

**“And the angel
said unto me, Wherefore
didst thou marvel? I will
tell thee the mystery of**

**the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath
the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest
was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit,
and go into perdition:..... And here is the mind which hath
wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which
the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are
fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come;.....And the
beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of
the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Rev. 17:7-11**

The scenario described here comes to fruition around the middle of the tribulation week announced by Dan. 9:27, for it describes the official beginning of the rule of antichrist who must reign for 1260 days. Daniel saw this same beast, as having 10 horns, meaning that he saw it at an earlier time than did John. Daniel 7 reveals that the prophet beheld “.....in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible,.... and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things.” V. 7-8 The seven horns in Daniel’s vision are exactly the same as the seven heads described by John, and portray the coalition of seven nations that will be in power during the first half of the tribulation period. We wonder today who are those original ten nations and when will they be reduced to seven? Furthermore, those seven will then be reduced by five in accordance with our opening text and one of the remaining two will emerge as the antichrist, that is, “...the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Rev. 17:11 Daniel likewise tells us that this “little horn” will reign

for a “time, times, and half a time,” which is three and one half years, or 1260 days, but who are these two remaining kings?

The nations that controlled the first three world empires are clearly identified by Daniel as Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece, but we do not have that luxury with this fourth beast, thus the participating nations are in no wise named. Scripture is, however, very plain in identifying specific characteristics of the global climate which will prevail in the end time and many of those signs are emerging daily. We are in the time Jesus designated as “the beginning of sorrows,” and we see very clearly that deception, wars, rumours of wars, nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, famines, pestilences, along with earthquakes in divers place are all in abundance today. Matt. 24:4-6 Luke 21 adds that there shall be “fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.” (what men refer to as acts of God) V. 11

Nation against nation and kingdom against kingdom virtually could apply to every government on the face of this earth, but what do we look for in ascertaining the nations, which will fit the criteria described by Daniel and John? Many prophecy scholars have wondered what nations would make up the ten horns portrayed by Daniel’s vision, and as previously noted in these sign posts, some have considered blocs such as NATO, or SEATO, The European Common Market, and others, but the numbers do not add up. Because of the recent global economic crisis, there is cause to believe that perhaps the G7 nations would fit the scenario outlined by Daniel and John. At present that group comprises the US, Japan, Britain, Germany, France, Italy and Canada. Both China and Russia would like to be a part of it and if they were admitted, along with one more, that would bring it to G10. According to Daniel, three of those nations would be removed thus bringing the total back to 7. We have also heard that those in charge of The International Monetary Fund (IMF) connected to these nations has considered dividing ten different regions into trading blocks, and whether those blocks would correlate with ten nations, we simply do not know. What we do know from scripture is that ten nations are going to form a coalition, and it is not hard to speculate, with the money woes around the

world, that their common bond will be economic. Whether men want to recognize it or not, one world government will emerge and we believe very quickly. One world currency has been proposed more than once and some politicians in Washington are doing everything in their power to oppose the U.S. being a part of it. However, with the falling dollar and other governments around the world on the brink of collapse, some will surely insist that there is no alternative.

The recent oil spill in the gulf of Mexico has created chaos on many fronts, but news headlines are now focusing on the economic impact. The U.K. Guardian reports that “Barack Obama wrung an apology from BP and an agreement for the oil company to make a \$20bn down payment into a special compensation fund for the victims of the Gulf oil spill...The White House was insistent that the \$20bn was not a cap,” meaning that BP’s financial obligations may continue for a very long time. In addition this same article goes on to say that “Obama also extracted a commitment from BP for a \$100m fund for oil rig workers put out of work by the moratorium on drilling – which the oil company had been resisting.” The language in this article, from England’s perspective, is not hard to interpret as presenting a considerable strain between these two nations, and it seems that money always creates controversy whether it be between nations or individual people. This leaking oil well, along with a host of other chaotic “natural disasters” (acts of God) such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floods simply reinforce the fact that the problematic climate described by Jesus, is producing more and more obstacles that are beyond the control of men, and all of them are literally draining the coffers of nations around the world. America is still reeling from Katrina, but when Haiti was hit by the hurricane, and other nations are plagued with devastating earthquakes, foreign aid is expected. We can only wonder how long it will be before many of these nations will be unable to send such relief. According to God’s Word, these disasters will increase yet more and more and it is not hard to imagine that this economic chaos will have a definite impact on what nations will be a part of the seven headed coalition of the end time.

We know that three prominent horns or nations will in fact be removed, and with the out of control spending of the U.S. government, it is not hard to imagine that America could well be one of them. Scripture is very emphatic that the "...borrower is servant to the lender," (Prov. 22:7) and any nation indebted to another will be forced into this subservient role. Some may recoil at identifying America as one of those deposed nations, but I am persuaded that this seven-headed coalition must of necessity be comprised of goat nations who are bent on Israel's destruction. I am of the opinion that all three of the horns to be removed will be sheep nations, and as we learn from Matt. 24:32-46, only these sheep nations will be preserved to continue as a nation in the Millennium. So maybe this removal is really an expression of The Grace Of God. There has been much speculation, and many searching for specific signs to identify from whence the antichrist might come. According to our text only two nations will be left standing by the middle of the week, and with the volatile changes occurring in our world, the entire political landscape could change in a heartbeat. Scripture is very clear on this matter, for the impenetrable Babylon The Great came to an end in only one night. Dan. 5:30-31 At present Russia and China would seem to occupy center stage. If we consider the economic scenario presented above, "the little horn" that deposes three others could well apply to either Russia or China, for that little horn could indicate a "newcomer," a reference to time rather than might or power. In addition Russia is fast becoming the strongest military force since they along with the U.S. posses 90% of the world's nuclear arsenal. The recent arms agreement between these two countries however, has almost eliminated America as a nuclear force for the President has gone on record not only of reducing the nuclear arsenal, but stating unequivocally that he would not use such weapons even in the event of an attack. Most of the world communities do not see Russia relinquishing her power and following that same path.

China on the other hand seems to be the frontrunner in economic stability. Former President Bill Clinton stated recently on an NPR broadcast that China holds 90% of

America's debt and has the freedom to sell that debt to any other nation if she desires to do so. Another radio report states that America has 130 trillion dollars in unfunded liability, simply because she has spent much more money than she actually has. It is not a great stretch to see that America, along with two other of the G7 nations, could easily be eliminated due to economic collapse.

Such news could have a tendency to bring great panic to the hearts of some, and if Christians are not looking steadfastly to be taken out of this world, such panic is justified. But for those around the world, looking and longing for that meeting in the air, our own hearts may be truly broken, when we consider the possibility of a national collapse. I think, however, that we are not unlike Daniel who knew the 70 year captivity was coming to an end, freedom was near, yet the first 19 verses of Daniel 9 do not reflect jubilation. Likewise, we are looking earnestly for the coming of Jesus, yet our own hearts are grieved by the conditions that prevail in our beloved country. Our only recourse is to heed Jesus words from Luke 21, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." V. 28 There surely must be a time when we actively claim the fact that we are citizens of heaven and Jesus said when these things "begin" to come to pass, we are to rejoice for we surely are to be delivered out of this world. Faith will lay hold of that glorious prospect and we surely can be filled with jubilation rather than grief.

HIS CLAIM OF LOVE

**Let heathen rage and stand in unbelief --
My heart, my thoughts are fixed, O God, on thee!
Though self or friends or world shall bring me grief,
The love of Christ alone hath claim on me!**

**Let voices call--not one shall turn my face
From Him who gave Himself to set me free--
My ears are deaf to everything but Grace
That binds my life to God eternally.**

-- Eltha N. Furman

THE FULLNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

J. Oswald Sanders

“IF ANY MAN THIRST,” HE CRIED. “LET HIM COME UNTO ME AND DRINK. HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME...FROM WITHIN HIM SHALL FLOW TORRENTS OF LIVING WATER. BUT THIS SPAKE HE OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH THEY THAT BELIEVE ON HIM SHOULD RECEIVE: FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS NOT YET GIVEN; BECAUSE JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED.” John 7:37-39.

These verses foreshadow the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the believers at Pentecost, and thereafter upon all who believe: “for,” says Peter, “the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” - Acts 2:39.

The consecration of Aaron as High Priest, is an exquisitely chosen illustration of this truth. The holy anointing oil with which he was consecrated was so lavishly outpoured upon his mitered head, that it streamed down upon his body, reaching even to the fringe of his priestly garments. The Psalmist takes us into this ceremony thus: “It is like the precious oil upon the head, that ran down upon the beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments” - Psalm 133:2.

Pentecost provides the interpretation of this beautiful symbolic act. On Christ our Head was poured out the unction of the Holy Spirit in unmeasured fullness. With such profusion was this anointing bestowed, that it flowed down upon His mystical body, reaching to its last and least member, the very skirts of His garments.

And yet today there are thousands of Christians living as though there had been no day of Pentecost, as though there were no share for them in this Pentecostal effusion. Here lies the root cause of our individual and collective spiritual barrenness and pitiable powerlessness.

To a company of gifted Christians who had already been blessed with every spiritual blessing, who had been sealed with the Spirit, the earnest of their inheritance, the Apostle Paul rings out this command: “Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit” - Eph.5:18.

There is a possibility of excess in drinking wine, but not in drinking deeply of the Holy Spirit. Wine is the devil's stimulant, but the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the Divine stimulus. Paul's dual command, presents both a comparison and a contrast. Like wine, the fullness of the Holy Spirit produces unnatural boldness, utterance, power, optimism. See that one who is intoxicated. He is afraid of no one. His stammering tongue has been loosed. He feels equal to saying anything. Failure is unthinkable. He feels exhilarated by a power entirely outside of himself. Such are some of the effects on the timid believer who is filled with the Spirit. But in contrast, the fullness of the Spirit results in wisdom instead of folly, self-control instead of riot, holiness instead of hellishness.

The Spirit-filled life is the life of the yielded believer - dominated, controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is the life of Christ manifested in the believer. It is I Corinthians 13 translated into experience. It is the life after the pattern of the early church.

1. The Purpose of the Fullness. This life is for every Christian in every-day life. It is the only normal Christian life as depicted in the New Testament. It is not reserved for a select few, or for extraordinary conditions and circumstances.

Some years ago a friend of mine, who was entirely ignorant of the Scriptures, was converted. He came to the New Testament with a simple, believing mind. He read the Acts of the Apostles with a bounding heart, but when he became more intimate with the body of Christians among whom he moved, he saw an appalling discrepancy between the Apostolic pattern and the present-day reality. Was it all a mirage? Was such a life impossible? It seemed not. At this crisis he was invited to attend a convention where he fellowshiped with some of God's choicest saints, and was fed with the finest of the wheat. He exclaimed, "They've got it here!"

This Divine Provision is for every relationship of life. In the verses immediately succeeding this command, the Apostle unfolds its effects on husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. It covers the whole scope of our daily lives. It is for every occupation, whether secular or sacred. It is for old and young, male and female. God has no favorites. Listen to the terms used to describe its application: "All flesh"; "sons"; "daughters"; "young men"; "handmaidens";

“old men”; “your children”; “them that are afar off”; “as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Surely no one has the slightest excuse for thinking that this life is not for them. It is possible for all of us to be constantly “full of the Holy Spirit.” Such a life is for every one, for every day, in everything. Remember that of the 120 present on the day of Pentecost, the majority remained hidden believers, serving the Lord in their ordinary walks of life. Only twelve of them were apostles.

2. The Effects of the Fullness. First and foremost, the fullness of the Spirit imparts a new consciousness of Christ. For testimony to this, one can appeal to the Scriptures, to the experience of the saints of all ages, as well as to the witness of personal experience. “He shall glorify me; He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you.” John: 16:4. The first operation of the Holy Spirit will be to make real to your inner consciousness, not Christ on the Cross only, but Christ in the heart, a living Christ. What a vivid consciousness of their glorified Lord characterized the life and witness of the early Church. Christ did indeed dwell in their hearts by faith, through the strengthening of His Spirit. Are you enjoying this consciousness?

Furthermore it equips for spiritual conflict. Upon entering the Spirit filled life, it not infrequently happens that the conflict instead of abating, increases in intensity, but it is now waged on a different plane, and with weapons no longer “carnal but mighty through God.” This was the experience of the Lord Himself. “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being forty days tempted of the devil”- Luke 4:1,2.

The Spirit, Who led Him into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, was with Him in the temptation to give Him triumph in it. We cannot escape from temptation but we can conquer in it, through the Spirit. Are you “more than conqueror” in the conflict?

Boldness in witnessing is another element in the Pentecostal blessing. Immediately after he was filled with the Spirit, Peter the coward, became Peter the courageous. The other disciples, who forsook Jesus and fled and were in daily fear of their lives, were suddenly transformed. “Ye shall be witnesses unto Me”-Acts 1:8. “And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.”

Acts 4:23. Not only does the fullness of the Spirit result in boldness, but also power in witnessing.

“Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses.” Acts 1:8, R.V. “And with great power gave the apostles their witness.” Acts 4:33, R.V. “My preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.” 1 Cor. 2:4. Powerless and ineffective preaching and witnessing would be unknown if all enjoyed the Spirit's fullness. When Christ called His disciples to undertake a superhuman task, He endued them with the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, the reason being, that wherever He is in fullness, He manifests Himself in power. After Pentecost, Peter's sermon became liquid logic and flaming eloquence. How was it received? “They were pricked in their hearts and said....What shall we do?” How was the message of the Spirit-filled deacon Stephen received? “They were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake.” “They were cut to the heart.” There is no ineffectiveness here, no uttering of pious platitudes.

Lastly. The Spirit's fullness fits us for suffering and sacrifice. Those who associate this blessing only with ecstatic emotional experiences and great revivals, have not read their Bibles carefully. “Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost said.....and they ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city. And they stoned Stephen....and he cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.” Acts 7:55-60. “The Lord said to Ananias.... He is a chosen vessel unto me...I will show him (Paul) how great things he must suffer for my sake....And Ananias said, Brother Saul, the Lord hath sent me.....that thou mightest be filled with the Holy Ghost.” Acts 9:15-17.

Note in each case the close connection between the infilling and the suffering. And who suffered so much as the Spirit-filled Paul? We can glorify God as much in the fires of suffering as in the floods of revival.

3. The Manifestation of the Fullness. This will vary with the individual, since no two are alike, either physically or temperamentally. With some, the result may be a deep emotion, with others, a deep peace. With some, it will be volcanic and ecstatic, with others, restrained and restful. But it is to be remembered that these emotional states are only the accompaniment, and not the essence of the experience. As

someone has said, the New Testament has drawn up no code of sensations which must be experienced by the believer. It is a blessing which results from faith not from feeling, and which issues in sanity, not in eccentricity.

But the fullness will manifest itself pre-eminently in a supreme consciousness of Christ, an increased holiness of character, and marked power in service.

Then, too, it is for ordinary Christians in ordinary Christian service. There came a crisis in the affairs of the early Church. A murmuring arose over the administering of relief to the needy. The Apostles, feeling that they had been called especially to the ministry of the Word and prayer, were loath to sacrifice these for this equally necessary, though less important, service. What was the solution?

“Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.” Acts 6:3. These early apostles insisted on having only Spirit filled men to administer even the social activities of their church life, care for the poor and handle the finances. The fullness was not bestowed in order that they might work miracles, but in order that they might do hidden work in a God-glorifying manner. The life-giving touch of the Spirit is necessary in all our work.

But it is also for specially-called Christians for special work. It is an entirely unscriptural idea, that all believers are equally called and equipped to do the work of an evangelist, or a pastor, or a teacher. These gifts are given only “to some.”

Peter, in prison with John, is called upon to make a defense of the activities of the infant Church before the High Priests. Much hangs on the wisdom and cogency of his answer. This is no ordinary occasion. How does God equip him for this emergency? “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel....Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John....they marveled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus....So they let them go” - Acts 4:8,13,21.

From the tense of the verb “filled,” we learn that this was a special, sudden filling of the Holy Spirit to equip for the special emergency that had arisen.

Paul and Barnabas had set out on their epoch-making missionary tour. The whole future of the Christian Church

hung on its successful issue. They came in their journey, to Paphos, where the deputy of the country manifested a deep interest in their message. But Satan had his emissary ready to hinder the work of God in the person of Elymas the sorcerer, who "withstood them" and sought "to turn away the deputy from the faith." How will they deal with this situation?

"Then Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him and said, O full of all subtily.....thou shalt be blind." Acts 13:9-11. In these abnormal circumstances, Paul received a special filling, as the tense of the verb again suggests, for the special ministry of discipline. The filling in this sense is spasmodic, received as the need arises. For every unusual demand, God has an unusual supply. Whenever we are called upon to exercise some special or critical ministry, there will be a special equipment of grace and power awaiting us.

Lastly, this fullness of the Spirit is for fruitfulness for every Christian. What is fruit but overflowing life? The abundant life from the root expresses itself in the branch in its fruit. The River Nile is of little use to Egypt until it overflows. The bearing of fruit is entirely unconscious and effortless on the part of the branch. So it is with the Christians. "I have chosen you and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." John 15:16. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control." Galatians 5:22,23. It is impossible for a Spirit-filled believer to be barren, of either graces of character, or of fruit in service.

4. The Condition of the Fullness. As one approaches this aspect of our theme, one is greatly cast upon the Holy Spirit Who alone can lead the longing soul into the blessed experience commanded so clearly in the Word. May He lead you in now if you have not had this experience. Will you come step by step with me?

(a) **Acknowledge.** Have you been brought to this definite acknowledgment? "I am not filled with the Holy Spirit"? Until you acknowledge your lack, He can lead you no further. Doubt and fear must be surrendered. Do not let some un-confessed sin load you down with guilt and thus hinder you from being free with the Lord. You can claim this blessed cleansing of I John 1:2. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

(b) **Ask**, Confidently and importunately, for the promised fullness. "IF ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him." - Luke 11:13. "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." - John 16:24.

You are asking God, in response to your absolute surrender, to impart the Holy Spirit's fullness, so that you may have Him dwelling in you to the full, unhindered in exercising all of His Divine attributes.

Have you surrendered to the Lordship of Christ? For where this is absent, the Holy Spirit will not dwell in His fullness. You are not asked to submit to some cruel tyrant who will deprive life of its joy, but to the One with the nail-prints in His hands. It is at this point that the battle often rages.

A student came into my office for conversation. Before long it became apparent that his life was un-surrendered, and that the battle centered around one cherished ambition. Acting upon a suggestion gleaned from an address by Dr. Scroggie, I made the issue clear to him from three words in Acts 10:14, "Not so Lord," pointing out that Peter's statement was an impossible one. If Christ were his Lord and Master in reality, he dare not say, "Not so," to Him. If he said, "Not so," it was tantamount to denying His Lordship. I wrote the three words on a card, handed it to him, asking him to take it to his room, pray over it, and strike out one or other of the self-contradictory statements.

When I came down next morning, I was anxious to learn which words had been deleted. To my delight I found the card on my desk with the two words "Not so" struck out, and better still, these two words substituted. "Master and - Lord." Can you say these words? Do not fear to yield to Him. Then only are you in a position to ask and receive. Say "Lord, I have yielded myself to Thee, body, soul, and spirit, to be and do and go as Thou dost direct. I now ask Thee to fill me with Thy Spirit, that I may render obedience to Thy command."

(c) **Accept**. It is not sufficient merely to ask, we must accept by an act of faith what He has promised and we have asked. How did the Galatians receive this blessing? "That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. 3:4. "And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know

that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petition desired of him." I John 5:14,15.

The filling is not our responsibility, but God's. We cannot fill ourselves. When we have complied with God's conditions, we may with absolute certainty, on the authority of the above Scriptures, know that our petition has been granted. And then, although there may be no immediate gush of blessed emotion, go on your way reckoning that God has fulfilled His Word. "for He cannot deny Himself."

I KNOW A NAME

*I know a soul that is steeped in sin,
That no man's art can cure;
But I know a Name, a precious Name,
That can make that soul all pure.*

*I know a life that is lost to God,
Bound down by things of earth;
But I know a Name, a precious Name,
That can bring that soul new birth.*

*I know of lands that are sunk in shame,
Of hearts that faint and tire;
But I know a Name, a precious Name,
That can set those lands on fire.*

*I know a Name, a precious Name,
Its sound is a brand, its letters flame,
I know a Name, a precious Name,
That WILL set those lands on fire.*

-- Author unknown

- * To ignore an insult is the true test of moral courage.
- * A cynic believes other people are as bad as he is.
- * When God measures a man, He puts the tape around the heart instead of the head.

ENGAGED TO CHRIST

Laura Bauer

“Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly; and indeed bear with me,. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” II Corinthians 11:1,2.

What a wonderful thought! One day I shall be married to my Lord. I am now engaged to him, and with the help of the Holy Spirit, I am preparing my wedding garments.

The word ‘engage’ is very interesting, and has several meanings.

1. “To offer (as one’s word) as security for a debt or a cause.” I offer my word - even my life - to Christ for the debt He has paid for my sake. “Who gave Himself for all, to be testified in due time.” I Timothy 2:6.

2. “To entangle or entrap in, as if in a snare.” I am truly entangled, entrapped by His love for me. Everywhere I go, He is with me, around me. He has ensnared me with His desires. “For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ...” Ephesians 3:1.

3. “To attract and hold by influence or power.” I want Christ always to influence my life, and attract me by His power. He overwhelms me; He sways me. “Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory and victory, and the majesty; for all in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all.” I Chronicles 29:11.

4. “To interlock with; mesh.” “For we are members of His Body, of His flesh, and of His bones” Ephesians 5:30. I am interlocked with Him more and more each day; so that one day, there will no longer be two people, He and I, but Christ only “.....and they two shall be one flesh” Ephesians 5:31. “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.

5. “To bind oneself to do something, especially, to bind by a pledge to marry.” He has pledged Himself to marry those

whom He has redeemed, and who have let Him dwell in them. I pledge myself, consecrate my life to Him. "By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh" Hebrews 10:20.

6. "To provide occupation for; involve; to induce to participate." The Lord has put my life to work. He has caused me to be involved and ready to participate in whatever He may ask me to do. It may be something important, or not so important, but as long as it is His will, I want to be involved in what He has for me. "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" Philippians 2:13.

7. "To enter into a contest." Once Christ saw that I was willing to be entrapped and influenced by Him; willing to interlock my life with His, pledge my devotion to Him, and become a devoted participant, he entered me into a contest, the wonderful race course. I want to finish this course so that I may win Him. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" I Corinthians 9:24.

8. "To enter into conflict." And what a conflict it is! With the world, the flesh and the devil. Sometimes with family, and sadly enough, with other Christians. "Thou, therefore, endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth, entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" II Timothy 2:3, 4.

9. "A promise." He first made a promise to me; and I in turn made my promise to Him. "Being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform." Romans 4:21.

10. "Guarantee." "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" Philippians 1:6. And I say "AMEN!"

* The bridge you burn now may be the one you later need to cross.

* The measure of a Christian is not how great his faith is but how great his love is.

* Sometimes those who object to playing "second fiddle" shouldn't be in the orchestra at all.

Editorial July 2010

“And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.” Luke 17:5

How many times have various members of the body of Christ uttered this prayer? The context wherein this statement is made however, has much to do with the freedom we so desperately desire and that we must have in our Christian experience. It comes on the heels of Jesus instruction regarding offenses. It is interesting that the disciples (learners) are here defined as “apostles,” (messengers) and as such they must deal with those who would offend them in a very mature way. Jesus instructs them: “Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.” V. 3-4 It is at this point the apostles ask for the increase in faith for they undoubtedly knew that at this juncture that they really did not know how to believe God for such grace. Jesus immediately refers them to the scripture. “.....If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.” Paul tells us plainly that “faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word,” thus this “mustard seed” faith comes through even the most minute and simplest portions of truth. One major fact we must learn in such matters is that “asking forgiveness” is imperative for the offender, and he does not do it to placate and appease the offended, but rather to clear his own conscience. We can live with the consequences of our sin, but we can never live with the guilt of them. On the other hand, granting forgiveness is an absolute necessity for the offended party. There is sometimes the mistaken idea that one need not forgive an offender unless he asks for it, but Paul tells us in Eph. 4:32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” The fact is that if we wait to forgive one who has trespassed against us to come and ask for such grace, we may wait a long, long, time, and we cannot afford to do that.

This verse tells us that we must forgive “unilaterally” even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven us. If we do not forgive immediately, the “bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking,....with all malice:” of V. 31 has a very good chance of taking root within our own hearts and defiling many. Today, some seem to think they are punishing the offender by refusing to forgive him, but scripture plainly tells us, “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.” Rom. 12:19 The offended must forgive and leave punishment to The Lord for his own protection. The fact is that God has already forgiven all men because of Jesus work on the cross, but only those who come to Him in true repentance actually enjoy freedom from that load of guilt. Likewise, the one who sins against men, must ASK forgiveness, otherwise he still bears the guilt of his offense.

Once again, Jesus’ admonition in this portion is specifically for the offended apostles, and they are to be instructed by the parable recorded in v. 7-10, wherein The Master describes a servant coming from the field after working all day to immediately prepare his master’s meal. The question is asked as to whether or not the servant should receive special reward for such a thing and the answer is “no” because it was simply his duty. The meaning is that the servant is simply acting according to who he is; a servant. Likewise Christians must act on who they are by nature, a new creation with the same spirit of grace manifested by Jesus and it is indeed their duty to be of the forgiving spirit described heretofore. GH

Announcement:

We have moved all the Grace & Glory literature from Mountain Grove and rejoice that we do have an abundance of the Grace & Glory Hymnal. If you would desire some of these song books, we will be glad to send them to you. We know that many of the older books are rather frayed and worn.

Eyes Of Faith

Ty Robinson

Consider some things we know about faith. *“The just shall live by faith ...”* (Rom. 1 :17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38, as quoted from Hab. 2:4). *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Rom. 10:17 “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Heb. 11:1*

God saw Israel as armies even while they yet were slaves in Egypt. They had been in bondage over four hundred years, without such an army, but He spoke these words to Moses: *“... for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: ...”* Ex. 12:17 The Lord saw the children of Israel redeemed from the land of Egypt before it transpired, for He *“... calleth those things which be not as though they were.”* Rom. 4:17 Likewise, Moses must see the children of Israel, and their armies redeemed out of the land of Egypt through "eyes of faith," because it "was not evidenced yet!" Ex. 12:51 further states: *“And it came to pass the selfsame day. that the LORD did bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their armies”.*

The substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, are then seen only with "eyes of faith." The term "eyes of faith" is not found in scripture, but this principle is found throughout the Bible. For example, when the Apostle Paul prays in Eph, 1:18 *“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened,....”* he is asking the Lord to open our spiritual "eyes of faith." He would have us enlightened by the Holy Ghost, to behold The Light as God does. Without this we cannot behold the deeper things of God.

Elisha learned to have "eyes of faith," and was taught to see hidden things the same way God does. II Kings 6: 15-17 relates the story of Elisha's servant who awoke one day surrounded by a large host of horses and chariots, *“...And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for*

they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed. and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see, And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” Elisha's eyes were not upon circumstance, but rather were clearly focused upon the Lord, as must be the case with all full overcomers, who then see victory rather than defeat. All full overcomers learn to see things from God's perspective, with Holy Ghost enlightened "eyes of faith."

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Rom. 10:17 The Word of God, is none other than Jesus Christ Himself, (Rev. 19:13) thus, simply studying It, reveals more of Christ, and brings His Light to the darkest areas of our understanding, allowing our spiritual "eyes of faith" to be opened, by the power of the Holy Ghost. Jesus described the Holy Ghost as being “the Spirit of Truth,” and His primary job is to “...guide you into all truth, ...and to... shew you things to come, ...” (John 16:13) thus explaining that it requires the enlightened spiritual eyes of Holy Spirit filled believers to perceive the Light of The Lord from God's perspective. The Bride of Christ will view things as Jesus sees them, through her Holy Spirit filled dove lit "eyes of faith." This is possible because God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we could ever ask or even think, according to the power that worketh in us, (paraphrasing Eph. 3:20).

Another example of "eyes of faith" being enlightened by the power of the Holy Ghost is found in Luke 2 when Jesus was presented for circumcision at the temple in Jerusalem. “And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; ...waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and

blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, ...And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;....” V. 25-36 Simeon was privileged to see "the Lord's Christ" with his own natural eyes, but with enlightened "eyes of faith" by the power of the Holy Ghost, he saw Jesus Christ the risen Saviour, having already acknowledged in verse 30 that Jesus Christ was his salvation!

The Old Testament worthies of faith also had "eyes of faith." Heb, 11:10 asserts that Abraham "... looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." How did this man of faith look for that heavenly city, except through "eyes of faith"? Study the life of this icon in the faith, and see how he became the father of the faithful, believing God who "... calleth those things which be not as though they were ..." Rom. 4:17.

Job too had "eyes of faith," though it took some time for him to behold all that God wanted him to see with them, much as it does for all of us. Job had no scripture text to claim, but he did have a knowledge of God; knew his "redeemer liveth," and believed that no man could approach God, except on the basis of blood sacrifice. The 42 chapters of Job, (probably the oldest book in the Bible), emphasize the importance God places in just one man's life, and how He caused Job to better focus his "eyes of faith," to behold the deeper things of God. One of Job's three friends, Eliphaz the Temanite, was the eldest son of Esau, Jacob's brother, placing Job's life between Abraham and Moses. These chapters cover a time period of about one year.

Chapter 1:1-5 affirms that Job was perfect, and upright, a man who feared God, eschewed evil, and continually offered burnt offerings to God on the behalf of himself, and his family. He was not aware of the conversation in heaven between God and Satan, but we

are, and Job 1:8-12 shows The Lord's appreciation of Job's heart as He found him like no other man in the earth, as noted above. Satan then expressed to God how He had a hedge about Job, and had blessed him in everything. He then requested that the hedge be lifted, thinking Job would surely curse God. God granted Satan's request with the restriction that He could not put his hand on Job. The rest of chapter 1 reveals that Job lost his sons and daughters and all his herds, but Job's faith in God did not waiver, as we read "*Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly*" V. 20-22

Satan was in no wise satisfied with all that God had permitted him to do to Job, thus he requested God to lift the hedge a little more, and allow him to touch his flesh and bone thinking this would cause Job to curse God. "*And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life.*" Job 2:6 Once again, Job was privy to none of the conversations between God and Satan, but the Lord knew Job's heart, and that he was a man of faith, who, with his "eyes of faith" continued to look unto the Lord.

After Satan left the presence of the Lord he "... *smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown*" V. 7 Job has suffered the loss of all his substance, his children, and now the additional great affliction in his health, yet we do not read that he wavered in the measure of faith expressed thus far. Quite the contrary, for Job 2:9-10 declares: "*Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not job sin with his lips.*"

Chapters 3-31 consist of Job's discourses with his three friends. Chapters 32-37 are a report of God's messenger, a younger observer of Job by the name of Elihu, who had the "inspiration of the Almighty." Job 32:8 During Job's conversations with his friends, he spoke of God 54 times, but made reference to himself over 700 times. He expressed a desire to die 13 times, and spoke of death 96 times, never once speaking of life. The following verses express some of what Job had to say in these chapters that relate to our subject on having "eyes of faith."

Job 10: 1-5 *"My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked? Hast thou eyes of flesh? or seest thou as man seeth? Are thy days as the days of man?"* Jesus fulfilled these requirements when He took upon Himself the form of a man. John 1:14 *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,"* Heb, 2:14-18 further explains it: *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.* Jesus had eyes of flesh, and "eyes of faith." He did indeed see as man seeth, and He saw with His "eyes of faith" things men cannot see until, and unless, He reveals it unto them.

"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: .." cried Job in chapter 13:15. This is a most noble and remarkable proclamation of faith, for the Hebrew word

"trust" equates to the new Testament words "faith," or "believe." Prov. 30:5 states: *"Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him."* This statement also proves that Job knew the word of God even though it had not been penned yet, and he knew the word of God by the hearing of the ear proving the truth of Rom. 10:17: *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

Job 19:25-27 reveals more of what Job believed, and already saw with his "eyes of faith." *"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth....Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, ..."*

Job's next profound statement relates both what he sees, and what he does not yet perceive, with his "eyes of faith." *Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.* Job 23:8

"Oh that one would hear me! behold my desire is, that the Almighty would answer me,..." Job 31:35 Again Job did not know of the conversations between Satan and God concerning him, yet he has divulged his innermost thoughts throughout this book, and God heard him, knowing his thoughts afar. Job has finally "expressed all" and thus *"The words of job are ended."* Job. 31:40

Finally chapters 38 through 41 show the Lord's response as He "...answered Job out of the whirlwind,.." asking him some seventy-two questions, which actually opened Job's "eyes of faith" to clearly see God's Almighty hand in everything, and in every detail of his life. *"Then Job answered the LORD, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. . I have heard*

of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Job 42:1-5

Truly Job now saw with "eyes of faith" what the Lord was doing in his life. In these processes Job learned the principle of what Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 4:17-18. "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

Heb. 12:1 "*Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Let us see these things with our "eyes of faith."*

A Walk Of Faith Alone

In stillness I can hear Him; midst throngs I'm made aware
He's ever present near me; ne'er a time He isn't there
Each season of my life, tho, lends a cross, I've always known
When companion doth surround me, in truth I'm kept alone

It matters not my being, that joy should fill my soul
Or flood-tides o'er take me, with sorrow, pain and woe
Tho' love be round about me, with family and with friend
Alas, I'm but a pilgrim, sojourning till life's end

God purposed this; He knew 't'was best for me this way to take
I'm set apart; claimed by The King, 'tis all for Jesus sake
My path at times has lonely been, and often have I cried
And lo He whispers in my ear, 'tis all for you, my bride

The Master of the universe He is, and yet He's chosen me
To reign with Him in Heaven's court, throughout eternity
I'll run the race before me set, with patience to endure
My life, my heart, my faith like gold, by fire is made pure

Marilyn Higgins

PAUL'S GOSPEL

IN THE SONG OF SOLOMON

Fellowship With Jesus (2:1-13)

Alice S. Mooneyhan

The Shulamite speaks and says, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S.O.S. 2:1 There are two contrasting thoughts in this verse -- exaltation and humiliation. In Christ we are exalted to the place of sonship, but to ourselves, we are still in the body of humiliation. The rose of Sharon is a prominent plant, while the lily of the valley is a very lowly one. They represent two phases of our Christian lives. In II Corinthians 12, Paul speaks of himself in the new creation as "a man in Christ," which shows our exalted place in Christ. Later he said, "Yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities." This speaks of humiliation, a body of weakness.

"As the lily among thorns, so is My love among the daughters." Ch. 2:2 The thorn speaks of the curse (Gen, 3:18). The Lord told Adam that the ground would be cursed for his sake, and thorns and briars it would bring forth. The daughters were compared with thorns, while the Shulamite was compared with the lily of the valley. The law was also a curse to all who were under it. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" - Gal. 3:10. Many Christians put themselves under the law, and seek to be justified by the law. They are "thorny" Christians -- they are fallen from grace. Such saints are critical and faultfinding, especially with those who enjoy their liberty in Christ.

2:3. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste." Here she compares Him with an apple tree in contrast with the other trees of the wood. He is a fruit-bearing tree. In Revelation 22, Christ is seen as the Tree of Life, bearing twelve manner of fruit. In the garden of Eden, the tree of life was typical or figurative of Christ. As she found her Beloved to be shelter and sustenance, so Christ is our Shelter and sustenance. That is so wonderful! We can find a rich pasture in this Song of

Solomon's, by trusting the Holy Spirit to reveal the truth to our hearts. She sat down under the apple tree, and His fruit was sweet to her taste. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" - Psalm 34:8. Everyone who has tasted of Christ will say, "Yes, He is good!"

2:4. "He brought me to the banqueting house." Now, this does not mean that the Shulamite was given to drinking wine. In Ephesians 5, we have the Scripture: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled (continually filling) with the Spirit." That was the kind of wine she was drunk on -- the Spirit. The apostles were drunk from the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Peter said, "These are not drunken, as ye suppose." But that is the effect that the Holy Spirit has upon us. He fills us so full that we may appear to be drunken. We do not seem normal; and we are not. We are normal Christians, but not normal according to the standard of the world.

The rest of this verse is absolutely wonderful, if you have ever experienced it. "And His banner over me was love." In order to make you understand what it means to me, I will say this. The worst trial I ever had in my life was ended when the Lord spoke this verse to me. It was ended instantly, as far as the trial was concerned, though the circumstances had not changed one whit. It was the devil tempting me, taunting me, drawing pictures for me -- mental pictures -- putting fear upon me. "Fear hath torment" - I John 4:18. I tell you, I feared. It was for someone else, but it was extreme mental torture. When the whisper came to me, "The Lord loves you," my trial was gone. I rejoiced in the Lord. "His banner over me was love." That banner is a wonderful thing; it is a sign of His presence. Flags are used to show the presence of different personages. When His presence (banner) is over us, nothing can hurt us.

In the Army, banners are used to distinguish one regiment from another, in the Navy, to distinguish the nationality of the ships, or to denote the presence on board of a high-ranking officer, on a castle to denote the presence of the owner. Other flags inspire confidence or fear depending upon their traditional use. There was the skull and crossbones of the pirate ships, the red flag of defiance and battle, the black flag of no mercy; the yellow flag of quarantine; the white flag of peace. A flag at half-mast indicates mourning, while the

flag lowered in battle is the sign of surrender. These have been recognized symbols throughout the world for centuries.

His banner of love over us is displayed to all . Unfurled over us, it assures us always that “If God be for us, who can be against us?” - Romans 8:31. A condemned man, covered with the flag of his country is protected. So Christ unfolds His banner over us, not only when we are sitting in the house of wine, but also in sorrow, sickness, trials, and tests when Satan tries to defeat us. Out faith can see His banner, which is otherwise invisible, through the clouds of Satan’s opposition and warring. “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him” - Isaiah 59:19. Praise the Lord!

2:5. “Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.” The only cure for lovesickness is more love. That is what she wants:

“More about Jesus would I know,
More of His grace to others show;
More of His saving fullness see,
More of His love who died for me.”

2:6. “His left hand is under my head, His right hand doth embrace me.” This reminds us of Romans 8:39 that tells us nothing shall “separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” We come into that sweet fellowship with the Lord, and there is nothing that can rob us of that wonderful place. Later on, we hear another woman saying, “His left hand *should* be under *my* head, and His right hand *should embrace me*” - 8:3. The one speaking in Verse six is sure of His affection. She has the assurance of His love and His fellowship. Is it not blessed to know that someone surely loves us? We may not be sure of the love of others, but the love of Jesus Christ is everlasting and will never fail. Praise the Lord! “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord” - I Cor. 1:9. God has called us into this place. We have found that Christ wants to obtain a Bride, and we eagerly long for that place.

2:7. “I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake (my) love, till He please.” She says, “Do not disturb.” This is the solemn charge to act as cautiously as a hunter would with wild hinds or roes. They are most easily startled; their hearing is acute. The daughters of Jerusalem are

cautioned to let this one alone. "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" - Luke 10:42. We desire that our most intimate fellowship with the Lord be undisturbed.

(To Be Continued)

The Old Rugged Cross

On a hill far away, stood an old rugged cross, the emblem of suff'ring and shame; And I love that old cross where the dearest and best for a world of lost sinners was slain.

O that old rugged cross, so despised by the world, Has a wondrous attraction for me; For the dear Lamb of God left His glory above, To bear it to dark Calvary.

In the old rugged cross, stained with blood so divine, A wondrous beauty I see; for 'twas on that old cross Jesus suffered and died, To pardon and sanctify me.

To the old rugged cross, I will ever be true, Its shame and reproach gladly bear; Then He'll call me some day to my home far away, Where His glory forever I'll share.

Chorus:

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross, till my trophies at last I lay down; I will cling to the old rugged cross, And exchange it some day for a crown.

The Old Rugged Cross

Author-George Bennard, 1873-1958

Composer-George Bennard, 1873-1958
Meter-Irregular with Chorus

“Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: By whose stripes ye were healed.” I Peter 2:24

Seldom can a song leader suggest a time for favorites from any congregation without receiving at least one request for "The Old Rugged Cross. " This gospel hymn, a sentimental favorite of Christians and unsaved alike, was written by George Bennard in 1913. It is generally conceded to be the most popular of all twentieth century hymns.

George Bennard was born in Youngstown, Ohio, but his parents soon moved to Albia, Iowa, and later to the town of Lucas in the same state. It was here that young George made his personal acceptance of Christ as his Savior. Following the death of his father before George was sixteen years of age, he entered the ranks of the Salvation Army. Bennard and his first wife served for a period of time as officers in this organization.

Consequently, Bennard was ordained by the Methodist Episcopal Church, where his devoted ministry was highly esteemed. For some time he was busily involved in conducting revival services, especially throughout the states of Michigan and New York. One time, after returning to Michigan, he passed through a trying experience which caused him to reflect seriously about the significance of the cross and what the Apostle Paul meant when he spoke of entering into the fellowship of Christ's suffering. As Bennard contemplated these truths, he became convinced that the cross was more than just a religious symbol but rather the very heart of the gospel. George Bennard has left the following account regarding the writing of this hymn:

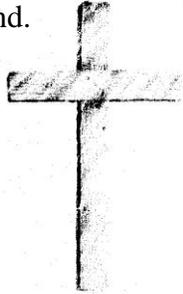
The inspiration came to me one day in 1913, when I was staying in Albion, Michigan. I began to write "The Old Rugged Cross." I composed the melody first. The words that I first wrote were imperfect. The words of the finished hymn were put into my heart in answer to my own need. Shortly

thereafter it was introduced at special meetings in Pokagon, Michigan on June 7, 1913. The first occasion where it was heard outside of the church at Pokagon was at the Chicago Evangelistic Institute. There it was introduced before a large convention and soon it became extremely popular throughout the country.

Shortly after writing this hymn, George Bennard sent a manuscript copy to Charles Gabriel, one of the leading gospel hymn composers of that era. Gabriel's prophecy, "You will certainly hear from this song," was soon realized as "The Old Rugged Cross" became one of the most widely published songs, either sacred or secular, in this country.

Bennard continued his evangelistic ministries for forty additional years following the writing of this hymn. He wrote other favorite gospel hymns, but none ever achieved the response of "The Old! Rugged Cross." On October 9, 1958, at the age of eighty-five. Bennard exchanged his "cross for a crown." He spent the last years of his life by the "side of the road, " a few miles north of Reed City, Michigan. Near this home there still stands a twelve foot high cross with the words, " 'The Old Rugged Cross' - Home of George Bennard, composer of this beloved hymn. "

Although it has often been stated that we do not worship the cross as such but rather the Christ of the cross, one cannot ponder the truths of Christ's atonement without a keen awareness of the centrality of the cross in God's plan of redemption for lost mankind.



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“THE COMPASSIONATE CHRIST”

Dorsey L. Crow

“BUT WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDES, HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION ON THEM, BECAUSE THEY FAINTED, AND WERE SCATTERED ABROAD, AS SHEEP HAVING NO SHEPHERD”
Matthew 9:36.

A more vivid or touching account of the human emotions of our Lord cannot be found in the entire Gospel record. Seeing the bewildered and helpless multitudes, the great heart of the compassionate Christ was deeply moved with pity and sympathy for them. He did not see them merely as sheep looking to be fed because they were weary, cold and hungry; but He saw them as sheep on the run for their lives from the harassment of bloodthirsty wolves. He saw them as the prey of thieves and robbers. Through eyes of unequalled compassion, Jesus saw them as lost and unloved, doomed and dying; and turning to His disciples He called upon them for fellowship in prayer that others might see as He saw and love as He loved.

No greater single need exists in our generation than that of human compassion for other humans. Hearts filled with true pity and sympathy for others are few and far between in this tragic hour of human history. In New Testament days, the poverty program was carried on by the churches; but the modern church has become so elated with self-sophistication that the “ethical” thing to do is to turn such unsavory programs over to government directed programs and personnel. In reference to compassion, “egoism” best describes the age in which we live. This philosophy, in due time, will destroy the person or nation who courts its cause, because it never gives. Egoism and compassion cannot live in the same heart, for ego cares for ME, while compassion cares for THEE.

The Bible tells us in Galatians 6:2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” If we would bear one another’s burdens we must have compassion for the burdened. What is compassion? Webster says it is “to suffer with another, to have pity and sorrow for another’s distress or misfortunes; to have sympathy; to be tender; to be merciful.”

This and much more, is what the Bible means in reference to the compassion of Jesus when He was “moved with compassion,” and when He said, “I have compassion on the multitude” - Matthew 15:32. Through tender mercy and the sympathetic suffering of His loving heart, the compassionate Christ fed the multitudes, healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, made the deaf to hear, and went to pay the debt of mankind on the Cross.

Both sympathy and empathy are characteristics of compassion. Where there is compassion, pity and sympathy are evident; but, if we would have the heartfelt concern of the compassionate Christ, we will be moved with the kind of care that puts us into the other fellow's shoes.

A surgeon was asked, so the story goes, if he ever worried about the day coming when his fingers would lose their skill. “No,” said the doctor, “my greatest worry is the fear that one day I will no longer feel the pains of my patients.” S.R. Smalley said, “We cannot heal the wounds we do not feel.” Christ has felt our wounds, every one of them; therefore, He is capable of healing every sickness and of forgiving every sin.

What is compassion? Compassion is a doctor suffering with his patients. Compassion is a pastor weeping with his people, when they weep. Compassion is a man giving his last dollar to help feed a hungry stranger. Compassion is a soul winner shedding tears over a lost man. Compassion is a group of high school students giving up their senior trip to help pay the hospital bill of a sick classmate. Compassion is a wounded soldier risking his life to carry a bleeding buddy to safety.

Compassion is what led Jesus to lay down His life on Calvary's cruel Cross to save hell-bound sinners from that awful place of eternal torment. We see the flower of a compassionate heart blooming with all the brilliance of eternal glory in the unforgettable words of Jesus as he prayed for those who crucified Him, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do - Luke 23:34.

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\* Let your testimony be written in large enough letters that the world can always read it.

\* If you can't hear God speaking, check the volume control on your conscience.

