection of morphine (a potent narcotic pain reliever) or a normal saline placebo (harmless saltwater). Patients were routinely asked to rate their pain levels before and after the injections. Half way through the study, the test drugs were switched (crossed over) to the other drug, so those starting with the morphine were switched to the saline placebo, and those starting with the saline placebo were switched to morphine. All patients reported pain levels within the expected range for the type of surgery. The results were shockingly divided into thirds, with one third showing better relief on the placebo than the Morphine; in another third both the Morphine and the placebo worked equally well; and in the last third the morphine proved better than

the placebo. Fully two-thirds could be influenced by the Placebo Effect. This is not really bad news, but it does tell us that there can be a large disconnect between the objective expectation and the subjective experience.

The root of the Placebo Effect is centered in our belief systems, and as such, we usually get what we subjectively anticipate or assume to be objective reality. For example we tend to believe that a more costly item will be more effective than similar lower priced items which are assumed to be of “lesser value.” Pricing strategies often advantage this belief and push their price higher than competitors when the relative value is the same or even less.

Two short stories that remarkably show the results of deeply believed yet false assumptions, like the Placebo Effect, work to enlist the power of mind and body into an experience that would have gone the other way if all the facts were known.

Float Like a Rock

I have an acquaintance from years ago, who somehow got separated from her diving party several miles off the Florida shore where land was not visible. She was floating and treading water for three days. Fortunately she was wearing her lifejacket so she knew that of all the things which could cause her to perish, drowning would not be one of them, and that she would eventually float up onto some shore—hopefully still alive. In those days these bulky

flotation devices were filled with cottony fibers harvested from the seed pods of Kapok trees. Kapok is water resistant and although quite heavy it is very buoyant. When she was safely pulled into the small rescue boat her flotation jacket was removed and it fell into the water. Immediately it sank! After telling me her story, she shared how thankful to God she was for that life vest. She gave me an intense stare and in a low, deeply serious tone said, “Jim that vest was weighing me down, but I know I would not have survived without it.” To this day she thanks God for the fact that she was wearing her heavier-than-water lifejacket; which gave her the strength (without food or drinkable water) to tread water for three days. Her story is one of the best illustrations of the power of the placebo-like effect of believed yet false assumptions.

No Hair for Me, Thank You!

When testing new cancer drugs on real cancer patients, occasionally a participant in the placebo arm of the clinical trial (those receiving the fake medicine) will show complete hair loss (a usual anticipated side effect of toxic chemical agents for cancer “treatment”). This story wonderfully shows how the Placebo Effect can initiate precise control of a specific cellular process.

Disappointingly, out of every 100 people treated for cancer with the traditional triad of surgery, radiation, and toxic chemicals, only about 3 of them seem to benefit with long-term return to health and freedom from reoccurrence of cancer. Because of such dis-

mally low “cure” rates, it is being argued in the research literature as highly plausible that these precious few survivors (3%) owe their success solely to the Placebo Effect.

To those benefited by the false cancer drugs, the objective of their faith is an unwarranted belief that new experimental cancer toxins are better than the current toxins, and a totally false belief that they got the new medication. In spite of both of these fallacies they got what they expected. Jesus repeatedly said, “Your faith has made you whole.” Faith [belief] always has an object. He is still working to be the one in whom we faith [sic]. Why the limitations when the object of our belief is not the treacherous life-jacket nor the impotent sugar-pill but the loving, life-giving inspiration and source of all good things—the all-powerful God and His precious Son? We own the limitations. They are rooted within our minds. Our enemy has sown the seeds of doubt, and we have allowed them to grow into fatal pride. This is a major problem, because without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. (Heb 11:6) And where faith is small, so is the evidence of God’s presence and power. (See Matthew 13:58; Mark 6:5.)

According to the author of my favorite commentary on the book of Romans, we do not need to stay in such a miserable condition because exercising faith is as easy and as natural as breathing!

“Pride is the enemy of faith. The two cannot live together. A man can think soberly and humbly only as the result of the faith that God gives.... The man who has confidence in his own strength and wisdom, will not depend upon God. Trust in the wisdom and power of God comes only when we recognize and acknowledge our own weakness and ignorance.”

“Many people have a notion that they are so constituted that it is impossible for them to believe. That is a grave error. Faith is just as easy, and just as natural, as breathing. It is the common inheritance of all men, and the one thing wherein all are equal. It is as natural for the child of the infidel to believe as it is for the child of the saint. It is only when men build up a barrier of pride about themselves (Psalm 73:6) that they find it difficult to believe. And even then they will believe; *for when men disbelieve God, they believe Satan; when they disbelieve the truth, they greedily swallow the most egregious falsehoods*” (*Signs of the Times*, August 6, 1896, by Ellet Waggoner, emphasis supplied).

It is by “beholding” that we regain our Edenic capacity for spontaneous faith. When we see the Man, Jesus Christ, we are undone, and in self-adorrence we humbly turn to Jesus in the newness of child-like faith; knowing that we are but dust and trusting that He is everything to us (2 Corinthians 3:18; Isaiah 6:5; Job 42:5, 6; Luke 18:17; Psalm 103:14, 15, Acts 17:28).

“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). Jesus is the *real* cure for our sinful natures.

Satan’s power may be much more potent than the Placebo Effect. But he is temporary so his miracle-working power can have only a temporary manifestation of wealth, health or merely the perception of healing. Temporary power cannot sanctify us with the eternally superior “faith that is in” Jesus which breaks the curse of death, and blesses us with eternal life—now. In Acts 26:18 Jesus describes Paul’s mission to the Gentiles with these words: “To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by *faith that is in me.*” Praise God for this promise because in our wrestling match with the powers of spiritual wickedness (Ephesians 6:12), Acts 26:18 assures us that Jesus wins for us. This promise and this mission give us something real to believe—unto living breathing faith that works.

The miracle of the highest value, and of the most urgent nature is the one that by faith enables “them that believe to the saving of the soul” (Hebrews 10:38, 39). “It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire” (Matthew 18:8).

This last story is about a Roman army captain who, in asking Jesus to heal his servant, reveals the type of faith that Ellet Waggoner describes as “natural as breathing.” The captain’s faith is accompanied by works and it is as reasoned and intelligent as it is spontaneous. This is better than placebo!

I Know How This Works!

When Jesus arrived in Capernaum, a Roman army captain came and pled with him to heal his servant boy who was in bed paralyzed and racked with pain.

“Yes,” Jesus said, “I will come and heal him.”

Then the officer said, “Sir, I am not worthy to have you in my home. It isn’t necessary for you to come. *I Know How This Works. If you will only stand here and say, ‘Be healed,’ my servant will get well! I know, because I am under the authority of my superior officers and I have authority over my soldiers, and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave boy, ‘Do this or that,’ and he does it. And I know you have authority to tell his sickness to go, and it will go!*”

Jesus stood there amazed! Turning to the crowd he said, “I haven’t seen

faith like this in all the land of Israel! And I tell you this, that many Gentiles, like this Roman officer, shall come from all over the world and sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And many an Israelite—those for whom the Kingdom was prepared—shall be cast into outer darkness, into the place of weeping and torment.”

Then Jesus said to the Roman officer, “*Go on home. What you have believed has happened!*” And the boy was healed that same hour! (Matthew 8:5-13 paraphrased)

God help us to believe in Him, and to rely on Him because “His faith is in us” to heal us from death, the curse of sin, and to sanctify us with the perfect life of His dear Son in us “to will and to do to His good pleasure” forever. Amen!

Blessings! JR

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Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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