



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume XIX  
Issue 457

# Out of this World!

## Our Divine Calling

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

God has not been haphazardly working His way through the ages. From the beginning He has had a very definite plan, and He is masterfully working it to fulfill His own predetermined purpose.



You have *hid* these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them unto babes (Matthew 11:25).

Instead of currently revealing Himself to the world at large, God chooses who He wants to receive His revelation *at this time*.

What does God's Word say about us as believers regarding our calling?

Our calling was "from the beginning":

*God has from the beginning chosen you to salvation (II Thessalonians 2:13).*

Our calling was "before the disruption of the world":

*He has chosen us in Him before the disruption of the world (Ephesians 1:4).*

Our calling was a part of "the counsel of God's Own will":

*Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who works all things after the counsel of His Own will (Ephesians 1:11).*

It is important to understand something about our calling. God currently seeks neither to reveal Himself nor His plan to the masses. If it was His purpose, He would have accomplished it long ago. The fact is that He has taken elaborate steps to assure that He and His plan are sufficiently hidden from the majority of mankind.

*All men cannot receive this saying, save **they to whom it is given** (Matthew 19:11).*

God's plan on the stage of human history is to reveal Himself initially to a few – the called, the elect. He draws those whom He has *chosen*, whether in His past dealings with Israel, or His present dealings with the members of the Body of Christ.

God's calling has always been to a few. He told Israel that He neither set His love on them nor choose them because they were more in number than any people, but because they were "the fewest of all people" (Deuteronomy 7:7).

The reason that God has called only a few during the course of human history is that He is calling out a *small* company of servants for His name. Those few

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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).

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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CALLING (continued from front page)

whom He calls are being prepared to rule with Him, serving the rest of creation.

A survey through the Scripture's use of the word "chosen" will reveal that God's calling is one of service:

*God has **chosen him out** ... to stand **to minister** in the name of the LORD (Deuteronomy 18:5).*

*Them ... God has **chosen to minister** unto Him (Deuteronomy 21:5).*

*Them has the LORD **chosen** ... to minister unto Him (I Chronicles 15:2).*

*He has **chosen Judah to be the ruler** (I Chronicles 28:4).*

*He has **chosen Solomon** ... to sit upon the **throne** of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel (I Chronicles 28:5).*

*The LORD has **chosen you to stand before Him, to serve Him, and that you should minister unto Him** (II Chronicles 29:11).*

*My **servant** whom I have **chosen**: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He (Isaiah 43:10).*

*Behold My **servant**, Whom I have **chosen** ... (Matthew 12:18).*

*I have **chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain** (John 15:16).*

*He is a **chosen vessel** unto Me, to bear My name (Acts 9:15).*

Notice Isaiah 43:10 again, for it is of particular significance as to one's calling in relationship to God Himself:

*My servant whom I have **chosen: that you may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He** (Isaiah 43:10).*

God draws His *chosen* into personal relationship

with Himself. He has chosen us for the purpose of *knowing Him, believing Him, and understanding Him. This is our calling.*

The religious are satisfied to learn *about* Him, the chosen are given the heart actually to *know Him*. Paul wrote,

*That I may **know Him**, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death (Philippians 3:10).*

Religious systems blind and bind men, sidetracking them by endless busy-work – meetings, group activities, projects and mass instruction, all resulting in a secondhand "knowledge" and "faith" concerning "God."

Our particular culture's religious masses are "Christian"; but if they lived in another culture, they would undoubtedly have adapted the context of its religious persuasion (e.g. Islam, Buddhism, etc.).

God is now tutoring "The Called" for service in the "heavenly places" – the Celestials.

## CELESTIAL CALLING

Ours is a *high calling*.

*The high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:14).*

*God's calling above in Christ Jesus (CV).*

God's calling for members of Christ's Body is the Heavens. The clear distinction between Heaven and Earth is made immediately in the Scriptures.

*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Genesis 1:1).*

The Scriptures then proceed with the theme of the earth.

*And the earth ... (:2)*

It is not until we get to the writings of Paul in Scripture that the secret purposes related to the Heavens are revealed. ►



## CELESTIAL ALLOTMENT

### Ours is a heavenly allotment.

Israel received an earthly allotment. When God gave them the land of promise, it was divided into lots according to their tribes. So it is with the Body of Christ that our sphere of promise is the celestials, and our portion is there.

*the eyes of your heart having been enlightened, for you to perceive what is the expectation of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of the enjoyment of His **allotment** among the saints (Ephesians 1:18).*

*that, being justified in that One's grace, we may be becoming enjoyers, in expectation, of the **allotment** of life eonian (Titus 3:7).*

One day we will be awakened and/or taken to our celestial occupation. Just as with Israel's allotment, ours is currently occupied by enemy forces.

*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12).*

*For it is not ours to wrestle with blood and flesh, but with the sovereignties, with the authorities, with the world-mights of this darkness, with the spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials (CV).*



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## CELESTIAL TRAINING

Paul is the supreme celestial commander of this divine operation,<sup>1</sup> and we are his forces for the occupation and recovery of the celestials. We are currently in boot camp and officer's training. We suffer hardships now; we will reign then.

*Yet if children, enjoyers also of an **allotment**, enjoyers, indeed, of an **allotment** from God, yet joint enjoyers of Christ's **allotment**, if so be that we are suffering together, that we should be glorified together also (Romans 8:17).*

*Being aware that from the Lord you will be getting the compensation of the enjoyment of an **allotment**: for the Lord Christ are you slaving (Colossians 3:24).*

*At the same time giving thanks to the Father, Who makes you competent for a part of the **allotment** of the saints (Colossians 1:12).*

Through suffering God is making us competent to reign and rule. He will compensate us with the “enjoyment” of a celestial allotment. Rest assured: your training and preparation will not be a waste! ■

1. By way of illustration, General Douglas MacArthur was the Supreme Commander of Allied Powers and led the occupation of the Philippines. So we follow Paul, who on the behalf of our Commander in Chief – the Lord Jesus Christ, shall lead the way for the occupation of the celestials; just as David, as King of Israel, shall lead the way Israel's for future occupation of earth.

# Selling Out for Pot-Luck and Sunday School

by — Dan Sheridan

The doctrines of hell and annihilation are evil. They aren't from God. These doctrines are ANTI-God and ANTI-Christ. People who embrace them aren't just confused, they are deceived.



If orthodox hell or annihilation are true, Christ hasn't *completed* anything! He's a failure! He has failed to fulfill His role as the Firstborn! Jesus Christ is God's Christ. He has been anointed by God to reconcile everyone. If everyone isn't reconciled, Christ is a failure.

Paul says that,

*In Him the entire complement delights to dwell, and through Him to reconcile all to Him (making peace through the blood of His cross), through Him, whether those on the earth or those in the heavens.*

That's why "Christianity" isn't a viable option. It denies God and His Christ. Why would anyone be part of a system that nullifies the work of Christ? Most will sell out God for a pot-luck and Sunday School. ■

## All that Are in the Graves Shall Hear His Voice

*... The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice (John 5:28).*

Read the above words again, and then stop a minute and answer the question, "Who are in the graves?"

According to the common teaching, there are no people in the graves. They are either alive in heaven or in hell. If people are there already, what need is there for a resurrection, or a judging?

Something doesn't fit here; and it is not God's Word, but man's teaching that doesn't fit. The problem is that people deny the fact of death. One cannot read the Hebrew Scriptures without running into verses that tell the state of the dead.

*The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence (Psalm 115:17).*

*For the living know that they shall die: but the*

*dead know not anything ... (Ecclesiastes 9:5).*

Those who have died are still in the graves. There has to be a resurrection to make them alive, and this is not immediately when one dies. Paul tells Timothy of some,

*Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some (II Timothy 2:18).*

The fact is that the resurrection has not occurred yet. Those who died are still in the graves until the Lord gives the shout for them to rise. All, yes, all who are in the graves will hear His voice. That includes even the unbeliever. ■

*Faith Fellowship  
(Vol. 59 No. 1)*



# Reader's Question Box #12

## What is the meaning of "eternal life"?

**Q:** I'm wondering, if *aion* doesn't mean "eternal," what is the meaning of "eternal life"?

**A:** The two Greek words that are translated "eternal life" in the KJV (*i.e.*, Romans 6:23) are more properly rendered literally "life eonian," as in the *Concordant Literal Version*. Our *Bible Student's Version* (Greek Scriptures) renders it "life lasting for the ages," *Young's Literal Version* has it as "life age-during," *Weymouth* has it as "life of the ages," *Diaglott* has it as "life age-lasting," *Rotherham* has it as "life age-abiding."



This is a reference to the life without dying, or life without death, that will be inherent from God in the faithful saints of this current age (or, as we have called it, dispensation) during the last 2 ages (the millennial reign of Christ, and the age that follows (the new heavens and new earth after Christ's millennial reign and the Great White Throne judgment)) before the consummation (I Corinthians 15:24-28). This is so, because during the last two ages, death still exists, is still an enemy; and only those who have life bestowed on them from God will not be affected by this last enemy.

Upon the consummation, when ALL mankind has been resurrected, ALL mankind will then have "eternal life" because death will have been abolished. In a sense, those who will be resurrected to be with Christ in the last two

ages can be said to have "eternal life" because there will be no death for *them*; **but** in totality, "eternal life" is not a reality in the last two ages because death is still existent for others during the last two ages. During the last age of the new heavens and new earth, death still exists as "the second death" (Revelation 20:14; 21:8). After the last age then comes the consummation, when ALL mankind will be resurrected to what we then can say will be our concept of "eternal life."

There is confusion about this issue because of the KJV translators' rendering of the Greek *aion* as "eternal," and "for ever." The accurate, more understandable rendering of this Greek word is "age" or "eon," with the adjective form being "age-lasting" or "eonian," etc.

So, the bottom line is that there can be no "eternal life" while death still exists. ■

by — André Sneidar

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### The Really Bad Thing About Free Will

A Critical Look at the "Salvation by Willpower" Doctrine

by — Martin Zender

The most destructive doctrine in the world is that of human free will. The doctrine of free will denies Christ's death for sins, it starts with the premise that your sins still stand against you. Your sins are still keeping God from you, and you from God. This is a direct denial of the work of Christ. In spite of what John 1:29 says, Christ's sacrifice on Calvary (according to modern-day "evangelists") did not remove your sins. This is the essence of the free will teaching: Your sins still count against you. It's the heart of the doctrine. This is why people are forced to make a free will decision to accept Christ. It is your free will decision, not the sacrifice of Christ, which finally removes sin and paves the way to God.

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*by* — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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