



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume V
Issue 148

The Loveliness of Christ

by – C.I. Scofield (1843-1921)

All other greatness has been marred by littleness; all other wisdom has been flawed by folly; all other goodness has been tainted by imperfection.

PERFECT HUMANITY

First of all, as it seems to me, this loveliness of Christ consists in His perfect humanity.

In everything but our sins, and our evil nature, He is one with us. He grew in stature and in grace. He labored, and wept, and prayed and loved. He was tempted in all points as we are – sin apart.

Beloved, there is no other who establishes with us such intimacy, who comes so close to these human hearts of ours ... He enters simply and naturally into our lives as if He had been reared on the same street with us. He is not one of the ancients; He is one of us.

How wholesomely and genuinely human He is! Martha scolds Him. John, who had seen Him raise the dead, still the tempest, and talk with Moses and Elijah on the Mount, does not hesitate to make a pillow on His breast at supper.

They ask Him foolish questions, and rebuke Him, and venerate and adore Him in one breath. And He calls them by their first names, and tells them to fear not, and assures them of His love. In all of this He is to me altogether lovely.

His perfection does not glitter; it glows. The saintliness of Jesus is so warm and human that it attracts and inspires. We find in it nothing austere

and inaccessible. The beauty of His holiness reminds one rather of a rose, or a bank of violets, which warmly beckon to all who see it.

Jesus receives sinners and eats with them – all kinds of sinners such as Nicodemus, the moral, religious sinner, and Mary Magdalene, “out of whom went seven devils” – the shocking kind of sinner.

He comes into sinful lives as a bright, clear stream enters a stagnant pool. The stream is not afraid of contamination but its sweet energy cleanses the pool.

PERFECT COMPASSION

Moreover, Christ's sympathy is altogether lovely. He is always being touched with compassion. The multitude without a shepherd, the sorrowing widow of Nain, the little dead child of the ruler, the demoniac of Gadara, the hungry five thousand – all these representing suffering – whatever suffers touches Jesus' heart. His very wrath against the scribes and Pharisees is but the excess of His sympathy for those who suffered under their hard self-righteousness.

Why did He touch that poor leper? He could have healed him with a word as He did the nobleman's son. Why, for years the wretch had been an

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Dear Saints,

Olga M. Phillips
1930 - 2008

It is with heartfelt sadness that I share with our readers of the death of Olga Phillips. She was the mother of Janet Maher, the gracious assistant that God provided me when we moved to Windber.

Janet, a lifelong resident of Johnstown, joined our family in the day-to-day life and responsibilities of our business and ministry nearly four years ago. I have known Janet for nearly 20 years. The blessing she has been since arriving to PA is beyond words – an invaluable Godsend. I am always amazed at the hand of God in our lives.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17).

Although behind the scenes, Janet is a vital part of the **BSN**. In fact, for those of you who receive the printed version, she handles each of your issues – assembling them and getting them ready for the post office.

Janet’s mother Olga “fell asleep” in Christ on July 21st at the age of 78. Her death reminds of two things:

(1) No matter how long we live, life is simply too short. It goes by so very quickly.

“What is your life? It is even a vapor, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away” (James 4:14).

Death should remind us to live and love strongly – every moment to its fullest!

(2) We have a confident expectation for Olga, and all our loved ones already in the grave.

“For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (I Corinthians 15:25-26).

“Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, ‘Death is swallowed up in victory’” (I Corinthians 15:54).

(see **EDITORIAL**, next page)

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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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LOVELINESS (continued from page 1505)

outcast, cut off from kin, dehumanized. He lost the sense of being a man. It was defilement to approach him. Well, the touch of Jesus made him human again.

PERFECT GENTLENESS

Further, Christ's gentleness is altogether lovely. It is in His way with sinners that the supreme loveliness of Jesus is most sweetly shown. How gentle He is, how faithful; how considerate, how respectful. His gentleness is never weak. His courage is never brutal.

When He speaks to that silent despairing woman, after her accusers had gone out one by one, He uses for "woman" the same word that He used when addressing His own dear mother from the cross.

Follow Him to Jacob's solitary well and hear His conversation with the woman of Samaria. How patiently He unfolds the deepest truths. He could not be more respectful to Mary of Bethany.

Even in the agonies of death, He could hear the cry of despairing faith.

PERFECT POISE

My friends, you may study these things for yourselves. Follow Him through all the scenes of outrage and insult on the night and morning of

EDITORIAL (continued from previous page)

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death..." (Revelation 21:4).

Even though I knew Olga for only four short years, it did not take me long to know what a wonderful woman she was. She was like a mother to me. Oh, how she loved her family – they were her life! – and oh, how her family loved her. Olga has left a vast emptiness in their hearts and lives.

Those of you who desire to send our dear sister Janet words of love and encouragement can do so at the following address:

His arrest and trial. Behold Him before the high priest, before Pilate, before Herod. See Him brow-beaten, bullied, scourged, smitten upon the face, spit upon, mocked. How His inherent greatness comes out: not once does He lose His poise.

Let me ask you to follow Him still further to His crucifixion. Go with the jeering crowd without the gates; see Him stretched upon the great, rough cross and hear the dreadful sound of the sledge as the spikes are forced through His hands and feet. See, as the yelling mob falls back, the cross, bearing this gentlest, sweetest, bravest, loveliest man, upreared until it falls into the socket in the rock.

"And sitting down, they watched Him there"
(Matthew 27:36).

Listen too. Hear Him ask the Father to forgive His murderers, hear all His cries from the cross.

"When they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified Him. ... Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:33-34).

Is He not altogether lovely?

The Loveliness of Christ
abridged



Janet Maher
409 Devon Dr.
Johnstown, PA 15904

Goodnight Olga, you are greatly loved and will be dearly missed. Rest well; we will all see you in the morning!

"I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15b).



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

ACC

ALL MEN

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw **all men** unto me” (John 12:32).

“... Even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon **all men** unto justification of life” (Romans 5:18).

“Who will have **all men** to be saved ...” (I Timothy 2:4-6).

EVERY MAN

“That was the true Light, which lighteth **every man** that cometh into the world” (John 1:9).

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But **every man** in his own order ...” (I Corinthians 15:22-23).

ALL FAMILIES

“... In thee shall **all families** of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:2-3).

ALL FLESH

“... **All flesh** shall see the salvation of God” (Luke 3:5-6).

ALL THE KINDREDS

“... **All the kindreds** of the nations shall worship before thee” (Psalm 22:27).

ALL NATIONS

“... The LORD’S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and **all nations** shall flow unto it” (Isaiah 2:2).

THE WORLD

“... Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of **the world**” (John 1:29).

“This is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of **the world**” (John 4:42).

“To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling **the world** unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us **the word** of reconciliation” (II Corinthians 5:14, 19).

THE WHOLE WORLD

“And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of **the whole world**” (I John 2:2).

EVERY CREATURE

“Who is the Image of the invisible God, the Firstborn of **every creature**” (Colossians 1:15).

“And **every creature** which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Revelation 5:13).

ALL THINGS

“Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of **all things** ...” (Acts 3:21).

“For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are **all things** ...” (Romans 11:36).

(see **ALL**, page 1511)

"We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, 'I believed, and therefore have I spoken;' we also believe, and therefore speak" (II Corinthians 4:13).

My Change in Beliefs

by – Ted McDivitt

A few weeks ago, a brother in the Lord asked if I would write of my experiences that led me to believe that God is the Savior of all men. Preparing this paper has brought much personal joy, simply because I am reminded of so many great memories of people God brought into my life – people who brought to light so many truths that I was ignorant of before. I pray others, too, in reading this paper, might receive a blessing in some measure.

I grew up in a small town in northeast Ohio, though much of our time as a family was spent on my grandparent's one hundred acre property, about eleven miles away. During my childhood years, we attended a *Baptist* church situated directly across from my grandparent's farm. If I remember my dad correctly, the church had its beginning in my grandparent's living room. I don't recall my grandfather sharing much from the Scriptures, but there was never any question about my grandmother's faith and love for the Lord.

My father was one of the main teachers for the adult classes and my mother taught the preschool and young elementary age children. We hardly ever missed a Sunday morning service, and attended most Sunday evening and Wednesday evening prayer services.

At the age of seven, a traveling evangelist spoke at our church. Even though my parents taught me concerning God and the Bible, this speaker caught my attention like never before, especially when he was teaching about the "*fire and brimstone*" of hell. That evening, at the close of his sermon, I went forward and bowed my knees to the Lord, and asked Him to save me.

I still remember myself visualizing what it would be like to be in flames in the hottest fire imaginable, screaming because of the excruciating pain from the heat, skin curling upon skin yet miraculously somehow never disintegrating – and thinking there was no end to this conscious torture. So much did I take this message to heart, I took my best friend to the preacher's doorstep (which happened to be an apartment on my grandparent's property), and I said, "Preacher, this is my best friend. He needs to be saved. I don't want him to spend eternity burning in hell." As soon as I finished telling him this, I left the two alone.

This was my understanding for the next 5-10 years. Sometime in my late teens, I started having discussions with an uncle of mine by the name of John Patterson. He and his wife (my dad's sister) also lived on my grandparent's property, and since we spent most of the summer months camping alongside a lake about 100 yards from his home, we ended up studying together often. He would continually ask me questions that I couldn't answer based on the *Baptist* teaching.

The following are just a few examples:

"If *forever* means endless, then what does *forever and ever* mean?"

"If the twelve apostles are going to be seated on the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel on the earth, where is the apostle Paul's seat?"

"If someone tells you that you are going to go to *hell*, which *hell* do you think they mean?"

"If the dead saints are already conscious with Christ in heaven, then what need is there of ►

the resurrection? And if this is the case, how do we understand death?”

“If Christ’s mission was to seek out those who are lost, and to save sinners, and truly be the Savior of the world, will He be successful? If just one remains lost for all eternity, doesn’t that mean our Lord failed in what He set out to accomplish?”

“What happens to those in the second death when death is finally abolished?”

At about age twelve, we left the *Baptist* church and began attending a *Faith Evangelical Free* church closer to home. I’m not sure why we left the *Baptist* church, except I do remember my father being told by the preacher to skip over Ephesians 1:4 in his class. Dad was told *not* to teach about predestination. It wasn’t long after this that dad resigned.

John Patterson also made the move with us to the *Faith Evangelical Free* church. At first, we were well received. Both mom and dad were given positions as teachers, and even I was asked to teach an adult class when I was in my early twenties. However, in time we experienced what I call “growing pains.” Dad was asked to keep Uncle John “under wraps,” so to speak, in his class. Basically, dad was allowing John to talk too much. Many, including the preacher, were aware that we believed that God is the Savior of all. For some, this was just too much to take. Eventually my family and I were asked to attend a meeting with the elders. Questions were asked to confirm that we, as members of the *Faith Evangelical Free* church, were believing and teaching contrary to the constitution. This being true, and us not denying it, I withdrew my membership, but I also knew that there is only one group that we really need to be members of – that is the “*body of Christ*.”

With the exception of one more altercation in an adult Sunday class concerning I Corinthians 15:22-28, my days in “mainstream churches” were pretty much over. The next major breakthrough in my understanding of God’s *eonian* purpose came in 1982. Before then, the only one I knew who believed God was the Savior of all, besides my parents and my older brother, was John Patterson. I finally asked him, “Who else believes this besides you?” Even though what he taught me made sense, I guess I just needed it confirmed by someone else. So when

I asked him, he gave me the phone number and address of Lloyd Hibberd, who at the time was the pastor of the *Grace and Truth Chapel* in Baldwin, Michigan and was the United States representative for the *Grace and Truth Magazine* printed in England. I forget the exact month, but on a Saturday evening, my parents and I visited with Lloyd and his wife Dorothy in their living room. We had a long list of questions for them to answer. I remember one of mine was concerning Galatians 5:4, especially the words, “*You fall out of grace*.” Needless to say, we were not disappointed. The Hibberds more than confirmed all that my uncle had been sharing with us for several years. If we had any doubts before about God being the Savior of all, they were all removed that evening.

In the following years, Lloyd became like a second father to me and we were blessed to have many precious opportunities to fellowship with one another. He is one of many I am eager to see again when we are caught up together to meet our Lord in the air.

The first weekend conference I attended was held at Lloyd’s church in August of 1983. It was a special one because John Essex, the editor of the *Grace and Truth Magazine*, was there along with some of his co-workers. I had been associated with much of his writings and was thrilled to be able to meet him in person.

That was an exciting time in my life because one by one the barriers that kept me in the dark for so long were crumbling and I was able to perceive God in greater glory than ever before. God gave me a sincere desire to learn and brought very knowledgeable, dedicated teachers into my life. Some of these have passed away such as Lloyd Hibberd, Ray Van Dyke, Guy Marks, and others, yet God has sustained many unto this day who I have become very close to and continue to be blessed much from their labors and dedication in God’s Word. It’s comforting to know that He Who undertakes a good work among us will be performing it until the day of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:6).

Someone else recently asked me what it was that clinched in my own mind that God is the Savior of all. I told her it was a combination of things. As I

(see **CHANGE**, back page)



Letters to the Editor

This is my first *BSN* and I found it to be excellent reading. Thirty minutes and it was completed. Now, I have a quick question that perhaps you can shed some light on. Directly related to issue #143 is the article found on page 1471. It is entitled *The Quality of the Divine Love* by Alexander Thomson. I found the article an interesting change from what I usually am exposed to. Can you point me in the right direction for more discussion regarding this facet of a Christian belief system please? – **OR**

The excerpt *Why Jesus Died*, by C. Baxter Kruger was one of the best articles to run in the *BSN* lately. It highlights the dichotomy in evangelical Christianity between a God who loves, yet desires to vent His wrath; between a powerful God who can save all, and a powerless God who wishes He could save all; between the settled completeness of the cross, and the desperate plea for human action that is the altar call. I daresay many readers, like myself, had to read this article a few times, ponder and mull over it, because it addresses ideas so fundamental to evangelical Christianity we don't even question them.

ALL (continued from page 1508)

*"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 15:21-28).

*"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one **all things** in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him"* (Ephesians 1:10).

It's true that we treat others the way we understand God treating us. If we believe God delights in punishment, we do too. If we believe God loves the unbeliever, but won't accept them until they make a choice (believe), we likewise reject them until such time. If we believe God has done His best at the cross, and now it is up to us to escape an eternity of eternal conscious torment, we will apply threatening and manipulative measures to convert unbelievers and to keep believers in line. If we believe that human choice changes God's attitude towards us, we assign blame to unbelievers and credit ourselves.

This belief that God is vengeful towards us on one hand, and loving on the other, creates the kind of insanity in Christianity that says, "God loves you. Believe or else." Yes, God is violent at times, but Kruger explains that God's violence stems from His unwillingness to allow His creation to remain lost. It is a violence against sin, not against His creation, and the outpouring of His desire to restore fellowship. But for the first time I see the violence at the cross as the violence of sin, not of God. That violence is the hatred of sin towards God, and Christ endured it rather than joining it in rejecting God. I used to think this was God's anger venting; now I see it as sin's anger venting. And it is ugly. There's nothing like perfect love to expose the ugliness of sin. Truly, Christ's continual faith at the cross is the undoing of Adam. – **CA**



*"And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile **all things** unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven"*(Colossians 1:20).



CHANGE (continued from page 1510)

mentioned earlier, when I was quite young, my uncle continually challenged me with questions I couldn't answer. I suppose the questions that stood out the most were the ones involving the Greek words "aion" and "aionios." The realization that these did not mean *forever* or *endless* opened the door for me to believe all the numerous Scriptures that clearly reveal that God will save, justify and reconcile all.

Other important matters I learned from my uncle and confirmed by Lloyd Hibberd and others, were to "rightly divide the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15), "... have a pattern of sound words" (II Timothy 1:13), and "... to be testing what things are of consequence" (Philippians 1:10). The more accurate we are in these entreaties, the more we will grasp, among other things, the unique call and ministry of the apostle Paul. This is crucial for us to understand since he was the one chosen to be the apostle, herald and teacher of the Gentiles (I Timothy 2:7). The simple fact that Paul prefaced the "rightly dividing" with the word "endeavor" shows it is not an easy task, but nevertheless it is an important one if we are to grow in realization of God (Ephesians 1:17) and His purpose of the eons (Ephesians 3:11).

What a privilege it is to know that God graces us in the Beloved, in Whom we are having the deliverance through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses in accord with the riches of His grace, and that He lavishes on us, in all wisdom and prudence making known to us the secret of His will to have an administration of the complement of the eons, to head up all in the Christ – both that in the heavens and that on the earth (Ephesians 1:6-10).

After receiving such grand truths, may God be "worthying us" or causing us to be worthy of the calling, and should be fulfilling every delight of goodness and work of faith in power, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in us, and us in Him, in accord with the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 1:11-12).

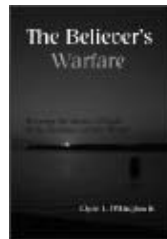
I pray these words will bring some measure of joy and consolation for others.

In His love and grace,
Ted McDivitt



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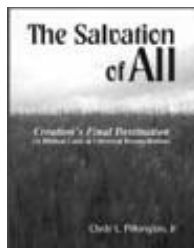
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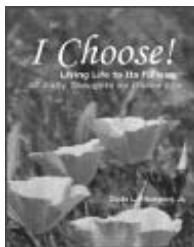
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