

Gospel - Light

Issue # 44

"Send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me." Ps. 43:3

«For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation...» (Romans 1:16)

Is Heaven a Real Place ?

The most stupendous thought that can occupy the mind of man is Heaven and how to go there. God has not left us to grope our uncertain way through a dark, starless night, with no light for our pathway and no guide for our faltering foot-steps.

Yes, the Bible has much to say concerning Heaven and life after death. In fact, the Word of God was written to show us how to go to Heaven. How true, then, are the inspired words, "If in THIS LIFE ONLY we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" (1 Cor.15:19). In spite of that, most men are living in the opening words of that sentence; "In this life only." They plan for this life only.

They work for this life only. They prepare for this life only. Oh, how true are the words of our Lord, "For what is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36) Therefore, you are making a foolish bargain if you have prepared for "this life only." **The only certain thing about this life is death.** Sometimes when we have to stand beside the open grave over the earthly remains of



one who is the dearest and the nearest of all earthly companions to us, we cover that mound with a blanket of flowers and water those flowers with our tears. Sometimes in our loneliness our hearts we repeat the words of the Lord Jesus as He hung upon the cross, "My God, my God, why?" (Matt. 27:26).

The Lord Jesus Christ, when He was here, was called the "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isa. 53:3). He has drained to the bitterest dregs the cup of every human sorrow, suffering and woe. Therefore, He is able to help us when all human help is in vain.

Yes, there is a Heaven! The Bible says so, and all laws of logic demand it.

Have you ever stopped to think that there is no instinct in animals, nor intuition given to man by the Creator that does not respond to a fact? Who taught the newborn kitten, even before its eyes are open, to seek nourishment at its mother's breast? **God the Creator placed that instinct in the kitten,** and that instinct responds to a fact. It is a fact that nourishment has there been provided. Who taught

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How Can a GOD of Love Send Anyone to Hell?

To answer this question, we must first understand the origin of Hell. The Bible teaches us that, Hell is a terrible place of eternal torment which was primarily **created for the devil and his wicked angels.** "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels..." (Matthew 25:41).

God gave man the ability to choose between right and wrong, between obeying His Word or disobeying it. When Adam chose to sin in the Garden of Eden, he did more than just harm himself, he brought condemnation upon the entire human race. **"Wherefore, as by one man Adam sin entered into the world, and death by sin, as so death passed upon all men..."** (Rom. 5: 12). So you ask, "How can a God of love send anyone to Hell, after all, it is not our fault that Adam sinned in the Garden..."

Let me make it perfectly clear, **GOD DOES NOT SEND ANYONE TO HELL!** In fact, He has done a great service to keep us from the



place of the eternally damned, if we will accept His provision. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish (Not go to Hell), but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16). In His mercy for all of sinful mankind, God made a way of escape from the judgment of eternal damnation.

As there is light, there is darkness; as there is Heaven, there is a Hell; and as there is God's love, there is also God's judgment and wrath. **Through the sacrificial death of Christ, we see the love of the Heavenly Father displayed for the entire**

world to receive! As you examine the Holy Scriptures deeper you'll find that God's holiness and righteousness **DEMANDED A PAYMENT FOR SIN,** and put Christ on the cross. So, God provided a way for you and I to escape our personal payment for sin. **Jesus paid our sin debt, HE is the Way to Heaven!** (John 14:6). What does that mean? Let me explain.

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You Have Choices to Make!



"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. **Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other**" (Gen. 13:10,11).

God made us with the ability to choose. We are not robots. And life is made up of choices. We choose; then we must live with our choices. We choose, and then we either rejoice in or regret sooner or later the choices we have made.

Lot's Choice Involved Sight

In chapter 13 and verse 10, Abram told Lot to

choose. **"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where."** In verse 11, Lot chose the plain of Jordan, chose it simply on the basis of sight. It looked good, so he made his decision on that.

When Abram said to Lot, "Now you make a choice; you choose first," wouldn't it have been wonderful if the Bible had said Lot built an altar, got down before God and made his choice on what God told him to do? But Lot never acknowledged God in his choice. It looked good, so he made his choice based entirely on sight.

Lot's Decision Invited Sin

Anytime we leave God out, it is dangerous. "Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent **toward Sodom**" (Gen. 13:12). He is not in Sodom yet. He is just pointing in that direction. He is just thinking about it, He is just wondering.

"And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed" (14:12). "Dwelt" means he had settled in permanently. He liked it there.

In chapter 13 Lot had just pitched his tent toward

Sodom. In chapter 14 Lot is there. "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom" (Gen. 19:1). The dignitaries, the government officials, the leaders of the city, sat in the gate. In **chapter 13 he is just looking** in that direction. In **chapter 14 he has moved in.** In chapter 19 he is popular...

Lot's Choice Included Sorrow

Lot lost his standards. When those two angels in the form of men came to his home and those homosexuals surrounded his house and wanted to have relations with those men, do you know what Lot said? **"Take my daughters."**

Dads, when you start letting down, there is no stopping. Imagine, Lot, who was raised in Abraham's home and now offering his girls to the homosexuals for the night!

Lot lost his testimony. His own sons-in-law laughed at and mocked him. "What are you doing trying to get us out of here?" Yes, they mocked him.

Also, he lost his burden for souls. He couldn't even win ten to Christ.

He lost his family-his wife, his own daughters.

Last of all, he lost his joy. Lot went down there

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The Bible Condition for God's Forgiveness

Salvation is by God's sovereign grace! But what about when born again believers offend others and need forgiveness?

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Here we see a lovely exemplification of His own teaching. In the Sermon on the Mount our Lord taught His disciples "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt 5:44). Above all others, Christ practiced what He preached. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. He not only taught the truth but was Himself the truth incarnate. Said He, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). So here on the Cross He perfectly exemplified His teaching of the mount. In all things He has left us an example.



Notice Christ did not personally forgive His enemies. So in Matthew 5:44 He did not exhort His disciples to forgive their enemies, but He does exhort them to "pray" for them. But are we not to forgive those who wrong us? This leads us to a point concerning which there is much need for instruction today.

Does Scripture teach that under all circumstances we must always forgive? I answer emphatically, it does not. The Word of God says, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times a day, and seven times in a day turn again to

thee saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luk 17:3-4). Here we are plainly taught that a condition must be met by the offender before we may pronounce forgiveness. The one who has wronged us must first "repent," that is, judge himself for his wrong and give evidence of his sorrow over it.

But suppose the offender does not repent? Then I am not to forgive him. But let there be no misunderstanding of our meaning here.

Even though the one who has wronged me does not repent, nevertheless, I must not harbor ill-feelings against him. There must be no hatred or malice cherished in the heart. Yet, on the other hand, I must not treat the offender as if he had done no wrong. That would be to condone the offense, and therefore I should fail to uphold the requirements of righteousness, and this the believer is ever to do.

Does God ever forgive where there is no repentance? No, for Scripture declares, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1John 1:9). One thing more. If one has injured me and has not repented, while I cannot forgive him and treat him as though he had not offended, nevertheless, not only must I hold no malice in my heart against him, but I must also pray for him. Here is the value of Christ's perfect example. If we cannot forgive, we can pray for God to forgive him. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." — AW Pink

No Loose Laces

The children of Israel committed a trespass regarding the accursed things, for Achan . . . took of the accursed things. — Joshua 7:1-12

One person's actions can affect an entire group. This truth became clear to journalist Sebastian Junger as he followed a platoon of soldiers. Junger watched a soldier accost another soldier whose bootlaces were trailing on the ground. He didn't confront him out of concern for his fashion. He confronted him because his loose laces put the entire platoon at risk—he couldn't be counted on not to trip and fall at a crucial moment. Junger realized that what happens to one happens to everyone.

Achan's "bootlaces were loose," and we learn from his story that sin is never private. After the great victory at Jericho, God gave Joshua specific instructions on how to deal with the city and its loot (Josh. 6:18). The people were to "abstain



from the accursed things" and to put all the silver and gold "into the treasury of the Lord" (vv.18-19). But they disobeyed his command to them (7:1). The interesting thing is, not all of Israel sinned; only one person did—Achan. But because of his actions, everyone was affected and God was dishonored.

As followers of Jesus, we belong to one another and our individual actions can impact the entire body and God's name. Let's "tie up our laces" so that we may individually and together give God the honor He deserves.

— Marvin Williams

RUN FOR IT...

Hit the ground running – every morning that's what we do as we leave the house and re-enter the rat race. We run errands; we give someone a run for his money; we always want to be in the running and never a run-of-the mill.

We are always running toward something, such as our goals, or away from something, such as our past. A lot of folks spend much of their lives attempting to run away from God, the purposes He has for their lives, and the blessings He is waiting to give us all.

No matter how hard or how far we run, still, we can never outrun ourselves from God. God keeps pace with us, calling us in the short run to take care of the long run by falling to our knees and running for our life – to Jesus--- just as Peter and the other disciple ran that first Easter morning. John



20:4 "So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulcher." Peter and John were running to the cemetery to find Jesus' body. You don't go into a cemetery to look for the living. They were not expecting to find Jesus alive when they rushed to the tomb. However, instead of His dead body they found His linen clothes, "And the napkin, that was about His head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself" (John 20:7).

Now, because Christ arose from the dead we can go to Him! On our knees, we can run all the

way to glory through prayer and enter into the majestic throne room of God's grace!

You without Christ can also run to eternity by going to your knees and asking Jesus to come into your heart and forgive your sins. Be aware of Romans 10:13 which still says "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." — Jesse Adams

Show and Tell

"After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter" (John 13:5-7).

If you take a course on writing or attend a writer's conference, you'll likely hear the phrase, "Show, don't tell." In other words, "show" your readers what is happening, don't just tell them. Don't tell readers what you did; describe doing it.

One of the reasons we tend to tell rather than show is that it's easier and faster. Showing how to do something requires time and effort. In teaching, it's easier to tell students what's wrong with what they did than to show them how to do it right. The latter, however, is more effective.



For thousands of years, the Jewish people had only the law telling them what to do and what not to do. But then came Jesus Christ, who showed them how to live the life God had been telling them about all along. Jesus didn't just say, "Be humble"; He "humbled Himself" (Phil. 2:8). He didn't just say, "Forgive others"; He forgave us (Col. 3:13). He didn't just say, "Love God and your neighbors"; He demonstrated love by His actions (John 15:12). "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" —(John 13:15).

Christ's perfect example of love shows how great God's love is for us and how we are to show His love to others.

— J.A. Link

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You Have Choices to Make!

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to get rich, but he ended up losing everything and living in a cave outside the city with his own daughters. They got him drunk, had an incestuous affair with him, and Lot fathered his own grandchildren.

But it all goes back to the time when Uncle Abraham said, "Lot, you choose..." and Lot said, "That way looks good. So that is the way I'll go."

Life is made up of choices. Genesis 13:11 says, "Then Lot chose. . . ." Lot grew up in Abraham's home. When his father died, he went to live with Uncle Abraham; Abraham, the friend of God; Abraham, the father of the faithful; Abraham, of whom it was said by the Lord, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord". (Gen. 18:19).

Genesis 13 says now it is time for Lot to make a choice. **It doesn't matter how good or how bad a home we have, sooner or later we must make up our own minds which direction we plan to go in life.**

When kids are growing up, they make the choices that their parents make. They have the same philosophy about life and spiritual things as their parents. But regardless of the home we grew up in, **sooner or later we all have to come to the place where we choose which direction we are going.**

We Choose Whether We'll Be Saved or Not

We personally choose whether we'll be saved or not. God has already made the choice. "He is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." God's will is that all men



come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. He wants everyone saved. Jesus died for mankind. God so loved the world of sinners that He gave His Son Jesus to die for them. But you and I must personally make the choice whether or not we will go to Heaven.

I'm not talking about church membership nor about living a good life, but about that personal decision to receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour. No one can make that choice for you. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received Him [Jesus], to them gave he power [authority] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Have you ever made that choice? If you could go to Heaven by being good, then Jesus died in vain. It is not in being a church member nor in being baptized nor in whether you are born in a Christian nation. **But have you personally received Christ as your Saviour? It is your choice.** Receive Christ into your heart and life now, TODAY and He will save your eternal soul by His amazing, merciful grace! I made my choice April 20, 1967... — Steve Roberson

How Can a GOD of Love Send Anyone to Hell?

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If you choose to rob a bank, you can't blame the policeman or the court judge for sending you to jail. **Your choice** between freedom and jail was made when you disobeyed the law and robbed the bank. **You made that decision.** Obviously, you sent yourself to jail!

Nobody can blame God for his or her decision to live life THEIR OWN WAY. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12). You can receive Christ in your life and go to Heaven, or you can reject Him and go to Hell. **The choice is yours!**

Some people go to Hell even though they have lived a moral, "religious" life because they miss the simplicity of God's salvation and the magnitude of His love. "It is finished", Jesus cried on His cross (John 19:30). He suffered for our sins, and gave His blood for an atonement. You cannot add to His finished work. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9). When you see your need as a sinner,



GUNPOINT BY JASON611

repent through confession and thank Him for dying and suffering in your place. **Bow your head in prayer, believing in your heart that Christ died for you!** His resurrection is the living proof that the Heavenly Father accepted His work of salvation. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

The Bible teaches us that God is long suffering, and He does not want any of us to go to Hell, He wants us to turn to Him! Hell is a real place where many people will spend eternity, but be sure that God has worked in the lives of all, attempting to bring them to repentance. God doesn't send anyone to Hell, people go there on their own. Jesus said, "And ye will not come to Me that ye might have life" (John 5:40). **How about you? "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"** (Romans 10:13).

If you don't know how, you might pray something like this: «Dear Father in Heaven, I do believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins and that God raised Him from the dead. I now repent of my sin trusting Jesus and Him alone to save my soul. I now accept Christ as my personal Savior! In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen».

— Tom Meador

Where is Jesus Christ Now?

Some born again believers are a bit confused about what happened to Christ after the Crucifixion... Trouble comes and they ask, where's God now? And the weeping believer cries out, "they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him".

Let me say, the Lord Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God making intercession for us. There is not one pain that passes through your body that He does not feel. There is not one tear that wets your cheek that He is not aware of. There is not one sleepless night, not one aching in your heart, not one moment of temptation in your life that He does not know about.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Yes, my friend, Jesus knows all about your sorrows, your heartaches, your burdens, your problems, your cares, your difficulties, your misgivings, your misunderstandings, because He is at the right hand of God making intercession for you.

It's a grand and glorious thought to know that anytime we miss the mark, anytime we fumble the ball, anytime we stub our spiritual toe, anytime we fall in the race, we don't have to stay down. We may fall down or get knocked down, but we don't have to stay down because the moment we look by faith to Him, He intercedes and pleads our cause to the Father.

Christ instead

(2 Corinthians 5:14-21)

The biblical doctrine of substitution is taught all through the Scriptures. If it is not clearly stated, it is set forth in types and shadows, which correspond with the truth as it is emphasized elsewhere. In the passage before us, however, we have what seems to be the most complete summary of the subject in the Bible.

We have often heard verse 21 quoted or preached from our pulpits. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." It is such a basic text, it easily lends itself to any Gospel message. But recently, while going over all these verses, the entire passage seemed to speak to me of the substitutionary work of Christ. In fact, this great doctrine is manifested in the sacrifice of Christ

Instead of our Sacrifice

The foundation of the Gospel is that Christ died in our place. Perhaps, it is best stated in the first part of verse 21. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin." But look at several of the previous verses, also. In verse 14, we read, ". . . if One died for all, then were all dead." It is stated twice in the next verse, too. "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him Which died for them, and rose again" (v. 15). **Yes, thank God! It was His sacrifice instead of ours!**



Where is He today? At the right hand of God, yet in the person of the Holy Spirit, He is right there in your heart. That is one of the amazing things about our relationship to Christ. In the person of the blessed Holy Spirit, He is in our midst, in our hearts. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God. **The Holy Spirit is in every believer.** The moment a person is saved, the moment he believes, the Holy Spirit takes up His abode in that life.

Where is Jesus today? Though He is positionally and majestically seated at the right hand of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, He is in your heart and mine.

If He's not in your heart it's because you've never asked Him to come in. **Invite Him today! "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"** (Romans 10:13).

— Ray Barber

The sacrifice of Christ is founded on God's mercy! "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;)" (Eph. 2:4,5). Through



Christ's substitutionary death, God can say, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12).

Too, the sacrifice of Christ is filled with great mystery! Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Paul revealed this in his Roman Epistle, also. "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die:

yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:7, 8).

A beautiful "illustration of Christ's substitutionary death is found in the book of Genesis. As Abraham was offering his son, Isaac, as a burnt offering on the altar, the angel of the Lord spoke from heaven and stopped him from slaying him. Seeing "a ram caught in a thicket by his horns... Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son" (Gen. 22:13). And, similarly, when we were to die for our own sins, Christ, God's Ram, was offered up in our stead!

— Tom Hayes

