

Milk & Honey

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Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

Living on the Edge

Steve Hulshizer

The following article appeared in the first issue of *Milk & Honey* in May, 1986

Eutychus is certainly not a name that is often thought of when names are being considered for a new son. Neither is he an individual that is often discussed at the mid-week Bible study. There are no books written of his life, and seldom do we hear a sermon concerning him.

We only read of this young man in one verse of Scripture. In Act 20:9 we read, "And there sat in a window a certain young man, named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep; and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead." In the following verse we are told that Paul embraced him and he was revived.

While this brief incident is the only mention of Eutychus in Scripture, there is a very important and practical truth that is illustrated by this story.

In order to learn this truth we might begin by asking ourselves the question, "Why did Eutychus fall from the window?" Our immediate answer would be, "Because he fell asleep." More often than not, when this story is considered the blame is placed on the preacher. He was sleepy and Paul's "long preaching" caused him to sink into deep sleep and he fell.

It is not uncommon today among the saints to hear comments such as; the message was too long, the message was boring, the message was irrelevant, etc. Unfortunately in some cases that may be a problem. However, I doubt whether the Apostle Paul was boring, or that the message was irrelevant. The blame for Eutychus' fall could not be placed on the preacher.

In reality the reason he fell from the window was not because he fell asleep, nor because of Paul's preaching. He fell from the window because he was sitting on the edge! If he had not been sitting on the window edge he would not have fallen from it. It was his position that led to his "downfall." If he had been seated among the saints his sleep would not have caused the fall.

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Rightly Dividing The World Of Truth: Some Important Distinctions.

Willie Burnett

Part 1

The purpose of this article is identify certain crucial distinctions, that will enable us to determine the context of things that are taught in the Word of God—to appreciate what God is saying, and to whom it applies. Unless these distinctions are understood, Scripture may appear to be extremely confusing, and even contradictory. Here are some of the important distinctions to be noted:

ESCHATOLOGY [The study of Prophecy]

LAW vs. GRACE:

John 1:17 says "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ".

Here we have one of the important major distinctions in our Bible. This verse tells us that there was a completely new order introduced in the New Testament, as distinct from the Old Testament.

The O.T. saints were under Law with all its prohibitions and ceremonial demands, but today we are under Grace. We do not look to Moses, but we look to Christ. All of the O.T. system of sacrifices, ceremonials and physical forms of worship, have been superseded under Grace, through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. The moment he cried, "It is finished," the veil of the temple was torn from top to bottom, signifying that the old order had been abandoned. Also, the Christian must not regard the Ten Commandments as the "rule-of-life," to which he must comply to practice Christianity. No! The Christian is completely free from Law, and in the measure that he allows the Fruit of the Spirit to be manifest his life, he will fulfill the Law. An apple tree does not grow apples by legislation, but because it is its very nature to do so.

ISRAEL vs. CHURCH:

Israel was a nation chosen of God for earthly blessing. All the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had to do with nationhood, territory and material wealth, and although Israel has been temporarily laid aside, the

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coming when all of God’s promises will be fulfilled. [Read Romans 9-11] The Jew looks expectantly for the Messiah to come to earth.

The Church is a completely new entity which was never anticipated in the O.T. Paul tells us that it was “A mystery hid in God from ages and generations, but now made manifest.....” After The Lord was crucified, God laid Israel aside, and in this age, God is forming the Church comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. The blessings of the Church, unlike Israel, are not territorial or material but heavenly and spiritual. Paul tells us that we have “been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the Heavenly places in Christ Jesus”. The Church does not look for a Messiah who will come to earth, but a Saviour who will remove them from earth to be forever with the Lord. [1Thess 4]

THE KINGDOM AND THE CHURCH

Reading through the Synoptic Gospels the expression “The Kingdom of God” is prominent, and it has to do with the sphere of God’s rule. Sometimes it is called the “Kingdom of Heaven,” and these expressions seem to be used interchangeably. The Kingdom of God in the gospels relates to the nation of Israel and her relationship with the Messiah as King. However Israel rejected the King when He came, crying, “Away with Him, Crucify Him, we will not have this man to reign over us.” The result is that Israel has been temporarily laid aside, and the King is absent.

However, the Kingdom of God is still here upon the earth, not in a physical or tangible form but in a spiritual form. The Kingdom of God exists in the hearts of all who acknowledge His rule and authority. The Kingdom is a much wider sphere than the Church, and embraces both true and false, wise and foolish, wheat and tares – the whole sphere of outward profession as seen in Christendom. The Church however, is a unique entity within the Kingdom, where only true believers are included. This is the Kingdom in mystery, or the spiritual Kingdom.

COMING OF CHRIST FOR HIS SAINTS vs COMING WITH HIS SAINTS.

Scripture clearly teaches that there will be two phases of the Lord’s return in the future. The first will be the Rapture of the Church, and the second, when He returns to set up His kingdom on the earth. There are important distinctions to be observed:

THE RAPTURE	CHRIST’S ADVENT TO EARTH
• Coming to the air	• Coming to the Earth.
• Private and personal	• Public and national.
• Coming in blessing	• Coming in Judgment on Nations
• Coming for His saints	• Coming with his saints.
• Having to do with the Church only	• Having to do with Israel and the nations

All references to the “ coming” in the Gospels, with the exception of Jn.14:3 have to do with the coming of Christ to the Earth and must not be confused with the rapture. The truth of the rapture of the Church was only revealed by the apostle Paul in 1Thess.4. (In 1Cor 15 the apostle only deals with the believer’s body and the changes that will occur, but no mention is made about how we will be removed. In 1Thess 4 the apostle completes the picture and tells what will happen once these physical changes have taken place—The Rapture.) These distinctions are very important when we read the Gospels in particular. *To be continue in June Issue*

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Quotes

There is many a learned head in hell. John Flavel

Democracy is not an infallible way of getting things right. The democratic vote among the Israelites in the wilderness was to go back to Egypt. John Blanchard

The mark of a man is how he treats a person who can be of no possible use to him. Anonymous

God has no problems, only plans. Corrie ten Boom

Anger is a sin that is its own punishment. Matthew Henry

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From this simple story we can see why saints “fall” back into the world. Many times it is because they are living on the edge! Too often believers will attempt to live as close as possible to the world without being a part of it. They attempt to walk a fine line between Christianity and the world. In this position, it only takes a little sleep and one finds himself falling right back into the world.

How close are you walking to the world? Is it your practice as a Christian to get as close to the world as possible without being spotted (James 1:27)? Is your music like the world’s, but with different labels? Do you attend the same movie theaters as they would, but only go to the movies that “aren’t bad?” Do you dress like the world, but just a little less revealing or suggestive? Are your priorities similar to those of the world? Does your career take priority over Biblical principles? Are your friends also those who live near the edge of the world (Prov. 13:20)? Is your attendance at the assembly similar to the world’s attendance at “church?” Do you read worldly magazines? Is your language “close” to the world’s? Do you laugh at the world’s off-colored jokes? Is your “thinking” like that of the unsaved world? Are the world’s standards your standards (James 4:4)?

One of the easiest ways of determining if you are living on the edge of the world is to consider this question. “On what basis do you determine if you should go to a certain place, do a certain activity, or listen to certain music, etc.?” If you find yourself saying, “There is nothing wrong with this,” then you are most likely walking very close to, if not in the world.

In Philippians 1:9-10 we read Paul’s prayer for the saints. “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgement; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ.”

Paul prayed that the saints’ love would grow in knowledge and discernment. Love that overflows these two boundaries can be as harmful as a river that overflows its banks. His desire is that they “approve,” test and go in for, those things that are excellent, or “better.” (1 Thess. 5:21) All of this is in view of the Judgment Seat of Christ (Day of Christ), at which each saint will need to give an account for the deeds done in the body. (2 Cor. 5:10)

As believers we should be “testing” things in light of the Judgment Seat of Christ, and going in for those things which are “better.” Our test is not, “Is there anything wrong with this?” Our test should be, “Is this the best?” Is this the best book I can read? Is this movie the best thing I can watch? Is this the best place to go? Is this better for me than being at the assembly? Is this the best friend with respect to my spiritual growth? Is this the best bathing suit to wear? Is

this the best language I can use? It is not only a question of whether the Lord will be “displeased,” but whether He will be “pleased.” (1 Thess 4:1b) If we evaluate our activities from this perspective we will find ourselves moving further away from the edge.

It may be helpful to distinguish between “worldliness” and “sin.” A sin, as we know, is an act that is contrary to the will of God. On the other hand, worldliness could be defined as an attitude toward the things of the world (Phil. 3:19; 1 John 2:15). The Lord not only wants the believer to be righteous, but also to be “holy” (1 Pet. 1:15-16). We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Our thinking is not to be “con-formed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Rom. 12:2).

Going back to the story of Eutychus we can see that living on the edge is very dangerous. One need not slip very far to suffer great harm. Scripture over and over again exhorts the saints to be awake and alert. Those who are often “sleepy” live on the edge. Those who are alert and aware of the danger “approve things that are better.”

How close are you to the edge? *

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**Lord, what wilt thou
have me to do?**
Acts 9:6

May, 2006

The Way of Cain

C. H. Mackintosh

*Woe to them! For they have gone in the
way of Cain.... (Jude 11)*

It is well to see that Cain's act of murder was the true consequence—the proper fruit—of his false worship. His foundation was bad, and the superstructure erected thereon was also bad. Nor did he stop at the act of murder; but having heard the judgment of God thereon, despairing of forgiveness through ignorance of God, he went forth from His blessed presence and built a city (Gen. 4:17), and had in his family the cultivators of the useful and ornamental sciences — agriculturists, musicians, and workers in metals. Through ignorance of the divine character, he pronounced his sin too great to be pardoned. It was not that he really knew his sin, but that he knew not God. He fully exhibited the terrible fruit of the fall in the very thought of God to which he gave utterance. He did not want pardon, because he did not want God. He had no true sense of his own condition, no aspirations after God, no intelligence as to the ground of a sinner's approach to God. He was radically corrupt—fundamentally wrong; and all he wanted was to get out of the presence of God, and lose himself in the world and its pursuits. "Then Cain went out from the presence of the Lord...." (Gen. 4:16). He thought he could live very well without God, and he therefore set about decorating the world as well as he could, for the purpose of making it a respectable place, and himself a respectable man therein, though in God's view it was under the curse, and he was a fugitive and a vagabond.

Such was "the way of Cain", in which way millions are, at this moment, rushing on. Such persons are not, by any means, divested of the religious element in their character. They would like to offer something to God; to do something for Him. They deem it right to present to Him the results of

their own toil. They are ignorant of themselves, ignorant of God; but with all this there is the diligent effort to improve the world, to make life agreeable in various ways, to deck the scene with the fairest colors. God's remedy to *cleanse* is rejected, and man's effort to *improve* is put in its place.

And, my reader, you have only to look around you to see how this "way" prevails at the present moment. Though the world is stained with the blood of "a greater than" Abel, even with the blood of Christ, yet see what an agreeable place man seeks to make it! As in Cain's day, the grateful sounds of "the harp and organ," no doubt, completely drowned, to man's ear, the cry of Abel's blood; so now, man's ear is filled with other sounds than those which issue from Calvary, and his eye filled with other objects than a crucified Christ. The resources of his genius, too, are put forth to render this world a hot-house, in which are produced, in their rarest form, all the fruits for which nature so eagerly longs. And not merely are the real wants of man, as a creature, supplied, but the inventive genius of the human mind has been set to work for the purpose of devising things which, the moment the eye sees, the heart desires, and not only desires, but imagines that life would be intolerable without them.

In addition to all this, there is abundance of religion, so called; but, alas, charity itself is compelled to harbor the apprehension that very much of what passes for religion is but a screw in the vast machine which has been constructed for man's convenience and man's exaltation. Man would not be without religion; it would not be respectable; and therefore he is content to devote one-seventh of his time to religion, or, as he thinks and professes, to his eternal interests, and then he has six-sevenths to devote to his temporal interests; but whether he works for time or eternity, it is for *himself*, in reality. Such is "The way of Cain." *