



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 134

Nevertheless at Thy Word

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*“And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God, He stood by the lake of Gennesaret, and saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And He entered into one of the ships, which was Simon’s, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And He sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: **nevertheless at Thy word** I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: and so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed Him” (Luke 5:1-11).*

Peter was a professional, experienced, seasoned fisherman, and he had toiled all night without catching anything. He was done; he and his partners had already come to shore and cleaned their nets. It was at this time that the Lord Jesus Christ arrived giving the command,

“Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught” (Luke 5:4).

Peter was so tired, for he had worked all night. Peter had already cleaned his nets. How greatly all of Peter’s being must have cried out for him *not* to launch out again! His professional

experience must have cried, “No!” His weary mind, body, heart – every core part of him – must have demanded a compelling “No!” Every fiber of his being must have been in active protest. After all, what does the son of a carpenter really know about fishing anyway?

Peter’s response was truly amazing. By faith he said,

(continued next page)

Nevertheless, at Thy Word.....	1393
God’s Present Purpose	1395
Heaven’s Embassy on Earth –	
Select Readings on the Home, part I.....	1397
Reader’s Question Box #2	1400

(continued from previous page)

*“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: **nevertheless at Thy word** I will let down the net” (Luke 5:5).*

We can find great encouragement as we remember the circumstances which surround his astounding words, *“Nevertheless at Thy word ...”* Despite his experience, training, feelings and exhaustion, his response was one of simple faith and trust in the words of the Lord.

The result was equally astounding.

“And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink” (Luke 5:6-7).

There was a super-abundance of fish of such a multitude that their net broke under the strain of their weight. They needed assistance from their partners. Their catch was so great that two ships were filled.

Here is a lesson for us. We, too, should believe God over everything else – over our training, our intellect, our experiences, our circumstances and our feelings. Though all of the very core of our beings may cry and protest to the contrary, we can respond, *“Nevertheless at thy word ...”*

Like Simon Peter, we can say regarding the circumstances of our lot in life,

*“Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: **nevertheless at thy word** I will let down the net” (Luke 5:5).*



Bible Student's Notebook

ISSN: 1936-9360

No. 134 – April 30, 2008

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."

SUBSCRIPTION

Electronic Version (e-mailed to you): 1 Year (52 issues) – \$10; 2 Years (104 issues) – \$20
Printed Version (mailed to you): ½ Year (26 issues) – \$25;
1 Year (52 issues) – \$50

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.

The Bible Student's Notebook
PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963
Office: (800) 784-6010

bsn@studyshef.com
www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. – Editor
Andre Sneidar – Managing Editor
Rick Lemons – Associate Editor

Visit our online bookstore at: www.StudyShelf.com

Copyright © 1989-2008 Pilkington & Sons

God's Present Purpose

Select Readings on *Right Division*

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).

THE NEW BIRTH

The Bible says *"ye must be born again"* (John 3:7). I believe that *those to whom our Lord spoke* must be begotten anew. What right have I or anyone else to say that *all* must be born again? John was a minister of the Circumcision. He was never sent to the Uncircumcision. If I were to be asked to name the principal causes of incorrect doctrine in Fundamentalists' creeds I should surely include their almost complete apostasy from Paul, to whom alone the present secret administration was entrusted (Ephesians 3:8-9). They, like *"all they which are in Asia,"* have turned away from him (II Timothy 1:15). They do not believe that Paul was entrusted with the gospel of the Uncircumcision, as Peter and John of the Circumcision (Galatians 2:9).

The "new birth" is displaced by a deeper truth in Paul's epistles. He introduces a *new creature* (II Corinthians 5:17). ...

A.E. Knoch (1877-1965)
The Words of Man's Wisdom

GOD'S TRUE ALTAR TODAY

The altar call, as we know it, has its roots in the person and ministry of Charles Finney (1792-1875). Finney's meetings involved huge crowds and multiple conversions, and altar calls were used as a means to lead people to Christ ...

What was an altar used for in the Old Testament? It was used to offer up a sacrifice to God. The higher spiritual truth for us today ... is to be found in Romans 12:1. It states, *"... present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service ..."* We must understand that we are to become an altar unto God, and that

our life must become a sacrifice unto Him. It is not a matter of going to an altar as much as it is becoming an altar!

We must stop trying to force and manipulate people to come to a man-made altar, convincing them that walking an aisle is what saves them. Rather, we must help them to comprehend that God has *already* reconciled them to Himself through the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. As they are *awakened* to this truth they will want to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. When this takes place we *become an altar*, and our *lives become a living sacrifice* unto God.

Present yourself as a living sacrifice unto God!

Thomas Kissinger
The Glory of God and the Honor of Kings
Devotion for January 25

PAUL'S GOSPEL

Paul speaks of "my" gospel, and hints that he was given unique revelations (see Romans 2:16; 16:25; Galatians 1:11-12; 2:2; Ephesians 3:3ff; II Timothy 2:8). Why would he refer to the gospel as "my gospel" if it was a carbon copy of what the apostles preached in the early days? Why not call it *the* gospel? ...

I believe God gave Paul a greater understanding of God's truth than He originally gave to the 11. As evidence of this, note the volume of New Testament Scripture that he either dictated or penned – 13 of the 23 post-cross books, not to mention that three-fifths of the Book of Acts deals with his ministry as penned by Luke. The other New Testament penmen don't dedicate the amount of space in their writings to proclaim our identity in Christ that Paul does. Ephesians 1:3

through 2:10 alone (A.D. 60-62) contains 40 verses proclaiming our true identity! But the 3000 people who came to Christ at Pentecost were not taught this truth in Peter's sermon.

Bill Gillham

What God Wishes Christians Knew About Christianity (1998)

GOD'S WAYS

"Why is this happening to me?" the young man asked me after describing a crisis he was facing. "I've tried to be faithful in serving God. He knows what this means to me. Why would he let this happen?"

Questions that begin with "why" are common when problems come into our lives. Some Christians have suggested that it is wrong to ask "why?" but I don't think that is necessarily true. Jesus asked the question, "why?" from the cross in His final moments and we know he never said anything that displeases God.

The heart-attitude behind the question is the key. When we question why, is it a sincere question or an accusation against God? There's a big difference between the two.

The answer to questions about why is multifaceted, but there is one simple answer that often applies when we ask that question. It's this: *God's ways are not our ways.*

We look at things differently than the Sovereign God we serve. For instance, we think the three parts of the day are morning, afternoon and night. Not so with God. In Genesis, the Bible says that "the evening and morning were the first day." From God's perspective, new days begin when things start to get darker, not brighter. (Any orthodox Jew knows this, as evidenced by the fact that they begin to observe the Sabbath at sunset on Friday, not Saturday morning.) *God's ways aren't our ways.*

Consider another example: We believe we must be strong to be productive. God says that our need is to be weak, not strong. He doesn't choose the strong and mighty, but the weak to amaze the world. (See I Corinthians 1:27) While we're trying to become stronger, God wants to make us weaker,

more dependent on Him. *God's ways aren't our ways.*

Under God's rule, first comes darkness, then light. First comes weakness, then strength. The list could go on – first comes death, then life. First comes burst wine skins, then new ones. First comes losing our lives, then we find them. *God's ways aren't our ways.*

Will you choose, by faith, to forfeit the right to understand your circumstances and, instead, trust the One who does all things well? Thank God, His ways aren't our ways. Would you rather have your way? Or would you rather yield to the way of an omnipotent God who loves you so much that He gave His life to ensure that you would receive the best He has to offer?

Steve McVey

Grace Walk

SAD CONFUSION

Utter confusion reigns among evangelicals because of the failure to rightly divide the Word, especially the clear distinction between Israel and the Church ... More and more I am distressed with the teaching which confuses Israel and the Church, Law and Grace, Salvation and Discipleship.

Sad, sad that many of God's dear children seem to know nothing more than Jesus of Nazareth in His humiliation – while the risen, ascended, glorified Man is ignored, or unknown.

Paul R. Van Gorder

Cited by Miles J. Stanford in
Pauline Dispensationalism

PAUL'S EPISTLES

For years I have been reading and studying the Apostle Paul and his Church Epistles. They are completely adequate for the life and labors of every member of the Body of Christ.

Lehman Strauss (1911-1997)

Cited by Miles J. Stanford in
Pauline Dispensationalism ■

Heaven's Embassy on Earth

Select Readings on *the Home*

(Part 1)

"Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it ..."
(Psalms 127:1).

"... church in thy house" (Philemon 1:2).

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Some people look to the church for the care and nurture of their children. They expect the Sunday school or the youth department to be the primary factor in molding the spiritual lives of the young. But this is a fundamental responsibility of parents.

Ed Dobson (with Cal Thomas)
Blinded by Might: Can the Religious Right Save America?
(1999) Page 158

MASCULINE AND FEMININE

Those qualities of mind and person which impel a woman to seek the protection of the stronger sex, arising from her natural weakness and timidity, are really those very qualities which inspire the deepest admiration; yet, should a man happen to display these feminine qualities, they only render him supremely contemptible. A man must be strong, self-reliant, and courageous. No woman can devotedly love a man, unless she sees, or thinks she sees, in him a power of mind or of body, or of both, which Nature has denied to her. It is this power which she intuitively admires and venerates and worships ...

A woman is always and everywhere more ready to forgive the too great ardor and boldness of a lover than his unmanly timidity and shame. For a wife to look up to her husband for authority and guidance is as natural as to look to him for protection from danger; and this is as natural as breathing. It is therefore true, though it may seem hard to some to admit it, that it is his right and duty

to exercise authority, and her right and privilege to practice complaisance and submission.

James Campbell
A History and Philosophy of Marriage
(1869)
Page 114

REAL LIFE

Ed Dobson, who used to be a well-known conservative activist, speaks of his days in the "glory" of the media limelight. He had just appeared on the Phil Donahue Show, was whisked from the studio to the airport in a limo, basking in his celebrity status.

When his wife picked him up from the airport, he bragged about the experience and his important status all the way home. She listened quietly and then asked, "Would you take the garbage to the dump now?"

Dobson says that as he drove to the dump in his old pick-up truck with his TV makeup still on, he realized, "Real life is not lived in the glare of the television camera – it's taking garbage to the dump." This was the thought that would eventually alter the whole direction of his life.

Ed Dobson (with Cal Thomas)
Blinded by Might: Can the Religious Right Save America?
(1999) Page 18

MEANING OF NEIGHBOR

The word neighbor in the Scriptures means “near ones.”

Who is nearer to us than the people who make up family – parents, partner, children, and grandchildren?

Peter M. Lord
Bless and Be Blessed (2004)
Page 133

“IN EVERY THING”

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church: and He is the Savior of the Body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing” (Ephesians 5:22-24).

The wife is exhorted to subordinate herself to her husband. The subordination that Paul urges here stems from the unity of the husband and wife ... a point which the comparison with Christ and the church makes particularly clear. The purpose of the subordination is to provide a deeper and more solid oneness between husband and wife as they function together ...

Paul exhorts the wife to subordinate herself to her husband “*in everything*.” This phrase has evoked comments dealing with the question of limitations to the wife’s obedience to the husband. Such a question arises out of the modern desire to define authority relationships. People in modern society limit authority by controlling the scope of someone’s authority, specifying what decisions a person in authority can make ... The phrase “*in everything*” means that the wife is to subordinate to her husband in every area of her life. No part of her life should be outside of her relationship to her husband and outside of subordination to him. We should see the exhortation to be subordinate “*in everything*” in its immediate context in the passage.

The husband and wife are to be “*one flesh*” or “*one person*” with the husband as head ... The purpose of the woman’s subordination is to create a oneness between the man and the woman, the kind of oneness that lets them be one person in society. This oneness means that the whole of the woman’s life (everything she does) has to be subordinate to her husband so that together they can have one life.

Stephen B. Clark
Man and Woman In Christ
Servant Books, 1980, pages 82-83

THE FEMINIST MISTAKE

I hope people will see the feminist movement for what it is – harmful to women ...

Feminism discounts every bit of value the Lord has placed on living in relation to Him. It’s a movement that negates the pattern of marriage and the importance of children and men ...

The absolutely beautiful thing is how the Lord designed men and women. When He acknowledged Adam’s loneliness, He could have designed anyone as a companion. He could have made another man. But He didn’t. He made a woman. A man and a woman in union with Himself ...

Diane Passno
Feminism: Mystique or Mistake? (2000)

WHEN THE WIFE ASKS FOR COUNSEL

There are many occasions when a wife is feeling distressed about some difficulty, and she comes to her husband and says, “What should I do?” An abdicating husband will tell her that he does not care and that she can do whatever she wants to do. But when a wife seeks counsel from her husband, *she should always receive counsel*. When she comes to her husband and asks for a decision, he should always make a decision ...

Now a godly husband may decide, after taking

his wife's concerns into account, to do things "her way." But in a godly home, as soon as he does this, *it becomes his decision*. He is entirely responsible for it. Once the decision is made, it is his decision.

Douglas Wilson
Reforming Marriage
Pages 81-82

HYPOCRISY OF OUR JUDGMENT

However imperfect we may be, we want to believe that we are not as bad as others.

We feed our self-righteousness with this illusory contrast by ascribing our worth at the expense of others. But "the others" we feed off of see the self-serving hypocrisy of the self-righteous and self-serving exercise, even if we don't.

(continued from page 1400)

*"For **the creature** was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath **subjected the same in hope**, because **the creature** itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that **the whole creation** groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the **firstfruits** of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Romans 8:20-23).*

The same "the creature" that "was made subject to vanity" is the exact same "the creature" that "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This is why Paul refers to "the whole creation," of which we are but "the firstfruits of the Spirit."

This is the "subjection" of divine hope upon "the whole creation."

The same "all men" who were condemned in Adam are the exact same "all men" who will be

To illustrate, more than a few have noticed the comic irony in the fact that the group most vocal about "the sanctity of marriage," namely evangelical Christians, happens to be the group with the highest number of divorces in the United States, which itself had the highest divorce rate in the world! Numerous explanations have been offered by Christians to minimize this embarrassment, but none of them are convincing – or even relevant. Whatever our excuses, outsiders legitimately wonder, "If evangelicals want to enforce by law 'the sanctity of marriage,' why don't they stop ... worrying about laws to regulate *others'* behavior and spend their time and energy sanctifying their *own* marriages?"

Gregory A. Boyd
The Myth of a Christian Nation (2005)
Page 136-137

■
justified in Christ.

*"Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon **all men** to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon **all men** unto justification of life" (Romans 5:18).*

The same "many" who were made sinners in Adam are the exact same "many" who will be made righteous in Christ.

*"For as by one man's disobedience **many** were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall **many** be made righteous" (Romans 5:19).*

The same "all" who die in Adam are the exact same "all" who will be made alive in Christ.

*"For as in Adam **all** die, even so in Christ shall **all** be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:22).¹*

■

1. The verse does not read, "For as all those who are in Adam die, even so also all those who are in Christ shall be made alive."

Reader's Question Box #2

Q. In I Thessalonians 4:13, Paul refers to “others which have no hope.” If Paul was teaching the Salvation of all, who would he be referring to as having no hope? In this passage of Scripture it is obvious he is referring to the Resurrection hope, so these “others” would not have any hope of resurrection; but how could that be if “all” were to be eventually saved?

A. Let's start by getting a definition of the word “hope.” It is the Greek word “*elpis*” (Strong's Greek Lexicon #1680), and according to Strong it means “expectation or confidence.” Interestingly enough it is so identified with faith, that it is even translated as “*faith*” in the *King James Version* (Hebrews 10:23).

We all have neighbors who live around us who are lost. They have no *faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result they have no *hope* beyond the grave. They believe that the grave is, or may be the end; but just believing it does not make it so. Just because they personally have no hope, does not mean that there is not any hope for them beyond the grave. It simply means that they personally have not the confident expectation (hope) that we do.

Even those who are already saved can be taught incorrectly and thus be without the hope of resurrection. This was the case with some at the city of Corinth. Paul had to write to them about resurrection truth in I Corinthians 15. Here we have believers who had no resurrection hope. Obviously this did not mean that they would not be raised, or that they were “hopeless” beyond the grave.

Hope, as with faith, is a very personal thing. Just because one does not believe in resurrection, does not mean that it does not exist, or that they will not experience it. It just means that they personally have no confident expectation (hope) of it, because of their lack of faith.

Since “*hope*” and “*faith*” are both *King James Version* translations of “*elpis*,” our verse at hand

could just as easily have been translated “*others which have no faith*.” The reason that they have no hope is that they have no faith.

Believers who have faith and hope in God's promise of resurrection are saved from the hopelessness of the grave, therefore we don't sorrow in the same way as those that do who are without hope.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope” (I Thessalonians 4:13).

Just because someone has no hope or faith now, it does not mean that they will not have any in the future. Neither does it mean that the thing to be believed or hoped for does not exist, and that it will not come to pass – even for them.

Hope is a divine quality that is produced in stages. I have more hope now than when I first believed.

“... Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:3-5).

Hope is a process. Starting with tribulation, and then through experience, finally hope is produced in our lives. This divine process has not yet been fully developed in the lost. God is not now working with the full harvest; He is working with the firstfruit. The full harvest has no personal hope within the heart at this time; but not to worry, for the end result is not about man at all, but about God Himself, “*Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will*” (Ephesians 1:11).

The simple fact is that God has subjected the entire creation to hope, and it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, whether or not they apprehend it by faith (hope) now.

(continued on page 1399)