

Milk & Honey

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Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ

Understanding The Depths Of Our Sin

By C. H. Mackintosh; William R. Newell;
Charles G. Finney; and Lewis S. Chafer

To recognize the depths and hopelessness of our sinful state is to appreciate more fully the height and riches of God's grace.

1. We Are All Sinners Without Strength. "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6,8).

"Here, then, we have the positive activity of evil - the actual energy of self-will. For, be it remembered, sin is doing our own will, in whatever line that will may travel, whatever form it may assume. It may present itself to our view in the shape of the grossest moral depravity, or it may array itself in the garb of a cultivated and refined taste; but it is self-will all the while, and self-will is sin. It may be only like the acorn - the mere seed; but the acorn contains the wide spreading oak. Thus the heart of the newly born infant is a little seed-plot in which may be found the germ of every sin that ever was committed in the world. True, each seed may not germinate or bring forth fruit; but the seed is there, and only needs circumstances or influences to unfold it. If any one be kept from gross outward sins, it is not owing to a better nature, but simply to the fact of his surroundings. All men are sinners. All by nature do their own will." (C. H. Mackintosh)

2. We Have All Fallen Short. "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

"Note the difference in the tenses: "all sinned" is in the past tense, while "falling short" of God's glory is stated in the present tense. When Adam had once sinned, in Eden, he continually fell short, outside of Eden, as did all his race, by him and after him. God is looking back even here at Adam's federal headship involving us all. He looks at the race as fallen and lost and gone, in their federal head; and than as individually continuing in sins. As a natural consequence, all that race "are fallen short" of His glory. It is in and through Christ alone that sinners ruined in Adam, and daily falling

short of the glory of God, find redemption from sin's guilt and deliverance from its power. (William R. Newell)

3. We Are All Morally Depraved. "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9).

"That men are morally depraved is one of the most notorious facts of human experience, observation, and history. Indeed, I am not aware that it has ever been doubted, when moral depravity has been understood to consist in selfishness. The moral depravity of the human race is everywhere assumed and declared in the Bible, and so universal and notorious is the fact of human selfishness, that should any man practically call it in question - should he, in his business transactions, and in his intercourse with men, assume the contrary, he would justly subject himself to the charge of insanity. There is not a fact in the world more notorious and undeniable than this. Human moral depravity is as palpably evident as human existence. It is a fact everywhere assumed in all governments, in all the arrangements of society, and it has impressed its image, and written its name, upon every thing human." (Charles G. Finney)

4. We Have All Sinned Against God. "Against You, You only have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight" (Ps. 51:4). "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you" (Lk. 15:18).

"While various sins are defined in the Word of God, we conclude from the teaching of the Scriptures that sin is any want of conformity to the character of God, whether it be in act, disposition, or state. Sin is sinful because it is different from what God is; and God is holy because holiness is infinitely desirable. Holiness is an eternal fact. However, though holiness is an unchanging virtue, we are not dealing with an abstract virtue, but rather with the living God who has caused these things to be. Sin is always against God. To sin is to be unlike God, therefore it is to displease God. Sin cannot rightfully be limited to those things merely which are contrary to the revealed law of God; at best we can know but little of all that God is. Sin, therefore, goes beyond all laws and includes all that is not in conformity with the character of God." (Lewis S. Chafer) *

Devotions From Israel

Kaz Ortiz

The Storm Calmed – Mark 4:35-41

Written from the Sea of Galilee

After a long day of ministry of healing and preaching, the Lord Jesus sailed to cross the Sea of Galilee and go to the eastern side (approximately 6 miles across). While crossing the sea, he went in the stern of the boat and went to sleep on a pillow.

He told his disciples that they would cross to the other side. "Let us cross..." A wind storm arose and the waves began beating on the boat tossing it to and fro. The disciples were afraid and woke up the Lord with a question that we often ask Him while we are in the midst of our most severe trials. "Lord do you not care that we perish?"

The Lord Jesus got up and "rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, peace be still! And the wind ceased and there was great calm." One minute as man he was asleep on a pillow, tired from the work of ministry, the other as majestic deity, he was ordering the storm to cease. What a great display of humble humanity and unreserved raw power!

Here's a question for us as believers. How can the Lord who created the sea, perish by the sea? How can we perish with the Lord in the boat with us? Yet we show our lack of faith by not trusting in Him and His Word.

Be encouraged that the Lord will be and is with you through life's storms. He allows the waves and the storms of life to toss us. Life's trials help our faith to grow. Nevertheless, we are never alone. He goes through them "with" us and promises we will get to the other side. *

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York Bible Study

In September the York Bible study will have a **new format**. It will start at 9:45AM and **end by 1:15PM** followed by lunch. Hope to see you!

In September, the beginning of its 31st year, the study will be taught by brother Tom Irwin on the topic of Sanctification. Mark Kolchin will be teaching on The Days of Christ, the Lord, and of God in the October 13th study. Mark your calendar for these dates and plan to attend.

The Unopened Book

This was the first Gospel Tract printed by Spread The Word in 1996. Write for free copies.

The young men packed all their gear and rechecked the list. Everything was ready and they set out on the long hike. It was estimated that the trip would take two weeks over rugged terrain.

Soon after departing a severe storm arose and it rained very hard. The footing became very slippery and before Bob realized it he lost his footing and sent tumbling down the mountain. It did not take him long to determine that he had broken one or more of his ribs. After assuring all that he knew the way, Bob headed back home.

What he did not know was that the trail had been washed out by the storm. Before long he was lost. Confident that he was headed in the right direction, he pushed on in much pain.

Later Bob's body was found well off the trail. He had exhausted himself wandering aimlessly through the woods. In his pack was a guidebook which explained how to survive when lost in the woods. Sadly, the book was never opened!

Many in the world today are like Bob – they have a divine Guidebook which explains how to be saved, but never open it! Some simply do not believe they are lost in their sins. Others are very busy working at their religion, but never check to see if they are on the right path. In either case, the Bible, which explains God's way to obtain the forgiveness of sins, is never opened!

Is it possible that you have never opened your Bible to find out what God has to say about how you can be saved from the penalty of your sins?

Why not open it now and see what God has to say before it is too late.

Maybe you do not know where to start. We would suggest that you start by reading the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). These books give different accounts of the life and death of Christ. As you read look for the answers to the following questions. "Why did Christ come into this world?" "How are we saved from our sins?"

The following few verses are printed here to get you started. Read them carefully with the above questions in mind.

"Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:21

"For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost." Luke 19:10

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

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“What must I do to be saved?” Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

Acts 16:30-31

“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

Romans 6:23

“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”

1 Corinthians 1:18

“For if righteousness (being right with God) come by the law (religion), then Christ has died in vain.” Galatians 2:21

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9 “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all.” 1 Timothy 2:5-6

“Now where remission of these (sins) is, there is no more offering (sacrifice) for sin.” Hebrews 10:18

Will you open your Bible and read God’s instructions on how you can be made right with Him, or will you die in your sins with your Bible unopened?

Remember, you are not only accountable to God for what you do know, but also for what you could know! g

Write for free copies.

A grateful mind is a great mind.

A thinking person is a thankful person.

Anon.

The Christian’s Place

A. Miller writing on Psalm 23

“The Jews’ religion” had its place and day before the cross; Christianity after it. This makes all the difference. We know not Messiah after the flesh, but a risen Christ in heavenly glory. We are associated with Him there. Judaism was earthly in its character; it had “divine service,” and a “worldly sanctuary.” Christianity is heavenly. Christians are seated together in heavenly places in Christ. Our place is to be *outside the camp* with Christ as witnesses, and *inside the veil* with Him as worshippers. *

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Commitment or Convenience

And they were continuing stedfastly in the teaching of the apostles, and the fellowship, and the breaking of the bread, and the prayers. Acts 2:42 (Strong)

In the New Testament there is only one Church, and all who by faith are in Christ Jesus are in the Church, and as such are members of Christ’s body. (Eph. 1:22-23). However, there are local expressions of the Church, or local assemblies of called-out believers. These local assemblies are to reflect the truth of the One Body, and thus they are to function according to the New Testament Scriptures, gathering only to the Name of Christ. (Matt. 18:20; Acts 13:1; Rev. 1:4)

Clearly the local assembly is to be a fellowship of *believers*. It would be contrary to Scripture for Christians to be “in fellowship” with those who are outside of Christ. (2 Cor. 6:14) It thus becomes incumbent upon the local assembly to know those in the local fellowship.

Sadly, many saints do not truly understand what it means to be “in fellowship.” They see fellowship as something they “do.” To many it speaks of the good times of fellowship around the meal table, or in some other social activity.

While such things are certainly proper for Christians, fellowship in a local assembly is far more than this. In Acts 2:42 the word “fellowship” is a noun. In the original language the verse reads, “the fellowship,” as shown by Strong’s translation above. It is a *place* as well as an activity. “The fellowship” was *where* the saints continued stedfastly!

The word *fellowship* comes from the root word translated “partners” in Luke 5:10. James, John, and Peter were partners in the fishing business. “The “fellowship” in Acts 2:42 was in reality a “partnership of believers.”

When one is taken into a partnership it is because he has common beliefs and goals. So it should be in a local assembly of believers. An assembly should know who they are receiving into “the fellowship.” This may be by the report of others, such as with Phebe (Rom. 16:1,2), or it may be by two or three witnesses hearing the testimony of those desiring to come into the fellowship. With the increased pressure for numerical growth these steps may easily be bypassed.

When an assembly accepts a believer into the fellowship it takes on added responsibility. The assembly is to be a place where he is cared for, edified, encouraged, comforted, and protected. It is a partnership in which the corporate body *cares* for the individual saint.

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However, coming into fellowship involves a *commitment* of the individual believer to the local assembly. Since he is identified with the local testimony his daily life is not to bring shame upon the fellowship and its testimony for Christ. He is to be involved in the partnership. The assembly does not merely exist for the convenience of the saints. It is not a supermarket to which customers come at their convenience to obtain their needs and leave.

Those in fellowship are to *contribute* to the operation of the fellowship as the Lord enables. It may be financially. It may be by physical labor, or it may be in spiritual labor. In whatever way they contribute they are to do it as unto the Lord for the good of the local assembly of believers. (Col. 3:23)

Partners also have the responsibility of being at the gatherings of the local fellowship of believers. Those who attend inconsistently, or attend only a small percentage of the gatherings, barring illness of course, could hardly be considered partners in the work—at least not faithful partners!

Are you in fellowship, or do you simply attend the activities of a local fellowship at your convenience? Just because you attend some of the gatherings does not mean you are in the fellowship of believers. One can easily attend meetings without being in fellowship. To be “in fellowship” means you are convinced and convicted of the same truths as the assembly, and are committed to the local partnership of believers.

Is the assembly a commitment or a convenience? *
Available as tract. Write for free copies.

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Quotes

There is a danger of losing the spiritual fellowship by thinking that our social fellowship is the climax of all fellowship.

Donald Grey Barnhouse

The fact that we share social activities with other Christians does not in itself imply that we have fellowship with them.

J.I. Packer

Do not resent growing old, many do not have the opportunity of doing so.

Anon.

Are we giving God what is right, or what is left?

Anon.

When faithfulness is most difficult it is most necessary.

Anon.

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