

Milk & Honey

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Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

A Prepared Place

John 14: 1 to 3
James G Deck (1807 to 1884)

Let not your hearts be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many mansions if it were not so I would have told you so, I go to prepare a place for you, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Comment:

Jesus had just told them of His imminent departure from them, but not only that, He would leave but that it would be via sufferings and reproaches. Certainly their hearts were troubled as the One they followed, who was to deliver Israel, was now, having left all to follow Him would be left alone, in their minds to be deserted and exposed to sufferings. Jesus comforted them telling them that He cared for them and that He would someday come for them and take them to be with Him in heavenly mansions. Certainly, what is in store, for those who trust Him as their Savior, Heaven will be beyond all imagination for all eternity.

We cannot know from these scriptures what was going through Jesus's mind while He was assuring His disciples of a place in Heaven. I have to believe that Jesus's mind had to be weighing going to the Cross to take the judgement of God for our sins, to give us a sin free soul, the only way He could prepare us a place with Him in Heaven. The only way a place in Glory could be obtained for man was by way of the cross, of His judgement for our sins at the hands of a Holy God

I do believe that when Jesus was telling His disciples He was going to prepare a place for them, that He fully knew in His soul of the sufferings and reproach lay before Him in the only way He could prepare a place for them (or us) in heaven. That in a few days He was going to face the judgement of God at the Cross, man's only hope of salvation. He sweat great drops of blood in anticipation of what lay before Him on the cross. "The Lord set His face as a flint to go to Jerusalem", to please the Father by completing the work of redemption via the work of the cross. "Who for the joy that

was set before Him endured the Cross." No one could or can ever be in heaven apart from the way of the cross.

In the end we cannot but rejoice in the fact that all that was needed to purchase us a place in heaven was completed 2000 years ago. While the hope of glorious Mansions is wonderful, I believe it will pale to nothing upon seeing our Savior's face and being free from sin to worship Him unhindered we will raise one loud eternal burst of praise"

In Hope We Lift Our Eyes

In hope we lift our wishful longing eyes,
Waiting to see the Morning Star arise;
How bright, how gladsome will His advent be,
Before the Sun shines forth in majesty!

How will our eyes to see His face delight,
Whose love cheered us through the darksome night!
How will our ears drink in His well-known voice,
Whose faintest whispers make our soul rejoice!

No stain within, no foes or snares around,
No jarring notes shall there discordant sound;
All pure without, all pure within the breast;
No thorns to wound, no toil to mar our rest.

If here on earth the thoughts of Jesus love
Lift our poor hearts this weary world above,
If even here the taste of heavenly springs
So cheers the spirit, that the pilgrim sings,

What will the sunshine of His glory prove?
What the unmingled fullness of His love?
What hallelujahs will His presence raise?
What, but one loud eternal burst of praise? *

Shepherding Conference

Brian Gunning, Tom Irwin, Gary McBride, Larry Price
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Ask

Ask someone who has been to the Shepherding Conference if it would be worthwhile to attend – and then register. *

God Teaches Us His Gospel

Lesson Two for Youth

Bruce Hulshizer

1. Read These Verses In Your Bible: Romans 1:18-2:16 Immoral people know God and will be judged for their evil lives (chapter 1 verse 18 to 32)

Some people might want to say they do not know there is a God. But God has showed everyone that He is the powerful One who is greater than them. Everyone can look at the order and greatness of what God made. There is no possible way the universe just happened. They know there must be a mighty Creator!

The real problem is that people know there is a God, but they do not want to give God glory. They want to be their own boss. They do not want to have to listen to their Creator. They ignore God.

So, men have made “god” into something they make with their own hands. God is awesome, but men changed Him into someone little! They imagine a “god” that is not true.

They have the truth about God being above them, but they do not honor Him as God. They do not thank Him. They do not want God or His rules. They do not want God to tell them what to do or not to do! So, God lets them live evil lives. And the things they do become more and more evil.

Do they know God sees what they are doing? Do they know God will judge them? Do they know God will punish their unrighteous deeds? Yes! But they do wrong anyway!

So, “immoral” people know God, and they know that God expects men to do right. They have the truth that there is a God through seeing His creation, but they do not obey what they know. This person is in great danger of God’s judgment! His evil actions will be punished! When God judges him, he will not have any excuse!

Moral people live better lives, but are they right with God? (chapter 2 verse 1 to 16)

Do you agree with me about the immoral person? Maybe you agree that they deserve to be judged by God. Well, you are in danger of judgment from God also! You might think you are okay because you do not do such evil things. Compared to an immoral person, you are a good, moral person. So does that make you righteous?

Does God judge by comparing who is better? No! He would not be a righteous judge if He did that! You know His judgment is based on the truth. He looks at you and sees everything about you. Other people do not see what you think, but God does. Other people do not know what you do in secret, but God does!

Have you ever had an evil thought? Have you ever wanted to do something mean to someone? Have you ever

done something wrong when no one was around? Have you ever felt bad for what you said or did?

God sees past what you seem to be. He judges what you really are! Are you perfect? If your life was only, always doing good, then God could give you eternal life. But inside you have a conscience - it makes you feel bad for doing wrong things. Do you really always do what is perfect? God knows you do not.

So, you may be a “moral” person. You know that God expects you to live right and do good. You have the truth, and you think about right and wrong with your conscience. But God looks at all of your life. He even sees in secret. Only a perfect life can avoid righteous punishment.

You know you do not have a perfect life. So you are in great danger of judgment from God too! God must give wrath to those who are unrighteous, and you do not have an excuse!

2. Review By Answering These Questions List Two key words or ideas in this lesson

1.

2.

Questions

1. Paul begins by showing all people are in danger of facing what for their unrighteousness? p_____

2. The first group of people Paul talks about are what kind of people? i_____

3. People know the truth that there is a God through looking at what? God’s c_____.

4. People do not want to admit that they know about God because they do not want to do what? o_____ God

5. The immoral person is in danger of judgment and they do not have any what? e_____

6. What kind of person agrees that immoral people should be judged by God, but thinks he is better? m_____

7. God does not judge by comparing one person with another to see who is better, because His judgment is not what? r_____

8. God sees what people really are, even what they do where? In s_____

9. God expects a perfect life because He has what kind of judgment? r_____

10. Moral people still do wrong things even though they know right and wrong by what? c_____ *

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. punishment | 3. creation |
| 2. immoral | 4. obey |
| 3. creation | 5. excuse |
| 4. obey | 6. moral |
| 5. excuse | 7. relative |
| 6. moral | 8. secret |
| 7. relative | 9. righteous |
| 8. secret | 10. conscience |

Answers to Questions

The Gentleness And Compassion Of The King

Keith Keyser & Sam Mikhael

Isaiah describes the Lord Jesus Christ as Jehovah's perfect servant in four classic songs (Isaiah 42; 49; 50; 52:13-53:12.) Matthew 12 quotes the first one to make the point that this Anointed One has not come to destroy men's lives by making their lives burdensome rounds of endless religious drudgery. In contrast to the rabbis of His day, Christ would not dominate people. The Scripture reveals a different side of Messiah, saying: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench" (Matt. 12:20; cf. Isa. 42:3.) Matthew, in chapter 12 of his gospel, not only quotes this verse from Isaiah but illustrates this description of the Lord Jesus' gentleness and compassion by detailing His deliverance of two men who were pitifully afflicted by the consequences of living in a sinful, fallen world.

Case 1: The Man With A Withered Hand

The synagogue at Capernaum had some interesting congregants in Christ's day: early in His ministry the Lord healed a demon possessed man there (Mk. 1:21-27.) The Pharisees and the Sadducees were unsuccessful in ridding their gathering of disabled and desperate people. Matthew 12 shines the spotlight on a man with a "withered" hand. Some translations describe it as "shriveled" (NIV'11.) This description likely indicates paralysis - as in Jeroboam's case in 1 Kings 13:4. In that case, the apostate King Jeroboam son of Nebat was afflicted with a shriveled hand to set forth the supremacy of Jehovah, who sent the man of God to prophesy against the idolatrous altar at Bethel (1 Kgs. 13:1-10.) The New Testament also renders the same word "dry" to indicate the future result of Israel's national rejection of Christ (Lk. 23:31.) Their spiritual desiccation would lead to increasing outrages against the truth until their future restoration to the Lord (see Zech. 12:10-13:1.)

This afflicted man's presence indicated the tragedy of Christless religion: the leaders of the synagogue were unmoved by his disability - one which likely made ordinary physical employment difficult, if not impossible. In their preoccupation with the human traditions that their ancestors and they added to the Scripture, they completely lost sight of compassion in the face of suffering. They were more than willing to crush a "bruised reed" by their merciless and proud devotion to their self-promoting ceremonies. But Isaiah asserted that "a bruised reed" - like this damaged man - "shall He not break."

Case 2: The Demon-Possessed Blind And Mute Man

Matthew 12 further authenticates the Lord Jesus' messianic credentials with the story of His healing of a blind

and mute man. Like the previously mentioned disabled man this fellow existed in sheer misery, completely unrelieved and uncared for by the religious establishment. Undoubtedly, the man's "quality of life" would not measure up in the eyes of the "brave new world" that advocates euthanizing those who have severe physical or mental handicaps. Yet Christ views him as a person with value, and immediately heals him. In keeping with Isaiah's prophecy, "smoking flax shall He not quench": the barest spark of humanity left to this demonically oppressed man would not be callously extinguished by the Lord. Instead, He rekindles the flame, and restores the man to normal life.

To God There Are No Disposable People

The Lord did not trample people in His quest to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Nor did He throw away people as valueless pawns, if they were perceived useless to His cause. As Isaiah notes, He will "...send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust" (Matt. 12:20-21.) But He will accomplish this through His saving grace. As Spurgeon declared: "The power which Christ uses for the spread of his kingdom is exercised in conversion, and is as different as possible from compulsion or clamor. Conversion is the mysterious work of the Spirit upon the soul. That great change could not be produced by the fear of imprisonment, the authority of law, the charms of bribery, the clamor of excitement, or the glitter of eloquence. Men have pretended to conversion because they hoped that a religious profession would benefit their trade, or raise their social position, but from such conversions may God deliver us. Men have been startled into thoughtfulness by the excitement which arises out of Christian zeal; but any real spiritual benefit they may have received has come to them from another source, for the Lord is not in the wind, or the tempest, but in the still small voice."

A bruised reed, gives evidence to the harm done to humanity by sin and smoking flax, the faintest remnant of that humanity, instilled by God, within each of us. Indeed marred, as we all are before God, yet He has power to deliver from the ravages that Satan and sin inflict on human lives. In this fallen world there is no shortage of people that are physically, mentally, and spiritually afflicted. What a blessing it is to see that the King of kings is merciful and offers compassion rather than oppression. No matter how seemingly hopeless the person, He is willing and able to save. *

¹ As Henry remarks: "A soul under Satan's power, and led captive by him, is blind in the things of God, and dumb at the throne of grace; sees nothing, and says nothing to the purpose. Satan blinds the eye of faith, and seals up the lips of prayer." Matthew Henry, Commentary on the Whole Bible. (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1673.

² C. H. Spurgeon, "The Gentleness of Jesus," in The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons, Vol. 19. (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1873), 703.

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Entangled?

William MacDonald

“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.” (2 Tim. 2:4)

The Christian has been enlisted by the Lord, and is on active service for Him. He must not entangle himself in the affairs of everyday life. The emphasis here is on the word entangle. He cannot completely divorce himself from worldly business. He must work in order to provide the necessities of life for his family. There is a certain amount of involvement in everyday interests that is unavoidable. Otherwise he would have to go out of the world, as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 5:10.

But he mustn't allow himself to become entangled. He must keep his priorities straight. Even things that are good in themselves can sometimes become the enemies of the best.

Wm. Kelly says that “to entangle oneself in the businesses of life means really to give up separation from the world by taking one's part in outward affairs as a bona fide partner in it.”

I have become entangled when I become involved in the world's politics as a means of solving man's problems. That would be like spending my time “rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.”

Or I have become entangled when I put more emphasis on social service than on the Gospel as a panacea for the world's ills.

I have become entangled when business gets such a grip on me that I give my best efforts to the making of money. In thus gaining a living, I lose a life. →

Be Ready Always

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear.

1 Peter 3:15

One way to *be ready always* is to always carry some Gospel tracts. Many times we have short opportunities which do not afford enough time to present the Gospel fully. A short Gospel tract or card gives the individual an opportunity to read it after you are gone. It is a great way to sow seeds. Spread The Word will gladly provide you with some free tracts. Go to www.FoodForSaints.com to see the ones available. You may ask for a sample pack. ✱

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→ I have become entangled when the kingdom of God and His righteousness cease to have first place in my life.

I have become entangled when I am caught up by things that are too small for a child of eternity—like the mineral deficiencies in the tomato and cocklebur, the summer habits of Wyoming antelope, the microbic content of cotton T-shirts, the browning reaction in potato chips or the post-rotational movements of a pigeon's eye. These studies may be all right as a means of livelihood but they aren't worthy of a life passion. ✱ “Truths to Live By - One Day at a Time”