

Note: If you arrived here by Internet search, know that this series of sermons is about "The Whole Christ". Click on the up-left Logo to see the SiteMap where, among other things, this particular series began and continues. I pray you will be blessed as I am.

Paul and Jesus teach of 'heavenly things' -

1Corinthians -

15:12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

15:34 Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

To whom is Paul speaking? Answer, "**1:1,2 Paul, called (i.e. 'invited') to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, Unto the church (i.e. 'called out gathering') of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified (i.e. 'separated out') in Christ Jesus, called (i.e. 'invited') to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name (i.e. 'received, surnamed') of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:**"

These are '**sanctified**' leaders, already '**called to be saints**', thus on a par with other such leaders in other '**called out gatherings**' even as the Spirit of Christ Jesus was working among the nations.

In a large city, the '**gatherings**' meet in varied parts of the city and suburbs usually in large homes and so there are leaders that have taken responsibility for these '**gatherings**'. However, some leaders at Corinth, well knowing and teaching fundamental things of salvation and church life, could not get it into their heads about *some things*, and so they fulfilled their responsibilities teaching what made sense to them.

But what makes sense to men is not necessarily the *sense of God*; or '**heavenly things**' was lacking in the teachings to some of the brethren. Why? These leaders were more responsive to their own understanding than to Paul's clear teaching. Yet, this subject was (is) of utmost importance to each Christian ... in that a person '*walks*' according to the *integrity or reputation of the home* to which they are going.

Below we shall compare this to Jesus similarly chastising a Teacher of Israel who understood enough to know '**thou art a teacher come from God**' but little else of '**heavenly things**' because the Teacher's life and responsibility was on earth, thus complicated by earthly '*church*' things that had but little to do with '**heavenly things**'. As necessary as are the *fundamental salvation-things that affect humans on earth* ... much more important are '**heavenly things**' affecting us through Christ our Lord ... that is, for the Father unto us ... for the '**heavenly things**' are *functioning in heaven and not on earth*.

Being taught by our Lord and his Apostles, some small aspects of '**heavenly things**' give us '*little understanding*' of the 'Son of God' who regarding earth is the 'Son of man'. But let us continue with Paul teaching the Corinthians.

15:35, 36 But (among you) some man ("man" is not in the original text) will say (further regarding 'heavenly things'), How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool (Paul says to these), that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

These Christians knew of salvation's victory over earthly death, but they understood little of the ways, means, and methods of '**heavenly things**'. Indeed, such things are essential ... and are the essence of Christ Jesus' *fulfillment* of God's Plan of the Ages ... unto *each* child of God.

15:38 But God giveth it (each and every thing) a body as it hath pleased him, and (even) to every seed his own body. (Moreover,) All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

In the Greek, '**flesh**' is that between skin and bone, full of blood, of both animals and humans. Now, the KJV misses some meanings here because Paul is speaking not just to any humans, but to

those destined for *incorruptibility*. He may consider some in the church to be '**fools**', but saved '**fools**'. Therefore, he uses the word '**anthropos**' which means more than 'man'; it means '**face of man, or husband, or sir**' (i.e. '**looks like man or husband or sir**').

As Paul proceeds we will see why he uses '**anthropos**' instead of using simply 'man' (i.e. male human): I repeat, these are not simply "men of the world", but '**sanctified in Christ Jesus**'. At this point you may think me to be going overboard, but I am sticking very close to what Paul is teaching here.

15:40,41 There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.

Note that Paul now adds the term '**body**' which includes *all that is within* the 'body'; also note that bodies can have '**glory**'; and '**differing**' glories.

15:42 So also is the resurrection of the dead (in God). It is sown (i.e. placed in the ground) **in corruption** (i.e. 'a state of perishing, since its state of *aliveness has died*'); **it is raised in incorruption** (i.e. '*no longer corruption*');

15:43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power:

15:44 It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

We are somewhat familiar with *all that is in* the human body. Paul teaches there is a spiritual '**body**' (of which we are told little in scripture because such things are worked in heaven and not on earth).

Indeed, the '**human body**', whether alive or dead, by God had been given a spiritual '**aspect**' (much like the seed of a plant). Then this '**aspect**' of the human body in resurrections regenerates into a new-living body *no longer of earth* ... where in heaven it is judged and either kept in heaven or sent elsewhere.

15:45 And so it is written, The first man (i.e. '*anthropos*') **Adam was made a living soul** (i.e. '*having been blown upon ... i.e. quickened by God's Breath*'); **the last** (i.e. '*final*') **Adam was made a quickening** (i.e. '*the production of something to life*') **spirit**.

Please note how glorious are Paul's descriptions. The soul of each living *natural* thing was quickened into life by God's Breath; yet, each shall be sown into the earthly ground amidst death ... and if and when it is resurrected it will be '**raised a spiritual body**'.

Plants for instance when alive produce seed as it is dying. The death/life-seed when fallen to earthly ground is in a state of death; yet, it can be raised to life as a new plant '**of its own kind**'. Here we see the Miracle of Life in God's earth-creation which is continually receiving God's Breath as the things of earth continue.

Likewise, each will die in its time because all that are of earth are under the sentence of death in this fallen earthy world.

The exception is the '**corruptible**' child of God destined for '**incorruptibility**'. Also an exception is the '**corruptible**' sinner already destined for '**corruptible**' punishment ... not having accepted the Christ who died for him or her.

The '**last Adam**' of course was Christ descended to earth to walk about in *the form of* the '**first Adam**'. The first one lived until he died; yet, the last one '**a quickening spirit**'. Christ Jesus walked the earth in the *form of* an '*anthropos*'; yet he was (is) '**spirit**' from heaven ... a '**quickenning**' spirit ... able to grant life both earthly and heavenly.

In the Gospels we see him doing both.

15:46 Howbeit that (made) was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

15:47 The first man (i.e. '*anthropos*') **is of the earth, earthy: the second man** (i.e. '*anthropos*') **is the Lord from** (i.e. '*of*') **heaven.**

15:48 As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy (i.e. 'made of earth or dirt'): **and as is the heavenly** (i.e. Greek word means '*in heaven*'), **such are they also that are heavenly** (i.e. '*in heaven*').

Dear reader, here is where Paul's teaching, in using the Greek word '*anthropos*', is made clear. As

the child of God is a '**man-faced**' person (and no longer the normal typical 'earthy man') ... so also is the '**second man-faced**' one who '**is the Lord of heaven**'.

For '**As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.**' Paul tells foolish ones among God's children that they are no longer '*of earth*', thus '*not earthy*' ... and though they are yet *corruptible*, even so they are *destined for incorruptibility*.

Far too much church teaching is that though we are earthy (like all men), yet somehow we are "saved".

Ah, but all that are '**earthy**' are under condemnation; while the child of God, not under condemnation, is therefore **not 'earthy'**.

This is why Paul tells us in our earthy-woes to stop acting like *our earthy-woes* are "*signs of earthiness*". For indeed, we belong to Him through the Blood of His Son and we will be redeemed from these earthy-environs in due time.

Philippians 3:20,21 For our **conversation is in heaven**; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto (i.e. an image of) his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

The Greek word '**conversation**' means '*the ongoing work of citizenship within a government and its laws*'.

15:49 And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Indeed, the '**image of the earthy**' is what Paul means in using '*anthropos*' to describe us.

You and I, though '*man-faced*', are **not earthy** even as Christ Jesus was (and remains) '*man-faced*' **and not earthy** ... as in verse 47, he '**is the Lord of heaven**'.

15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

You and I dear Christian reader, though having upon us the image of corruption, have not within us the corruption of that image ... else we could not '**inherit the kingdom of God**'. Your and my flesh and blood cannot inherit; yet, in the raised condition we shall.

Matthew 13:43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

15:51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible (image) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

Therefore, you and I shall have raised bodies incorruptible even as Christ Jesus' incorruptible body returned incorruptible back into heaven from which It descended.

1Thessalonians 4:15-17 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and (might) remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are 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 which are (i.e. might be) 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 (i.e. amid '**the coming of the Lord**').

15:54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

15:55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

15:56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin (unto us) is the law.

Indeed, the Righteous Law of Moses condemns the sin of and in our fallen condition as we so often sin (i.e. '*miss the mark*' set out for us in the spirit of the Moses' Law). Albeit, the animal blood

within the Law has been superseded by the better Blood of God's Son.

15:57,58 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Ah, but sadly we Christians have been convinced that we must "be about doing the work of the Lord ... or should be doing".

Nonetheless, '**the work of the Lord**' *is the Lord's work* and *is not ours*.

Were not all the children of God in the church at Corinth in some way or other also '**laboring**'? Ah, but their '**labor**' was supposed to be toward '**stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in**' and not to be confused by the enemy into thinking that it is "our work *to abound to do* the Lord's work" and thereby *to struggle* within our earthy-condition-woes. In fact, there is so very much in the church for members to do ... to do ... to do.

The Lord does not need (even '**stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in**') *striving* to accomplish his work for him. Take note that '**abounding in**' is not '*working to do*'.

Instead, Paul's emphasis is that God the Father and the Son have been and are continuing to do Their work in the world ... and also in '*the heavnlies*' for us ... which we best receive while '**stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding**' amid '**a rest**' for us.

... for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Revelation 3:15,16 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

(And) **Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

3:18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

3:20,21 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

3:22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

22:12 And, behold, I come quickly (said to each of God's children); and my reward is with me, to give every man (i.e. '*each one afar*') according as his work (i.e. '*occupied by, business, employment*') shall be.

In all below this line we shall compare with all above this line.

I suggest that you do much of the comparing of verses yourself; for if I did all of it, this would grow quite long. When you see (15:...) below it points you to go above and reread that verse. Indeed, our conversation here on earth as God's children (also in this sermon) continues about 'heavenly things' that are accomplished in heaven.

Above: Paul deals with leaders of churches, the church at Corinth being such a church. If some church leaders, having been raised up to their leadership positions in the Lord within spiritual growth, knew and understood but *little of higher spiritual heavenly things* then Paul would not have needed to teach and preach to them.

In other words, in-the-Lord spiritual growth while walking this sod (as had the chosen twelve) is a unique and required goal for any type of leadership in the church, the Lord intending it for much benefit for all members and the community at large.

Yet, to be drawn in to a mind-and-heart-set that is as much aware of '**heavenly things**' as '**earthly things**' is a process between the Shepherd and individual sheep, having little to do with church things and other brethren. Yes indeed, it will affect the relationship to these and to all else; yet, it is essentially and necessarily lonely.

Moreover, if leadership of an assembly is right with God, then God's Spirit will be working in ways less discernible, meaning "less understandable" that can cause at least some discord in the assembly because we go so much with what we understand. Soooooo ... with God '*first things are first*' and for the assembly and individually we should be seeking those '*first things*' from Him.

Even so, the '*heavenly things*' are really and truly only of and from Him where He is.

Below: Jesus ... who in a few years will have fulfilled his mission for the Father ... has just begun his Spirit-filled ministry and now as Israel's Messiah he is in his first visit to Jerusalem where walking the streets he had said many forceful words in the city and performed many miracles and drawn much attention unto himself ... such that a renown Teacher of both God's Word and Moses' Law respectfully has approached him in the privacy of the night ... catching him alone without his disciples -

Gospel of John -

3:1,2 There was (John implies he is no longer) **a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know** (i.e. '*perceive*') **that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man** (i.e. '*none*') **can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.**

3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man ('man' is incorrect, the Greek is '*a certain one*') **be born again** (i.e. '*from above*'), **he cannot see** (i.e. not '*know, perceive*') **the kingdom of God.**

Nicodemus '**perceived**' that Jesus had come '**from**' God and that God is with him.

Responding to Nicodemus' thought and words Jesus said, "Except a '**certain**' one (i.e. '*special, important, notable*') is born from above ... such a '**certain**' one cannot (even) '**know or perceive**' the kingdom of God, much less have '**God be with him**'. Dear reader, Jesus was speaking of himself.

Furthermore, Jesus was not speaking regarding men of earth "being saved". Jesus was informing Nicodemus that he is the Messiah '**born from above**' ... of heaven and not a man of earth. (See above 15:35)

Sadly ... I have thought and so much of Christianity thinks ... exactly what Nicodemus has been thinking: that Jesus was speaking of him and of other elder-spiritual-leadership men of Israel.

3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man (i.e. '*anthropos*') **be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?**

Here both are speaking of Jesus. Both are speaking of what Jesus had just said; yet, Nicodemus still considered Jesus to be an earth-bound '*man-face*' ... in that, Nicodemus himself was a '*man-face*' and knew he could not again enter into his mother's womb ... so what was this one '**come from God**' saying?

When descending to earth from heaven, Christ had arrived in the womb of Mary ... betrothed to Joseph ... son of David ... and had emerged from Mary's womb in the *form* of a '*man-face*'. In very fact, Jesus at this time is speaking about '**quicken**' (15:36), something he did and still does for the Father.

Therefore, the subject of '**water**' (in the next verse) is '**water of the womb**' (of which now Jesus will speak).

Christ himself had experienced *emergence from the water of Mary's womb* even as Nicodemus had experienced *emergence from the water of his mother's womb*. Yet, Jesus is speaking of the '**quicken**' of a *new and second life* that can follow after the *new and first life*.

3:56 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (i.e. natural) **and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh**

(15:39); **and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.**

Remember at the time that a great many Israelites both in Israel and scattered among the nations were longing for the Messiah to come; even as John the Baptist had arrived to inspire that very longing. Nicodemus is mystified, but he is hanging in there trying with his mind to understand Jesus because he acknowledges that '**God is with him**'. Here, dear reader, is the dilemma of every sincere child of God. We go so much by our minds; and so is Nicodemus, for he wants to so much to minister to his people in a higher way as he has observed of Jesus.

Moreover know this: Jesus refers to himself in saying, '**... and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God**' (15:44) because in just a few years the Son of God will again '**... enter into the kingdom of God**'. Nicodemus is told as a Teacher he should have recognized the very Messiah who is speaking to him because the Spiritual Scriptures he had so long studied, which were apart of him, should have already prepared him. Indeed, the Spiritual Scriptures had prepared him for this very visit.

Nicodemus is not yet '**of the Spirit**' and he must become so if also he wants 'God with him' in the manner that '**God is with**' Jesus ... which is why he is here.

3:7-9 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again (i.e. 'from or of above'). The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. ... Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Dear reader, like every child of God who is hungry for God, Nicodemus wants to *understand*. Nevertheless, Christ standing before him in the *form* of an (*'anthropos'*) simply states to him that Nicodemus also must be born of above to even have a chance of understanding all that he is so hungry to know. Actually, this teacher of Scripture wants to know of the '*heavenly things*' behind, above, and beyond Scripture ... where God is ... and the Spirit is hinting in the very being of Nicodemus that this Jesus knows much about IT.

Christ Jesus is the '**quickeningspirit**' (15:45). Nicodemus wants to comprehend and the Spirit must lift him from simply '*a child of God*' to '*a man of God*'. Jesus met Saul on the road to Damascus and Jesus is meeting with Nicodemus. Dear reader, this is a Shepherd-and-little-sheep thing; but most little ones of the flock are content with the Shepherd providing their needs as He leads them from green pasture to green pasture. Yet, having witnessed Jesus in *action*, Nicodemus wants some of IT.

I (you?) knew but did not know until the Lord began convincing me (you?) that I (you?) knew very little ... and still know very little ... but also that I am (you?) slowly being changed as I am (you are?) willing. "Being willing" has to do with staying as close to Shepherd as a little sheep and get in his or her everyday '*earthy*' walk ... which has to do with '*conversion in the heavenlies*'.

Dear reader, far too many born-again believers in our churches think of Jesus as a 'man' and thus like Nicodemus, educated in the scriptures, they (we) miss *the glory expressed* within the Gospels about the Very Son of God.

That is, we read of Jesus as a wonderful man doing marvelous things for the Father. Ah, but wonderfully, even down to earth-walking among men, the glory of the Son of man oozes out as observed in the Gospels to those who hunger more for Christ the Son.

I suspect this is why the Lord wants us to be more aware of The Whole Christ as we spend time in The Whole Scriptures.

I and my precious wife are little sheep staying as close to the feet of the Shepherd as we can ... with the Shepherd's permission and his help. We love all the other sheep, knowing we are ones with them, but there is *just something about our Shepherd*.

3:10-12 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We ('We' is not in the original text) speak(ing) that (i.e. 'which') we (not 'we', but 'that or for or because') do know, and testify that (i.e. 'which') we (no 'we') have seen; and ye receive not our ('our' *is in the original text*) witness (or testimony, record) ...
... If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

The we's are not in the original text; I suspect that the translators thought they also spoke and wrote to people about '**heavenly things**' as had Nicodemus, and so they added the we(s). Yet, the original text is only about Jesus and his words.

So let me simplify the verse: '**Jesus answered, Art thou a master of Israel and knowest not these things? Verily, verily I say unto thee, speaking that which (I) do know and testifying that which (I) have seen, ... and ye receive (or absorb) not our witness.**'

Who is the '**our**' in this verse? I suggest that it is *God's Holy Sanctifying Spirit* which has always been within the Scriptures to inspire Its readers. Jesus implied that Nicodemus as a '**master teacher**' should have had at least some concept of such 'higher things'. Nicodemus did have a 'high concept'; yet, he had constrained it downward to exist along with the trappings of his low office of '**Teacher of Israel**'.

This means that his '**conversation**' with God has been limited to the '**earthy**' kind of relationship, existing with his walk among his duties of '**Teach of Israel**'. How do you and I and our teachers miss such things?

I suggest that we are too much into our churches with our doctrines and works in trying to win others to Jesus and/or to win other brethren toward our doctrines and our code of life. Therefore, the Truths within such doctrines are so buried beneath *our works* that such works *inspire us more than do the Truths of God*? The Truths of God: are they really mine or yours? Do the Truths of God belong to God's people? Are they not God's Truths? Should not the Truths of God humble you and me before Him?

The very reason Nicodemus is questioning Jesus is that the Holy Sanctifying Spirit of Truth had gotten hold of him as he had observed '**these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him**' when Jesus had been walking the streets of Jerusalem doing the Father's work. Jesus, then, made it plain that he himself was the Messiah '**came down of heaven**' to do such things and that someday he would reenter heaven to be with the Father.

We see the same with the lowly woman at the well.

3:13 And no man (i.e. 'no other') hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from (i.e. 'of) heaven, even the Son of man which is (i.e. 'being, which is of) in (i.e. 'fixed in') heaven.

Let me simplify the verse, '**And no other hath ascended to heaven but he that came down of heaven, even the Son of man, which (is) fixed in position of heaven.**' (15:47)

The Writer of the Book of Hebrews mentions '*heaven*' 15 times because he was writing to '**holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling**' in verse 3:1 and in **Philippians 3:20 For our conversation (with God the Father and God the Son) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ**'.

Nicodemus' prayers and conversation with his God was couched in the Mosaic Law ... being a master teacher of it ... which Law is by God but of earth for God's people living on earth. Therefore, the time had arrived for Nicodemus' conversation with God the Son to become centered in *Christ of the heavenlies*.

Moreover, Jesus informed Nicodemus that the One standing before him is the Messiah ... and that the Messiah shall be lifted up for the sins of the people ... even as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness (which Nicodemus fully understood).

Please note that it was some time later that Jesus began openly declaring that he was the Son of God, the promised Messiah; yet, he had clearly told it to Nicodemus a Teacher to God's people Israel.

Is this not somewhat similar to informing the chosen Twelve of Jesus' Messiah-ship? Nicodemus would go on to defend (thus represent) Jesus before the Sanhedrin and he was one of the two who entombed Jesus' body ... knowing that he would surely be banned from his high position and perhaps from the temple. Extremely important was Nicodemus to God's Plan regarding His Son!

Jesus was not trying to "save" Nicodemus. He was elevating Nicodemus as *chosen of the Father* for this very visit and for the famous passage of John chapter 3 and for God's purpose in years to come.

3:14-16 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the

(whole) world (and His people of Israel scattered among the nations), **that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** (see 15:48 / Philippians 3:20,21)

3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (15:49)

3:18,19 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and (yet) men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (15:50 / 1Corinthians 13:43)

3:20,21 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (15:57,58 / Revelation 3:15-22)

Nicodemus had '**cometh to the light**'.

The Book of Hebrews

What kind of Shepherd do we have?

And from where does He lead us?

13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again (i.e. '*led forth*') from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through (i.e. '*fixed in*') **the blood of the everlasting covenant ...**

Let me rewrite this, '**Now the God of peace, (having) led forth from the dead our Lord Jesus (the) great Shepherd of the sheep, fixed (or set within) the blood of the everlasting covenant ...!**

I see here **a**) that *the God of peace had led forth Jesus from the dead*, and also **b**) that *Christ Jesus had been fixed or set within the blood of the everlasting covenant ...* that is, '*from the foundation of the world*'.

Even so ... Jesus himself had said in John 10:14-18, '**I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so (i.e. in the same manner) know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 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.

In other words, from before the foundation of the world (see Hebrews 13:20 and John 10:14-18) the Father had commanded Christ the Messiah ... when descended to earth ... to be ready to lay down his life and to raise it again ... according to the '**the blood of the everlasting (i.e. always before and always after) covenant**'.

As the Writer concluded Hebrews (in verse 13:20, in much fewer words) he said all this ... knowing that his initial readers fully understood the early doctrine of '**the principles of the doctrine of Christ**'.

... 13:21 (May the God of peace) Make you perfect (i.e. '*rendered to be fit*') in every good work to do his will, (and Him) working (i.e. '*doing, continual action*') in (i.e. '*fixed in*') you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Indeed, may God the Father through the Shepherd Son of heaven be continually doing in you the things needed to be wellpleasing in His sight !!

As is mentioned in Hebrews 6:1,2 ... Christians of the churches had thought (and do think) that the important things for us are the following: '**... the principles of the doctrine of Christ (and) the foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith toward God (and) the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**'

Ah, but also and furthermore the Writer of Hebrews tells us -

6:1-3 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection (i.e. '*completion*');

... not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, ...
... Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. ...
... And this will we do, if God permit.

Well then, what does the Writer mean? and what should 'we do'?

Encapsulated within the Mosaic Law was (and is) simply -

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and your neighbors as yourself'.

Encapsulated within the New Covenant was (and is) simply -

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and your neighbors as yourself'.

Yes, dear Reader, we think that we do this. But we on earth think that we do this by *understanding and then teaching 'the principles of the doctrine of Christ'* ... meanwhile the Writer tells us **'let us go on'** to be **'rendered so as to become fit'** for what lies before us.

'Becoming fit for heaven' is not accomplished on earth (as we so often think of it). Instead it is accomplished in **'the heavenlies'** where the individual Christian ... *consistently* seeking God ... *communes* with Him *where He is*.

Let me say it otherwise, "On earth our walk with the Lord should mature ... even as our walk (conversation) should grow with the Lord ... in *'the heavenlies'* ... even more than on the earth."

As Jesus told Nicodemus, "You must be born from above; **yet**, to know of **'heavenly things'** *you must be taught* of 'heavenly things' *by the Lord himself from where he is.*"

Therefore, I am not speaking of "Coming before the Throne of God in fervent prayer". Instead I speak of a *consistent chatting upward* in one's earthly walk day by day such that earthy things bring to mind upward thoughts ... which pleases God.

In driving with my wife 80 miles to a doctor's appointment my mind is on the snowy road and on the visit with the doctor; yet, periodically I listen to and speak to my precious wife of whatever comes to our minds. The Apostle Paul's days and nights were full of many *'earthy'* things, but never such as to clear his mind of upward thoughts.

Philippians 3:20 For our conversation (with God the Father and God the Son) is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ'.

It is the heart gazing up as much as gazing around at our world. And if one's attention is as much toward God as it is toward where we are on earth then He takes *the responsibility* for teaching as he did with Nicodemus.

The purpose of this website primarily is regarding the Scriptures as I wander around in them always looking for the Lord to grab my attention. And then I place herein some of those "attentions" that visitors may look over my shoulder, so to speak, at what I am doing.

From time to time the Lord has a habit of visiting a person as the person is visiting the Scriptures ... and it is not so much the Lord visiting where you are as it is to raising you toward him where he is ... and where he is is the 'heavenly things'.

Moreover, I suggest we are so much into earthly conversations about "One day being with Jesus" that we miss out on individual *conversations in heaven* with him.

When we institutionalize Truths about God so as to teach here on earth ... too often we have covered over and squelched individual *longings for conversations in heaven*. The former has to do with learning, teaching, winning, victory, etc., while the latter has to do with simple *timely heavenly conversations*.

Have you heard the phrase, "He (or she) is too heavenly to be of any earthly good"?

I have a dear friend who seemingly at odd times finds herself humming or even singing hymns. These are expressions to Him without conscious "praying" and so she wonders "why or what it means?"

On a TV show we were watching the other night a nun commented about a sister nun who was very boisterous and always seemingly busy. Yet, about her the quiet nun said, "God made her so that His and her conversation is above all the noise and commotion". I immediately thought, "That's it!"

Can it happen in a busy office? Can it happen on a ranch in calving season? Can it happen on an

assembly line? In fact, over a great many years it has happened in foxholes with war raging roundabout!

Sincerely, Ron

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