

Bible Student's Notebook

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume XVII Issue 417

Do We Believe God?

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

o we believe what God says?

By nature, none of us believe Him. None of us wish to believe. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the Law and the Word of God. We all seek to evade it by various devices.

Some deny that there is any God to speak to man.

Others believe there is a God, but deny that He has spoken in His Word.

Others believe that He has spoken, and that the Bible contains His Word, but deny that it is His Word.

Others believe that the Bible contains the Word of God, but cannot tell us where to find it or how to distinguish His words, or where to hear His voice.

Others receive it, and receive their emoluments and dignities for so doing, but deny its Divine origin and inspiration and spend their energies in destroying it, declaring its histories to be "myths," "legends" and "old wives' fables," its prophecies to be the shrewd guesses of mortal men or the work of those who lived after their fulfillment.

Others receive it, but declare that much of it consists of forgeries, and spend their whole time criticizing it or writing commentaries upon it. No class of men are so busily engaged in writing about the Word of God. They cut it up with their pens, just as Jehoiakim cut it up with his penknife.

Others are content to use it as a book to pick to pieces, not to find fault with it, but to find "texts" suitable for sermons or almanacs, or birthday-books, or motto-cards; just as Shakespeare and the poets are used for the same purpose.

Others believe it to be inspired by God, but have their various "schools of thought" as to the kind of inspiration involved, and the nature and the measure of it.

Others believe, as a matter of fact, or as an article of faith, that it is inspired, but hold that no one can really understand it, and thus endeavor to shield themselves from all responsibility to believe it, on the ground of their ignorance.

Others go a step further, and, while holding that, while no one can understand it, the "Church" (whatever that expression may mean!) can do so. They thus seek to shelter themselves by shifting their responsibility to believe God from themselves to the Church; and thus, while refusing to believe God, they believe man, and swallow down with credulity all that man may say.

Others receive it, as a good book, but are content with setting it to music; and treat it as being useful for

(see Believe, page 3735)

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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
- 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).

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BELIEVE (continued from front page)

making "libretto" or an oratorio or cantata, or of a song or a solo. Thus, with some it becomes a "book of the words," while the performers are "rendering" the music. They receive the applause of man for singing with great gusto warnings which they ignore, threatenings which they do not fear, commands which they disobey, prophecies to which they do not take heed and promises by which they are not moved.

Others receive it, and believe it to a certain extent, and value, and even reverence the Scriptures as the Word of God, but not by a Divine or "living faith," because it has not the evidence of the "good works," which are manifested only in "faith-obedience" (Romans 1:5; 16:26).

"Faith-obedience" is the obedience which proceeds from, and is produced by, a living faith in the Living God. In other words, it is the acting as if what we heard were true.

We get to know more and more of Him, and to be giving Him thanks for what He hath done in making us meet for His glorious presence. We shall not forever be putting ourselves back into our old place from which we have been delivered. We shall not always be asking for forgiveness of the sins for which He was delivered, because we shall always be rejoicing in Him (Colossians 1:14). We shall be looking and pressing forward to the calling on high (Philippians 3:14).

We shall be free to engage in His service, being no longer occupied with ourselves, our walk or our life. We shall be no longer taken up with judging our brethren, knowing that the same Lord has "made them meet" also, and that they are members of "the same Body," and that we shall soon be called on high together. We shall cherish our fellowship with them here (if they will let us), knowing that we shall soon be "together" with them there.

We shall hold not only the precious doctrinal truth connected with Christ the Head of the one Body, but the practical truths connected with the members of that Body.

We shall seek to learn ever more and more of God's

purposes connected with "the great mystery concerning Christ and His Church," and to enter into all that concerns its glorious Head.

We shall recognize that His will is so perfect that we shall prefer it to our own, and desire it to work out all else that concerns us.

We shall have nothing to "surrender." We shall be done with that miserable "gospel" of self-occupation; and, all connected with its phraseology will have been left far behind, as being on a lower and different plane of experience altogether.

Christ will be our one object, and we shall count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord (Philippians 3:8).

If this is not the result of our believing God, it is proof positive that we have not a "living faith," and that all of our works for holiness are only "dead works," because we have not this blessed evidence as the result of our "faith-obedience."

We shall find ourselves strangely out of harmony with all that rules in Christianity, and all that characterizes religion.

We shall realize that its phraseology and its terminology are all based on a lower plane of experience. We shall find ourselves out of touch with many of our fellowman. We shall have lost and given up religion; but this will be because we shall have found Christ, and know what it means to be "found in Him" (Philippians 3:9).

Seeing the Distinction

Scripture till we see sharply and clearly the distinction between Israel, the chosen earthly nation, and the Body of Christ. Paul is the Apostle of the latter and, as such, he is the Apostle of a totally new thing.

William R. Newell (1868-1956) Paul, Lost and Found

The Sign Gifts:

for Another People and Another Time

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. & André Sneidar

t seems that Paul's conclusion in I Corinthians 13 is being overlooked here. After Paul states three gifts that were given to the church – prophecies, tongues, knowledge - he states that the things that abide NOW are faith, hope and charity, the greatest of which is charity.

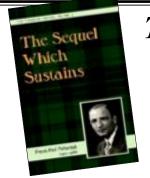
Tongues is not mentioned as one of those things that abides NOW. In fact, Paul had the gift of tongues more than any of them (14:18), and he downplayed that gift in favor of those three things that remain as the "guideposts" for the body of Christ during this dispensation. Additionally, Paul equates the desire and use of those "other" "older" gifts as "childish things" and confusion ("see through a glass darkly," or, as the CV puts it, "enigma," which is defined as "something that baffles understanding and cannot be explained" (WordWeb)).

So this clinging to the things of the "old" dispensation is much ado about something that God through Paul said was to be "put away" or discarded. Moreover, in examining the peak of God's revelation to the Body of Christ today, when Paul writes of the seven things that are the hallmark of the unity of the spirit, tongues is not mentioned (Ephesians 4:4-6). In fact, speaking in tongues is not even mentioned in any of Paul's post-

Acts epistles, which is a telling indication that those gifts, of which tongues was a part, served a specific special purpose and function during Acts which did not carry through to the post-Acts period once God had suspended His program with Israel (which we now know is only temporary).

The confusion on this issue is due to the failure to rightly divide the Word of Truth, including Paul's epistles. We need to see that Paul's early ministry during Acts was to the Jew first, and then to the gentile. After Acts, we don't see this pattern being maintained by Paul. During Acts, Paul's ministry to the Jew first was God's final act toward Israel in presenting His Son as their Messiah, After Israel's final rejection of this ministry through Paul, it was the final "nail in the coffin" (colloquially speaking) and God pronounced the end of His work with Israel as His special people in the earth, and they became loammi, "not My people," as had been prophesied. This was the final ultimate act of Israel which allowed God to "conclude them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy on all" (Romans 11:32).

The sign gifts given to Israel have no place in the Body of Christ because their legitimate use has ceased.



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The Sequel Which Sustains -

The Pohorlak Papers: Volume 1

by — Frank Neil Pohorlak

In cooperation with his estate, this is the first in a series of collected articles on various scriptural themes by Frank Pohorlak (1907-1988). In associations with men such as Bob Jones, John R. Rice, J. Frank Norris and A.E. Knoch, he enjoyed a long, illustrious, colorful life and teaching ministry spanning many states and foreign countries.

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1-800-784-6010 www.StudyShelf.com Paul's method is "teaching, for exposure, for correction" (II Timothy 3:16, CV). Where is the teaching (instruction) on "praying in the spirit"? It doesn't exist. Its solitary reference is limited to I Corinthians 14:15, and is a part of the exposure of our Apostle. Without such abuse at immature Corinth, this correction would not have taken place and we would not so much as even heard of such a thing as "praying in the spirit," since Paul actually teaches (instructs) us on it nowhere in his writings.

This idea of "the spirit praying through" someone appears nowhere in Scripture (to my knowledge).

As for Romans 8:26,

- (1) There is no mention of "the spirit praying through" anyone. Instead, the spirit *aids* our infirmity because of our ignorance in knowing what to pray for. Instead of "the spirit praying through" us, it *pleads for us*. There is a world of difference between doing something "through" someone, and "for" someone.
- (2) This intercession is "groanings which cannot be uttered." The Greek word for "uttered" is alalētos, meaning "unspeakable" (Strong), "not expressed in words" (Thayer). It is derived from the Greek word laleō, "to talk, that is, utter words" (Strong), "to utter a voice or emit a sound" (Thayer), and the nega-

tive particle *a* before it, and therefore means "not emitting a sound."

We see this in other translations as well:

"groans unspoken" (Diaglott);

"groanings unutterable" (Young);

"sighings unutterable" (Rotherham);

"unspoken groanings" (Holman);

"can find no words" (Weymouth).

The spirit's intercession is spiritual, not verbal, and has nothing to do with us, since they are done by the spirit "for us" and not "through us."

Indeed, it is our heart and passion that this not be about quantity, but quality.

Tongues and the other "sign" gifts referred to by Paul in his Acts epistles were a "leftover" from God's dealings with Israel as a people who required those signs. These expired gifts are to another people for another time. We, the Body of Christ, are a people not of signs but of *faith* (II Corinthians 5:7). There is a higher calling and purpose which God has assigned to the Body of Christ in this current dispensation.



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Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.'s Personal Blog: http://thegreatadventureoffaith.wordpress.com

All Will Be Brought to Light

by - Clyde L. Pilkingotn, Jr.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God (I Corinthians 4:5).

here are many injustices in the life of the believer: dishonor, slander, defamation, misrepresentation, even as an "evil doer" (II Timothy 2:9). We rejoice in the day when the truth will come out, and the record will be set straight.

may appear to earthly eyes, the bema will make clear that we are "His workmanship," "His achievement" (Ephesians 2:10). Then and there alone will we have our proper recognition, and it will be from the only One Who counts.

At Christ's reward platform the truth of life that is now veiled in darkness will be fully brought to light. Regardless of how things ... then applause will be coming to each one from God (CV).

Forgetting, Not Regretting

by - A.E. Knoch (1874-1965)

ew, indeed, who have learned what they are in themselves, can look back without regret. Paul might have made much more mention of his past errors in his epistles, but he never brings them up without good cause. There is no power in our past, especially not in the years of self-exaltation before we began to find our all in Christ. Many are tempted to spend much time regretting their own ignorance and selfishness, and thinking how much better it would have been if they had been enlightened at an earlier age. Such regrets weaken and unfit us for our forward striving toward the goal, conformity with Christ, and should be discouraged. Let us forget our past advantages and disadvantages and look ahead. Back of us is ourselves, ahead is Christ.

Studies in Philippians *Unsearchable Riches* Magazine



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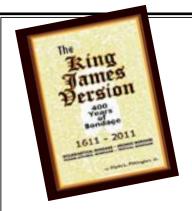
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The King James Version – 400 Years of Bondage

1611-2011

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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