



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## *The Herald of His Grace*

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

Volume IV  
Issue 96

## *Stablished ~ Strengthened ~ Settled*

by – E.W. Bullinger

*“But the God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (I Peter 5:10-11).*

**T**hese words contain a prayer for a very special blessing. Yet in order to obtain it we are cast upon the God of all grace – God, who performeth all things for us. Thus we have in this verse four things:

- (1) The God of all grace.
- (2) His effectual calling.
- (3) The necessary suffering.
- (4) The certain blessing.

### **1. The God of All Grace**

We must not dwell on the first of these (if we are to consider the others), for it is a subject in itself – a vast subject – for we are lost in wonder, love and praise the moment we enter upon the consideration of “*the God of all grace*,” and survey His sovereign grace, His redeeming, grace, His saving grace, His justifying grace, His providing grace, His abounding grace, His exceeding grace: and all this uninfluenced grace, invincible grace, inexhaustible and immutable grace.

What grace! All treasured up in Jesus Christ who is “full of grace,” and He alone. It can never be said of any mortal as it is said of Mary, “Hail, Mary, full of grace!” in perversion of Luke 1:28 in all the Romish versions. No! All grace is treasured up for us in Christ, and He holds it at His own disposal. Let us pass on to the second point.

### **2. His Effectual Calling**

“Who hath called us unto His eternal glory” – not, who is calling us; not, who may call us – but “Who hath called us,” a past, completed act, and that not to a temporal glory, nor to a fleeting transient glory, but to a glory which knew no beginning and can know no end. If He has called us, it is to His eternal glory. If He has called us, we shall have experienced our inability to obey. That is why it is here, “*The God of all grace*.” When God commands, the first thing we do is to discover our inability to obey; it is this which fills us with anxiety to be saved.

When He calls, we immediately discover that we are like Mephibosheth in II Samuel 9. We are at Lo-Debar, a “place of no pasture.” We have nothing really to sustain us, we are clothed in filthy garments, we are not worthy to come into the King’s presence, not meet to sit at the King’s table, and, moreover, “lame on both feet” (verse 13). When King David called Mephibosheth, how

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## *The Latest Word ...*

Here are the latest materials that we have published.

*A Dictionary of Scripture Proper Names* – by J.B. Jackson.

Translations of the Bible do not typically translate the names found therein. Instead the translators only transliterate the names. This means English language readers cannot understand the meaning of the names used in the Bible. This is a shame since so much meaning is captured in the names. This work, originally published in 1908, provides a way to find out the meaning of those words by pulling from over a dozen scholarly works. 94 pages. PB. \$12.<sup>95</sup>

*The Names and Order of the Books of the Old Testament* – by E.W. Bullinger.

To get back to the “original” is ever the endeavor of the careful Bible student. To find that he has followed in the study of the Holy Scriptures some man devised classification of the Sacred Writings is disheartening, yet such is the condition of all who have based spiritual thought and exegesis on the names and order of the books of the Old Testament as they appear in our Bibles. The “authority” for them is a human one dating back to about 300 B.C. How serious the original order and the original names were tampered with in this change is shown in this book, and the true names and order of all the books are clearly set forth as they appear in the original Hebrew, and in harmony with the Divine imprimatur of Luke 24:44. It will be seen at once that the information contained between the covers of this book is of vital importance as fundamental knowledge for the Bible Student. 68 pages. PB. \$9.<sup>95</sup>

*The Second Advent: In Relation to the Jew* – by E.W. Bullinger.

In his usual clarity and attention to detail, Bullinger demonstrates from the Scriptures that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is of far more relevance to Israel than to the church, the Body of Christ. 38 pages. PB. \$9.<sup>95</sup>

*The Prayers of Ephesians: We in Christ – Christ in Us* – by E.W. Bullinger.

There are two longer prayers in the Epistle to the Ephesians, plus a shorter concluding one. The two longer prayers have a common subject, Jesus Christ and Believers. However, in the first prayer it is what God made Christ for us; in the second it is what God has made us in Christ. In other words; in the first it is “We in Christ,” while in the second it is “Christ in Us”. Also the first prayer deals with God’s power which he wrought in Christ, while the second one deals with God’s power which is at work in us. 60 pages. PB. \$9.<sup>95</sup>

*The Knowledge of God: His Revelation of Himself* – by E.W. Bullinger.

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## ***Bible Student's Notebook™***

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

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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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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.

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(recompiled and edited)

could he obey? Yet David called him not for his own sake. He said,

*“Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?”* (II Samuel 9:1).

*“Fear not: for I will surely shew thee kindness for Jonathan thy Father’s sake”* (:7).

Still, how could he obey, being lame on his feet? We learn in verse 15, only by being sent for, fetched and carried. So it is with us. The Lord Himself must be the carrier, the sender, the fetcher, or the appointer of those who shall do so.

Like the man sick of the palsy; he was carried to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is written, *“Jesus seeing their faith.”* Why is it that we immediately and universally think of the four and not of the five. Why do we exclude the man himself? Had he no faith, no desire? How do we know but that it was he who urged his friends to carry him?

It is only our own perversity that thus limits God’s grace. Yes, and *“When Jesus saw their faith”* He saw the desire of His own heart, the work of His own hands. Where there is the Master’s gracious call, there will also be His careful carrying.

*“Who hath called us unto His eternal glory.”* How does He call? By Jesus Christ, it says. Yes, it is all by Christ, with Christ, through Christ, in Christ. Called by Christ to the experience of identification with Him in the glory of God the Father, we are comforted with the fact that as the Head is, so are the members of the body of Christ.

As the Father sees Him, so He sees His members. They are glorified together in the purpose of God; but as Jehovah the Spirit brings them into the apprehension of what they are in Christ, it is then that they discover their corrupt and depraved condition. It is then they cry, *“I am black,” “I am vile,” “I am undone;”* but the declaration of His grace-filled lips is,

*“Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee”* (Song of Solomon 4:7).

That is glory! Can we believe it? Yes, but only as He brings this precious truth home to us by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is thus that we, as the members of His body, realize something of the glory we possess in and through Him.

### **3. The Necessary Suffering**

*“After that ye have suffered awhile.”* Have we been called to His eternal glory? Then we have the call to suffering also. Has Christ left us the legacy of His peace (John 16:33)? He has left us the legacy of tribulation also. Then in the world we shall have tribulation. Do the consolations of Christ abound in us? Then the sufferings also abound (II Corinthians 1:5); but we have this testimony concerning them:

*“That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know”* (I Thessalonians 3:3-4).

Is it not a mercy to know this blessed truth, so that we may not be moved? To know that there is not a pain or anxiety or trial or care but what comes in all wisdom, and is accompanied by infinite love.

Have you experienced any of them? What have you done with them? Does your conscience condemn you for having taken them to anyone but to Him, who calls you by them to Himself? May the Lord ever enable us to carry our anxieties, our cares, our distresses and our sorrows to Himself. He alone can comfort us, He alone can deliver us in His own good time.

Hence we pray in our service, *“We commend to Thy Fatherly goodness all those who are anyways afflicted in mind, body or estate, that it may please Thee to comfort and relieve them according to their several necessities, giving them patience under their sufferings, and a happy issue out of all their afflictions.”* Our hearts respond to that. There is true fellowship there. *“The God of all grace who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.”* ►

Christian sympathy breathed in that prayer.

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, to enjoy fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:6), we shall also experience conflict with wicked spirits in the same heavenlies (Ephesians 6:12). The very place of favour is the scene of conflict. You see this in the case of the Lord Jesus Himself.

*“And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil” (Matthew 3:17-4:1).*

You see the same in His servant Paul (II Corinthians 12:1-10). Paul was in the third heaven, blest with extraordinary revelations of eternal glory, yet there was the necessary suffering, “a messenger of Satan to buffet him.” “A man in Christ,” yet a man “buffeted” by an angel of Satan; but after he had suffered awhile he was stablished, strengthened, settled by those gracious words,

*“My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (I Corinthians 12:9).*

This brings us to ...

#### **4. The Certain Blessing**

“Make you perfect.” What are we to understand by these words? It is a word of simple meaning, but full of instruction. It means to adjust, put in order again. Among the Greeks it was the technical surgical term for setting a bone, a medical term for making up and preparing medicine. It was also a nautical term for fitting out, refitting or repairing a ship. We have its various meanings, all true in a spiritual sense, expressed in this prayer; it is the prayer for us to pray, and it expresses the work of God for us.

The following are some occurrences of the word, and they illustrate its use:

*“... He saw other two brethren ... with ... their father mending their nets” (Matthew 4:21).*

*“... if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one” (Galatians 6:1).*

*“A body hast Thou prepared [margin, “fitted”] Me” (Hebrews 10:5).*

*“... perfectly joined together” (I Corinthians 1:10).*

Who can mend our ways and repair our nets? Restore us when overtaken in a fault, prepare our hearts, join us together in the same mind, the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, but the God of all grace?

It is He also who can stablish us. This speaks of permanency.

*“And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem” (Luke 9:51).*

i.e., His purpose was stablished, fixed, settled; nothing could move it.

*“And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you [plural] that he may sift you [plural] as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen [i.e., stablish] thy brethren” (Luke 22:3-32).*

That is the very thing Peter is doing by the Holy Spirit here in our text. He was obeying by the Spirit this very command. May he by these words stablish us his brethren now.

His very example stablishes us, for though Peter failed and fell, his faith did not fail, it was the faith of the operation of God, and neither men nor demons, neither Peter’s sins, Peter’s wavering, or Peter’s doubting could ever mar the fair beauty of that faith which stood “*not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God*” (I Corinthians 2:5).

Peter's faith had many a shaking, but it was stablished upon the truth of his God, upon the person and work and righteousness of Jesus Christ. A faith so stablished by the "God of all grace" reconciles the heart to His mysterious and sometimes perplexing providences, and nothing shall ever remove it from its foundation.

Peter does not say that we are to arrive at any state of perfection, or at this stablishing by praying, by believing, or by any act of faith or act of surrender as it is popularly called. No, he looks to the God of all grace to do it all for us.

"Strengthen." Why are those who are stablished in Christ to be strengthened? Because in themselves they are weak and often faint and weary. See how we read of this strengthening in the case of Paul (II Corinthians 12:5-10). Paul had no strength out of Christ, and yet he was "*strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might*" (Ephesians 6:10). He could do all things through Christ strengthening Him (Philippians 4:13). He was

*"strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness"* (Colossians 1:11).

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**PATTERN** (continued from page 1000)

This confession that Jesus Christ is Lord can only be the work of the Holy Spirit!

*"... No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost"* (I Corinthians 12:3).

## THE VICTORIOUS GOD

Reflecting upon the two examples of Thomas and Paul, we come to realize that God does directly and miraculously intervene in the faith of some individuals, by giving them sight experience for their faith. God will not deny this to the precious multitudes of His creation. Christendom has missed a key ingredient in the understanding of God, His love, and His will.

God, having commanded strength for His people, secures it to them in the Son of His love, and performs it in them by His Spirit. Therefore this is their supplication:

*"Strengthen, O God, that which Thou hast wrought for us"* (Psalm 68:28).

"Settled." Settled means grounded, founded as on a foundation. What mercy to be grounded and settled in the faith so as not to be "*moved away from the hope of the gospel*" (Colossians 1:23). It is a great blessing to be on God's sure foundation, but it is a greater blessing to be settled thereon. If we know anything of this spiritual settling upon the one foundation which God has laid in Christ, that settling will be experienced in connection with suffering, stablishing and strengthening.

Those who are by the God of all grace called unto His eternal glory, and are suffering for a little while in fellowship with a despised and rejected Lord, who are perfect only in Christ, those whom He is stablishing, strengthening and settling in the faith, the fear, the truth of God, will be able to sing the glorious doxology of I Peter 5:11,

*"To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."* ■

It is God's will that *all* men be saved (I Timothy 2:4). God does *all things* after the counsel of His Own will (Ephesians 1:11). His love will never fail (I Corinthians 13:8).

He will not lose any of His creatures. He will be victorious in all for all eternity. He will be "*All in all.*"

Just as God subdued Saul on the Damascus road, He shall subdue all things unto Himself.

*"And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all"* (I Corinthians 15:28).

# *Paul:* The Pattern of Salvation for the Unbeliever

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting. Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen@ (I Timothy 1:15-17).*

## **PAUL'S CONVERSION**

Paul was saved in a very different way than we are. His was a salvation by direct divine intervention. Listen in part to Paul give an account of his conversion.

*"And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And I answered, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me ... And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus" (Acts 22:6-11).*

## **OUR CONVERSION**

Is this the way that you were saved? Hardly. Saul, who later was called Paul was an archenemy of God. It took the direct hand of God to stop him and turn him around.

When Paul wrote to Timothy he said that his salvation was "a pattern" (i.e., a type, a picture); but it was not a pattern of our salvation. Our conversion in no way resembles his.

A close look at what Paul actually said will reveal that he did not tell Timothy that his salvation was a pattern for our salvation. Rather he says that his conversion was a pattern not for now, but for those who should "hereafter believe."

## **HEREAFTER**

A definition of "hereafter" found in the Webster's Dictionary is "in a future state" (*American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828).

The Greek word is Strong's Greek Lexicon #3195, *mello*. Here are some examples of how this same Greek word was translated elsewhere in the King James Version.

*"... Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath **to come** [mello]?" (Matthew 3:7).*

*"... Neither in this world, neither in the world **to come** [mello]" (Matthew 12:32).*

*"... Who hath warned you to flee from the*

wrath **to come** [mello]?” (Luke 3:7).

“... *Northings* **to come** [mello]” (Romans 8:38).

“... *Or things present, or things* **to come** [mello]” (I Corinthians 3:22).

“... *Not only in this world, but also in that which is* **to come** [mello]” (Ephesians 1:21).

“Which are a shadow of things **to come** [mello] ...” (Colossians 2:17).

“... *Having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is* **to come** [mello]” (I Timothy 4:8).

“For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world **to come** [mello] ...” (Hebrews 2:5).

“And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world **to come** [mello]” (Hebrews 6:5).

“But Christ being come an high priest of good things **to come** [mello] ...” (Hebrews 9:11).

“For the law having a shadow of good things **to come** [mello] ...” (Hebrews 10:1).

“For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one **to come** [mello]” (Hebrews 13:14).

Clearly the Greek word “mello” speaks of that which is “to come,” and the word “hereafter” in I Timothy 1:16 speaks of the “hereafter.”

### **DAMASCUS ROAD EXPERIENCE**

Saul did not believe by simple faith (apart from sight). It took the “Damascus Road experience” to bring him to Christ. He met up with the

resurrected Christ! Oh, the extent to which God will go to reach man! He is much less limited in His evangelism than we are.

Paul says that his salvation is a pattern for those who should believe “*hereafter*.” This salvation shows forth all of God’s “*longsuffering*.”

### **PAUL THE PATTERN OF THE THINGS TO COME**

Paul is not only our apostle in this current age of the dispensation of the grace of God, but he is also God’s pattern (type) of the salvation of unbelievers in the future. The unbelieving, the obstinate, the oppressors, the enemies of God will all have a dramatic conversion, coming face-to-face with their Savior.

Like Saul, the real question is not really one of unbelief; it is simply one of timing. All will eventually be brought to belief by their Creator, although not all in this lifetime. How have we made death the end of God’s grace and mercy? Some will not be saved by pure “*faith*” without sight. With others it will take “*sight*” for some to believe.

### **BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HAVE NOT SEEN, AND YET HAVE BELIEVED**

Those of us who have the privilege of believing now, are indeed greatly blessed. We are taught this from another account in the Scriptures. It is in the record of “doubting Thomas.” Listen to what Thomas, the apostle said.

*“The other disciples therefore said unto him [Thomas], ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said unto them, ‘Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not believe’”* (John 20:25).

Now listen to the response of our Lord Jesus Christ to Thomas.



*“Then saith He to Thomas, ‘Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless, but believing.’ And Thomas answered and said unto Him, ‘My Lord and my God.’ Jesus saith unto him, ‘Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.’” (John 20:27-29).*

Jesus said that Thomas believed by sight. *“Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed.”* He goes on to say, *“blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*

### THE FIRST TRUSTERS

Those of us today who believe by simple faith (apart from sight) are but the first trusters.

*“That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted in Christ” (Ephesians 1:12).*

Do not be discouraged as you look around you. What you see is not the end of God’s plan and purpose. Granted, the world is filled with sin and unbelief; but God is not yet done. Don’t judge the final outcome by the current state of things. This is not the finished product of God.

Those of us who now trust the Lord Jesus Christ are but the beginning of God’s glorious work. We are but the first trusters in His glorious design.

### THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THE HARVEST

*“... My wellbeloved Epaphroditus, who is **the firstfruits** of Achaia unto Christ” (Romans 16:5).*

*“Of His Own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be **a kind of firstfruits of His creatures**” (James 1:18).*

*“... These were redeemed from among men, being **the firstfruits unto God** and to the Lamb” (Revelation 14:4).*

In every harvest there is that small portion of the crop that matures early, before the vast majority of the rest. The firstfruits are a token of that which is to come – the full harvest.

Under the Old Testament economy the firstfruits belonged to God, and were holy unto Him.

In every generation, and in every place, God has had His firstfruits – those that come to harvest earlier than the rest. We are the firstfruits of God’s full harvest. We will enjoy the First Resurrection, but this does not exclude the rest of creation who are awaiting our manifestation:

*“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” (Romans 8:19).*

What a blessed privilege to be the first trusters – firstfruits – of the Lord. Just as God has brought us to faith, He too will bring the rest of His creation.

### NOT SAVED AFTER PAUL’S PATTERN

None of us in the Dispensation of Grace were saved after the pattern of Paul; but *“them which should hereafter believe on Him”* will see *“a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun.”* They will come into the presence of the resurrected Son of God, and will with Saul call Him Lord.

*“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10).*

*(See PATTERN, page 997)*



# *Husbandry:*

## What It Means to Be a Husband

by – Douglas Wilson (edited)

HUSBANDRY, n. The business of a farmer, comprehending agriculture or tillage of the ground, the raising, managing and fattening of cattle and other domestic animals, the management of the dairy and whatever the land produces.

HUSBAND, v.t. To till; to cultivate with good management.

– Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).

*“Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement” (I Peter 3:6).*

Unfortunately, many women are led (if it can be called leading) by men who believe themselves to be nothing more than walking, talking, living, breathing impositions. How many Christian women today ... could imagine calling their husband lord with a straight face? Him? Yet a husband is one who cultivates with authority.

Now it goes without saying that this authority must be exercised by a man with a Christ-like disposition to service. He must not wield his authority in a self-seeking way; but he must wield it; he is a *husband*. It is tragic that in our culture the word husband is understood as nothing more than a male legally tied (for a few years) to a particular female. Nevertheless as the etymology of the word should indicate, much more is involved. Husbandry is the careful management of resources – it is stewardship, and when someone undertakes to “husband” a wife, he must understand that it cannot be done unless he acts with authority.

He must act as though he has a right to be where he is. He is the lord of the garden, and he has been commanded by God to see to it that this garden bears much fruit. This cannot

be accomplished by “hanging around” in the garden and being nice. The garden must be managed, ruled, kept and tilled. For many husbands this is an alien concept; they certainly spend all their time in the garden helping themselves to whatever fruit *happens* to grow, but they always have the furtive [cautious] look of someone guilty of criminal trespass ... They are unsure of their right to be there, and pulling up weeds means that they have assumed responsibility for the state of the garden – he had better not do *that*. Such abdication [abandonment of one’s authority] is an abdication of *stewardship*; it is the abdication of *husbandry*, [which leaves] the wife ... frustrated because she has a husband in name, but she does not have a husband.

Some men may object by saying that their wives demand to be left alone. All they are doing is respecting their wives’ wishes. There are two responses to this. One is that whether or not the wife has demanded to be left alone does not alter the fact that Christ has demanded that she *not* be left alone.

*“Husbands, love your wives, even as*

*(See HUSBANDRY, page 1004)*

# *The Liberated Self*

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new” (II Corinthians 5:17).*

**M**any struggle in their Christian walk to find deliverance from themselves.

Even those who have come to understand that they are new creatures in the Lord Jesus Christ often believe that they are still their old selves too. They have been led to believe that there are somehow two of themselves.

They have been taught that there are two selves residing inside of them. They have been led to believe that they are always fighting an inward civil war for control – fighting to live, fighting to gain control, fighting for supremacy, fighting to have the dominant expression. Remarkably, this is all some strange type of religious schizophrenia. It is a tiresome and burdensome struggle of the imagination. What is so sad is that nothing could be farther from the truth.

Listen to these words:

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ...”

## **ONE ME**

There is only one me. I am a new creature. I have not been rehabilitated.

I am one person, not two. I am not two creatures; I am a one “*new creature*” – a totally new creation of God.

“... *Old things are passed away* ...”

My former self, my old identity, the old me is dead and gone. It has “*passed away*.” It died with Christ.

It is not who I am anymore – regardless of what I may think or do to the contrary!

“... *Behold, all things are become new*”

Now everything has changed. “*All things*” are new. Nothing is old.

My former self (my old identity in Adam) is forever gone. It died with Christ.

My new self (my new life and identity in Christ) is here to stay. I am alive in Christ.

There are not two of me. There is only one. There was an old me that used to be – now a has-been. Then there is the new me, now alive with divine life.

## **ONE NATURE**

I do not have two natures. I had an old one that used to be. I have a new one that now is. The battle is not an inward struggle between two me’s.

Not that there’s not a battle. It is just that it’s a battle of faith. The battle is about believing what God says is now true about me. It centers in me believing that I am who God says that I am.

Many are seeking to be liberated from themselves. They think that they are in the midst of a great battle between their two selves – their two natures. This is not what the Scriptures teach!

Paul clearly writes that we,

“... **WERE by nature** the children of wrath ...” (Ephesians 2:3).

A new nature has not been added to our old one. This would only be confusion, and God is not the author of that (I Corinthians 14:33). What we were by nature in Adam is in the past; it is – “were.”

Christ once-and-for-all dealt with my former self at the cross. He now has made me a new self.

I am not now liberated from myself. I am liberated to be myself. I am now free to be who I really am: the real me – the only me that there is – the new creature that God has made me in Christ.

## ONE LIFE

*“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).*

My former identity – my old “I” – was my identity as the son of Adam. My new identity – my new “I” – is my identity as the glorious son of God.

My old “I” is that of molded conformity – of human uniformity. As a son of Adam I was from birth ever pressed into the cast of sameness.

My former “I” is just that – it was crucified (executed) with Christ – “*I am crucified with Christ ...*”

My new “I” is just that – new – brand new. It is the “I” of Christ living me. It is the new “*life which I now live in the flesh ...*” My new life is *His* life. It is the only life I now have.

## ONE IDENTITY

I do not have two identities. I had an old one, now I have a new one – one former, one present.

My new identity – the new “I” – is that of the unique design of divine distinctiveness. As a son of God I am now free to be that one-of-a-kind individual that God has created me to be – filled and made vibrant

with His dynamic life living in and through me.

*“I [a son of Adam] am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I [a son of God] live; yet not I [the ‘I’ of the old creation], but Christ liveth in me [the me of the new creation]: and the life [the divine life of God] which I [the unique person that God has made me to be] now live in the flesh [right now, this very day] I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).*

## THE REALIZATION OF THE LIBERATED SELF

People are always talking about their attempts to discover their true selves – their efforts of trying to “find themselves.” The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ needs to find out who they really are. This need not be such a difficult search. All that really is needed is a careful look at the Scriptures, and a simple faith in the words of who God says that we are. God knows who we are; all we need do is believe Him.

The new me is the me of union with Christ. It is His life. It is His life exchanged for my past one. This is the truth of the divinely exchanged life. It is the great exchange. Indeed it is the greatest of all exchanges.

Understanding and believing these glorious truths will allow me the freedom to be at rest with my new self – free to be the real me, the new man, the only me that there is – the me in Christ.

I have not been liberated from myself. My former self has died with Christ and I have now been liberated from my old man to be myself – the self He has made me in Christ.

Refuse to be the shell of a person, pushed into a mold of Adamic conformity. Be the real you that God has uniquely designed you to be. Refuse to be bullied out of your divinely designed identity that your Father has given you.

**I am who God says that I am.** ■

*Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).*

The head of the woman is the man, [and] the head of the man is Christ. Christ has commanded husbands to imitate Him – and this necessitates a love which does not walk away, or stand by.

Second, wives need to be led with a firm hand. They will often test their husbands in some area, and be deeply disappointed (and frustrated) if he gives in to her. It is crucial that a husband give his wife what the Bible says she needs, rather than what she says she needs.

So a godly husband is a godly lord. A woman who understands this biblical truth and calls a certain man her *husband* is also calling him *lord* [I Peter 3:6]. It is tragic that wholesale abdication on the part of modern men has made the idea of lordship in the home such a laughable thing. A man cannot get by with good intentions. He cannot get by with a pleasant demeanor. He cannot get by with a sweet disposition ... In a world of spiritual eunuchs – one who is impotent in his masculinity – it is good to find a man who is more than simply male ...

Many Christian men are nice guys, but they do not provide the strength of leadership that God requires and their wives need.

*“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (I Corinthians 11:3).*

How many of us really know the God Whom we worship? Is it not the case with very many that if they worship “the unknown god”? The true knowledge of God can be found only in the Bible and some of the highest revelation of Him is found in three of Paul’s later letters: Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians. However, as Christians become less familiar with the Bible there is a danger that the God they worship becomes the “god of their imagination.” 50 pages. PB. \$9.<sup>95</sup>

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