



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume XIV
Issue 344

The Loneliness of the Son of God

A Look at the Interior Life of Christ

by — Arthur P. Adams (1845-1925)

I am not alone, because the Father is with me (John 16:32).

Man is social in his nature; loneliness is a horror. Men have been driven mad simply by being left alone for a long period. Persons wrecked on lonely islands, and left alone for years, have lapsed into savagery and become virtually wild beasts.



Everyone knows that it is not necessary to be alone in order to feel lonely: the worse kind of loneliness is often-times felt when multitudes are around us, but no acquaintance, friend or relative. Still further, we may be lonely, and keenly so, from the lack of sympathy and spiritual communion, even when surrounded by our relatives and friends. Many an isolated lover of the truth knows what it is to be lonely from this cause and to long for communion with some kindred soul that this hunger of the spirit might be appeased.

Now Christ knew what it was to be lonely from all of these causes, and especially the last. That we may know something of His interior life, let us study this subject.

LONELY BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

We might begin with His birth. Jesus was born a perfectly unique and lonely being; there never was one like Him before, nor since. He began His earth life lower down than Adam. The latter was created an adult, innocent and sinless, and in possession of the faculties and functions of maturity. Jesus came into the world an infant – in this respect as in all others, “made like unto His brethren” (Hebrews 2:17) – and thus knowing all of the helplessness of humanity. He was “made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4), hence a member of the human race, “made sin for us” (II Corinthians 5:21), and as Jesus thus began as a lonely being, so all of His life was lonely.

His childhood was lonely. No one understood Him, no one could sympathize with Him, not even His mother, though she hid His strange and wonderful sayings in her heart. The story

of His talking with the doctors when He was twelve years old shows this. How strange that Jesus should distress His reputed parents by thus staying away from them. When they find Him and mildly chide Him for His truancy, His answer is,

Did ye not know that I must be about my Father's business? (Luke 2:49).

No, they did not know it; they could not even understand His words then uttered.

They understood not the saying which He spoke unto them; and He went down with them to Nazareth, and was subject unto them (Luke 2:50-51).

He was a lonely and homesick child.

THE HUMILIATION OF THE SON OF GOD

Next we come to His baptism. Here He was misunderstood, and has been misunderstood ever since. Why was Christ baptized of John? John's baptism was for “repentance and remission of sins” (Mark 1:4); but Christ had no sins of which to repent, and none to be remitted. Why was it then? What was the true reason? It was a part of His humiliation; it was one of the “points” wherein he must be “made like unto his brethren.” Although Jesus was not a sinner, yet He was “made sin.” Christ, although He had no sins of which to repent, yet He submits to the humiliation of the baptism of repentance be-

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Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic 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 freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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Strictly Personal

Important News Regarding the “Daily Email Goodies”

Dear Saints,

Some of you have been enjoying my email studies since the 1990’s. With continued expressed enjoyment, in 2003 they became a regular daily known as “Daily Email Goodies.” However, during the illness and death of my mother last year, these emails became erratic. One of the factors that added to this was that the free service I was using would not allow me to schedule emails in advance, thus requiring me to send them manually. In the past couple of weeks I have been experimenting with a paid service that appears to work well, allowing me to prepare and schedule emails well in advance, and thus helping to keep them “daily.”

Originally my “Daily Email Goodies” began as very short thoughts and quotes intended for quick morning reading. Over time they often became lengthier, and eventually articles, audios, and even then issues of the *Bible Student’s Notebook* were added to the mix.

During this progression of the “Daily Email Goodies” some have expressed that, although they enjoy all of the new types of emails that I send, they miss reading the old-style short thoughts in the morning.

This month we have resumed a full schedule of my daily emails. I will be sending two emails daily: one in the early morning, and one in the late afternoon (Eastern US).

The morning email will be my original “Daily Email Goodies” format: a short thought or quotation to help start the day. Note that these morning email readings will be contained within the email itself, and therefore will not require a link for reading them.


The afternoon email will alternate through issues of the *Bible Student’s Notebook*, audios from *Bible Student’s Radio*, and links to *Study Shelf* articles, *Bible Student’s Press* book offers, and announcements.

My new emails are being sent with the following **title** in the **subject line**: [Study Shelf], followed by the type of email that they are. They should be showing up in your email box **from**: **Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.**

In these mailings, I trust that you will continue finding encouragement in your personal walk, guided by Father.

Ever your brother,

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.



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The Three Heavens and Earths



LONELY (continued from front page)

cause "thus it became Him to fulfill all righteousness."

Hence we can understand John's words to Christ when He came to be baptized. John forbade Him, saying,

I have need to be baptized of You, and You come to me
(Matthew 3:14).

This is as though he had said, "You have no sins to repent of; this is not a baptism needful or fitting for You."

Jesus answering said unto him, "Allow it to be so now; for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him (Matthew 3:14-15).

How significant is that "now" – it was the period of Christ's humiliation. He Who ascends far above all heavens must first descend to the lower parts of the earth (Ephesians 4:9-10); and so Jesus, the undefiled, takes His place at the commencement of His earthly ministry with the corrupt, guilty and condemned sinner.

He identifies Himself in baptism with that "generation of vipers" (Matthew 3:7), with grasping publicans, by hypocritical Pharisees, and cruel soldiers, as though He was one of them in need of repentance like the others, although in reality He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" (Hebrews 7:26). None of them understood it then, and few understand now how low Christ stooped, and "God was in Christ" to reconcile the world to Himself (II Corinthians 5:19).

THE DEPTHS OF DESCENT

We shall measure and appreciate the love of God, as "manifested" (John 4:9) in Christ, just in proportion as we realize the depths to which Jesus descended to redeem us. How fitting and comforting it was of the Father that in this first public manifestation of the humiliation of His Son, He should bear witness by a voice from heaven to His perfect satisfaction and pleasure in Him.

Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, "This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17).

Jesus is the true David of Whom the Psalms and other Scriptures so often speak. "David" means "beloved"; hence the Father says, "This is My Beloved Son" – "My Son," because He was manifesting His nature, love; "Beloved," because He is the great antitype, the true David, the MAN after God's Own heart, of Whom the shepherd king of Israel was only a shadow. Let it be remembered, too, that in all of this Christ was our "Forerunner," our Leader and "Captain." For those who

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are joined to Him – God's Beloved – they, too, shall come to opened heavens and the approving voice.

THE TEMPTATION OF THE SON OF GOD

We pass now to consider in this same connection the temptation of Christ. Here again He was alone, literally so, having no other companions than "wild beasts" (Mark 1:13). Why must Jesus be tempted *alone*?

Let us ask first, why was He tempted at all? You will notice that, in the account it says that

Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Adversary (Matthew 4:1).

This temptation then was under the direct guidance of the Spirit, and hence was of course necessary and important. What was the reason of it? We have already indicated it in our consideration of the baptism of Christ. It was needful that He should be

Tempted in all points like as we are (Hebrews 4:15).

For it is only after being "tempted and tried" that "the crown of life" shall be received (James 1:12). Jesus was "made perfect through suffering" (Hebrews 2:10), even as "they that are Christ's" are perfected (I Peter 5:10):

In that He Himself has suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted (Hebrews 2:18).

Why must He be tempted *alone*? Because He was the only One, in all of God's universe, Who at that time was undergoing the finishing process by which He was to reach the "perfect" condition. As I illustrated on other occasions, a man finishes off one machine as a pattern to go by in the making of all of the rest. The first pattern machine, of course, is finished by itself, *alone*; but the others are finished off in lots, having a number of them in the hands of the workmen at the same time.

Jesus was "*the beginning of the creation of God*" (Revelation 3:14), the pattern Man after Whom all of the rest are to be fashioned. Hence, of course, He must pass through the process *alone*, but the rest of the race, "*every man in his own order*" (I Corinthians 15:23).

Who can tell the horror of that forty days, alone in the desert, "*with the wild beasts*," exposed to all of the power and malice of "*the Prince of this World*."

AN AWFUL REALITY

The temptation of Christ was no farce as some theologians would have us believe, but an awful reality; a fiery, fierce ordeal for that lonely Son of Man. This trial at the commencement of His ministry, and the continual trial all of the way through, was to Jesus a dread reality. We may be sure of this from what is said of Christ in Hebrews 5:7-9,

Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared; though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and being made perfect ...

Surely this passage shows us something of the awful reality of the trial of Jesus. He knows, as all believers know, what it is to offer up prayers and supplications, with strong crying, tears and fear, and to learn obedience through much suffering.

Many other instances in Christ's history show His loneliness. In His heart experience and inner life He was alone, absolutely, so far as any human companionship was concerned; there was no one who could sympathize with Him. His disciples did not understand the importance of His plainest speech (see for example Mark 8:31-33). Jesus told them how He was to suffer many things, and be rejected, and killed, and rise the third day:

And Peter began to rebuke Him, but Jesus turned and looked upon His disciples, and rebuked Peter, sayings, "Get you behind me Satan, for you don't savor the things that be of God, but the things that be of men."

Why was it that the disciples did not believe what Christ told them? It was not because they did not understand what He said, nor was it because they mistrusted His word, but they thought Him mistaken, downcast, "blue," as we say, and that He was only talking that way because He felt depressed and discouraged. Peter's "*rebuke*" was meant not so much to chide Him as to cheer Him up,

Be it far from You, Lord, this shall not be unto You (Matthew 16:22).

This is as though he should say, "O no, You must not talk so, Lord; nothing so awful as that will happen, it will all come out right."

They could not enter into His feelings, or sympathize with His experience, or even accept what He said. Nor Jesus could not explain it to them; they were not able to bear it, He must bear His isolation alone, with no companion but His Father.

Sometimes He seems to chide them for their dullness, as,

O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken (Lujke 24:25).

Or, as He said on another occasion to the Twelve,

Are you also yet without understanding? (Matthew 15:16).

It seems as though Christ *longed* for some human friend to whom He could open all of His heart, and spoke as above, not impatiently, but sorrowfully and regretfully, as time and again He was saddened.

Not even the beloved John understood the Lord, or could enter into His feelings. On one occasion this disciple was very angry with some who did not receive Christ and he says,

"Lord, will You that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them even as Elijah did?" But Jesus turned and rebuked him and said, "You know not what manner of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them (Luke 9:54-56).

FATHER WAS HIS ONLY SYMPATHIZER AND COMPANION

How little of the mission of Christ did these disciples understand! How little of His Spirit did they possess! Truly Jesus was *alone*; there was no one to share His joys and hopes and fears; or to help or encourage Him by counsel, advice or sympathy. The only companion He had was His Father. He indicates this when He says,

I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent Me (John 8:16).

Again He says,

Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me (John 16:32).

He speaks as though He would have been *alone* had it not been for the Father; as though HE was His only companion – and we can see that such was the literal fact.

There was absolutely no being in God's universe, excepting God Himself, who could be a true heart companion to the Lord Jesus Christ, because there was no other being like Him – none who had ever had the same experience, or knew anything about it.

His disciples, even the most loving of them, were of another spirit and knew nothing of the interior life of Jesus; the only relief from this absolute isolation that Jesus had was communion with His Father. Hence we read that,

In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place and there prayed (Mark 1:35).

Again we read that,

He withdrew Himself into the wilderness, and there prayed (Luke 5:16).

Yet again,

He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God (Luke 6:12).

Were not these lonely seasons of prayer, in the solitary places, in the wilderness and the mountain, while yet the world was sleeping? Were they not the times when, into the ear of the loving Father, the only sympathizer and companion He had, Jesus poured His "*supplications with strong crying and tears?*" Ah! Who can fathom the *depths* of agony that Jesus endured from this sense of utter isolation. No wonder that, notwithstanding His weariness from His constant travel and toil, He was gladly willing to forego His sleeping rest for a few hours' converse with His Father and only friend.

Do you sometimes wonder what these tearful prayers and supplications were that Jesus offered? Would you like to know what He actually said? Very few Christians know that these intense petitions of Christ, some of them at least, are recorded, and yet such is the fact. *They are in the book of Psalms.* Yes, they are recorded there, many of them.

The Psalms of David are prophetic of Christ. The personal pronoun, I, in many of them refer not to the typical, but to the anti-typical David, the *true* Beloved (see for example Psalm 18:16-24, 43-44, and many others). In many of these Psalms the prayers of Jesus are recorded, laying open the heart, the *interior* life of the lonely Son of Man.

Read the Psalms, noticing how they are referred to in other parts of the Bible and applied to Christ, and you will recognize that they are the inspired prophecies of Christ's heart experience, the record of His prayers, supplications and fears when alone with God. Is it not blessed thus to know something of Christ's inner experience, and to see how truly He was tempted in all points like as we?

There are many other instances in the life of Christ that indicate His loneliness, especially those passages that show how He was misunderstood by others, even by His Own disciples (for example, see Matthew 11:13-19; Mark 4:36-41, 8:13-21; John 6:59-71, etc.) Jesus very seldom made any attempt to explain, for the simple reason that they could not understand (see John 12:36-41).

Without space to notice these points further, we pass to the most striking illustrations of the thought we are considering as brought out in Christ's passion. Gethsemane, Gabbatha, Golgotha were the final witnesses of the cumulative intensity of his loneliness.

THE AGONY AND ANGUISH OF THE SON OF GOD

Christ was alone in the Garden. All of His disciples accompanied Him to the garden on that dark night of His arrest. Now, notice how strangely the Savior acted, as though longing for human sympathy and reaching out for it, although at the same time He knew it was not for Him. On entering the garden He leaves eight of His disciples, as though conscious that they could not help Him; but still longing for human sympathy He takes with Him Peter, James and John, the three who came the nearest to being companions to Him, and retires to a distant part of the garden. Then, instead of taking these three disciples into His confidence and telling them what was on His mind and praying together, as one would suppose was His intention, He seems again to realize how vain it is to look for human help and, simply commanding them to watch, He leaves them to pass through His agony alone. No human ear heard His agonizing,

If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me (Matthew 26:39).

No human eye saw His anguish, the bowed form and the bloody sweat – as He had been obliged to drink the cup of death alone during all of His ministry – so now He must "wring out" the bitter dregs alone. His disciples could not even watch with Him one hour, but slept while Jesus wept and prayed; and when His enemies came and arrested Him and carried Him off to His mockery of a trial, they

All forsook Him and fled (Mark 14:50).

Alone He must meet the hatred of the Scribes and Pharisees; alone He must stand before timorous, faint-hearted Pilate; alone He must bear the insults of Herod and his men of war.

The spitting and scourging, the crown of thorns and purple robe, the mockery and shame, must all be borne by Him alone without human help or sympathy.

THE DEATH OF THE SON OF GOD

On the cross Jesus touched the *lowest* depths of His agonizing loneliness. We have seen that, during His ministry, His only companion was His Father. This was the one solace of the Savior's earth life: to get alone with His Father. Yet on the cross it appeared that even His Father would desert Him, so that Jesus sensed absolute loneliness for that one supreme moment more than ever was before or since, or ever will be. Can you not perceive the awful significance of the Savior's cry,

My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? (Matthew 27:46).

It is as though He would say, "I have been alone, except for You, for these three and thirty years, and now in the hour of My direst necessity, have even You forsaken Me?"

This awful experience was the bitter dregs of the cup from which Jesus shrank in the garden, crying out, "If it be possible let this cup pass from Me" (Matthew 26:39) – but it was not possible: He would not be spared this fierce trial.

He must be made "in all things like unto His brethren." Their natural condition is expressed by such Scriptures as "far from God," "without God in the world." Jesus must experience this, being "tempted in all points, like as we, He might be able to succor them that are tempted;" and so at Calvary there is the sense of separation for a time between the Father and the Son as the agonizing loneliness of Christ reaches its culmination.

PARTAKERS OF HIS SUFFERINGS

O blessed Lord Jesus! We may not be able to fathom the depths of the sufferings, but our tears may fall at the remembrance of them, our hearts may throb in sympathy, now that we can appreciate something of their significance; and with gladness we may "fill up that which is behind of His afflictions" (Colossians 1:24) that thus being made, in some small degree, "partakers of His sufferings," we may, by and by, become "partakers of the glory that shall be revealed" (I Peter 4:13; 5:1).

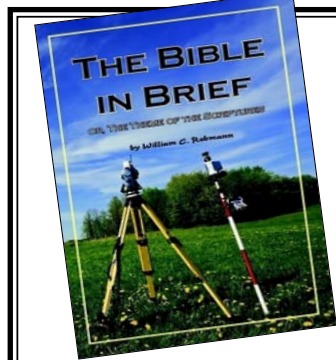
Loneliness is a portion of Christ's sufferings that believers share, filling up the measure (Colossians 1:24), that he may also "reign with Him" (II Timothy 2:12). Is it not a sad pleasure thus to see something of the interior life of Christ, and so to creep nearer to His heart of love and to enter more fully into the "fellowship of His sufferings" (Philippians 3:10)?

Shall we murmur if, following Him, we sometimes also feel a keen sense of isolation and loneliness, as we are made to realize the truth of Christ's saying,

You are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Should we not rather "count it all joy" (James 1:2)? O, scattered children of God, take these thoughts for your comfort, and you will be able to "rejoice" even in your loneliness, knowing that thereby you are made,

Partakers of His sufferings, that when His glory shall be revealed you may be glad also with exceeding joy (I Peter 4:12-13).



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Hallowed by His Wife

by — André Piet

A wife who has an unbelieving husband, and he approves of making a home with her, let her not leave her husband. For the unbelieving husband is hallowed by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is hallowed by the brother, else, consequently, your children are unclean. Yet now they are holy (I Corinthians 7:13-14).

The unbeliever is hallowed by the believer with whom he or she is married. Please note that the believer does not become unhallowed because of the unbelieving partner, but the reverse is true: the unbeliever is hallowed because of the believing partner.



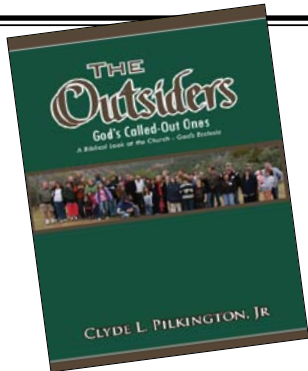
This is also true for the children in the house. Everyone in the house is hallowed because of the one believing person: “*Yet now they are holy.*” The entire household shares in the blessing God gives through one person.

Are you a believer and married to an unbelieving partner? Know that your husband or wife is hallowed by you! Do you have children together? Those are hallowed by you, as well! Please note that they are hallowed. That is not an assignment, but a statement and a guarantee. Thank God for it!

Religion will have you to put forth efforts to hallow your partner, trying to convert them, or to have them “attend church” and to have them pray, etc. No matter how pious, it is not faith. It is hypocritical hallowing. It frustrates, especially since such efforts usually produce an opposite effect. Faith does not have that problem, due to no “works” having to be done. Your husband or wife and your children are holy! God is their Savior and He will, at His time, persuade them of it. All of this is so, as in the past He blessed the whole household of unbelieving Potifar only on account of Joseph (Genesis 39:5).

Trust in this and thank God for it!

(Translated from Dutch)



The Outsiders: God's Called-Out Ones – A Biblical Look at the Church – God's Ecclesia

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

In 1995, after sixteen years of being in the “pastorate” the author walked away. He left the “religious system” by resigning from the very “church” and “ministry” he had formed. In many ways this work is a testament to these actions. This testimony was thirty years in the making – the results of a spiritual journey that the author found to be common to other saints scattered throughout the world and across history. This is an opportunity to explain why some who love the Lord no longer “go to church.” It does not seek to persuade others to do something different; but rather to be simply who and what they already are “in Him.” This is an uncovering of the truth of the church, and an encouragement for the members of His Body to enjoy the position and standing “in Christ” that they already possess, realizing that they are truly “complete in Him” (Colossians 2:10), that He alone is their Life (Colossians 3:4), and that His Life is full of freedom (Galatians 5:1).

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