



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IV
Issue 95

Heavenly Places

The Scene of Conflict

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Recently while reading E.W. Bullinger's article, *Established-Strengthened-Settled*, I came upon a sentence that reached across the century since it had been written and spoke profoundly to my heart. My spirit soared as I considered the depth of its truth. I will share that single sentence with you and we will reflect upon its significance.

The very place of favor is the scene of conflict.

The context of this statement is as follows:

"If we are called to His eternal glory, we shall be called to suffering also. If we are called to experience spiritual union with a risen Christ in the heavenlies ... (Ephesians 2:6), we shall also experience conflict with wicked spirits in the same heavenlies (Ephesians 6:12). The very place of favor is the scene of conflict."

This statement represents a clear and important understanding regarding the true source of our spiritual warfare. It is the heavenly places, the exact same heavenly places of our spiritual blessings and position in Jesus Christ.

The words "heavenly places" and "high places" found in Ephesians represent one single Greek word written by Paul, *epouranios*. This is Strong's Lexicon #2032. It is a compound word meaning "above the heaven." It is made up of two words – #1909 *epi*, translated in the King James Version as "above" and "over;" and #3772 *ouranos*, translated in the King James Version as "heaven."

Epouranios is found five times in Paul's letter to the Ephesians (1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). The *epouranios*, or "heavenly places," is the highest heaven, the heaven of heavens, the super-heavens – that region "far above all heavens."

"He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things" (Ephesians 4:10).

This is "the third heaven," where Paul received his abundance of revelation (II Corinthians 12:2). The first heaven is the atmosphere just above our heads, where the "birds of heaven" (i.e., "the fowls of the air" Genesis 6:7) fly. The second heaven is where the "stars of heaven" (Genesis 26:4) shine. The third heaven is where the "God of heaven" (Genesis 24:3) is seated on His throne. This is the heaven that is "far above all heavens." This is the realm of the believer's true life.

The **Heavenly Places** are the Location of Our Spiritual Blessings

(See CONFLICT, page 983)

Heavenly Places – The Scene of Conflict.....	981
A Willing Mind.....	984
The Least to the Greatest	986
God's Pattern in Our Lives	987
Seeking Men's Approval	987
The Husband's Role in Love	988
Ordaining Elders	989
Judge Nothing Before the Time	990
This Temporary Life	991

Dear Truth Seekers,

Three New Periodicals

In the last issue of the **BSN** we discussed the beginning of three new periodicals in addition to the **BSN**.

We presented the first of those, the **BSN Digest**, as a quarterly publication which will be similar to the original **BSN** (Issues 1-16), as this will be a *FREE* publication that will be sent to anyone who simply requests it.

In this editorial we will discuss the other two periodicals.

Why New Periodicals?

For years I have given much thought to the method of communicating truth. The printed page has always been at the very heart of my life and ministry. Why have I chosen to start this new publication?

Even though we have increased the **BSN** to twice a month, this small ministry is already full. I already have years worth of material ready to be published in the **BSN**.

There are still many foundational truths that need to be expounded. These truths are precious to me and are surveyed in our publisher's box printed to the right of this editorial in every issue. I have no desire to enlarge our current teaching course with the **BSN**.

These new publications will allow for (1) the needed space to publish additional material, and for (2) the needed venue to broaden the subject content of our writing ministry without disrupting the current flow and format of the **BSN**.

Bible Student's Commentary™

The **Bible Student's Commentary**™ will be a monthly periodical dedicated to a systematic, word-by-word study through Paul's epistles.

If you are interested in receiving more than what you are currently receiving in the **BSN**, you can subscribe to the **Bible Student's Commentary**™

(See **EDITORIAL**, page 992)

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume IV, No. 95 – April 8, 2007

This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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PATRIARCHS

REMEMBER THAT IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY AS HUSBANDS AND FATHERS TO TAKE THE TRUTHS WE LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD, THE TRUTHS THAT WE HOLD DEAR, AND IMPART THEM TO OUR FAMILIES.

BIBLE STUDENT'S NOTEBOOK™

PO Box 265, WINDBER, PA 15963

Office: (800) 784-6010

bsn@studyshelf.com

www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor

André Sneidar – Managing Editor

Rick Lemons – Associate Editor

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(recompiled and edited)

CONFFLICT (continued from page 981)

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places [epouranios] in Christ” (Ephesians 1:3).

The “*heavenly places*” are the seat of our divine favor with God. All of what we possess from God that is real and lasting is located there. All else is but an illusive shadow.

The Heavenly Places are the Location of Our Position in Jesus Christ

“Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places [epouranios] ... And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places [epouranios] in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 1:20; 2:6).

The Lord Jesus Christ is seated in the place of honor and power at the right hand of the Father in “*heavenly places*.” We too are seated with Him there. Our union “with” and “in” Him is our true standing and identity.

The Lord Jesus Christ is our life (Colossians 3:4). Therefore, our real life is in the heavenly places, and is lived out through us in the details of daily life (Galatians 2:20).

The Heavenly Places are the Location of Our Manifestation of God’s Wisdom

*“To the intent that **now** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places [epouranios] might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God” (Ephesians 3:10).*

The words “*might be known*” are translated from the single Greek word *gnorizo* (Strong’s Lexicon #1107). It is translated elsewhere in the King James Version as “*certify*,” “*declare*,” “*make known*” and “*give to understand*.”

Beyond the scope of our earthly eyes, God is doing a great work. He is making known the details of His great wisdom to the spirit-world. The amazing

part is that He is using us as the divine vessels of its accomplishment.

Interestingly, Paul uses the word “*now*” in Ephesians 3:10. This work of God in us to make known His wisdom to the principalities and powers in “*heavenly places*” is a current work. It is not something that God will be doing in the future; it is something that He actively is doing now.

We must realize that there is much more being accomplished by the work of God in our daily lives than meets the human eye. This can only be realized and seen by the eyes of faith.

The Heavenly Places are Also the Location of Our Spiritual Warfare

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [epouranios] (Ephesians 6:12).

The “*heavenly places*” is the place of God’s throne. It alone is the place of our standing, but it also is the source of our spiritual battle – where we are engaged against evil forces.

Our warfare is not man-to-man, nor is it earth-based – it is pursued in “*heavenly places*.” These powers against which we wrestle may indeed be “*the rulers of the darkness of this world*,” and their commander may be “*the god of this world*,” but this world is not where the true battle rages – we fight them in “**heavenly places**” – that place of our true identity and standing is where our warfare is fought and won.

Our strength is to be found only in Him:

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10).

The more heavenly our life, the greater the conflict. The more we embrace our true blessings and our true position in Christ in heavenly places, the more intense the battles that we face will become. For truly **the very place of favor is the scene of conflict.**

A Willing Mind

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Corinthians 8:12).

The starting place of the work of God in the life of His sons is the implanting of His will in their hearts and minds. Sons are to be like their fathers; so God's sons are to be like the Heavenly Father. At the core of this reproduction of the divine nature is the Father's own will.

*"For it is God which worketh in you both **to will** and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).*

This is the work of God in a nutshell – “*to will and to do*” – and the Father begins by working something into His sons (“*worketh in you*”). He works into them His will (“*to will*”). As His sons we are given a willing heart for His life and purpose. We trust and acknowledge the in-working of His will.

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

The Father leads His sons by instilling into them His own spirit.

“For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God” (Romans 8:14).

Here is God's leading. Those led by God's Spirit are God's sons. Like Father, like son. The Father is working to permeate His divine expression in every area of our lives.

Thus, everything starts with the “will.” Little wonder, when speaking to the Corinthians about the subject of giving, Paul says that the beginning principle is a “willing mind.”

“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath,

and not according to that he hath not” (II Corinthians 8:12).

Let's remember that we are God's “*workmanship*.” It is indeed “*God which worketh*” in us, and His first work will be the infusion of His will.

Be honest. Do you feel that His will is lacking in you? Do you feel as though He is working too slowly? Beloved of the Father, do not be discouraged with His work. Trust Him implicitly. By patience and faith wait upon Him to do His work. His will in you is His responsibility.

*“But they that **wait upon the LORD** shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40:31).*

Or, maybe you have the “will,” but do not have the second part yet – the “do” (“**both to will and to do of His good pleasure**”). Perhaps you identify with these words of Paul,

*“... For **to will** is present with me; but **how to perform** that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18).*

Again, do not be disappointed with His work. Simply trust Him unreservedly. Wait patiently upon Him. The **doing** of His will is also His responsibility. He is faithful and will do His work!

You have the “want to.” That is the start.

“For if there be first a willing mind ...”
(II Corinthians 8:12).

Rejoice that this “willing mind” is God's work. The rest of the verse says,

“... It is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not”
(II Corinthians 8:12).

Do you despair over what you don't have (“hath not”)? Maybe your lack of talent, or ability, or resources, or experience, or money, etc.? Do you think that they hinder God's work in your life? Do not fret. His work is larger than all of these. You are who you are because God has made you that way. He is the potter, we are the clay.

“Who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Romans 9:20).

Because you are God's clay – His “workmanship” – He is responsible for who you are and what you have. God will use these in His own wisdom and at His own discretion.

When Moses was chosen and called by God to deliver His people out of Egyptian bondage, he was overwhelmed. Moses focused on what he didn't have. He looked at his inability. He was a man of excuses. Yet,

“it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not” (II Corinthians 8:12).

Let's listen in on the conversation (Exodus 4:1-5):

God: “What's in your hand?”

Moses: “A rod.”

God: “Throw it on the ground.”

Moses threw it on the ground and it became a serpent. Moses ran away.

God: “Reach out and pick it up by its tail.”

Moses did what God said and it became a rod in his hand again.

God would use this as a sign that He had appeared

to Moses.

God's call of Moses was not about Moses, it was about God. It was about God's ability and purposes. It was about what God would do with what Moses had, not what he didn't have.

We must always remember that God can use anything to do His work and bring Him glory. Thus, Paul could write,

“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not” (II Corinthians 8:12).

Do not be discouraged about your shortcomings, your inabilities, your failures, your inadequacies, your lack of talents and your weaknesses. God is the Master of them all.

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence” (I Corinthians 1:26-29).

Look at the things that God specializes in using.

God has chosen to use “foolish things,” “weak things,” “base things,” “things which are despised,” and even the “things which are not.”

Can you identify with any of these? Do you sometimes feel stupid, or meager, or low class, or without value? No problem. These are the very things God has predetermined to use in carrying out His work.

Look carefully at the passage and you will see that He even specializes in the use of nothing – “and the things which are not.” Do you ever ►

feel worthless, even to the point that you feel like nothing? Then you qualify for the use of God!

By way of illustration: everyday as God asks of you, "What is in your hand?" (so to speak) ... Open up your hand and let Him have His way with you and what you have. Rest in who God has made you! Rest in the place where God has you at this time in your life. Rest in His resources. Rest in His ability. Rest in His faithfulness.

You may not have any confidence in yourself. That's ok. It is all about Him. Have full confidence in Him.

"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).

Here Paul clearly answers his own question of dilemma from some years earlier. As we have already seen he wrote to the Romans, "... for **to will** is present with me; but **how to perform**

that which is good I find not" (Romans 7:18); but now how clearly he writes the answer to the Philippians, "... that He which hath begun a good work in you **will perform** it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).

What you can not "perform" in and of yourself, God "will perform." You are His work. He started you. He will complete you.

Therefore, we can rest in Paul's wonderful words:

"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not" (II Corinthians 8:12).

God is placing His in-working "will" in you, to use you ... as you are, where you are, with what you have ... all for His glory alone.

"That no flesh should glory in His presence"
(I Corinthians 1:26-29). ■

The Least to the Greatest

by – John Wesley (1709-1791)

"The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters covers the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

Now in the same manner as God has converted so many to Himself without destroying their liberty, He can undoubtedly convert whole nations, or the whole world; and it is as easy to Him to convert a world, as one individual soul. ...

In every nation under heaven, we may reasonably believe, God will observe the same order which He hath done from the beginning of Christianity. "They shall all know me, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 31:34); not from the greatest to the least (this is that wisdom of the world which is foolishness with God); but "from the least to the greatest" (Hebrews

8:11); that the praise may not be of men, but of God. Before the end, even the rich shall enter into the kingdom of God. Together with them will enter in the great, the noble, the honorable; yea, the rulers, the princes, the kings of the earth. Last of all, the wise and learned, the men of genius, the philosophers, will be convinced that they are fools; will be "converted, and become as little children" (Matthew 8:3), and "enter into the kingdom of God." ...

The General Spread of the Gospel
Sermon 63, 1872 Edition
Thomas Jackson, editor ■

God's Pattern in Our Lives

by – M.R. De Haan, M.D (1891-1965)

"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" (II Corinthians 4:17-18).

Yes, God is working out a pattern in our lives. We see only the present and the immediate, but God sees the whole picture of one's life as it will appear when the last stroke of the brush has completed the picture. In this pattern of our lives there are bright spots and dark backgrounds, all of them necessary for the complete portrait. As we pass through the dark experiences of life, we see only that dark piece.

Our experiences resemble a jigsaw puzzle. Here is a black piece that seems to fit nowhere at all. It does not make sense. Here is a little brighter piece. Other sections of the jigsaw puzzle are dark, and some pitch black, and we cry and moan in these black moments; but by-and-by the Master will take all the pieces that look so disconnected to us now and will carefully arrange each piece in its proper place. Then we shall see His completed work – the work of a Master who makes no mistakes.

Listen, when it is all ready, we shall find that the dark pieces of the puzzle were as important to the completion of the full beauty of the pattern as the bright sections.

Take heart, dear child of God. *Father makes no mistakes.* He loves you more than you love Him, and even as the child cannot understand ... an earthly father until he reaches maturity, so, too, we cannot understand all now; but someday we shall understand.

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (I Corinthians 13:12).

Broken Things – Why We Suffer
(Pages 104-105)

Seeking Men's Approval

by – A.W. Tozer (1897-1963)

Icannot believe in the spirituality of any Christian man who keeps an eye open for the approval of others, whoever they may be. The man after God's own heart must be dead to the opinion of his friends as well as his enemies. He must be as willing to cross important persons as obscure ones ...

We'll never be where we should be in our spiritual lives until we are so devoted to

Christ that we ask no other approbation than His smile. When we are wholly lost in Him the frantic effort to please men will come to an end. The circle of persons we struggle to please will be narrowed to One. Then we will know true freedom, but not a moment before.

The Price of Neglect
(Page 141)

The Husband's Role in Love

by – Dwight H. Small

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25).

The husband is to take the initiative in love; he is made responsible for married love. He is the lover. The command is: "Husbands, love your wives" (Ephesians 5:25)! One will seek in vain to find such a command for wives! It never says: "Wives, love your husbands." Some would suppose that this is unnecessary because husbands are such loveable fellows anyway! But hardly!

Rather, the whole mystery of creative and reciprocal love is embodied in this principle. It is the logical counterpart in marriage to the love relation between Christ and the believer. It is love creating its own response. In loving his wife, the husband causes her to love him in return.

This design of God is not meant to be reversed. Whenever the wife must be the one who initiates love and the husband only reciprocates, there is a deep fault in the relationship, sufficient in fact to bring it to an end.

Paul proceeds to set forth just exactly how husbands are to love their wives. It is "as Christ loved the church" ... The fullness of Christ's love for the church suggests five major characteristics for the husband ...

Christ Loved the Church Realistically

He was under no illusions when He sought us in love! ... He knew us just as we were: sinful, unlovable, and unreasoning ... "while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" – in love!

Christ Loved the Church Sacrificially

He "... gave Himself for it" (:25). How costly is love! ... The very life of love is to spend itself

for the sake of another ... Husbands must love their wives sacrificially. They must be willing to give up all that is required to fulfill the life of the beloved. This may involve giving up some of their interests, their time, their pleasures, their ambitions, their friends. It means nothing shall have priority over their responsibility to fulfill the needs of their wives. There is no substitute for the giving of oneself! ... A mink coat can never substitute for a husband's love!

Christ Loved the Church Purposefully

His purpose was "that He might present it to Himself a glorious church... holy and without blemish" (:27). So it is not enough for the husband to sing, "Take my wife and let her be, consecrated Lord to Thee"! He must love her purposefully. This will take time and thought, prayer and work, patience and persistence!

Christ Loved the Church Willfully

The mind, the heart, and the will must cooperate in loving ... Very few young people seriously consider to what a large extent love is dependent upon the action of the will.

Christ Loved the Church Absolutely

His love for us was without limit, without condition, and without reserve! Ephesians 5:28 reads, "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself."

*Design for Christian Marriage
(Fleming H. Revell, 1959)*

Page 78-79

Ordaining Elders

by – Samuel Ridout (1855-1930)

The appointment of elders was restricted to those who were especially commissioned by the apostle. So far from this showing that succession in office was contemplated, it does the reverse. ... We never read of elders or bishops ordaining their successors. There is no hint of such a thing. Ordination then was an apostolic act, done either directly by the apostle or by those commissioned to act for him. ...

It is important to note that the name and functions of the elders were derived from Judaism, and that the synagogue furnished the model for this office. We should not overlook the fact that the book of Acts is a history of the transition period from Judaism to Christianity, and that many Jewish practices were permitted during this time, to make the change as gradual as possible. Timothy was circumcised because of the Jews among whom he had been brought up (Acts 16:3). It was the apostle's custom, wherever permitted, to preach in the synagogues every Sabbath day. What wonder is it then, that in establishing the assemblies he should, under divine guidance, have set up elders to rule? (It should also be remembered that the New Testament Scriptures were not yet in the hands of the early Church; the divine order given by the apostle had to be communicated *viva voce*, and maintained by appointed elders (I Corinthians 7:17; 11:2, 16; Titus 1:5, etc.). God was tenderly caring for His beloved people, and would give them no needless shocks. This is the thought underlying the whole book of Acts.

But where have we a hint that ordination was to go on? I Corinthians is pre-eminently the book of Church order, and yet we have no mention of Church officials. The house of Stephanas (I Corinthians 16:15-16) addicted *themselves* to the ministry of the saints ...

As the Church emerged from the influence of Judaism, it laid aside the swaddling-bands of customs which were appropriate only to a state of infancy, and was left free to be guided and controlled by the Holy Spirit alone. While we bless God for the apostles – the visible representatives of Christ's authority on earth – we recognize that they were connected with the foundations of Christianity, and were never intended to be perpetuated. They have given us the inspired epistles. They nourished the infant Church, and they are now waiting with the Lord until He comes. ...

But with the presence of the apostles goes ordination to office, as we have seen. ... So then we are left, not in a state of disorder or incompleteness, but as God intended, with the Holy Ghost in divine authority, and the Word of God as our all-sufficient guide. ... The office, the designation by apostolic authority of a certain person for a certain place, has passed. ...

It may be urged that the apostle provides for succession in II Timothy 2:2, "*And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*" A glance will show that it was the *truth* that Timothy had received which he was to transmit to faithful men – a responsibility which remains for all time.

We are living in times of ruin. That which came so fair from the hands of the Lord, has become so mutilated as to be almost unrecognizable. The failure is ours and ours alone.

The Church and its Order According to Scripture
(1915)

Judge Nothing Before the Time

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God ...” (I Corinthians 4:3-5).

Warning Against Premature Judgment

We are premature in our judgments. We make passing judgments on ourselves and others before God has completed His work in us. We must realize that there is an appointed time for the inspection of God’s finished product, but it is not now.

Paul tells us plainly,

“Therefore judge nothing before the time ...” (I Corinthians 4:5).

God Has Not Finished His Work

We must always be mindful that each one of us is God’s work.

Paul calls us “*the work of God*” in Romans 14:20. He calls us “*His workmanship*” in Ephesians 2:10. Day by day He is making out of us what He wants us to be. He is the Master-Workman, and we are His masterpieces. He has the ages in which to accomplish His work, and He will do so successfully.

“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).

Do Not Be Tempted to Play Judge

Judgment here belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. He is the only one so qualified. The Father has committed to Him sole judgment.

“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son”

(John 5:22).

“Because He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained ...” (Acts 17:31).

“... It is He which was ordained of God to be the Judge of the quick and dead” (Acts 10:42).

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ...” (II Corinthians 5:10).

“... The Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom” (II Timothy 4:1).

“In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel” (Romans 2:16).

We Are Not to Judge Ourselves

“I judge not mine own self” (I Corinthians 4:3)

When we judge ourselves we are actually passing judgment upon God’s work and ability in us. In faith we need to rest, not in our abilities, but in His capacity to carry out His own work in us. This is why Paul would not pass judgment upon himself.

We Are to Be Unaffected by the Judgment of Others

“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s

judgment ...” (I Corinthians 4:3).

Others may choose to judge us. However sincere their actions may be, or appear to be, we are not to be affected by this. When we, like Paul, walk before the Lord, their verdicts will be a “*very small thing*” in our sight. In fact, if we are concerned about their opinions, it will have a hindering effect on God’s work in us.

“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10).

Thus, we have Paul’s instruction,

“Let no man therefore judge you ...” (Colossians 2:16).

We Are Not to Judge Others

We must walk in faith and see our brothers as who they really are. They are a new creation – the work and workmanship of God. We must not be party to the judgment of God’s work.

“Who art thou that judgest another man’s

servant? ...” (Romans 14:4).

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Romans 14:10).

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more ...” (Romans 14:13).

We must always remember that God is busy at work in His own creation. We can rest completely in “*the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*” (Ephesians 1:11). We can rest in this for ourselves, as well as for others.

We are all like a building under construction, a painting yet wet and unfinished, a tapestry still being woven, a tree that has yet to reach maturity. We must with patience await the Master’s grand completion.

We would all do well to follow Paul’s instruction to,

“... Judge nothing before the time ...”
(I Corinthians 4:5). ■

This Temporary Life

by – Albert Barnes (1798–1870)

*A*ll that we enjoy, and all that we suffer here must soon vanish and disappear. The most splendid palace will decay; the most costly pile will molder to dust; the most magnificent city will fall to ruins; the most exquisite earthly pleasures will soon come to an end; and the most extended possessions can be enjoyed but a little time. So too the acutest pain will soon be over; the most lingering disease will soon cease; the evils of the deepest poverty, want and suffering will soon be passed. There is nothing on which the eye can fix, nothing that the heart can desire here, which will not soon fade away;

or, if it survives, it is temporary in regard to us. We must soon leave it to others; and if enjoyed, it will be enjoyed while our bodies are slumbering in the grave ... How foolish, then, to make these our portion, and to fix our affections supremely on the things of this life! How foolish also to be very deeply affected by the trials of this life, which at the furthest CAN be endured but a little longer before we shall be forever beyond their reach!

Barnes’ Notes on the Bible
II Corinthians 4:18

EDITORIAL (continued from page 982)
for one year (12 monthly issues) for \$20.

Due Benevolence™

Due Benevolence™ will also be a monthly periodical. It will be the result of a twenty-five year dream. It will be a very uniquely-themed publication. I know of none like it in existence. In fact, *every* article in *every* issue will be centered upon *one* single subject – a greatly neglected Bible topic – one sorely needed in the Body of Christ. This will be a publication of **Biblical Sexuality**.

What If ...?

What if much of what we think we know about sexuality is based upon cultural and religious tradition? Most saints live their lives in bondage to bad doctrine. What if most of us were living our sexual lives in bondage to bad doctrine as well? What if many of those obsessive fears and concerns regarding our sexuality were not true? What if some of those thoughts which we have constantly dismissed and oppressed were *based* upon Godly design, rather than upon sinful passion? What if the so-called “Everyman’s Battle” was in fact not designed to be a battle, but a precious gift?

I believe the subject of sexuality is, sadly, one of the most neglected topics of the entire Bible. As a result, the lives of many, if not most, have been adversely affected. Believer’s have wrongfully been deceived concerning one of God’s greatest gifts to man. Scores of marriages have been scarred and damaged.

Why a Periodical Dedicated Only to the Subject of Sexuality?

I believe there is a tremendous need to communicate the issues related to marital life and sexuality. Perhaps there will be a much more limited audience of those that will see the need, or have an open heart, mind, and ear for our new topic of teaching. This new publication will allow us to continue our current work of the **BSN**, while expanding to those who have an interest.

Be Forewarned!

You should be forewarned! **Due Benevolence™** will contain honest, frank discussions about sexuality that will be very Biblically graphic, even to the point of which some people would undoubtedly feel

as uncomfortable or inappropriate; but the Bible does not pull any punches or beat around the bush with any subject it approaches – and the subject of sexuality is no different. So, a word of caution – this publication *will* contain material that could easily be viewed by many as being “offensive.”

That **Due Benevolence™** will be controversial may well be a great understatement. The articles will *definitely* go “against the flow.” Frankly, you will probably be shocked at what I have to say. In fact, you probably would not want to subscribe to this new periodical if you do not want your current understanding of sexuality to be challenged.

The purpose of publishing these materials will be basically threefold: (1) to *teach* as clearly as possible what I understand to be the neglected truths that the Scriptures teach concerning various aspects of sexuality; (2) to *guide* saints to reclaim their Godly gift and enjoyment of sexuality; (3) to *help* relieve people of undue guilt and bondage produced by the legalistic, moralistic, Victorian religious influence coming from Roman Catholic and Gnostic errors.

Due Benevolence™ is designed for those who have a serious desire to study Scriptural sexuality. It is not intended for those who are simply curious.

If you have a genuine interest in these studies, “*Welcome, brave hearts!*” You will probably not agree with everything you read. Frankly, I do not ask that of you (with this or any of my publications). In fact, as has been true with the **BSN**, I am sure over the passage of time I too will not agree with everything that I have written. I am just “stepping up to the plate” and “taking a swing” at presenting the things I have been studying for the past 25 years. As with the **BSN**, I encourage you to study what is presented and consider them for yourselves. Take what you can that is valuable and that you find to be the truth of the Scripture. I appreciate the opportunity to share these things with serious seekers.

You can subscribe to the **Due Benevolence™** for one year (12 issues) for \$20.

Your fellow,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.