

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

**KING JAMES BIBLE
USED FOR ALL
REFERENCES TO
GOD'S WORD IN
THIS NEWSPAPER**

The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



"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..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith

October 2016



GOD'S IMAGE AND LIKENESS



"So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Genesis 1:27)

God created man just like Himself, even copying the triune aspect of Himself in the man—body, soul, and spirit. We can see God embodied in the man, Jesus Christ; His soul and spirit in God, the Father, and God, the Holy Spirit. The soul and spirit of man are separable only by the Word of God. (Hebrews 4:12)

As we consider some of the attributes of God, we can see them reflected in man. Consider God's circular patterns in all creation: the water cycle, the cyclical pattern of the seasons, the ocean tides, phases of the moon, etc. We can see that He is rhythmic and structured. (Genesis 14:1; Isaiah 40:22) Is it a coincidence that man seeks rhythm in his life? Children have greater success in school when they have regular bed-times and mealtimes. We consult our clocks and calendars frequently to keep ourselves on schedule and to plan ahead. Human society functions better when there is structure woven into it.

Another aspect of God is His grandeur and majesty reflected in nature. (Psalm 19:1) A visit to the Grand Canyon, Glacier National Park, or even gazing into the night sky can inspire in any of us a sense of awe and amazement. People become so awestruck by nature that they mistake their sense for a spiritual experience and try to worship God there. The fact is that God made all of the natural wonders for His own pleasure, (Revelation 4:11) and since we were made in His likeness and image, we take pleasure from the work of His hands, too. The Bible is clear that God only receives worship at the appointed times and places of His New Testament churches. (Psalm 5:7; Hebrews 8:2) God desires man to worship Him, not His creation. (Romans 1:25)

Yet another aspect of our amazing Creator is His giving nature. "It is more blessed to give, than to receive." (Acts 20:35) God has illustrated this quality

amply in the giving of Himself to redeem mankind. (Isaiah 53; John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18) We can all attest to the fact that it feels good to give—think about the last birthday party you attended. It is gratifying when the recipient opens the gift you brought. Have you ever served meals at the homeless mission or visited a shut-in? We do these things because it feels good to give of ourselves, showing further evidence of the image and likeness of God in us!

Underneath their rebellion, children crave clear leadership. This is their natural yearning for God and His clear, firm direction. (Hebrews 12:5-11) When they don't get it, instead are allowed to be "in charge", they become whiny and belligerent. As the parent continues to refuse to make the child "toe the line", the child gradually becomes more confused and disgruntled. A child's sin nature desires to have control, but since he was made in the image and likeness of God, he at the same time, desires firm, yet loving leadership and discipline. The two desires within the child war against each other, and unless the parent reins in the rebellious, self-serving side, the child will become confused and alienated from God so much that he no longer knows how to behave. Then we end up with more and more mass shootings. A scope back into the childhood of these shooters would certainly reveal the great confusion of never having had clear, firm, loving leadership.

There are these and more evidences that man really was created in the image and likeness of God. Man has God's hand prints all over him—not just in his human form, but also in his mind. All three parts of man—his body, his soul, and his spirit—were Godly back in the garden. (Genesis 1:31) But when Adam chose to disobey, sin passed upon all men, (Romans 5:12) so that all men's souls are dead in trespasses and sin. We sin because we are sinners, and the Bible bears out that we are totally depraved. (Psalm 14; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10-18) Even the disciples knew what lurked within when they all asked, "Is it I?" (Matthew 26:20-22) When we see Jesus, we sense our Creator but we also sense our guilty soul.

Man is triune just like his Creator, composed of body, soul, and spirit. The natural man's soul is dead, but his mind still bears the imprints of his Maker's hands. This is why God so desires to reconcile man in his entirety with Himself. In every born again, child of God, the old man and the new man coexist. (Romans 7:14-25) The mind of man bears at the same time the vestiges of His Creator and the scourge of sin, but when he allows Jesus to save him, his soul is created anew. (Jeremiah 18:4; II Corinthians 5:17) The born again man still has his old sinful mind to deal with, but with God's seed in him, he has the ability to refrain from sin. (I Corinthians 9:27) From that point forward, he has the choice in his mind to follow God or follow self, to choose treasures on earth or to lay up treasures in Heaven. (Matthew 6:24, 33-34)

Only the Word can separate the soul and the spirit. The Bible bears out that man is triune, just like his Creator and that the soul of the old man is dead. That soul is created anew when the man is born again, but the man still bears sin in his body and mind. We see vestiges of God in our mind: the need for structure, the inspiration from His creation, the pleasure in giving, and the innate need for firm and consistent leadership. Only our Creator knows the line between soul and spirit, and He will redeem all parts of the born again man for Himself at the last day.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Ephesians 4:30



Body, Soul, and Spirit

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The “Model” or “Ideal” Church

Hebrews 8:5 “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.”

The members of the “model” or “ideal” church would esteem her pastor very highly for his work’s sake. (I Thessalonians 5:12-13) They would not be looking for things to hold against their pastor. (I Timothy 5:1)

There would be no divisions or schisms among them. (I Corinthians 1:10; Psalm 133:1; Acts 2:44-46)

The members would be truthful and honest. (Ephesians 4:25)

They would support the cause of Christ 100%, every member according to his ability. (I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7) Anything worth having, is worth supporting. (II Corinthians 8:1-7) There is a blessing promised in giving. (II Corinthians 9:6; Luke 6:38) Supporting the work of the local church, and her sister churches as need arises, is a command from Christ. (Matthew 23:23)

The “model” or “ideal” church would put away from among them disorderly members. (I Corinthians 5:11-13; II Thessalonians 3:6,14)

They would contend for the doctrines of Christ. (Jude 3)

They would pray for one another. (Ephesians 6:18; Hebrews 13:1; Romans 12:10; James 5:16)

They would love each other. (I Peter 1:22)

Members of the “model” or “ideal” church would attend worship services. (Hebrews 10:25)

They are ready to lay down their lives for the brethren. (I John 3:16)

They are seeking the salvation of the lost, even under persecution, or threat of persecution. (Acts 8:1-4; Luke 19:10)

They are rejoicing together in the comfort of the Holy Spirit. (Philippians 4:4; Colossians 3:16-17)

Lastly, the members of the “model” or “ideal” church are looking for the glorious return of Christ. (Hebrews 9:28)

Are you looking anxiously, or reluctantly? (Philippians 3:13-21)

THE 5 “HE’S” OF MATTHEW 10:37-39

In Matthew 10:34, Jesus stated that He has come to “divide” mankind. What a harsh statement! With the world shouting “peace” and “love”, we would say this is a verse that contradicts God’s principles. This is not so! Looking deeper, we will see it is in harmony with God.

God has always demanded peace and love to Him first. This is where we get confused. We try to have the peace and love of man with God, which is then superficial. Peace and love must come from God. Man must reach out to obtain this from God.

The dividing comes when you love God first. It will separate you from those things that hurt you, such as drugs, alcohol, tobacco, hate, lying, etc. This dividing that this Word of God brings is not a negative, but a positive force in our lives.

Christ was simply saying, “I am come to take these things that will hurt you, out of the way.” In order to do this, he has placed 5 direct facts that we must accept and do.

In verse 37, He says, “**He** that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me...” This is a fact. We and our young people must come to grips with that! We, at some point, must separate ourselves from our parents. We must decide if God is going to be our God, or just the God of our parents. If we love (phileo—friendly love) our father or mother before Christ, we are not worthy (axios) or suitable for Christ.

“...**he** that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” Sometimes, we, as parents, put our children’s desires before God. Our children may play sports, or desire to go to a birthday party, or go over to a friend’s house on Sunday. If we prefer our children’s desires before God, then we are not worthy of Christ. (Proverbs 8:33; 14:12; 22:6) The way to train our children, is to show them the love of Christ through our devotion to Him above our chil-

dren.

In verse 38, He says, “And **he** that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.” There are two main parts this verse:

1) Taketh not his cross - We all have a cross to bear. Not only does each member have the cross of preaching the Gospel and serving God by self-denial, but we also have our individual crosses such as things that have a hold on us personally. We must forsake them, and follow Christ. Christ bore a heavy cross for you and me, the weight of our sins, the sins of the whole world. He has never asked us to take on that kind of cross. He just asks us to carry our own. Philippians 4:13 reminds us we are not alone in bearing the weight of our cross as Christ was alone when He bore the weight of our sins.

2) Followeth after me - We all follow something or someone. Christ did not say follow and live after someone else. He said, “After me.” That is following, or seeking after Christ and His righteousness. (Matthew 6:33) It is not too much or too hard; it is reasonable. (Romans 12:1-2)

In verse 39, He says, “**He** that findeth his life shall lose it.” Many people today think they have found life in jobs, homes, or other material substitutes. Some even claim life in people, but all of these things are going to pass away. They will be lost.

“...and **he** that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” If you look for life in Christ, through His Word, it will never pass away. (John 3:16; Matthew 24:35) If we seek God’s will, we may lose some temporal things: family, friends, fleshly things, but this is speaking of eternal things. Losing your life for the sake of Christ is really gaining. After all, he promised His disciples that they would be rewarded for their losses here and in the life to come. (Matthew 19:29)

THE DIFFERENCE

I got up early one morning
And rushed right into the day.

I had so much to accomplish
That I didn’t have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me,
And heavier came each task.

“Why doesn’t God help me?” I wondered.
He answered, “You didn’t ask.”

I wanted to see joy and beauty,
But the day toiled on, gray and bleak.

I wondered why God didn’t show me,
He said, “But you didn’t seek.”

I tried to come into God’s presence;
I used all my keys at the lock.

God gently and lovingly chided,
“My child, you didn’t knock.”

I woke up early this morning
And paused before entering the day;

I had so much to accomplish

That I had to take time to pray!

Prayer makes a difference.

~James 5:16~

Don’t leave home without
it!

The Equality of the Grave!

Psalm 49:6-20

Cemeteries are a very interesting place to visit. As you look at the different grave markers, you can find some very interesting things. Dates reveal when the person was born, when they died, and how old they were. Names sometimes reveal the nationality of the person. The type of marker sometimes tells the type of religious background they had. The inscription can tell the attitude of some, whether they were funny or solemn. I am reminded of one such inscription. It went as follows: "Remember, friend, as you pass by. As you are, so once was I. As I am, you soon will be, so prepare for death and follow me." That is so true. As we live and enjoy life, we do not want to think of death. We must, however, it is a reality. That is what Psalm 49:1-20 is talking about. Verses 1 and 2 show us that your estate in this life has no bearing on whether or not you die. "Hear this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world: Both low and high, rich and poor, together."

The reality of the grave in verse 10, says, "For he seeth that wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others." Death is an appointment **ALL** will keep. (Hebrews 9:27) This is one appointment you will never be too late for, or too early for. God has control of this time. The world can solve the problems of cancer, aids, and other deadly diseases, but this will not stop man from dying. (Romans 5:12) We all have a "grave" waiting for us. It might take on different shapes and styles, but it is still a grave. (Matthew 23:27)

In verses 6 and 7, the Bible says, "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:" Mankind today thinks he can buy anything he or she wants and in many cases, this is true. Man can control every aspect of his life, and even to a certain extent, his salvation as far as accepting it or not. However, God is the only One that has control over death. (Revelation 1:18) You might say Satan can take life, but only if God allows it. Death teaches us how important life is.

Verse 15 says, "But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me." To the saved, this means a new body. (Philippians 3:21) To the saved, it means a new place to dwell. (II Peter 3:13) To the saved, it means life. (John 5:24) To the faithful, it means reigning forever with Jesus. (Revelation 22:4-5) To the lost, those who have never trusted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, death means everlasting punishment in the Lake of Fire. (II Thessalonians 1:8-9)

Yes, death is an equal opportunity employer. No one is discriminated against. All have a choice of what is ahead in this thing called death, life everlasting or punishment everlasting. You have the choice. To members of the Lord's, local, New Testament churches, faithfulness means more than convenient service. To the saved, Christ deserves more out of your life, after all, that's why He saved you. To the lost, Jesus has the power to change anyone's destiny before your death. You must choose!

The Uncertainty Of Eternal Life

There's probably more uncertainty about the most important matter in the world than any other that is faced today among young and old.

Let me illustrate it this way, if you were to ask 100 people at random, about rape, pornography, killing, or pollution, you would get a fairly consistent, definite opinion from most. However, if you ask the same 100 people about salvation, you will probably get almost as many opinions. Opinions such as, "Baptism, church membership, works, being good, I don't know," or even, "I have never thought about it," as well as many other responses.

Most of these same people would tell you that they believe in Jesus Christ and Heaven, yet they do not know whether or not they are going to Heaven for sure. Most of these people know definitely where they will be tonight, or what they will be eating, yet they do not know where they will spend eternity.

I feel I know the cause of their dilemma. They have not heard the truth, or have not listened to the truth, and they have not believed the truth. Most have been deceived. The word deceived, or a form of it, is used some 40 times in the New Testament. Jesus stated it this way in Matthew 24:4, "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you." There are many being deceived, not only in so called churches and on TV, but sadly, also in some of the Lord's churches.

If you were to ask the average person what one must do to have eternal life, his reply would probably be one or more of these: Go to church, Be baptized, Live a good life, Obey the law, Join a church, Be raised in a Christian family, etc. What does it really take to have the knowledge and assurance of eternal life? John 17:3 says, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

I John 5:13 says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

There does not have to be uncertainty of eternal life. We can know, be sure, be certain, and have assurance by the Word of God.

It is a free gift. (Romans 6:23) A gift is not a payment. If a person thinks he must work his or her way to Heaven, they will never know if they have worked hard or good enough.

This knowledge, assurance, or certainty of eternal life must begin with our realization of sin. (Romans 3:23) It is a realization of fact, not a possibility. We must realize that we cannot be good enough, that we cannot merit, or work our way to Heaven. Most importantly, we do not have to! The way to Heaven was opened by Christ. (Romans 10:3-4)

It is asking Christ, no one else, for eternal life. (Romans 10:13) You must ask the One who is able to save. (John 6:35-40,44)

It is a real belief. (Romans 10:10) Belief: an assent of the mind to the truth of a declaration, proposition, or alleged fact, on the grounds of evidence, distinct from personal knowledge. The Greek form simply means to rely upon, trust. We all believe in many things, but only those who will believe, or trust, Christ will have eternal life. Then is when they will have certainty of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

All things have a starting point. Salvation is no different. It must start with the One who made it possible. (Luke 2:27, 30-32; Revelation 1:8; John 1:36; I Peter 1:19)

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2



Freedom



On July 4th, 1776, these United States of America declared its independence from England and all other countries of the world. At that time, she became a free country, accountable only to God. The adopting of the Declaration of Independence declared and protected the right of each individual making up this great nation. We have in the last few years seen much change in our great nation. These changes have not been toward the standards that she was established on, but all in all, we are still the freest nation on the earth.

We have religious liberty. We have free enterprise liberty. We have freedom to own our own houses. We have freedom to choose our own friends. We have freedom to stand for what we believe.

With all the freedom we have in this great nation, it is not compared to the freedom we have in Christ, as a child of God. We have freedom over the control of station in life. We have freedom over the Adamic man. We have freedom in Christ which gives us liberty then to have an abundant life. Freedom in Christ gives us the liberty to serve the One who died for us.

With this great freedom we have in Christ, many times we forget and take advantage of the liberty we have. I Corinthians 8:9 says, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak." I Peter 2:16 says, "As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God." Galatians 5:1, 13 says, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." With this great liberty is also a great responsibility in serving Him.

Let us consider two trains of thought today: 1) What Christian liberty is not. 2) What Christian liberty is.

What Christian liberty is not. The rejection of God's Holy Word is not Christian liberty. Matthew 24:35 says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Psalm 119:89 says, "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." John 12: 48 says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day."

Rebellion against God is not Christian liberty. Psalm 14:1 says, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have abominable works, there is none that doeth good." Psalm 9:17 says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."

Every individual doing that which is right in his own eyes is not Christian liberty. Judges 17:6 says, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Our liberty to do, ceases where another's liberty begins. We are only free to do that which is right in the sight of God, the Great Law Giver.

We are not free to interpret God's Word the way that we want to. I Corinthians 2:9-14 says, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." God's Word can be understood by the help of the Holy Spirit, not our own ideas or perceptions. The Holy Spirit reveals to a lost man his need for salvation through the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit reveals to a saved man his need for following God in a New Testament church through the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit as Comforter reveals the deep things of God's Word to those members of local, New Testament churches that are seeking to know His truths.

Condoning every other doctrine is not Christian liberty either. III John 11 says, "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

What is Christian liberty? Christian liberty begins with the deliverance from the penalty of sin. (John 3:16; John 5:24) Christian liberty is the deliverance from sin's dominion. Romans 6:14 says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Christian liberty begins by the freedom from sin's bondage after one is saved. Sin no longer has dominion over us. We are now free to choose to follow after that new man that is created in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:17)

Galatians 2:20 says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Christian liberty means that one is now made free to serve the Lord. God gives this ability after one is saved, they now are able to follow His will and submit to Scriptural baptism by the authority that comes through a New Testament church. After baptism, the Lord adds them to a local, New Testament church where they are now free to serve the Lord according to His will in their lives. (Ephesians 5:17-20; Ephesians 3:16-21)

Total Christian liberty will come one day when we rise in His likeness. Psalm 17:15, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness."

The freedom we have in America is one to stand for. However, the freedom we have in Christ is one to stand for and proclaim to all of mankind.

He Is Not Here!

In Matthew 28:1-8 and John 20:11-17, we learn of Mary Magdalene going to the tomb of Christ. She went to the tomb of Christ, but found an empty cave. She was looking for her Savior, but found a messenger of God in the tomb instead of Christ. The angel had some exciting news to tell her. He is risen!

People today are as Mary was then. They are searching for something. Matthew 7:7, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:" We must seek the right way. I Corinthians 1:22, "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;" You must seek until you find Him. Hebrews 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

People today find what they are seeking for in God's Word, but they cannot and will not believe it. God's Word shows the only way one can be set free from the bondage of sin. John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." This is how God chose to reveal His plan of salvation to mankind, through His Word. (I Corinthians 1:18-21)

Mary searched for her Savior and He was not at the tomb. Are you searching for Christ in the wrong place? Do you find yourself lost? Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Christ is the only offering that could be accepted for sin by God. I John 2:2, "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Christ found Mary in the garden. Just as He found Mary, He will find you. The plan is clearly set forth. The preaching of the Word of God is what saves mankind. I Corinthians 1:21, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Conviction of the Holy Spirit through the Word draws every man. John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." Repentance toward God then must come by the individual. Luke 13:3,5, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Is Jesus seeking you? Have you found Him? Be like Mary and recognize Him as your Master today.

"Jesus saith unto her, Mary.

She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni;

which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not;

for I am not yet ascended to my Father:

but go to my brethren, and say unto them,

I ascend unto my Father, and your Father,

and to my God, and your God."