



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume XI
Issue 272

“Shoulda,” “Coulda,” “Woulda”

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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).

We unnecessarily live with the regrets of the past. We think that if we could just go back and do things over again, we would do them so differently, and that they would turn out better.



the past. Melancholy, and even fits of depression can set in concerning past choices. The plain fact is that we can't go back and change the past. It is impossible; and even if we could actually do so, we would be destined to repeat the same choices that we made on our first go-round. Let me illustrate.

We call this “hindsight,” and we always rate it “20/20.”

Hindsight is defined as:

The recognition of the realities, possibilities, or requirements of a situation, event, decision etc., after its occurrence. – *Farlex*

The opportunity to judge or understand past events using knowledge that you have gained since then. – *MacMillan*

This hindsight is simply the wisdom gained by experience. Experience teaches us that if we had to face similar circumstance TODAY, we would do them differently – and why not? Isn't that the purpose of experience, to make us wiser?

Regret however is defined as:

A feeling of sadness about something sad or wrong or about a mistake that you have made, and a wish that it could have been different and better. – *Cambridge*

Rather than operating in the wisdom of experience, sometimes we unnecessarily wallow in the regret of

Let's say that May 20, 1967 I received a “U” for “unsatisfactory” on my elementary math test. Theoretically I *could* live in regret about that test result even to today. I could think to myself, “If only I could go back and take that test again, I could get an ‘S’ for ‘satisfactory’! In fact, truth be known, I could get all the answers correct – with flying colors! If only I just had it to do all over again.”

Well, it may be true that if I had the test to take over again TODAY that it would be a breeze. Why wouldn't it? After all, that was decades ago, and one would think that I would have a lot more practice, experience and knowledge than I did the night of May 19th as I lay awake over thoughts of my math test the next day.

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (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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From the Editor

YEAR IN REVIEW: SEEING THE SAINTS

This year has allowed me to get out and see some of the saints again, and also some of them have come to see us as well.

We enjoyed some occasions of fellowships on the road here in PA, and in OH and CA.

Martin Zender, Charlie Cronk, Jean Douglas, Michael Glazier, Danny and Sandy Russino all came for wonderful visits, as did my editor André Sneidar, and then with my associate editor Rick Lemons.

Andre is from Virginia and is the key to our publishing. He works remotely with me on all of our projects. You have him to thank for everything you read from me.

On one of Andre's visits we took the opportunity to also enjoy another fellowship time with our dear brother Dan Gargon who lives just up the road from me. Dan and his love of the truth are such a steady source of encouragement.

Rick's work took him to Pittsburgh so he came through and stayed for a couple of days. It was such a wonderful and sweet visit, especially since I had not laid my eyes on

him for a couple of years. Since he had been on a work trip, his dear wife Lisa was not able to come. Maybe next time!

We had hoped that we could hit the road a little more than we did in 2010, but my mother, who lives with us, had some real health struggles this year. There were some very trying times this year for her, and of course for the entire family. I am thankful to report at this writing that she has stabilized – and days have returned to more like normal around here.

We have left the timing of the *Outsiders Tour* in Father's hands. He has given us the heart to get out – but it is all in His wise timing. I look forward to a time that I can get out to see some of you. In the meantime the tour may just have to come my way, as it already has somewhat this past year. We would love to invite you to come to our home and visit. We cherish the opportunity for your fellowship. Keep in mind that we have a guestroom for overnight stays as well!

I will close for now. I want you to know that I love each of you – my dear brothers and sisters in Christ. I am glad to be your brother, and thankful that we are family.



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.



Your ministry is one of the great ministries of this time.
– *Australia*

What a wonderful trip to the mail box today! It was a great idea to put together all the "I Am" articles together. I am ordering your new book *Daily Goodies* tomorrow. I have been printing these out for some time. It will be great to have 365 of them in book form. What do you have in store for us next? It will be hard to top what Father has already given you to do! But His pleasure is our gain! Thank you so much for the book! – *LA*

When I was 18 years old I knew that something was

wrong with what I was being taught. I know very little at this time, but refuse to be a sheep. People not only don't know the truth, but the sad thing of all is that they don't want to know the truth. ... My new thinking is that if everyone else believes it, it must be false. Maybe that is why it takes Christ a thousand years to get it straight to everyone. – *IL*

The lack of ability on the part of many pastors to adapt their beliefs is, in my opinion, one of the biggest threats of institutionalized churches. Bound to a strict and rigid dogma, pastors are forced to either live a lie or risk not feeding their families when their beliefs don't line up perfectly with those of the denomination or congregation they work for. Working for the evangel alone and not a paycheck would help offset much of that dilemma, I think. Adaptability is a must as we grow in our understanding. – *OH*

Father has so richly blessed us with "elder" brothers who are showing us what they have learned along the way, and the spirit of Christ is teaching our hearts that
(see **MAILBOX**, page 2523)

“SHOULDA” (continued from front page)

However, that I could ace that exact same math test is a truth for TODAY, not for May 20, 1967. If I went back to *that* day and took that same test over again, I would get the *exact same results* – no matter how many times I traveled back to that day to retake it. Why would that be? Because if I went back to *THAT* day in history – I would be at the *exact same* place in my development that I was *then*, with the *exact same* circumstances that were brought to bear on me on *that* day. No matter how many times I could return to that day in my past I would erase all of the intervening days between then and now, and I would make the exact same grade – because there would be *nothing* different in me.

If I went back to May 20, 1967 I would not have the hindsight that I have today. Remember that hindsight is only “*after the occurrence*” and is the experience of “using knowledge that you have gained *since* past events.” If I went back in time to take this test I would no longer have the knowledge gained “*after the occurrence*,” and could not use any knowledge gained *since* the event. Mistakes of the past are only of value NOW, and only if we have learned from the experience.

Now let’s bring God to bear on all of this. He is God, and we are His creation. We are His “*workmanship*,” His “*achievement*” (Ephesians 2:10). We are not self-made, we are not self-improved; He is the Potter and we His clay. At every place and at every stage in our lives we have *always* been right where He wants us; and He uses *everything* around us as His tools to bring us along as His skillfully designed masterpiece.

So, what if you “messed up” in the past? You have always been right where He wants you. It was all a part of His divine plan of experience.

We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation works patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope makes not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us (Romans 5:3-5).

Amazing is it not, that God uses your problems to work in you His divine patience. Then He gives you divine experience, which brings you divine expectation. Then the divine expectation makes us unashamed, opening the floodgates of God’s love pour-

ing out all over your heart. Bask in the goodness of His plan for you!

Relax and lighten up about your past; and your present, and your future for that matter. God is God; He is in charge. He loves you unconditionally and is molding you – day-by-day – into *all* that He intends for you to be. Do not be discouraged with His pace, nor with His progress, for He is not yet finished; *but one day*, in the glorious resurrection, you and I finally will be complete, and He will place us (His “*workmanship*” and “*achievement*”) on grand display for all of the rest of creation to see.

That in the ages to come He might display the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:7).

So, now what? Well, in the meantime, enjoy the journey of your lot in life *with Him*. You are *right* where He wants you. You are not ahead, nor behind of His timetable. You are spot-on in the divine schedule. Everything is working just as planned!

We know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:28-31).

Now, what about all of those past “regrets”? It is time to let them all go. After all, they are a part of your past, and you belong to Him, so *they* belong to Him too!

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).

Enjoy the life of God in you!

Appointed unto Men Once to Die

Hebrews 9:27 – An Abused Verse

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

This is one of the more abused verses in Scripture. This verse was written to “the Hebrews,” and the context is a comparing and contrasting between the Old Testament high priest and Christ. The “man” who has an appointment with death is the high priest. This verse is misinterpreted because of the ignoring of the immediate and original context of Israel’s high priest. Context is KEY here because the verse starts with the simile of “as” and the next verse begins “so.”

The *Holman Bible Dictionary* reminds us that,

The death of the high priest marked the end of an epoch. One guilty of involuntary manslaughter was required to remain in a city of refuge until the death of the high priest (Numbers 35:25; Numbers 35:28; Numbers 35:32; Joshua 20:6). The expiatory death of the high priest removed blood guilt that would pollute the land (c.f. Numbers 35:33).

A.E. Knoch also reminds us of the bearing of the high priest upon the context.

In Hebrews 9:27 ... it was the death of the high priest in Israel which led to the “judgment” of the man slayer (Numbers 35:22-29). The statement has no reference to men in general. The “judgment” here is *restoration*. It cannot be applied to suffering for sin on the part of the unbeliever at the Great White Throne. How often have great saints wrested this passage from its context so as to bolster up their theology! Where this is necessary, does it not indicate a defect in their teaching?

What Does the Bible Really Teach About Hell? Unsearchable Riches, Volume 22

Ivan Burgener agrees,

... The death in focus here is not the “death” of men in general, but a very specific death, that of Israel’s “high priest”! ...

As we think about our old understanding of this verse, did it not seem strange that people needed to be told they would die but *once*? Did people think they were kin to a cat with multiple lives? Of course not! ...

What about “*after this the judgment*”? Well, upon the death of the High Priest the court would convene to declare the release and freedom (the judgment) of all manslayers in all of the cities of refuge throughout the land of Israel.

*Appointed Once to Die
Pauline Journal of Dispensationalism
Volume 21, Number 84*

Charles Welch, associate of E.W. Bullinger, expounds on this wonderful truth.

[Hebrews] Chapter 7 is dealing with the failure of Israel’s priesthood, the law concerning priesthood “*perfected nothing*.” Only in the virtue of a “*better hope*” can any draw nigh unto God. Chapter 9:26-28 is dealing with the failure of Israel’s sacrifices; the law concerning sacrifices was a shadow and could not “*perfect*” those who drew nigh. Only in the virtue of a “*better sacrifice*” can any draw nigh to God. The parallel is complete.

Moreover both sections deal with the removal and failure of the old covenant:

- A | 7:18. The setting aside (athetesis) of the commandment concerning the priests.
B | 8:8. Finding fault with the first covenant.
A | 9:26. The setting aside (athetesis) of the sin offering.
B | 10:9. Taking away the first covenant.

It may be objected that where we have inserted “sin-offering” the A.V. says “sin,” but it is recognized by all students of Scripture that the word “sin” often stands for the “offering of sin,” and consequently may be so understood here. Hebrews 9:26 is not dealing with the forgiveness or the putting away of sin, it deals with the abrogation of the sin-offering, a fact absolutely necessary if Israel were to believe on the Son of God, and leave the shadows of the old covenant. “*He appeared to set aside the sin-offering by the sacrifice of Himself.*” The reader has only to read Hebrews 10:4-9 to find abundant confirmation of this interpretation.

The idea that has been read into this verse that the offering of Christ was “for the repudiation of sin at the conclusion of the eons” does violence to the order of the words in the original and fails to give the true meaning of *athetesis*. There is not one single instance in either the New Testament or the LXX where the word is used in connection with “putting away sin,” whereas the consistent usage compels us to see that here, in Hebrews 9 as in Hebrews 7, the disannulling of a weak and profitless symbol is entirely in harmony with the context and aim of the epistle. Verses 27 and 28 must be read together, as they are two members of one simile indicated by the words “as” and “so.” Some intended likeness must be discovered, for if a contrast were intended we should get the expression used in Romans 5:15.

Now what is the intention of the writer when he says, “*as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*”? The majority of commentators take it to refer to mankind in general, and that the offering of Christ “once” is set over against the dying “once” of verse 27. While this contains truth, we are not persuaded that it is the true meaning of the passage.

For one thing there is hardly a deviation from the one great theme discernible in the whole of chapters 7, 8 and 9. Every effort and argument is brought to bear upon the one absorbing theme, the superiority of the priesthood and offering of Christ, and the typical teaching of the types and shadows of the law.

Who are “the men”?¹

“*It is appointed to the men once to die.*” The priests of the order of Aaron are definitely called “*dying men*” (Hebrews 7:8), and “*men having weakness*” (Hebrews 7:28).

So that, to say the least, we may admit the probability that in the context that speaks of the typical tabernacle priesthood and offerings, “*the men*” may refer to these same dying priests.

It occurred to us at this point to consult the LXX for the usage of “*judgment*,” knowing that in many cases the word judgment is synonymous with salvation in the Old Testament. Turning up the word *krisis* we found the list too formidable for the time at our disposal, but believing that the key to Hebrews 9:27-28 lies in the law concerning the cities of refuge, and knowing that Numbers 35 contains a full statement concerning these cities, we looked to see whether *krisis* occurs in that chapter. It does:

And they shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the man-slayer die not, until he stand before the congregation in judgment [krisis] (Numbers 35:12).

This statement is followed by a law making a distinction between a willful murder and a manslayer, and when these distinctions have been made the Scripture continues:

Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments [krimata]. And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall re-

1. “The men” is the translation of both the *Emphatic Diaglot* and the *Concordant Literal New Testament*.

store him to the city of refuge, whither he was fled [katapheugo], and he shall abide in it unto the DEATH of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil ... after the death of the high priest the slayer shall return into the land of his possession (Numbers 35:24-28).

This is the “judgment” EQUIVALENT TO SALVATION that was to be pronounced by the congregation, and hinged upon the death of the anointed high priest. It will be seen that such an interpretation harmonizes with the simile here intended:

A | :27-. And as.

B | :27-. The men die once.

C | :27. Judgment.

A | :28-. So also.

B | :28-. Christ was offered once.

C | :28. Salvation.

Judgment and Salvation

In Judges 2:16-19 we have the close connection established between the judge and deliverance:

And when the Lord raised them up judges, then the Lord was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge ... when the judge was dead, they turned back.

The judges of Israel were first of all saviors. This is seen in the judgeship of Othniel and Ehud.

The Lord raised up a savior to the children of Israel (Judges 3:9-15).

The reader will doubtless call to mind the many passages where the poor, the needy and the righteous call upon God to “judge” them, and such passages as Psalm 1:5 where the ungodly are excluded from “judgment.” It is this Old Testament concept of judgment and the particular exercise of it seen in Numbers 35 that must be kept to the fore as we read Hebrews 9:27.

Charles H. Welch

The Berean Expositor

Volume 16, pages 42-43

MAILBOX (continued from page 2519)

we are on the path He has chosen for us. How deeply I appreciate your insights ... May Father continue to bless in many ways, both your ministry and your family. – *TN*

Can't have a morning coffee – I'm allergic to it. So instead I read your *Daily Email Goodies* and get that same refreshing feeling coffee can give. – *VA*

Can't begin to tell you how blessed I've been by the *Daily Email Goodies*. They are truly a “labor of love” and I thank you for them! – *TX*

[*I Choose!*] You know, these last few days it seems I have been perceiving in my heart the truth you have written. Reading it was a confirmation for me. ... Keep up the excellent work you do passionately. I am enjoying it and can feel a course correction and the wind picking up in my sails. – *CA*

When my mother was on her death bed, I apologized through tears for all my wild ways, and the many ways I hurt her with my disobedience. She opened her eyes

and said, “I loved being your mother! You were so much fun!” My past was a dead issue with her! It should be so for all of our negative memories. – *PA*

I'm learning so much from you, and the insights you give me make me smile every day. ... The amount of unique insights I gain from you is spectacular! – *Netherlands*

Thanks so much for all you share with as many as will hear. In particular, thank you for *I Am Who Father Says I Am*. Deep, deep peace, rest and freedom is found in the truth. I do feel like a child deep inside, actually, and I am hearing what I have yearned to hear all of my life, “SON!” That seems to be my name now, though generic sounding to the fleshy ear, yet deeply personal when my spirit sees and hears Father calling me “SON.” “SON” swallows up my earthy identity and seems to be the culmination of this earthy life. Not that I am finished but I have been transformed from the inside, truly a new creation joined with his Father and heavenly family no longer separated by my earthy name which was my identity. – *VA*

Give Yourself and Others Some Slack

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

With all humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love (Ephesians 4:2).

We have been called to the divine exercise of patience. We are all very broken people, marred in the Potter's hands. We are all very busy people, attending to the many details of life. We are all very composite people, coming from so many different backgrounds, and journeying down such diverse roads, with varied influences. Patience is so essential in our relationships with each other.

Patience is also an important key in understanding the truth of Scripture. New paradigms are often very difficult and time consuming to grasp – especially scriptural ones. Religious tradition and baggage do not disappear overnight – time for tearing down and building up is indispensable.

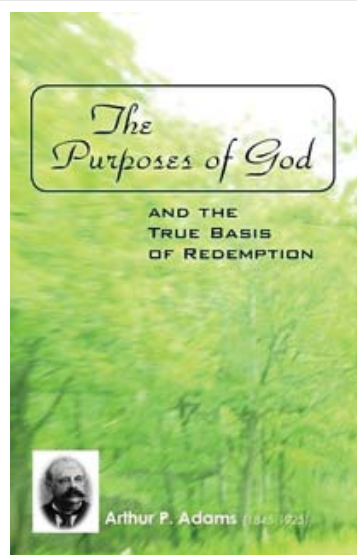
It takes a lot of time even to grasp the concept of certain truths. The amount of time differs greatly with each individual. Some of my own religious baggage was so heavy that it took years from the time I first started studying a subject until I had a sufficient grasp of it to share it with others.

God's work in our lives is a slow, gradual process. All growth is progressive, and the finer the organism, the longer the process. An oak tree takes a hundred years to mature, yet on the other hand a squash takes only two to three months, depending on the variety.

Miles Stanford (1914-1999) reminds us that,

The temptation to shortcut is especially strong unless we see the value of and submit to the necessity of the time element; in simple trust resting in His hands, "being confident of this very thing, that He which began a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). And, dear friends, it will take a long time! But since God is working [for the ages], why should we be concerned about the time involved? – *The Principles of Spiritual Growth*, chapter 2

We are God's oak trees. He has dedicated Himself to His work in us for the long haul. So, let's all cut ourselves and each other some slack. It's divine, and we all need it; I know I do. ■



This is a compilation of some of Arthur P. Adams' smaller works that first appeared in his periodical *The Spirit of the Word* in 1885. Adams suffered greatly for the truths presented here. The riches found within these pages deserve to be preserved for future generations. Even though Adams wrote over one hundred years ago, in many ways his writings are just as fresh as if they had been written today.

This is THE TRUE BASIS OF REDEMPTION – God our Creator, responsible for His Own creation, and every attribute of His being pledged to its successful completion. God is able, and He will. The creature may rest secure on that basis – the all sufficient ground and full assurance of his deliverance and final triumph in the redemption of Jesus Christ. – A.P. Adams

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