



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

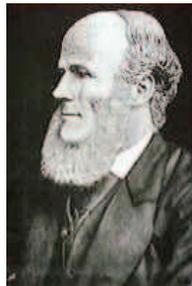
Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IX
Issue 214

Seeing God in Everything

by – C.H. Mackintosh (1820-1896)

Nothing helps the Christian to endure the trials of life so much as the habit of seeing God in everything. If we remember, as we start each day, that the hand of our Father can be traced in every scene; if we could see in the smallest, as well as in the most weighty circumstances, traces of the divine presence, how full of deep interest and meaning each day would be!



This worm, small as it may be, was as much a divine agent as was the “great fish.” A worm, when used by God, can do wonders. It withered Jonah’s gourd, and taught him – as it teaches us – a solemn lesson. True, its lesson was only learned after,

God prepared a vehement east wind (4:8).

The Book of Jonah illustrates this truth in a very special way. To see this, we only need to notice one word: “prepared.” This word occurs in the book four times, each time as an action of God. When Jonah had been cast forth into the sea, we read that,

The Lord had prepared a great fish (1:17).

A great fish was nothing uncommon – there are many of them in the sea. Yet the Lord prepared one for Jonah in order that it might be the instrument of God’s grace.

Again, in chapter four, we find the prophet sitting on the east side of the city of Nineveh, in sullenness and impatience, grieved because the city had not been overthrown and asking the Lord to take away his life.

And the Lord God prepared a gourd (4:6).

Men might see a thousand gourds, and even sit beneath their shade, and yet see nothing extraordinary in them. But Jonah’s gourd exhibited traces of the hand of God, and forms a link – an important link – in the chain of circumstances through which the prophet was passing.

God prepared a worm (4:7).

This only illustrates more strikingly the greatness of our Father’s mind. He can prepare the worm, and He can prepare the wind, and make them both work together to achieve His great designs.

Jehovah can tell the number of the stars, and while He does so He can take knowledge of a falling sparrow. He can make the whirlwind His chariot, and a broken heart His dwelling place. Nothing is great or small with God. The believer, therefore, must be mindful that God can use everything to accomplish His purposes in us and for us. We may pass through the same circumstances and encounter the same trials as other people; but we must not meet them in the same way. We should see the hand of God in everything; in the most trifling as well as in the most momentous occurrences of the day.

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The Apprenticeship of Marriage

by – Paul E. Billheimer

The stresses of marriage ... are designed to produce brokenness, to wean one from self-centeredness, and to produce the graces of sacrificial love and gentleness ...

Because so few people understand the nature and purpose of marriage, when stresses and strains develop they are tempted to feel that they have made a mistake and perhaps have married the wrong person. The next step is to seek a way of escape by one means or another ...

Life and marriage is an apprenticeship for the practice of agape love in preparation for rulership where the law of love is supreme ...

Don't Waste Your Sorrows

The Distinctive Impression of Christ

by – C.A. Coates (1862-1945)

I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

The experience of the love of Christ in tribulation or distress puts a very distinctive impression of Him upon the heart. I have a blank sovereign (British coin) which has never been minted; it is gold, but it does not bear the features of the king. It needs pressure to stamp the king's image there. I believe that the time of trial is the time when a distinctive impression of Christ and His love is put upon the believer. We more than conquer when the pressure of persecution results in the features of Christ appearing distinctively in us.

An Outline of the Epistle to the Romans

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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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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Life is Not Over

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Does it seem that life is over? It is not. You will get past these very dark and trying days, and brighter times will come. Your heart can find healing.



Allow the Father to wrap you in the arms of His love and grace. His love for you is boundless and unmovable. He knows your heartache and pain, your disappointment and feelings of emptiness and even betrayal.

OUR FATHER'S WAYS

“Why is this happening to me?”

Questions that begin with “why” are common when problems come into our lives ...

We look at things differently than our Sovereign Father. For instance, we think the three parts of the day are morning, afternoon and night. Not so with Father. In Genesis, the Bible says that “*the evening and morning were the first day.*” From Father’s perspective, new days begin when things start to get darker, not brighter. *Father’s ways aren’t our ways.*

Consider another example: We believe we must be strong to be productive. Father 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, Father wants to make us weaker, more dependent on Him. *Father’s ways aren’t our ways.*

Under Father’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. *Father’s ways aren’t our ways.*

Forfeit the right to understand your circumstances and, instead, trust the One who does all things well. Thank Father, His ways aren’t our ways. Would you rather have your way? Or, would you rather have the way of an omnipotent Father who will ensure that you would receive the best He has to offer.¹

He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Romans 8:32).

FATHER IS WORKING IN OUR LIVES

*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, **works for us** a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (II Corinthians 4:17-18).*

Paul says that our affliction is working for us. We must remember that Father is busily working in our lives. We must lay hold of this divine viewpoint.

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

Our experiences resemble a jigsaw puzzle. Here is a black piece that seems to fit nowhere at all. It does not make sense. Here is a little brighter piece. Other sections of the jigsaw puzzle are

1. Steve McVey, *Grace Walk*.

dark, and some pitch black, and we cry and moan in these black moments; but by-and-by the Master will take all the pieces that look so disconnected to us now and will carefully arrange each piece in its proper place. Then we shall see His completed work – the work of a Master who makes no mistakes.

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

Take heart, dear child of Father. *Father makes no mistakes.* He loves you more than you love Him, and even as the child cannot understand ... an earthly father until he reaches maturity, so, too, we cannot understand all now; but someday we shall understand.²

THE PURPOSE OF THE TRIAL

Father gives us the understanding of the divine viewpoint of who we are, and of our walk before Him, *then* He leads us down into the hard and bitter valleys so that He might perfect that understanding. It is there that this truth is made real in our lives. Faith must always be tested; it can be transformed into personal possession only through trial.

Let the Father put you on His potter's wheel and whirl you as He likes, and as sure as God is God and you are you, you will turn out exactly in accordance with His design. Don't lose heart in the process ... all noble things are difficult.

Every time you venture out in the life of faith, you will find something in your common-sense circumstances that flatly contradicts your faith. Common sense is not faith, and faith is not common sense; they stand in the relation of the natural and the spiritual. Can you trust Jesus Christ where your common sense cannot trust Him? Can you venture heroically on Jesus Christ's statements when the facts of your common-sense life shout, "It's a lie?"

On the mount it is easy to say – "Oh, yes, I believe Father can do it;" but you have to come down into the valley and meet with facts that laugh ironically at the whole of your mount-of-transfiguration belief. Every time my belief is clear to my own mind, I come across something that contradicts it. Let me say I believe Father will supply all my need, and then let me run dry, with no outlook, and see whether I will go through the trial of faith, or whether I will sink back to something lower.

Faith must be tested, because it can be turned into personal possession only through conflict ... The final thing is confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. Believe steadfastly on Him and all you come up against will develop your faith. There is continual testing in the life of faith ... Faith is unutterable trust in Father, trust which never dreams that He will not stand by us.³

MORE THAN MERE CIRCUMSTANCES

The trials, severe as they may be at times, are just *circumstances*. Our English word "circumstance" is a compound word made up of "circum" (around; surrounding) and "stances" (standing). Our circumstances are those things standing around us, those things which surround our walk.

We must remember that the events in our lives do not constitute who we are – they are merely the things that surround us in our walk – but they are more than *mere* circumstances. Because the Father has ordained them in our lives, they are *divine* circumstances. They are divine testings designed to be the pressing of the Father's hand to mold us into His grand purpose.

We are so vulnerable to becoming preoccupied with the things that scream for attention. It's so easy to let our emotions be drained by things, until we feel empty inside. The answer isn't complicated. It is simply to trust Him. That's all you need. When you don't feel Father's presence in the midst of your circumstances, He is there nonetheless, working out the details of your

2. M.R. DeHaan, M.D (1891-1965), *Broken Things – Why We Suffer*, pages 104-105.

3. Oswald Chambers (1874-1917), *My Utmost for His Highest*.

lifestyle in a way that is perfect and beautiful in His sight. One day you will understand the intricate workings of your Father's hand in the details of your life. For now, your only response must be to know, even when you don't feel anything, you must know, that He only acts in ways that are for your good and His glory.

Choose to lean on your Father. Know that at every moment His arms are around you, sustaining you and holding you. That will never change. Though the world should fall around you, His arms will never let you go. He will protect, comfort and guide you all the days of your life. Choose to rest in Him. It's the only way to move beyond fatigue in your circumstances.

Calm your troubled heart with thoughts of His love and faithfulness, His goodness and Sovereignty. He will never leave or forsake you. He will work out all things for good, according to the perfect plan that He has for you. Those things that concern you concern Him and are under His absolute control at every moment. Nothing escapes His attention; nothing lies beyond what His eyes can see and His hands can control. Don't worry. All is well. When the winds blow and the waves toss your emotions and thoughts about, all is well. He is Lord of

all things at all times. Rest in Him and find peace.⁴

TRIALS AND PAIN

But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold (Job 23:10).

*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in **due season** we shall reap, if we faint not (Galatians 6:9).*

Father has said He will exalt you in due time, but remember, He is referring to His time and not yours!

Some of you are actually in a fiery furnace right now. You are in a special kind of spiritual testing ... In Father's plan it may not yet be "due time" ... but it will come.⁵

Life is not over no matter how hard it may seem. It is the Father's way that lies before you. Rest your weary heart in His immeasurable wisdom and unfailing sovereignty.

4. Steve McVey, *Grace Walk*.

5. A.W. Tozer (1897-1963), *I Call It Heresy!* pages 116-117.

The Love of God

Active (I John 4:19)

Bestowed (I John 3:1)

Consoling (II Thessalonians 2:16-17)

Constraining (II Corinthians 5:14)

Divine (I John 4:8, 16)

Enduring (John 13:1)

Giving (Ephesians 5:25)

Great (Ephesians 2:4)

Manifested (I John 4:9)

Personal (Galatians 2:20)

Redeeming (Isaiah 63:9)

Sacrificing (I John 3:16)

Undeserved (Romans 5:8)

Unfailing (I Corinthians 13:8)

Unfathomable (Ephesians 3:18-19)

Universal (John 3:16)

Learning from Our Weaknesses

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust (Psalm 103:14).

The world, and often the believer right along with it, looks to and for greatness, prestige, prominence, honor and reputation. God looks to and uses foolish, weak, base and despised things.

For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, has God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nothing things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence (I Corinthians 1:26-29).

It is as weak earthen vessels (II Corinthians 4:7-18) that God teaches us valuable lessons in preparation for our celestial position with Christ in the Heavens.

In Our Weaknesses We Learn of Calvary's Love

We learn of the **TIMING** of His love: *while we were sinners.*

But God commends His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

We learn the **EXTENT** of His love: *great.*

But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us (Ephesians 2:4).

We learn the **ENDURANCE** of His love: *nothing can separate us from it.*

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn Humility

In our weakness He removes all other supposed sources of personal strength. It is all about Him, and not about us.

Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? (Galatians 3:3).

But by the grace of God I am what I am: and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me (I Corinthians 15:10).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn of the All-Sufficiency of His Ability

In our weaknesses we learn that we are the workmanship of God (Ephesians 2:8-10) and He will accomplish His work (Philippians 1:6; 2:13).

I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me (Philippians 4:13).

He said unto me, "My grace is sufficient for you: for My strength is made perfect in

weakness ...” (II Corinthians 12:9).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn Patience

God’s work in us takes time. We are able to learn patience with ourselves and with others. Our brothers and sisters are the workmanship of God as well. What a difference that understanding can make!

... We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation works patience (Romans 5:3).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn the Reception of Others

Wherefore receive one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God (Romans 15:7).

When we see ourselves in our weaknesses, and our reception by Christ in that state, it becomes the ground of which we receive others. It deters us from judging, or setting aside our brothers.

But why do you judge your brother? Or, why do you set at nought your brother? (Romans 14:10).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn to Deal Graciously with Others

Our weaknesses cause us to learn the true nature of grace. In our own failures we learn to be gracious with others.

Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, dealing graciously among yourselves, according as God also, in Christ, deals graciously with you (Ephesians 4:32 Concordant Literal Translation).

Put on, then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, pitiful compassions, kindness, humility, meekness, patience, bearing with one another and dealing graciously among yourselves, if anyone should be having a complaint against any. According as the Lord also deals graciously with you, thus also you (Colossians 3:12-13 Concordant Literal Translation).

In Our Weaknesses We Learn to Forget

We cannot “go forward” “in the past.” Understanding the divine viewpoint of our weaknesses we are able to forget the past.

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:13-14).

As weak earthen vessels God prepares us for our “high calling” position with Christ in the Heavenly places! ■

Coving, or Angry?

by – H.A. Ironside (1876-1951)

For God so loved the world, that He gave ... (John 3:16).

This verse negates the idea that a great many people have that God is a stern, angry Judge waiting to destroy men because of their sins. They think that because Jesus Christ loved us enough to die for our sins, that God can now love us

and be merciful to us. But that is an utter perversion of the gospel. Jesus Christ did not die to enable God to love sinners. “God so loved the world that He gave ...” Do you dread the thought of meeting God? Think of His great love for you in sending His Son.

Moments with the Book



Check Your Panoply: The Whole Armor of God (#5329), by Herman H. Rocke. A Study of Ephesians 6:10-18. 240 pages, PB, **\$9.²⁵**

Concordant Greek Text (#6350). This text allows the reader to see every passage just as it was penned nearly two thousand years ago, in the ancient uncial alphabet. An ultra-literal and consistent English sublinear is provided which uniformly expresses the Greek grammar with English standards. 735 pages, HB, **\$24.²⁵**

God's Eonian Purpose by Adlai Loudy. We live in a day when few believers have a good grasp of the truth that God has a purpose. Many reason that as long as they themselves are saved, nothing else really matters; but this work is a thorough review of God's plan and purpose, gathering together many of the most basic themes of Scripture, presented in an interesting and informative manner which will appeal to the sincere student of Scripture for the strengthening of faith. The book contains charts and illustrations which provide a welcome visual supplement to the text. 383 pages, HB (#5670), **\$16.²⁵**; PB (#3554) **\$12.²⁵**

God's Rules for Scriptural Interpretation: Man's Place in God's Purpose (#4275), by Chrales J. Peart 191 pages, PB, **\$9.²⁵**

Gospel of God's Reconciliation of All in Christ (#5250), by Ernst Ferdinand Stroeter. Originally published in German in 1915, translated by J.H. Tonn, 2007. 270 pages, PB, **\$9.²⁵**

Greek Elements, The (#5475). This work consists of extensive tables of the Greek grammatical forms and their English standards with a reverse index, in Greek, of those Greek forms. It also provides a complete analysis of the NT Greek vocabulary (with English equivalents), as well as a short Greek Course. 176 pages, PB, **\$19.²⁵**

In Christ: The Ultimate Benefit of The Grace of God (#1525), by Robert C. Brock. A look at the 159 Pauline uses of "In Christ." 59 pages (8 ½ x 11), BK, **\$9.²⁵**

Kingdom Offered Israel, The (#1955), by Wayne Schoonover. 20 pages, BK, **\$2.²⁵**

One God and One Lord: Reconsidering the Cornerstone of the Christian Faith (#4375), by Mark Graeser, John Lynn, and John Schoenheit. "Who do you say that I am?" Jesus of Nazareth posed this question to His followers nearly two thousand years ago, but the question still hangs in the air, requesting an answer from every person. In this extensive biblical research book, the authors carefully re-examine the scriptural evidence. They argue that the biblically accurate answer to the question of His identity is provided by Peter, John, Paul and others who unanimously proclaimed Him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God." This work also thoroughly examines the historical process by which traditional Christian orthodoxy came to be established. A combination of misguided Christian piety and pagan speculation are shown to be responsible for the intrusion of unbiblical concepts into basic Christian thought and doctrine. 680 pages, HB, **\$28.²⁵**

Out of the Flames (#3950), by Lawrence Goldstone. This is the story surrounding Michael Servetus being burned at the stake for heresy in 1553. This outstanding work shows that the degradation of the church in Paul's day spiraled into the total religious hypocrisy which gripped the world of the Reformation era, and how cruel and despotic the religious rulers of those days were. 368 pages, PB, **\$15.²⁵**

Universal King James Bible (#7750), Bill Petri, Editor. Every generation needs to go through the purification process as words change meaning. The best translation of the Bible is of no value if the reader cannot understand what is written. The changing of word meanings can make a majestic translation to one generation a poor translation to following generations. This is why the Psalmist refers to more than one purification. Today, new generations of believers have emerged and the need to update archaic words in the KJV must take place, while at the same time improving the word for word translation for English speaking people in the 21st century. 740 pages, PB, **\$39.²⁵**