



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 142

The Salvation of All

Select Readings on

Universal Reconciliation, Part 2

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

BLESSINGS OF GOD UPON SODOM

*"... When your sisters, Sodom and her daughters, **shall return to their former estate**, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate ..." (Ezekiel 16:55).*

Many people are not aware that the Bible declares that Sodom and Gomorrah shall be raised up again in the day of judgment to be corrected and finally restored to their former estate. What a merciful and loving God! ...

As far as the destruction of the city is concerned, it was necessary, and part of the purpose of God to bring about His progressive revelation in the earth. But we must keep in mind that just because God pours out judgment and wrath on people, does not mean that He has cast them off forever. His judgments and His wrath do not last forever. They are temporary and for the purpose of correction. Oh that Christians would be able to understand this about their Heavenly Father! God does not condone wickedness of any kind. But God is able to correct the sinner and restore him to his former estate. Remember ... God is Love! Remember ... Love never fails! It is impossible for God to give up on Sodom and Gomorrah, for He loves them, and His love will never fail them!

Isaiah 57:16 states,

"... For I [God] will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth ..."

Lamentations 3:31-32 states,

"... For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though He cause grief, yet will He have compassion according to the multitudes of His mercies ..."

Let God show you His great compassion and mercy for all.

God loves all, even Sodom and Gomorrah!

Thomas Kissinger
The Glory of God and the Honor of Kings

ALWAYS HAS, ALWAYS WILL

I am convinced that God is, always has been, and always will be the God of love, as most fully revealed in Jesus Christ.

Walter Callison
Divorce – A Gift of God's Love, page ii

LOVE IS COMPLETELY ADEQUATE

There is no difficulty that enough love will not conquer; No disease that enough love will not heal; No door that enough love will not open;

(continued page 1459)

Precious Ones. Beloved of the Father.

It is always such a joy and privilege to write a few personal words to you here. Sometimes space is limited in the BSN, and we can't take this opportunity; but I am always thrilled when room does permit.

BSN #141

In the last issue of the BSN we ran an extremely important article, *Why Jesus Died: The Undoing of Adam*, by C. Baxter Kruger. If any of our readers have not yet read this outstanding work, I would greatly encourage you to do so.

This article marks a significant change, clarification, and enlightenment in my own personal understanding of God and redemption! I hope that all of us can fully appreciate the power of the truth that it contains. I so appreciate the fellowship that we share in the continuous flow of truth that God is manifesting in our insignificance!

Rick Lemons, our co-laborer and associate editor, summed it up quite well with his observation: "WOW! I failed to realize that legalism goes not only to all depths but to all heights also!"

Andre Sneidar

Our dear brother in Christ, and managing editor, Andre, along with his two sons Daniel and Xavier, came for a wonderful visit. We were refreshed through the fellowship of mutual ministry. His work in all our publishing projects is invaluable. He is a true gift of God to me personally, and to those of you who enjoy the BSN and other fruits of his labor!

Susannah & Emma

My daughter Susannah and granddaughter Emma come from Weston, MO for a visit. Words can't express the thrill of having them for a full week! You won't be surprised that we made a few trips to the park with Emma. The only thing that could've made it better is if "daddy" (Justin) could have traveled with them!

Kathy Purdy

It is with heartfelt sadness that we share with our readers of the death of Kathy Ellen (McKay) Purdy. She was the wife of one of our writers, Ross Purdy. We ran his wonderful article *Enjoy the Learning Process in BSN #94*, and more recently, the series *I Will Have One Doctrine & One Discipline in BSN #122 – #126*.

She was 36 and died at home from a seizure on June 12th. She leaves an enormous emptiness in the lives of her husband and their two children, Luke and Trina. Some may know Kathy as the daughter of Bible teacher John McKay of Defiance, OH. How greatly she will be missed.

Words of love and encouragement can be sent to our dear brother and his children:

Ross Purdy
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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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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.

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No gulf that enough love will not bridge; No wall that enough love will not throw down; No sin that enough love will not redeem ...

Emmet Fox (1886-1951)

GOD'S OWNERSHIP

"The earth is the LORD'S, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Psalms 24:1).

My hope of salvation rests on the ground that God owned me at the outset, and has never forfeited His ownership. My soul may be small; but it is as much God's as His own eternal spirit. It may be for a season lost; but the ownership is not thereby transferred.

I have neither the right nor power to barter away my soul, nor has any other than my heavenly Father the right or power to everlastingly control it.

S.A. Gardner (1842-?)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 378

WHO WOULD DARE SMILE?

Who would dare so much as to smile, if he really believed endless torments were certain to be the portion of some members of his household ... Marriage would be a crime; each birth the occasion of an awful dread. The shadow of a possible Hell would darken every home, sadden every family hearth. All this becomes evident when we reflect, that to perpetuate the race would be to help on the perpetuation of moral evil. For if this creed be true, out of all the yearly births a steady current is flowing on to help fill the abyss of hell, to make larger and vaster the total moral evil which is to endure forever. "The world would be one vast madhouse" says the American scholar Hallsted, "if realizing and continued pressure of such a doctrine was present."

Thomas Allin (1835-1908)

Christ Triumphant, page 57

IS ANYTHING TOO GOOD FOR GOD?

Too good to be true! Its goodness, then, is acknowledged.

Too good to be true! These words comprehend much: they tell more for this despised truth than some seem to be aware. But can anything be too good for infinite goodness? Can anything be too good for infinite wisdom, prompted by infinite goodness, to devise? Anything too good for infinite goodness, wisdom, and power to accomplish?

Joshua Britton (1803-1878)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 338

JUSTICE IS NOT AT ODDS WITH MERCY

The grandest exercise of justice is mercy. The confusion comes from the fancy that justice means vengeance upon sin, and not the doing of what is right. Justice can be at no strife with mercy, for not to do what is just would be most unmerciful.

George MacDonald (1824-1905)

England's Antiphon (1874), page 150

THEN WILL I LISTEN

Show me sunlight that causes darkness; show me heat that freezes plants; show me love that delights in torture; and then I will listen while you talk of our heavenly Father cursing forever a portion of His children.

V.E. Tomlinson (1862-?)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 94

A GOD WHO IS AGAINST US

Too often the God who is preached from our pulpits, and who inhabits our Christian imagination, is a God who at root is against us rather than for us, who is waiting for an opportunity to condemn or to cast us off, rather than to embrace and restore us.

Trevor Hart

Home Foreword, page 5

IMPOSSIBLE, IF COMMITTED TO WEAKER HANDS

The Savior cannot desist from His reconciling work until every soul that God has made shall be, through all its depths, in harmony with Him. The task is vast and difficult beyond conception, and its accomplishment would be plainly impossible if it were committed to any weaker hands than those of the Son of God.

J. Smith Dodge (1834-?)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 376

GOD'S WORD OPERATES

The Word of God is living and operative (Hebrews 4:12). It always prospers in accord with God's desire (Isaiah 55:11). When God said, "Let light come to be!" light did in fact come to be (Genesis 1:3). Consequently, we may be assured that when God says, through His chosen apostle to the nations, that He will become "All in All" (I Corinthians 15:28), this will indeed become so. And when He says concerning us, who are believing His evangel concerning His Son, that God prefers us from the beginning for salvation (II Thessalonians 2:13), we may be certain that this special salvation (c.f. I Timothy 4:10) will be fully enjoyed, even as it is enjoyed in spirit today as we are believing (c.f. Ephesians 1:13-14; I Thessalonians 1:5). Believing what God says to us concerning the good He has achieved and that will be realized through the death, entombment and resurrection of Christ has powerful effects on us in our lives. It is a message of power, bringing grace and peace.

Dean H. Hough
Unsearchable Riches, Vol. 98, No. 6, page 279

GOD MISREPRESENTED

How terribly have the theologians misrepresented God! ... Nearly all of them represent Him as a great King on a grand throne, thinking how grand He is, and making it the business of His being and the end of His universe to keep up His glory, wielding the bolts of a Jupiter against them that take His name in vain. They would not allow this, but follow out what they say, and it comes much to this.

Brothers, have you found our king? There He is,

kissing little children and saying they are like God ... The simplest peasant who loves his children and his sheep were – no, not a truer, for the other is false, but – a true type of our God beside that monstrosity of a monarch.

Gordon MacDonald (1824-1905)
The Child in the Midst

THE FREE-WILL OF GOD

It is said that we can affirm nothing certain of any soul eternally free. But it is overlooked that God is as eternally free as any soul – and more so – and that, in the exercise of His eternal, sovereign free-will, He "will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

R.T. Polk (1837-?)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 354

GOD IS LOVE

That one unquestioned text we read,
All doubt beyond, all fear above;
Nor crackling pile, nor curing creed
Can burn or blot it out – "God is love."

Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 272

NOTHING TO ADD

The work that put sinners right with God is complete. The old hymn tells the truth: "Jesus Paid It All!" We cannot add anything to this saving work that Jesus has accomplished. We cannot improve on it. We cannot supplement it. We cannot make it shine any brighter. We cannot do anything to make God love us more than He already does ...

Nothing we can ever learn, nothing that we will ever do, nothing we might ever experience can contribute anything whatsoever to the work that sets us right with God. That work is the perfect doing and the perfect dying of Jesus Christ, our substitute and representative. Jesus completed the work. God accepted it and stamped it with His endorsement. The work that sets us right with God

is finished. It is finished! ...

The gospel is the “good news” that God has set sinners right with Himself through Jesus Christ.

William Fudge

The Great Rescue: The Story of God’s Amazing Grace (2002), page 86

THE GREAT HOPE OF THE GOSPEL

“God is love” (I John 4:8, 16)

God’s fatherly love of every soul is a thing indestructible and infinite. It is of that divine nature that no weakness, imperfection, or sin in us can destroy or diminish it. He loves the humblest and meanest on earth just as much as He loves the highest and holiest in heaven.

Love may manifest itself in tenderness and blessing in the one case, and in severity and fearful penalties in the other; but it is love just the same. Fatherly love punishes that it may save, and salvation must be the final consummation of God’s dealings with every soul. This is Christianity; that is the great hope of the gospel; that is the almighty power and grace of God.

James Gorton (1831-?)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 216

BEYOND CONCEPTION

We cannot conceive of a Creator who knows the end from the beginning, one who is Love, who has infinite wisdom, and infinite power, giving to any being life, life which is never to end, but to continue in suffering to all eternity. The Bible does not teach it anywhere in the original languages. God’s punishments are remedial and take place within the span of the ages during which He is accomplishing the making of man in His image and likeness. Punishment will last no longer than is necessary to bring man to hate his sin and be reconciled to his Savior.

G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945)

The Cross and the Ages to Come

CONTRASTS BETWEEN UNIVERSAL STATEMENTS

“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).

“For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all” (Romans 11:32).

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

In each of these texts, we encounter a contrast between two universal statements, and in each case the first “all” seems to determine the scope of the second. Accordingly, when Paul asserts in Romans 5:18 that Christ’s one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all, he evidently has in mind every descendant of Adam who stands under the judgment of condemnation; when he insists in Romans 11:32 that God is merciful to all, he has in mind every human being who God has “shut up” to, or has “imprisoned” in, disobedience; and finally, when he asserts in I Corinthians 15:22 that “all shall be made alive” in Christ, he has in mind everyone who has died in Adam. The grammatical evidence here seems utterly decisive; you can reject it only if you are prepared to reject what is right before your eyes.

Thomas Talbott

The Inescapable Love of God, pages 59-60

MORE POWERFUL THAN FEAR!

“The love of Christ constraineth us” (II Corinthians 5:15).

Here is the constraint of love, the influence of a divine Savior, whose love had become effective and powerful, resulting in repentance and obedience. [A]gain says this apostle,

“The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance” (Romans 2:4).

More powerful than fear, more potent than terror, more effective than the proclamation of doom, the course of the Son of God depends on *love* for its victories, and on the power of the Cross of Christ throughout the ages for its most cheering and assuring triumphs.

J.S. Cantwell (1837-?)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 202

OUR FATHER'S DISPOSITION

Were there no other passages of the Bible handed down to us but those which declare that God is our Father, and that He is love, these alone would be a sufficient foundation for the faith we cherish in regard to the final salvation of all souls.

All His attributes, whatever they may be, must subordinate to His *love*; and since He “*is good to all: and His tender mercies are over all His works*” as the Psalmist declares (Psalms 145:9), we feel sure that such must be His disposition forever. However severe, therefore, His judgments may be, we may confidently assert that in the very nature of His disposition, *eternal punishment of any* would be an utter impossibility since, if He were to inflict such a penalty, He would no longer deserve to be called “our Father.”

Henry Kirke White (1837-?)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 202

THE POWER OF LOVE

“... *God is love*” (I John 4:8).

In the New Testament, love means nothing less than the true nature of God. John assures us that God – the power behind our vast universe – is love, and that the life of His Son Jesus on earth was neither more nor less than the expression of that nature, that love, in terms of human life.

J.B. Phillips (1906-1982)
For This Day (1975), page 10

IS LOVE OUR WEAKNESS?

Is the love we bear our kindred a weakness of our earthly natures? Shall we drop it, in the resurrection? Nay, love is divine. It infuses into this life whatever there is of Heaven. It will constitute the atmosphere of the better land, for “*God is love.*” And, if one soul should fail of admission there, it would sadden all Heaven, nay, it would send a pang through the heart of God.

Daniel Parker Livermore (1818-1899)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 192

AN INFINITE EMBRACE

The unbeliever may easily imagine a better God than the common theology of the country offers him; but not the lovingest heart that ever beat can even reflect the length and breadth and depth and height of that love of God which shows itself in His Son – one, and of one mind, with Himself. The whole history is a divine agony to give divine life to creatures. The outcome of that agony ... will be radiant life, whereof joy unspeakable is the flower. Every child will look in the eyes of the Father, and the eyes of the Father will receive the child with an infinite embrace.

George MacDonald (1824-1905)
Unspoken Sermons: Second Series (1885), page 143

HE WILL NEVER

If God loves His children one-half as well as I do mine, He can never inflict endless misery upon them. If Jesus is as merciful and as impartial to His brethren as Joseph was to His, He will never suffer them to perish in a barren land while the riches of His grace endure, or the treasures of His love are unexhausted.

Dolphus Skinner (1800-1869)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 158

GOD COULD NOT POSSIBLY LOVE US MORE

The powers of darkness want people ignorant of God, and they accomplish this by engaging men

and women in the needless exercise of working to win God's affection. Religion demands that people "walk the line" to win the affection of a God Who already could not possibly love them more.

Martin Zender

How to Be Free From Sin While Smoking a Cigarette (2007), page 25

INFINITE LOVE, WISDOM, POWER AND JUSTICE

The fact that man was created by a God of infinite love, wisdom, power and justice is a guarantee that such existence will not in any case prove an endless curse.

Infinite love would desire the final happiness of all.

Infinite wisdom would arrange a perfect plan, which, when carried through, would secure the end desired.

Infinite power would secure all that infinite love desired, or infinite wisdom devised.

Infinite justice could be satisfied with nothing less than what the other attributes of God claimed – the destruction of evil and the triumph of good throughout the empire of God.

John Crenshaw Burruss (1821-?)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 156

MY PLEA

I plead for Christ, for the Honor of His name, for the power of His salvation, for the glory of His cross, for the endless and boundless ministries of His redemption.

I plead for the hope of sin withered by the hand of omnipotent love; of hell destroyed; of Christ triumphant, gathering the fruits of His cross and passion.

James Baldwin Brown (1820-1884)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 126

UNJUST NOTION

The notion that a creature born imperfect, nay, born with impulses to evil not of his own generating, and which he could not help having, a creature to whom the true face of God was never presented, and by whom it never could have been seen, should be thus condemned, is as loathsome a lie against God as could find place in a heart too undeveloped to understand what justice is.

Gordon MacDonald (1824-1905)

Unspoken Sermons: Third Series (1889), page 31

WHEN THE GOAL IS ATTAINED

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Romans 11:36).

In the issues of God's dispensations there can be no permanent ill. He is absolutely good. Of Him are all things, through Him are all things, and to Him are all things. When the goal is attained, all will be well. When our visions are unsealed by the life immortal, we shall perceive that what our finite sense termed ill in this life was but a necessary part of the great and wonderful plan of human redemption.

Adoniram Judson Patterson (1827-1909)

Voices of the Faith (1887), page 112

GOD IS GOOD

Against the many religious doctrines that appeal to and cultivate our fear, I shall urge upon my reader this simple proposition: Contrary to what we might fear, the Creator and Father of our souls – the Lord of hosts and King of kings – is good.

... But the history of organized religion, at least in the Western tradition, is a record of our human resistance to the proclamation that God is love, that His love extends to everyone, and that it is in no way conditioned upon human obedience or human faithfulness ...

We shall find in the end,

“Perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love” (I John 4:18).

Thomas Talbott
The Inescapable Love of God, pages 1, 37, 39

MUCH MORE LOVING

I believe that God is much more loving than we have been led to believe. Many people say that God loves us, but in the next breath they tell us that He will condemn us to hell if we do not measure up to the standards *they* lay down in His name.

Walter Williams
Love Without Limit (2004), page 13

GOD REIGNS

God REIGNS; that is the great *first* truth. He does not merely contemplate and oversee; He designs, directs, and decrees, and is never disconcerted nor disappointed. What to us are aberrations, defeats, disasters, are, to Him,

“... Declaring the end from the beginning ... My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure” (Isaiah 46:10).

They are but steps toward the fulfillment of His transcendent, beneficent purposes of universal good.

Horace Greeley (1811-1872)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 46

THE LEAST TO THE GREATEST

“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. ...

And 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.” ...*

John Wesley
The General Spread of the Gospel
(Sermon 63, 1872 edition)

CHEATED OF THE GOOD NEWS

“... God is love” (I John 4:8).

If we are not very much on our guard, we shall be cheated of the Good News. The inestimable comfort of knowing that God is love will be whisked away and we shall be given instead something so poor, unbending and relentless that, instead of being reassured, we will be repulsed and frightened.

J.B. Phillips (1906-1982)
For This Day (1975), page 11

HIS INFINITELY SUPERIOR GOODNESS

Evil and sin, it is true, are all too abundant in this world. They are matters of the most common observation in our daily life. God sent His only-begotten Son that the human race through Him might be freed from the bondage of sin and consequent misery. Every good man desires that this work shall be perfect and complete. Much more, then, does our heavenly Father desire it, as He is infinitely superior to us in goodness. He will never be satisfied until the last one of His erring and sinful children has been brought into the fold of the Good Shepherd, and made holy and happy. When there shall be no missing link in the chain, and not until every last child of the Father has been redeemed, will it be possible for any of His children to be entirely happy.

John Julius Weeks (1850-?)
Voices of the Faith (1887), page 106