

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual OABS Lectureship  
“Restoring Faith”  
May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**The materials in this booklet cannot be used digitally or otherwise without the permission of the OABS Director.**

**OABS.ORG**

## **Biblical Leadership**

By Martrell Sanders

### **The Need for Biblical Leadership**

There is a war against biblical leadership in our society. We can see the lack thereof in the behavior of people. Lk 16:10 says, if one is unjust in the least, then he is unjust in the much. A home, church, or even a government without biblical leadership will decay. God assigned a specific gender to take on certain roles in our society. God created man with a cognitive reason for leadership. I am not diminishing the role of women in our society. There are many godly women that bring their children up in nurture and admonition of the Lord, because the father lacks biblical leadership. We can see this in 2 Tim 1:5. Timothy learned the faith first from his grandmother and his mother. His father failed in this area, but Paul mentored Timothy. Paul considered Timothy to be his son in the faith. Biblical leadership starts in the home. For example, if a man does not lead effectively in his home, he cannot qualify to be a deacon or an elder. 1 Tim 3:2 says he must have one wife, and verse 4 says he must rule his house well. The same is true for deacons in verse 12. In Gen 2:15, Adam had a home, and a job. God gave him a law, or “set of rules,” to order his house. This arrangement was before Eve was made. God set the standard for a productive household.

In Gen 3:1-6, Eve was tempted by the devil while Adam was unavailable. 2 Tim 3:6 speaks of men creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women away with lust. The home must be tended to. If a farmer fails to tend to his garden, rodents, weeds, and snakes automatically creep in. A leader of a house, the Lord's house, even in worldly affairs must be on guard before trouble creeps in. Jude 1:4 says certain crept in unaware. If there is a fire, unless it is controlled, it will cause severe damage. Leaders must be present among his people. He must interact with the people on an intimate level. They will grow to know the leader, and see him as one that can be trusted. In 1 Sam 18:16, the people loved David because he connected with them, and he knew them intimately. In Jn 13:5, Jesus demonstrated intimacy by stooping down to wash his followers' feet. Peter couldn't comprehend this level of leadership. Peter saw this act as belittling, but Jesus demonstrated humility. True leadership is a work of service. He selflessly took upon the role as a servant, Phil 2:5-8. We cannot overlook the fact of Jesus washing Judas'

(the betrayer) feet as well. Jesus said in Matt 20:27, whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. The purpose of a leader is to serve his people. He must be aware of their needs, and ensure their protection.

Let us address what happens when a leader fails to look after his people. In 2 Sam 13, King David encountered an unforeseen circumstance. David had many sons, but only one daughter named Tamar. One of David's sons, Amnon, lusted after Tamar. Tamar was a virgin full of good works. He conspired a plan to have Tamar alone with him in his house. He forced himself upon her to lie with her. She pleaded in verse 12, no such thing ought to be done in Israel, and explained how it would bring the family to an open shame. He did not heed to her plea. After he forced himself upon her, his lust turned into hate toward her. Amnon ruined the reputation of Tamar. She remained unmarried and desolate. In verse 21, when King David heard of all these things, he was angry, but did not exact any punishment toward Amnon. Two years later, Absalom, one of David's other sons, took matters into his own hands. It could be that Absalom saw that his father failed to practice discipline, and decided to usurp authority by doing so himself. Paul wrote in 1 Cor 5, there was fornication practiced among the church. Paul instructed the leaders to exact discipline upon the offender. If not, his influence will spread as a cancer throughout the congregation. In verse 6 Paul said, a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. In Josh 7, Israel was guilty of sin. 36 men died in war because of the accursed thing, because Achan stole the Babylonian garments, gold, and the silver and hid them under his tent. God punished the entire congregation, and commanded Joshua to exact discipline. Joshua brought Achan, his family, his animals, and all of his possessions before the congregation. Joshua and the congregation stoned them and burned them, so that all would fear. David was naïve. He undermined the tarnishing effect of sin. Absalom had conspired a plot against Amnon to kill him, taking out his own vengeance. It could be that Absalom lost respect for his father. David failed to protect his own daughter, so Absalom considered David unfit to be king. 2 Sam 15:6, Absalom stole the hearts of the people, and rebelled against the throne of his father. A leader must deal with his people on an intimate level, and be willing to serve them.

## **Building Leaders**

Secondly, the main goal of a leader is to build leaders. A true leader makes himself increasingly unnecessary. In Matt 17:14, a certain man came to Jesus on behalf of his sick son. This sickness was of an epileptic sort, and would cause him to fall into waters and fire. The father requested help from Jesus' disciples, but they could not heal his son. Jesus asked, how long must I be with you? Jesus needed them to mature in their faith. Jesus knew his time on earth was limited, so he needed his followers to confirm the word of God by all means (Mk 16:20). Jesus witnessed their lack of faith, and encouraged them to increase it. Jesus said in Jn 16:7, it is expedient for you that I go away. Jesus demonstrated genuine leadership that passed on through his disciples, reaching us. In Jn 13:14, Jesus said, if I, being your master, washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. When Jesus met Peter, he told him, I will make you fishers of men. A leader doesn't give away fish, but he teaches his people how to fish. After Jesus resurrected from the dead in Jn 21:15, Jesus asked Peter 3 times, do you love me more than these? Peter answered yes, and Jesus said, feed my sheep. Jesus wanted Peter to continue the work of God. Jesus' portion of the work was completed, so he depended on Peter and the apostles to put their 3 years of training to use. Jesus prayed for his followers in Jn 17:18-19 saying, as thou had sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes, I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Jesus poured himself into his followers, making himself increasingly unnecessary. In 1 Chron 22:5, David prepared the materials for the building of the house of the Lord. He made the preparations for his son Solomon, and gave him guidance on how he should lead in the kingdom. 1 Kg 2:12 says, Solomon's kingdom was established greatly. Solomon had adopted his father's vision of the temple, and built it in a way that no other structure can compare to. A true leader creates a pattern, so that the followers can duplicate, and in turn, become the leader of their own followers. We can see this in 2 Tim 2:2, Paul told Timothy, the things that thou hath heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

### **Those who follow Biblical leadership**

Lastly, a leader's effectiveness is measured in the people following him. If a man's children are unruly, he is disqualified from being an elder (leader) of the church. In Acts 4:13, the audience knew Peter and John were not professionally trained, but were astonished at their knowledge. They also witnessed their boldness, and concluded that they had been with Jesus. In Phil 2:19-20,

Paul stated that he was sending Timothy to Philippi in order to know their state of being. He declared, Timothy was the only man that was like-minded, and would naturally care for them. In verse 22, Paul said, you know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he served with me in the gospel. True leadership effectiveness is measured by the followers.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, biblical leadership starts in the home. Our society is made up of several small homes. The home consists of members that play a significant role that promotes structure. The leader of the home intervenes in the affairs of followers in order to prevent problems from escalating. This is true for any institution that involves people. Biblical leaders invest time with followers to ensure direction. Biblical leadership is designed to be continuously duplicated.

## Restore the strength to overcome trials

by David Long

### Introduction

The word “trial” means “to test, a putting to proof.” It’s the idea of melting metal to get the impurities out. Like they do with gold. The KJV and ASV will translate the word “trial” most of the time as “temptation.” Depending on the context it could be referring to temptation to sin (as in James 1:13-15) or a testing like Abraham in Gen. 22:1 or Job in Job 23:10. There are two main Greek words in the New Testament translated “trial” or “temptation.” One is Number 3985 and the other is Number 3986 (both in Strong’s Concordance). #3986 comes from #3985. #3985 is used 39 times in the New Testament and #3986 is used 21 times in the New Testament. In trials and temptations we need the strength to overcome. Why? Because overcomers are the winners. This is spelled out very clear in Revelation chapters 2-3. People who don’t overcome lose big time. Overcome is the idea of victory, being victorious. *“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that 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). The phrase “we are more than conquerors” is one word in the Greek. It’s a compound word (Numbers #5228 and #3528 in Strong’s Concordance). Number #3528 “conquerors” is the word overcome. Where do we get the strength to overcome trials?

## I. Prayer.

We talk about the power of prayer; do we believe it? Matt. 6:13, “*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*” (Matthew 6:13). The ASV says, “*And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil (one.)*” The devil is pictured as a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour in 1 Peter 5:8. The devil wants to destroy us. He wants to have us for lunch so to speak. How can we have strength to overcome Him? According to Jesus prayer can help. “*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*” (Luke 22:31-32). Sifting wheat is the process of removing the chaff from the wheat. The devil wanting to sift Peter as wheat means he was wanting Peter’s faith to fail. Kinda like he wanted Job’s faith to fail. Peter was hit pretty hard when he denied Jesus but he came out strong on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14). I wonder if Jesus praying for Peter helped him? Jesus prayed in His trial. “*Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*” (Luke 22:42-43).

## II. The word of God.

The strength to overcome trials is found in putting on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17). Knowing the word of God and how to use it. Jesus showed us how in Matt. 4. “*They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation (testing or trial) fall away.*” (Luke 8:13). We call this the shallow soil or heart. Why? Because there is no real deep commitment in keeping the word of God. Their commitment seems to a surface, emotional response. They didn’t have the strength to

overcome trials. To have the strength to overcome trials our roots must run deep in the word of God. *“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving”* (Colossians 2:6-7). *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper”* (Psalm 1:1-3). *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified”* (Acts 20:32). *“But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you”* (1 Peter 5:10). How will this be accomplished? Through the word. *“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith”* 1 John 5:4). How do we get faith? (Rom. 10:17).

### **III. Fellow Christians.**

Our fellow Christians can help us to have strength to overcome trails. It's called “edifying one another.” *“Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11). *“Wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone; And sent Timothy, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort (encourage) you concerning your faith: That no man should be moved by these afflictions (trails): for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto”* (1 Thessalonians 3:1-3). Christians need to support Christians. *“Rejoice with them that*



*do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another...*” (Romans 12:15-16). *“I am glad of the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours: therefore acknowledge ye them that are such”* (1 Corinthians 16:17-18). *“For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears. Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus; And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more”* (2 Corinthians 7:5-7). Just read Romans 16 and notice all those people Paul mentioned by name. Those were some of the people that gave Paul strength to overcome trials.

### Conclusion

*“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted (tested), he is able to succor (aid, help, to run to the cry) them that are tempted (tested)”* (Hebrews 2:17-18). *“I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.”* (Philippians 4:12-14). We can have that same strength by praying about it, getting in the word of God and leaning on our fellow Christians. The best support group in the world is the church of Christ. Are you a member of the church of Christ?

# **Restore The Desire To Study**

---

## **Introduction**

Leonardo da Vinci once stated that, “Study without desire spoils the memory, and it retains nothing that it takes in.” This principle is evident in everyday life which reminds me of a time when my young cousin once told his Sunday school teacher he couldn’t memorize Scripture, yet we all knew he could recite airplane facts effortlessly, showing desire drives learning. When we first obey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 6:3-5), we approach God’s Word with zeal. Over time, however, if we are not careful, that desire can fade making it difficult to engage with the most important book ever written. Nearly everyone has faced this struggle. Thus, the need to explore how to Restore The Desire To Study. I am thankful that I was given this topic and hope to impart some biblical principles and insights that will help anyone who is struggling with this very real situation to be restored back to the Good Book.

## **Reestablishing Our Desire For God**

What are we to do if we lose that desire, that yearning, that craving for God’s holy writ? When this happens, we must understand that it did not just happen overnight. It happened gradually over a period of time until we found ourselves in this situation. So, the first thing we need to do is reestablish our desire for God. This is because the Bible comes from God, and we cannot restore our desire for studying God’s Word without it.

The Bible is the mind of Christ, because it is the inspired or breathed out message from God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Timothy 3:16). Simply put, we cannot restore a desire to study God’s Word, the Bible, without first restoring our desire, yearning, and craving for our God, but how do we restore our desire for God though?

First, we remember that love is an action not an emotion (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). Because this is the case we can properly fulfill Matthew 5:43-44 concerning the need to love our enemies. God

## **Restore The Desire To Study**

---

has never expected us to have happy feelings for our enemies but rather to show them love by doing everything possible to help them get to heaven.

Secondly, we must start actively living for God. Now here is where so many start and stop in a seemingly endless cycle. A large portion of those that are seeking restoration end up biting off more than they can chew. How many people have you known that come back with great zeal and then just as quickly fall away once again. Reestablishing our desire for God means we must get active, but we cannot get our old spiritual maturity back in a single week or two. People need to establish something easily accomplished to build their confidence again and encourage their faithfulness. I like to tell people to begin by faithfully attending each time the saints assemble (Hebrews 10:24-25). This very simple goal only takes a few hours a week but is a pivotal point in one's restoration in desiring God. After all, if one cannot even find the zeal to meet four hours a week with those that have that desire for God that we are seeking they will not be restored to a desire for God's Word anyway.

Thirdly, we must actively start demonstrating our desire for God's children if we want to progress in our desire for God. This means we must seek opportunities to demonstrate our love for our brethren and honor them as children of God (1 John 4:7-11; Romans 12:10).

Once we go back to the basics and we reestablish our desire for God and his children in love, we create a strong foundation for our desire to study the Bible. Assuming then that this foundation has been created we must then...

# Restore The Desire To Study

---

## Seek God's Knowledge And Wisdom

Seeking God's knowledge means we understand that knowledge is the gathering of information, in this case from the Bible, and that this gathering takes place in two ways.

The first way we seek God's knowledge is through daily Bible reading. Just opening the Bible and consuming its information each and every day is the first step in gaining biblical knowledge (Deuteronomy 17:19). Daily Bible reading establishes a habit of consuming God's Word and establishes a dedication to God, links us to God, and eventually pays huge dividends in our desire for studying God's Word.

Secondly to seek God's knowledge we must not just be daily Bible readers, but daily Bible studiers. It is heartbreaking how many children of God have no idea how to properly study the Bible. For whatever reason, leadership in the church for years has ignored this important step in a Christian's walk with God, by not making certain classes are given on this subject. Studying the Bible is not just reading over a few passages on a topic, no it is a deep dive into that topic or passage for its full biblical meaning. For example, if you are studying God's stance on worshiping with mechanical instruments you need to study on worship itself, the use of mechanical instruments in worship, the differences between the Mosaic covenant and Christ's covenant, and so much more. Now when you understand how to do this study, it becomes abundantly clear that we should not be worshiping with mechanical instruments today. This conclusion can only come to fruition if we are willing to scrutinize the Scriptures as the Bereans did in Acts 17:11. If we are not willing to scrutinize the Scriptures, we will not have the full knowledge of God's Word on the subject and can come to an erroneous conclusion.

So, let's now take a moment to see what God's word tells us about how studying His Word will create and increase our desire for studying His Word more and more. God's word will increase

# **Restore The Desire To Study**

---

our desire to study because we will be able to distinguish between good and evil (Hebrews 5:12-14), we will become furnished or equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17), we will be able to expose our flaws and sins more readily (Hebrews 4:12), and build our faith or trust in God all the more (Romans 10:17; Psalm 119:11).

It is at this point that anybody that is faithfully reading and studying their Bible daily will notice how much wisdom they lack. When this happens, one will begin...

## **Seeking God's Wisdom**

Seeking God's wisdom only increases our desire for studying God's precious message because with wisdom we learn to apply the knowledge we have gained in our reading and studying (James 1:5). This means that when we ask for wisdom in how to apply our knowledge of God's will, He will put us to the test (1 Peter 1:6-7). In other words, the more wisdom from above (James 3:17) that we acquire the more knowledge of God's Word we will desire, and the more faith and trust we will put in our Creator.

## **Conclusion**

When I was a kid I had a best friend that lived six houses down the block from me. Like a lot of young boys back then he got into comic books, and we started talking about them, reading them, and even dabbling in drawing them. Though, at the time, I was much more interested in baseball, basketball, and football cards my friend's desire for comic books quickly rubbed off on me.

When it comes to restoring your desire for studying God's word do not feel like you have to go at it alone. Find someone that has that zeal for it that you are looking for and ask them to study with you because surrounding yourself with those that love God's word as much as you want to love and desire the Bible will ignite a passion in you as well.

## **Restore The Desire To Study**

---

Anyone can find themselves struggling with this, but we must not be too proud to seek the help, encouragement, and edification the church can provide in such a vital spiritual aspect of our lives.

As philosopher Simone Weil once said, “The intelligence can only be led by desire. For there to be desire, there must be pleasure and joy in the work. The intelligence only grows and bears fruit in joy. The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is in running.”

# **RESTORE THE TRUTH ABOUT THE END TIMES**

Kaleb Nelson

The end times are one of the most misunderstood and abused topics in scripture. Unfortunately, when looking at the religious world of denominational “Christianity” as a whole, the majority of denominations believe in the premillennialist doctrine in some manner. Premillennialism is a word that comes from two base words, pre meaning before, and millennium which means a period of one thousand years. This doctrine teaches that humans are living pre or before a one-thousand-year reign of Christ on the earth. Is this true? In this manuscript three main topics will be discussed about the end times, first, what is premillennialism, second, what are some problems with premillennialism, and third what is the Bible’s view about the end times?

## **I. WHAT IS TAUGHT ABOUT THE END TIMES IN PREMILLINIALISM.**

### **A Background to Premillennialism.**

Premillennialism is based on a literal interpretation of all scriptures and prophecies. What we will spend our time explaining is the most prominent version of Premillennialism, which is Dispensational Premillennialism. Dispensational premillennialists read that Jesus was coming to set up a kingdom and assume that to be a literal physical kingdom after the likeness of Israel. Thus, they believe Christ planned to create a supreme nation of Israel that would have had chief authority over the whole earth politically. In this teaching Christ, when he came down to earth, failed his mission of establishing a political kingdom because He was rejected by the Jews. If Jesus could have succeeded, then they teach Jesus would have established an earthly kingdom that would have defeated Rome and been exalted to supremacy among nations. The Jews instead crucified Christ, against His will, and Christ established the church as a backup plan. Now humans are in the Christian age until Christ eventually will come back and establish the kingdom that He failed to

establish the first time He was on earth. This is how the Premillennialists teach the end times will unfold in this ideology.

### **The Rapture**

In the rapture, all Christians, dead and alive, will be called up to meet Christ in the clouds. They believe this is what 1 Thessalonians 4 is speaking of. All the wicked ones in the world will remain on earth. The Christians who are called up are called pre-Rapture Christians. The rapture will be a catastrophic event. Because some Christians will be driving at this unknown time, those cars will immediately become empty. This will cause major car crashes. Plain pilots who are Christians will immediately be raptured causing plane crashes. This will cause mass deaths due to the violence. Insurance companies will be swarmed like never before. Homes, Vehicles, retirement funds, and investments will be left with no heir, which will cause greed and fighting. In this teaching, the rapture is a glorious time for Christians and most horrific for anyone else.

### **The Tribulation**

In this teaching, after the rapture comes the tribulation. Two sides of the Tribulation need to be discussed. First, what would happen to the raptured Christians, and second what would happen to those on earth? In this teaching, the raptured Christians would go into judgment in heaven. Since all of these are Christians, they are not being judged on whether they are righteous or unrighteous, but rather are given their reward for their works here on earth, and their position of prominence in the yet-to-be-established millennial kingdom. This is a glorious judgment, or rather a reward for the Christian, allowing the Christian to look forward to the rapture.

In Premillennialism the earth will not have the same merry tune. The tribulation is seven years split in half into two three-and-one-half-year periods. During the second three and one-half years is when the “great tribulation,” will occur. While all Christians at the time of the rapture are



already taken up, Premillennialists teach that there will be some individuals converted to Christianity after the rapture and before the great tribulation. These are called “Tribulation Christians.” During the great tribulation, the antichrist will reign and carry out the greatest persecution in history. There will be no Christians left alive during this time.

### **The Second Coming Of Christ**

This teaching then states that Christ will come in His second coming to end the great tribulation. In this, all of the tribulation Christians will be resurrected and joined with the raptured Christians. These will all come with Christ to defeat the anti-Christ and begin Jesus’ millennium reign. Jesus will bind Satan for the millennium and after this victory will finally get to sit on the throne that He tried to establish thousands of years ago.

### **The 1,000-year reign.**

Now that Christ has defeated the anti-Christ and Satan, he can begin His reign, sitting on the throne of David, and ruling over political Israel. The land promise will finally be complete, and Abraham’s seed will finally be a blessing to all the earth. For one thousand years Sacrifices will be restored along with the other components of Judaism. Christ’s throne will be placed in Jerusalem.

### **The Final Judgment**

After the millennium will be the final judgment. This will be where the lost will be officially separated from the saved. The saved will then go to live in a “new heaven and a new earth.” This is the eternal resting place for the Christians. The lost will be in the torments of hell.

## **II. PROBLEMS WITH PREMILLENNIALISM**

### **Jesus Did Not Fail!**

One of the saddest things that premillennialists teach is that Jesus was a failure in coming to this earth. Jesus **DID NOT FAIL** in His mission of coming to earth and **WAS NOT REJECTED** by the Jews to bring a physical kingdom.

The Jews did not reject Jesus because Jesus brought an earthly throne. They rejected Him for the exact opposite reason. They wanted Jesus to be a physical king.

Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone. (John 6:14-15; KJV).

The only reason Jesus did not become a physical king is because He actively stopped it. The reason the Jews wanted Him crucified, is because He did not follow their vision of becoming a physical king of Israel. Jesus taught He would do away with the Jewish system, and the Jews did not appreciate that. If Jesus was bringing a physical kingdom He could have with no hesitancy.

Jesus also was not killed against His will. They teach that Jesus was rejected and killed before He could establish His kingdom. This would make the crucifixion a defeat.

Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:17-18; KJV).

He laid down His life. No man forced Jesus to go to the cross. He did it willingly, and it was all part of His plan, not a mistake.

In addition, Christ establishing the church was not a backup plan. It was God's plan and the only plan that God ever came up with for the saving of mankind.

To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: (Eph. 3:10-11; KJV).

It was the eternal purpose of God to create the church. It was not a mistake. It was not an afterthought. It was not something that just came about because of an unfortunate failure. It was God's plan from the very beginning.

### **The Kingdom Is Not Future!**

Another problem with Premillennialism is it teaches the kingdom is yet future and was not established in Acts 2. It teaches that Jesus is not yet sitting on the throne of David.

The fact is that the kingdom and the church are the same and these terms are completely synonymous.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. (Mat. 16:18-19; KJV).

Jesus uses these terms here synonymously! The church and the kingdom are the same entity. In addition, Christians who are members of the church, are said to be members of the kingdom.

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son: (Col. 1:13; KJV).

Those Christians were already in the kingdom that was presently established. The kingdom was not some distant future idea, it was a present reality just as it is today!

Jesus is currently sitting on the throne of David. This is not some future idea, He has been sitting on that throne for nearly 2,000 years.

Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2:33-36; KJV).

Peter here affirms that Jesus has been raised to sit on the throne of David. Peter affirms that Jesus at that moment was Lord and Christ. Jesus reigning in His kingdom is not future, it is here now.

Jesus even preached that this would come in the first century.

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. (Mark 9:1; KJV).

Unless there are individuals who are currently alive at two thousand plus years old and will stay alive until the one-thousand-year reign, the kingdom has already come. It is a fact that people do not live that long. The kingdom was established in Acts 2. The kingdom is present today!

### **The Kingdom Is Not Earthly Or Political!**

The Premillennialist view necessitates the kingdom to be here on earth. Jesus was never coming to establish an earthly kingdom. His kingdom was always spiritual.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. (John 18:36; KJV).

A study on whether the kingdom is physical and political should be able to end after this verse. Jesus affirms that His kingdom is not of this world. This is not the only verse that affirms this. Luke 17:20-21 shows that there will not be a physical capital of the kingdom, not even Jerusalem. Jesus' kingdom was never meant to be physical!

### **Premillennialism has too many problems to be true.**

It is safe to say that Premillennialism is not accurate considering these errors. A majority of the "Christian" religious world believes in some form of this teaching. The end times will not be this way, there will be no rapture, there will be no great tribulation, and there will be no millennium reign.

### III. THE BIBLE'S VIEW OF THE END TIMES.

After seeing the error that the world presents, it is now time to “Restore the Truth” about the end times. What does the Bible actually say about the end times? The first thing that is known about the end times is that it comes at an unknown hour.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (2 Pet. 3:10; KJV).

Thieves do not announce themselves. They come at an unknown and unexpected time. That is how the second coming will be. There are no signs of this coming, it will be completely random. Only God knows when this coming will be (Mat. 24:36).

The second thing to be learned about the second coming is that it will be witnessed by everyone, Christian and non-Christian.

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. (Rev. 1:7; KJV).

Every eye will see Jesus. This will be a spectacular event that will come with a great noise (1 Thess. 4:16). There is no way to miss this event.

The next point about the second coming of Christ is that Christians, dead or alive, will rise up and meet Christ in the air.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:16-17; KJV).

The dead Christians will rise first, followed by those who are still alive. All Christians will at this point be with Jesus in the clouds. What a glorious occasion as Jesus' kingdom in its entirety will be assembled for the first time.

Fourth, at the second coming the judgment will happen. This is not a judgment of some, but all will be there. Jesus affirms that the judgment will happen when he comes again in Matthew 25:31-46. He will be the judge and will cast off the sinner from the righteous. No one will escape the judgment.

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad. (2 Cor. 5:10; KJV).

Everyone will answer for how they have lived this life in the end times. Because of this Peter warns that Christians need to make sure our lives are right in the eyes of God (2 Pet. 3:14-18). Preparation for this judgment is the only way to make it out on the right side.

Last, the Bible says that Christians will never return to earth, and instead, they will be with God in heaven eternally.

Then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and **so shall we ever be with the Lord**. (1 Thess. 4:17; KJV, cf. 2 Pet. 3:10-13; John 14:1-3).

After the second coming there is no coming back to the earth to reign, but there is instead eternity with God in His heavenly abode.

When one considers the Bible's view of the end time it is shocking to see the religious world's belief. Christians need to understand the truth about the end times and boldly proclaim it so that God's truth can reign and be established in our present world.

## Restore the Truth About Hell

Zachary Hall

What do you think about when you hear the word, Hell? Is it a word that brings about fear of a terrible place? Is it a word that draws your mind to the various terrifying descriptions that are found in scripture? Or is it a word that does not mean much to you? It is the case that Hell is being downplayed by the world and even the religious world every day. This has caused people to have varying ideas on Hell. Some believe that Hell is a temporary place of punishment such as purgatory. Some believe that Hell is real, but no one will ever go there because God is love. Some will flat out say and teach that Hell is a fictional made-up place, created by the church to scare people. As comforting as these teachings may sound, they are false, foreign to scripture, and if taught and believed, will cost someone their eternal soul. The goal then of this lesson is to prove from the Bible that Hell is real, people will spend an eternity there, and it is a terrible place to be.

### **Defining Terms**

Since the object is to prove that Hell is real, it is important to define some of the terms that we are looking at. The first word to consider is the term restore, as we are restoring the truth about Hell. The English word restore means - to bring back to or put back into a former or original state.<sup>1</sup> The Greek word for restore as found in Galatians 6:1 is *καταρτίζω* (*katartizō*). It is used 13 times in the New Testament and means to mend what has been broken.<sup>2</sup> The same Greek word is used in Matthew 4:21 in reference to mending fishing nets.

The next word that we need to understand is the word, Hell. The English word hell is defined as - the nether realm of the devil and the demons in which condemned people suffer everlasting punishment.<sup>3</sup> Sadly, because of the plague of people not believing in Hell as a real place people to use the word hell as a curse or slang word. This should not be the case with those

who claim to follow Christ (Ephesians 4:29). The word Hell is found 23 times in the New Testament. However, because there are three Greek words that the KJV translators translated to the word Hell, this has caused some misunderstanding about Hell. The first Greek word is ᾠδης (*hades*). This word is found 11 times in the New Testament and means - the nether world, the realm of the dead.<sup>4</sup> This word is translated ten times as Hell and once as grave. This word has reference to the Hadean realm, the waiting place of the dead. This is best seen in Luke 16:23 when the rich man, Abraham, and Lazarus are all in Hell (the Hadean realm). Note, this is where Jesus was after his death before his resurrection (Acts 2:27). He was in paradise one half of the hadean realm. The second Greek word that was translated Hell is ταρταρόω (*tartaroō*). This word is defined as the deepest abyss of Hades.<sup>5</sup> This word is only used one time in the New Testament and is found in 2 Peter 2:4. This passage shows that God cast the angels who sinned to a place to wait for judgment. This is the side of the Hadean realm that the rich man would have been on in Luke 16:23. The third Greek word that is translated Hell is γέεννα (*geh'en-nah*). This is the Greek word that is used in reference to eternal hell the final punishment place of the wicked.<sup>6</sup> This word has a very interesting background “*Hell is the place of the future punishment called "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.*”<sup>7</sup> This word is used 12 times in the New Testament. 11 of the times it is used is by Jesus (Matt. 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47 and Luke 12:5). The other time it is used is by the half brother of Jesus, James in James 3:6). It would be illogical to say the Jesus did not talk about an eternal Hell because He did so more than any other New Testament teacher.

### **Restore the Truth That Hell is a Real Eternal Place**



If one is to have a proper understanding of Hell, one has to understand that it is spiritual not physical. This is something that is common to scripture. For example, in John 4:24 one sees that God is a spirit. Therefore, we know that God is spiritual not physical. Jesus spoke of His kingdom being spiritual not physical when He told Pilate that His Kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36). This means when one talks about the descriptions of Hell it must be understood that they are given to help man understand how horrible it is. For example, when the Bible says it's a place of outer darkness, this is used to show that God is not there. When the Bible talks about Hell being a lake of fire it is used to show the punishment and torment that is there, not a real lake of fire.

Hell is a real place of eternal punishment. One argument that man makes is that Hell is a temporary place. Consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:46, "*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.*" They consider the words eternal and everlasting and think since Jesus made a distinction there must be a difference in Heaven and Hell. However, when one examines the Greek word used in this passage it is the same Greek word for eternal and everlasting. So, if Hell is temporary then Heaven must be temporary as well. Of course, no one argues that Heaven is temporary. Jesus also would say that man is to fear the one who can destroy both body and soul in Hell (Matthew 10:28). This does not mean that one's soul will be annihilated as some teach but that the soul of man is punished for all eternity.

### **Hell is a Place of Torment and No Rest**

As one turns to the scripture, what one reads are descriptive terms that should paint a vivid picture in the mind. This should cause a person to examine his or her life against the scriptures and see how they ought to live (2 Corinthians 13:5; 2 Peter 1:10-11; James 1:25). Consider some of the ways the Bible describes Hell: It is described as a lake of fire (Revelation 20:14-15). It is a

place of outer darkness (Matthew 25:30). It is a place of weeping and gnashing teeth (Matthew 25:30). It is a place of no hope (Luke 16:26). It is a place of torment (Revelation 14:11). It is a place where the fire is not quenched and the worm dies not (Mark 9:44, 46, 48). As these passages are put together and studied, one can start to see that not only is Hell a real place, but it is a place one should spend their life trying to avoid. For a moment consider the account of the rich man and Lazarus from Luke 16. After the rich man died, he lifted up his eyes being in torments. He then asks for just a drop of water as he is tormented by the flame and no comfort comes. This happened just moments after entering the Hadean realm, how much worse eternal Hell will be.

### **Hell is a place of Horrible Inhabitants**

As one starts to understand the reality of Hell they need to know the reality of the inhabitants of Hell. A preacher once said that “Hell is going to be full of good people.” What is meant by this statement is the fact there are morally good people who fail to do the will of God. Therefore, they will be in Hell not heaven. Consider what Paul wrote to the church of Thessalonica *“In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;”* (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9). Note in this passage there are two types of people who will be in eternal hell fire those who do not know God and those who do not obey Him. One of the worst inhabitants of Hell is Satan himself and his angels (Matthew 25:41). Could you imagine having to spend an eternity next to Satan. Regardless of what those in the world believe, Hell will not be a good time with your buddy Satan. Hell is a place where the evil of all ages will be (1 Peter 4:17-18). When one considers the wicked through out the ages people such as Ahab, Jazabel, Adolf Hitler, rapists, murders and such like will be there. Would you ever want your children to be around such people? Yet sometimes we raise our children to where they will

be if they do not repent. John gives a list of people who will be there in Revelation 21:8. One group of people listed here are liars. Have you ever known someone to lie to you? Have you ever lied to someone yourself? If these lies are not taken care of Hell will become a greater reality than anyone would want.

As one considers the reality of Hell and that is a real place, it should cause the person to consider one's life. Another saying is this "Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Whereas Hell is a prepared place for an unprepared people." What group of people do you find yourself in? Are you prepared for eternity? Hell is a real place, and the Bible tells us that it is a place that we do not want to go to.

### Works Cited Page

1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/restore>
2. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g2675/kjv/tr/0-1/>
3. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/hell>
4. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g86/kjv/tr/0-1/>
5. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g5020/kjv/tr/0-1/>
6. <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1067/kjv/tr/0-1/>
7. Ibid
8. All scriptures are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

# RESTORING THE TRUTH ABOUT HEAVEN

*Jesse Dickison*

## Introduction

I am thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this lectureship. I am grateful for the Chipman Road church of Christ and its continued stand for the truth. I truly love and appreciate brother Russ Earl and his work with both the Chipman Road congregation and the Online Academy of Biblical Studies. And I love his beautiful wife, Lisa, and their equally beautiful daughter, Chloe. They are an amazing family.

I love this year's lectureship theme: Restoring Faith. Frankly, brethren, we live in a day and time when the biblical concept of faith is in desperate need of being restored. I appreciate the men, my brethren, who have spoken thus far on this program. My assigned topic is, Restoring the Truth About Heaven.

## The Truth About Heaven Has Been Lost

Let me begin by stating that, sadly, the truth about heaven has been lost, for the most part, in the religious world today. Today, the biblical truth about heaven has been replaced by wishful thinking and emotionalism.

"Most people go to heaven" is the thinking of modern religionists. Such was not expressed by our Lord in **Matthew 7:13-14**, "*Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it.*"

There are also those that claim, "We go to heaven immediately after death." We do not. We go into the Hadean realm--the unseen realm of the dead. We must understand that Hades is a real place that has two parts: Tartarus (a place of torments) and Paradise (a place of comfort and peace).

Another concept is that "We will have the same relationships in heaven as we have had on earth." In others words, the relationship between husband and wife will continue in eternity. Or that of father and son or mother and daughter. Even earthly brothers and sisters will enjoy that relationship in heaven. As to the first relationship (between husband and wife), Jesus said, "*For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven*" (**Matt. 22:30**). Note that Jesus does **not** say they **are** angels in heaven, but "they are **as** angels in heaven."

In many religious groups, heaven is personalized to the individual: If you like to golf, you will be able to golf every day (no cheating). If your hobby is fishing, you will be allowed to fish every day (no lying about how many fish you caught or how big the fish was that got away). If you love your pet (dog, cat, whatever), well they will be with you in heaven. In the minds of many people, heaven is a kind of replacement for the old Sears Catalog--simply a wish book.

Still others believe that "all you have to do to go to heaven is die."

Brethren, I truly believe that all these MISconceptions about heaven are a real indication that the biblical truth about heaven is in need of being restored!

## The Truth About Heaven

According to the Holy Scriptures heaven is not a metaphor, not a state of mind, nor an abstract concept. There are absolutely no passages in the Bible suggesting heaven is merely

symbolic or figurative.

On the contrary, heaven is real. It is God's dwelling place (**Psa. 33:13-14**: *The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth; 11:4: The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men; Isa.66:1: Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?*). It is also a place with no pain and no sorrow (*Rev. 21:4: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away*). And it is a prepared place for a prepared people. Jesus said in **John 14:1-3**, "*Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*" We also read in **Amos 4:12**, "... prepare to meet thy God..."

The rich young ruler knew he **had to do something**. **Matthew 19:16**, "*And behold, one came to him and said, Teacher, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?*" The Philippian jailor knew he **needed to do something**. We read in **Acts 16:29-30**, "*And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" There are a lot of folks who want to stop studying at **verse 31**, "*And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house.*" There is an important question that needs to be asked at this point: Believe what about Jesus? I want you note **verses 32-33**, "*And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately.*" It is obvious from **verse 32** that when they spoke the word of the Lord unto him, they included what he was to believe concerning Jesus. And it is also obvious from **verse 33** that speaking the word of the Lord, included baptism.

There a number of things that will keep one out of heaven: 1) Unbelief in Jesus (**John 8:24**, *...for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins*) and unbelief in general (**Heb. 11:6**, *And without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him*) 2) A lack of forgiveness toward others (**Matt. 6:14-15**, *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses; Mark 11:25-26, And whensoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one; that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your trespasses*) 3) Sexual immorality (**1 Cor. 6:9-10**, *Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God*) 4) Doing the works of the flesh (**Gal. 5:19-21**, *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practise such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God*) 5) Lying (**Rev. 21:8**, *But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, their part shall be in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which*

is the second death) 6) A failure to obey the gospel (**2 Thess. 1:7-9**, and to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus: who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might) 7) Loving the world (**1 John 2:15-17**, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever) 8) Willfully sinning after obeying the Truth (**Heb. 10:26-27**, For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries; **2 Pet. 2:20-22**, For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire) 9) Being lukewarm (**Rev. 3:15-16**, I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spew thee out of my mouth) 10) Many other things which times does not permit us to discuss.

What must we do to go to heaven? The short answer is, we must do the will of the Father (**Matt. 7:21-23**, Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity). This includes hearing the word of God (**Rom. 10:17**, So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God) We must believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah (**John 8:24**,...for except ye believe that I am he, ye shall die in your sins). It also includes repentance (**Acts 17:30-31**, The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead). With the mouth we must make confession that Jesus is the Christ (**Rom. 10:10**, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; **Acts 8:37**, And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God). And, yes, it includes putting Christ on in baptism (**Acts 2:38**, And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; **Gal. 3:26-27**, For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ; **Rom. 6:3-4**, Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life). There is no example of an accountable person being saved without baptism in the New Testament--after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every

accountable person who was saved, was saved by being baptized immediately. There is not one example of anyone being saved without baptism after Jesus gave what we call the Great Commission (**Matt. 28:18-20**, *And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world; Mark 16:15-16*, *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned*).

### **We Must Restore This Truth About Heaven**

Brethren, as the apostle Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 2:11**, we must not be ignorant of Satan's devices. He wants people to believe that going to heaven is easy. **It is not!** We must strive to enter in (**Luke 13:24**, *Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able*). The way to heaven is narrow (**Matt. 7:13-14**, *Enter ye in by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby. For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it*). Going to heaven is not easy it is one of the hardest things we will ever do. One who enters that eternal abode must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Jesus (**Matt. 16:24**, *Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me*). Denying self is one of the hardest thing we will ever do!

We must be bold in declaring that heaven is far better than our existence now. Why is that true? Consider the following, Because: 1) we will be with Christ (**Phil. 1:23**, *But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better; John 14:3*, *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*) 2) there will be no more suffering in heaven (**Rev. 21:4**, *and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away*) 3) we will have eternal rest (**Heb. 4:9-10**, *There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest hath himself also rested from his works, as God did from his*) 4) we will be reunited with the saved (**1 Thess. 4:13-17**, *But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord*) 5) it is our eternal home (**John 14:1-3**, *Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also; 2 Cor. 5:1*, *For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens*).



One more thing: **No one will go to heaven by accident!** No one will find themselves in heaven, not knowing how they got there. No one will stumble upon heaven by ignorance or by a lack of knowledge (**John 8:32**, *and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free; Hosea 4:6*, *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children*). If we would make heaven our home in eternity, it will be because we had a goal--and we have striven toward that goal--according to the will of God (**Heb. 12:1-2**, *Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God; Matt. 7:21-23*, *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*).

### Conclusion

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only way to go to heaven (**John 14:6** *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out demons, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*)--where the Father is. Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to only those who obey Him (**Heb. 5:8-9**, *though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation; Luke 6:46*, *And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*). Brethren, we must restore the truth about Heaven. For the most part, it has been lost. We must restore the truth about how we can make heaven our eternal home. This world is woefully ignorant of God's truth about salvation. Brethren, if we don't restore these truths about heaven found in God's Word, **who will?**

## **The Wisdom of God seen in Creation**

By Bill Goring

One of the displays of God's wisdom is in the creation of space and matter (Gen. 1:1). But the awesome reflection of God's wisdom is seen in how He created them.

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psa. 33:6-9).

The account of creation is one of the greatest exhibits of the wisdom of God. First, the fact that God knew how to create all of the wonders of this life is truly astounding. Secondly, the way that He created them shows His great wisdom. All He had to do was speak to bring this world into existence!

Who can forget the words of the Psalmist, as he looked around the universe and sang,

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psa. 19:1)?

Dear reader, can we not look around this galaxy in which we live and see the tremendous wisdom of God? Can we not stand in awe of the way that each planet travels in its own path around the sun? Can we not gasp in wonder when we see that there is order, design, and reason to everything that exists in our universe?

Truly, the wisdom of God is perceived as we take note of the way that everything works and functions together. Who else possesses the wisdom to organize such a numerous host of the heavens and elements upon this earth? Do not our hearts cry within us, “The God that we serve is a wise God?”

“To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. 136:5).

“He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion” (Jer. 10:12).

Truly, the creation of the heavens and earth displays the wisdom of God.

### **Account of Creation**

The Bible records a blow-by-blow account of creation in the first chapter of the book of Genesis. In the following, we summarize the events and offer several observations.

#### Day One

On the first day, God created the universe, including heaven and earth. The earth was disorganized and empty, and there was no light (Gen. 1:1-2). The physics for light did not yet exist. God next created light; God modified the laws of physics for that purpose.

Note: God created light before He created heavenly bodies like the sun, the latter being dependent on the former (1:3, cf. vv. 14-16).

#### Day Two

God created a vast expanse (firmament) between the waters that were upon the earth and the waters which are above the earth on the second day. It may not be possible today to know the meaning of waters “above the earth.”

The word translated “firmament” literally means “expanse” or “extended surface” and refers to metal that is beaten to expand it into a large thin sheet. It is striking to consider how similar this sounds to the modern concept of the expansion of the universe.

#### Day Three

On day three, God began to shape the earth. He commanded that the waters “be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear” (1:9). The earth at that time existed as a single continent.

He also created vegetation on this day.

#### Day Four

God created the heavenly bodies — the sun, moon, planets, and stars — on the fourth day (1:14-19). Notice how the biblical timeline differs from the evolutionary timeline. In the latter, the expansion of the universe occurs, then the stars and sun are formed, and then the earth. Then after millions of years, life itself spontaneously forms.

In the former, the world with its water is first, then light, later an expansion, then plants, and then the sun. Genesis and the theories of evolution are incompatible.

#### Day Five

Day Five finds the creation of aquatic and avian life (1:20-23).

#### Day Six

Finally, on the sixth day, God created animal life culminating with the creation of mankind — Adam and Eve. Unlike previously created life, Adam and Eve were created “in the image of God” (v. 27). That is, immortal, moral, with a consciousness of right and wrong. God formed them with living souls.

#### Day Seven

The work of creation now being finished, God rested (2:1-2). The miraculous acts of creation were complete. The world and the universe from this point forward would continue according to the fixed laws of nature, not without God, but without His supernatural influence.

God looked upon His creation and called it “very good” (1:31).

### **Final Observations**

God created heaven and earth, and all that is within them, according to Genesis 1, in six days. It is impossible to reconcile this with the modern theories of evolution, whether one speaks of the

formation of the cosmos, including the “big bang” and the creation of heavenly bodies, or the development of life on earth.

Furthermore, creation occurred according to the Bible only a few thousand years ago. The biblical timeline places the life of Adam at about 4000 years before the birth of Christ. The age of the universe, according to modern science, however, is about 15 billion years. Can these figures be reconciled?

The answer, it seems, would be that it is impossible. We know of no way to adjust these timelines to make them agree, but we believe that if we understood all things, we could understand this paradox.

Faith is not tested by easy choices. Choices that subject us to ridicule may be the hardest. How sound is your faith? If you accept God’s word, you will believe what it says about creation.

## Restoring Christians As Godly Examples

Jeremiah 6:16

Brendan Carr

### **Introduction:**

1. Definition of Restore – “bring back (a previous right, practice, custom, or situation); reinstate” (Oxford Languages; Google Search).
  - a. When one typically thinks of restoring or restoration it is typically related to a material good or product. For example, a car, a gun, a pair of good shoes, etc.,.
  - b. Restoration can also be considered for the reconditioning of one’s actions and/or disposition.
2. Logically speaking, there are at least three previous steps before the act of restoration is necessary.
  - a. #1: There is an original/standard state – think of a car in pristine condition and is no need of reconditioning since it is still in the original condition.
  - b. #2: There is an implied understanding that the original condition needs to be kept – a vehicle needs to be taken care of; notice, this implies personal responsibility.
  - c. #3: The original condition has been damaged or added to – the need for restoration demands that a departure from the original has occurred.
3. It is when these three steps have been met that restoration is necessary. Implied with the idea of restoration is that there is a desire or demand to return to the original.
  - a. Each of these four steps in the process of restoration can be found in the Scriptures. That is to say that God has a plan for Christians and demands that plan be followed, but man left God’s pattern and is in need to restore what God desires.

- b. The same is true with God's plan and desire for Christian living and how it connects to the examples that we set for our brethren and the world to see.

**Discussion:**

- I. The Original State – God's Plan for the Church.
  - A. God has always had a plan for His people, especially in the realm of holy and righteous living (cf. 1Pet.1:16).
    - 1. Consider first that God has always had a pattern and expects it to be followed:
      - a. Noah's ark had a plan (cf. Gen.6:22; 7:5; 1Pet.3:21).
      - b. The tabernacle had a plan (Exo.25:8-9; Heb.9:1-11).
      - c. Naaman's cleansing had a plan (2Kgs.5:1-14; Titus 3:5).
    - 2. It would be foolish to believe that God had no plan for the church and the lives of His saints, since the above mentioned prefigured the Christian age.
      - a. Consider first of all the meaning of the word "church," which is, "the called out." Now compare that to 1 Peter 2:9 and Colossians 1:13.
      - b. Therefore, God's plan demands that the body of the saved (i.e., the church) separates itself from the world in the realm of lifestyle (cf. Isa.2:3).
  - B. *Application:* God's plan can be found in the Scriptures.
    - 1. Jesus sent out His apostles to preach and to teach the plans of God for the New Testament Christian (cf. Mat.28:18-20, emphasis on verse 20).
      - a. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit inspired men to record the Scriptures that contain that plan for all aspects of the Christian's life (cf. 2Pet.1:3).

- b. We are not to go “above that which is written” (1Cor.4:6). Consider the warnings against departing from the pattern or altering the pattern (2Jho.9-11; Gal.1:6-9; Rev.22:18-19).
- 2. Therefore, if I truly want to know God’s expectation for Christian living, I MUST read His Word!
  - a. It seems, at least in part, that ignorance on the topic of Christian living can be due to general ignorance of the Scriptures (cf. Hos.4:6). Of which there is NO excuse (cf. 2Pet.1:3; 2Tim.3:16-17)!
  - b. Therefore, God desires that His Word be read, He demands that His Word be read (2Tim.2:15), and neglect of His Word leads to ignorance which leads to eternal punishment (2Thes.1:7-9).

## II. The Implied Understanding – God’s Expectation for Godly Living.

- A. The implication of God having a plan for man is that He expects man to continue in that pattern (1Tim.4:16). This plan can be summarized in one word – Holiness.
  - 1. To become holy (set apart) it demands cleansing (1Cor.6:9-11) and cleansing demands separation (2Cor.6:14-18).
    - a. Consider Titus 2:11-12 – we are to neglect the things of the world and live “soberly, righteously, and godly...”.
    - b. Please, take time to read these passages – Colossians 3:5-17; Ephesians 4:22-24; Romans 12:1-2.
  - 2. Christian living is not popular – the world scrutinizes holy living.
    - a. Consider a few passages from Peter’s first epistle – 1 Peter 2:11-12; 3:14-16; 4:1-4, 12-16.



b. Christians will suffer for righteous living (2Tim.3:12).

B. Application: It takes great strength and sacrifice to live for Christ.

1. Christians are not meant to “fit in” with the world.

a. Jesus made it very clear in Matthew 5:14-16 that His disciples are going to stand out and be observed by men, all to the glory of God.

b. It demands sacrifice to live for Christ (Rom.12:1-2); sacrifice of one’s own will, desires, emotions, and strength for Christ (Mat.22:37).

2. Consider, too, that Christianity without sacrifice is no Christianity at all (cf. 2Sam.24:24; Luk.14:26).

a. To live for Christ may even demand me to die for Christ, but it all comes with the greatest reward (Rev.2:10).

b. It is as Paul put it, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Php.1:21).

III. The Damaged State – Man’s Departure from God’s Pattern.

A. Despite the clarity of God’s Word the line of demarcation between the Christian and the world is fading today.

1. Consider first instances of God’s people suffering because of worldliness in the Scriptures.

a. Consider Aaron and the Israelites in Exodus 32 when Aaron made the golden calf, then consider verse 35.

b. Consider Demas, who was once considered a “fellowlabourer” of Paul, that then turned back into the world (Phi.24; Col.4:14; 2Tim.4:10)

2. It is possible for a Christian to go back into the world (Gal.5:4; 1Cor.9:27).

a. To become a friend of the world while being a child of God makes one the enemy of God (Jas.4:4; Mat.6:24).

b. Such an end, as Peter states, is worse than the beginning (2Pet.2:20-22).

B. Application: Worldliness in the church is killing the people of God.

1. Let us first consider how worldliness is seen today:

a. In seeking association in and with the world and not amongst the saints (1Cor.15:33; Gen.19:30-38).

b. In making worldly interest the great objective of life and making all else subordinate (Mat.6:19-21, 33).

c. In preferring the same illegitimate amusements as the world – dancing (Gal.5:19-21), drinking (Eph.5:18), gambling (Rom.12:17), etc.,.

d. In abandoning what is right for comfortable religion (i.e., good ole’ boy religion). Good ole’ boy religion is damnable (Rom.10:3).

2. The church is tasked with the greatest commission – to save the world. How can we save the world when we cannot even save ourselves?

a. Why would anyone in the world want to be a Christian when the saints do not act in the distinct manner God called them to be?

b. Where does worldliness begin? In having a carnal mind and all problems can be traced back to this problem (1Cor.3:3-5).

**Conclusion:**

1. “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where *is* the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls” (Jer.6:16).

2. Ancient Israel was guilty of departing from the laws of God (cf. Jer.2:13).

- a. However, God, who is longsuffering (2Pet.3:9), tried to call them back through the prophets before they were destroyed.
  - b. Such restoration had a cost, a cost they were not willing to pay, “But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jer.6:16b).
3. The cost of restoration today: The Second Law of Pardon.
- a. Willingness to forsake that which defiles – repentance (Jas.4:8).
  - b. An admitting of trespasses – confession (1Jho.1:9).
  - c. Asking of forgiveness – prayer (Jas.5:16; Acts 8:24).

# Restoring Biblical Morals — A Call to Battle

By Russell Earl

## Introduction

Morals are disappearing because so many have turned away from God's Word.

*"And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:" (Romans 1:28-31, KJV).*

The church must do what it can to **restore Biblical morals** without apology or compromise. We are the light of the world:

*"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14, KJV).*

## I. Identifying the problem

The world around us is a result of a rebellion against God and His Word

The way of life we see in the time of the judges is still around us today.

*"In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 21:25, KJV).*

- ♦ Tolerance over truth.
- ♦ Pleasure over purity.
- ♦ Feelings over truth and faith.

However, God still says:

*"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." (Jeremiah 6:16, KJV).*

## **II. The Foundation: God's Unchanging Standard**

God does not evolve with the culture. His standard remains the same; pure and perfect.

*"For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."* (Malachi 3:6, KJV).

We are called to live in holiness, no matter what the world does:

*"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* (1 Peter 1:15-16, KJV).

The works of the flesh are everywhere:

*"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like..."* (Galatians 5:19-21, KJV).

But the church must bear the fruit of the Spirit:

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* (Galatians 5:22-23, KJV).

## **III. The Church's Charge: Stand, Speak, Shine**

The church is not called accommodate ungodly morals but to boldly proclaim the truth.

We must preach and teach without apology:

*"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."* (2 Timothy 4:2, KJV).

We must teach the next generation God's ways:

*"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* (Ephesians 6:4, KJV)

When necessary, we must exercise church discipline to maintain purity:

*"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Thessalonians 3:6, KJV).*

Also, let us remember we must be good examples:

*"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16, KJV).*

#### **IV. God's Word: The Christian's Weapon and Defense**

Human wisdom will not fix a broken world. Only God's Word can:

*"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12, KJV).*

The Gospel remains God's power to save:

*"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16, KJV).*

The Word is the seed we must sow:

*"Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God." (Luke 8:11, KJV).*

And God will give the increase:

*"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." (1 Corinthians 3:6, KJV).*

#### **Conclusion: A Call to Arms**

We are engaged in a spiritual battle for the souls of men.

Paul reminds us:

*"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21, KJV).*

The church must restore Biblical morals by boldly preaching, living, and defending the truth.  
We trust not in ourselves, but in the living God who works through His people.