



Bible Believers' Bulletin

Vol. 39 No. 12 "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17) December 2015

"The Tabernacle of God Is With Men"

By Brian Donovan

The season recognized by the world for the birth of Jesus Christ is December. Even though the Bible-believing Christian is well aware that the time of His coming to "tabernacle" with men the first time (cf. John 1:14) was not December 25, we can still use the time, without "**abusing it**" (1 Cor. 7:31), to be a witness for the Lord to the lost. I have always noticed, when up in New York City every year at this time, that people tend to take tracts more often when offered with a "Merry Christmas" greeting. We know that *Christ* is not connected to the *Mass* anymore than His birth is connected to evergreen trees, mistletoe, and eggnog; or His death, burial, and resurrection to bunnies and colored eggs.

With all the nonsense put aside, the Lord Jesus Christ still did humble Himself to be "**found in fashion as a man**" (Phil. 2:8) when He came to walk in a tabernacle of flesh, being born in Bethlehem of a virgin. The

time of year was September/October, matching the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles. The scriptures clearly point to both of the appearances of Christ at the Feast of Tabernacles; not only with types, but with direct references. Jesus Christ began His ministry at "**about thirty years of age**" (Luke 3:23). The Apostle John shows four Passovers taking place after that, with the Lord offering Himself as "**our passover**" (1 Cor. 5:7) on the fourth Passover of His ministry (John 11:55). Since Passover is always observed in "**the first month**" (Exod. 12:1–2), called "**Abib**" (Exod. 13:4), and since Tabernacles falls in "**the seventh month**" (Lev. 23:34), Christ was thirty-three-and-a-half years old at His death on Passover.

The second time He comes to tabernacle with men on this earth will also be on the Feast of Tabernacles. The scriptures picture this coming as the sun rising up in the morning (Psa. 19:1–6; Isa. 60:1), with a strange reference in that first passage to "**the sun**" having "**a tabernacle**" (Psa. 19:4).

The picture gets stronger in Matthew 17:1–5 when Jesus Christ transfigures His appearance before Peter, James, and John on the mount. With

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The Gift and the Giver

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh” (Matt. 2:11).

Contrast that with the following passage.

“Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities” (Isa. 43:24).

The passage from Matthew 2 is, of course, from the account of the visit of the wise men to honor the infant Christ. The story has been immortalized in song as “We Three Kings of Orient Are.” Of course, there is nothing in Matthew 2 that says they were Kings or that there were only three of them. They were **“wise men”** (Matt. 2:1), and they brought *three gifts* (Matt. 2:11).

The first question we need to ask is, *why were they wise?* The first question in the Old Testament was God calling to Adam, **“Where art thou?”** (Gen. 3:9). The first question in the New Testament was the wise men asking, **“Where is he that is born King of the Jews?”** (Matt. 2:2). The Old Testament opens with God seeking man; the New Testament opens with men seeking God. The wise men were wise because *they came seeking Christ*.

Have you found Christ yet? If you do find Him, you will find Him as a Lamb before you find Him as a King. The shepherds of Luke 2 found Him first as a Lamb. The wise men came later; they weren't at the manger the night He was born.

They were also wise because *they rejoiced*. Matthew 2:10—**“they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”** Another reason was when they found Christ, *they worshiped Him* (Matt. 2:11).

Something else that made them wise was *they ignored Mary*. They didn't bring Mary anything; the passage doesn't even say they gave Mary the time of day. They came into that house, and there was Mary holding her child. Without so much as a “how do you do” to Mary, those wise men fell down and worshiped *Him*, not her. They didn't honor Mary at all. If Mary were the “Mother of God,” she sure got a raw deal there.

Now when the wise men worship the Christ child, they worship Him as three things: as a Prophet, a Priest, and a King. Those three offices are symbolized in the gifts they bring: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Gold is a symbol of Deity. That's the **“crown of gold”** around the Table of Showbread (Exod. 25:23–24), the Altar of Incense (Exod. 30:1–3), and the Ark of the Covenant (Exod. 25:10–11). That Deity is **“a great King”** (Psa. 47:2, 95:3; Mal. 1:14), so He gets **“a golden crown”** (Rev. 14:14) when He comes back to rule over this earth (Zech. 14:9).

Frankincense relates to Christ's office as a Priest (Exod. 30:34–38). He is a High Priest (Heb. 3:1) who also reigns as a King (Zech. 6:11; Heb. 7:2). Myrrh is associated with Christ's office as a Prophet (Deut. 18:15–17; Matt. 21:11). It was associated with death and dying (John 19:39; Mark 15:23). Jerusalem killed the prophets God sent to it (Matt. 23:37), and the Son of the Owner of the

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The Gift and the Giver

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vineyard fared no better (Matt. 21:37–39). Hence, the song:

“Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom.
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.”

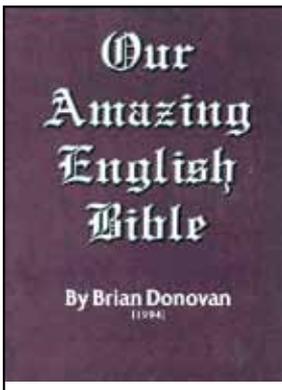
The Lord Jesus Christ is given those gifts as an act of worship. You can't worship without *giving*. Some Christians give *carelessly*: they give without checking what the cause is. Other Christians give *impulsively*: they give when they feel like it. Still other Christians give *systematically*: they give the tenth to the Lord. Some Christians give *equally*: they spend as much money on the Lord as they do on themselves.

One time, when my daughter Diana was a little girl, she came to me and said, “Pop May gave me \$5.00; what do I do with it?” I told her, “You have to tithe it.” “What's that?” she asked. I said, “You give a tenth of it to the Lord; you give Him fifty cents and keep the rest for yourself.” “That would be unfair,” she said. “Why?” I asked. “Because I would be getting more than God.” I felt like saying, “Would you pray for me, sister?”

Some Christians give *heroically*: they limit their spending for themselves just to their own needs and give God the rest. And a few Christians give *courageously*: when a need arises, they give what they have without concern for the consequences.

“Twenty thousand dollars for a brand new car,
Ten thousand dollars for a piece of sod,
Sixty thousand I laid down for a house,
And I gave twenty dollars to God.”

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The Gift and the Giver

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"A tidy sum to entertain my friends in mealtime chatter,
But when the world goes crazy, I ask myself, 'what's the matter?'"

"Yet there's another question for which answer I still search:
With things so messed up in this world, what's holding back my church?"

Did you ever check on how much money you throw away? One of the greatest things I have experienced as a Christian is that I can go through a store like Walmart, Kmart, Home Depot, or Target, and be able to look out over acres of junk and say, "Thank God, I don't need that."

Now, the wise men gave Jesus gold because He is a King. He's not just "**King of the Jews,**" but "**the great King**" (Matt. 5:35), the "**King of saints**" (Rev. 15:3), and "**the King of kings**" (1 Tim. 6:15).

The main subject of the Bible is *not* salvation. That is what is important to *us*, and thank God it is in there for us. But that is *not* what is most important to God. The main theme of that Book is who is "King of the mountain" (Isa. 14:12; Psa. 48:1-2)?

The Bible is an account of a contest over authority. THE issue is *authority*. Who's in charge of the government? Who's in charge of the business? Who's in charge of the school? Who's in charge of the home? Who's in charge of the church? Who's in charge of the Middle East? Who's in charge of this world? Who's in charge of the universe? The issue, brethren, is *final authority*.

Jesus Christ was given gold because gold is money, and *money talks*. Ecclesiastes 10:19 says, "**money answereth all things.**" The old saying is: "Put your money where your mouth is."

Have you ever noticed there is someone's face on every bill and coin you have in your billfold, purse, or pocket? What if they could speak *literally*? What if the Washingtons, Lincolns, Hamiltons, Jacksons, Grants, and Franklins on that money could testify at the Judgment Seat of Christ as to where you spent them. Wouldn't that be embarrassing for some of you?

Some of these Christian Colleges spend up to twenty million dollars a year on bell towers, indoor swimming pools, dorms, zoysia grass, planetariums, elaborate auditoriums, and theatrical stages. Why, twenty million a year could put a New Testament in the hands of every Christian in Communist China within two years. Now which of those things do you reckon will survive the fire at the Judgment Seat of Christ? Some people do have a time of it, don't they?

Now, Christian, if you don't have "gold" to give to the King, give what you've got. Peter was flat broke. He told that lame man there in Acts 3:6, "**Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee.**" If you don't have money, give what you can to the Lord. Those Christians in Macedonia were dirt poor, but they gave what they could to the King, and they gave themselves first (1 Cor. 8:1-5). Someone has said, "If I do what I can, God will do what I can't."

The wise men gave frankincense. That deals with a priest offering up prayers to God (Rev. 8:3-5; Luke 1:10). David says in Psalm 141:2, "**Let my prayer be**
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The Gift and the Giver

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set forth before thee as incense.”

Have you been “burning the incense” to the Lord? Have you been interceding for others in prayer? A priest intercedes for others, and in the New Testament, every believer is a priest (1 Pet. 2:5, 9). As our great “**High Priest**” (Heb. 3:1), Jesus Christ intercedes for us (Rom. 8:26–27; Heb. 7:25).

You are told in the Bible that “**we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin**” (Heb. 4:15). Our Priest knows what we go through. It’s good to know Somebody loves you.

Mohammed talks about Allah the “Compassionate.” For example? You will search the *Koran* and the *Hadith* in vain for any display of Allah’s compassion for mankind.

The pagans think that just because God feeds them, takes care of them, and gets them out of scrapes sometimes is evidence of God’s love. That’s *not* God’s love. Those may be displays of God’s mercy and goodness toward His creation, but not His love. What is God’s love?

“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for his friends” (John 15:13).

“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (1 John 3:16).

All this talk about love, love, love. If you don’t know that God Almighty, who made you, thought enough of you to come down to this sin-cursed earth and pay the penalty for your sins by dying for you, *you don’t know anything about love*. Love has nothing to do with two queers (male or female ones) fornicating with each other. In the Book, it doesn’t even have anything to do with a man and woman coming together in legitimate marriage.

The first time love shows up in the Bible, it is the love of a father for his son (Gen. 22:2). It is a picture of God the Father loving His Son (John 3:35, 5:20). And in the context of Genesis 22, the picture is connected with *Christ dying for your sins*: Abraham offering up Isaac.

If Someone loves you enough to die for you, that is some love He has for you, isn’t it? I tell the inmates in prison: “If you miss this love, you’ve missed everything.” In every love story on this earth, there is an element of selfishness in one or both parties. Not on the part of Christ, boy. His love goes beyond dying for His friends. He died for you when you were a *sinner* and His *enemy* (Rom. 5:8, 10).

One time, a little girl at an orphanage had a rich matron come to adopt her. The lady never had any children of her own, and she was eager to adopt this girl. Well, the rich lady said, “If you come home with me, you’ll have a pony to ride, a dog to play with, and a swimming pool.” The little girl said, “Anything else?” The lady replied, “You’ll have your own room with your own bed. I’ll send you to a good school where you’ll have lots of friends.” The little girl said, “Anything

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The Gift and the Giver

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else?" The rich lady rattled off several other things, but the girl still said, "Anything else?" "Well isn't that enough?" asked the rich woman in a frustrated tone. "No," said the girl, "if that's all you have to give me, I'd just as soon stay here."

When the rich woman was gone, the person in charge of the orphanage asked the girl, "Why did you tell that woman that?" "I didn't want all that stuff," said the girl. "I wanted someone who would *love me*." Brethren, a bunch of junk is no substitute for love. That Bible says, "**if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned**" (Song of Sol. 8:7).

When the famous missionary David Livingstone died, his African helpers found his body in his tent. Livingstone had died on his knees praying for Africa. Those Africans *knew* Livingstone loved them, so they insisted on taking out his heart and burying it there in Africa. David Livingstone was a faithful priest who showed the love of Christ by interceding for the salvation of lost souls there in Africa.

Finally, those wise men gave myrrh. That spoke of the sorrows of Christ as a Prophet. Isaiah wrote of Christ:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isa. 53:3-4).

The song goes: "I gave, I gave my life for thee. What hast thou given for me?" The Lord has given me so much. "What do you want, Ruckman?" "Well, I want something to eat." He gives me knockwurst, swiss cheese, good German black bread, vegetables and fruits I grew in my garden. "What else?" "I like kids." "OK, here's ten of them. Anything else?" "I always did like the ocean." "All right, I'll put you ten miles from it. Anything else?" "Well, I like good music." "Here's 400 hours of it. What else you want?"

He gives and He gives and He gives. Some day I am going to stand before Him, and He's going to say, "All right, Ruckman, I gave you all this stuff. What did you do for me?" Bless God, I sure better have something to show for it.

I had a buddy named Paul Kirkendall in Blytheville, Arkansas. He started a rescue mission work there, and he would go around to the businessmen in that town and ask for donations for the rescue mission. There was a rich Jew in that town who was a tightwad. He was worth a lot of money, but he never would give very much. Kirkendall went to him and asked for money one time, but the fellow wouldn't give a cent more. "I can't afford it," he said. He wasn't quite a millionaire yet, but he was way up there "in the chips."

Paul Kirkendall was a shrewd fellow; before he was saved, he had been a con man. So Paul got down on his knees in front of that Jew and began to pray out loud. "Dear God, I pray that you will please help this man and his two children. As you know, Lord, we've had bad weather this year and a crop failure. I

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The Gift and the Giver

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just pray that his two little boys won't have to go through this winter hungry and shoeless because of the troubles we've had." That old Jew shelled out after that prayer, boy.

You may think all the things you possess are yours, but there is no such thing as absolute ownership. Your house, your car, your property, your clothes, your wife, your kids; they're all on loan to you. One day you are going to die and leave them all to someone else.

God has put things in your hands for a little while to see what you do with them. Someday you are going to hear the words of Luke 16:2—"give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward" (Luke 16:2). Then you'll leave it all behind and answer to your Master for the things with which He entrusted you.

Those wise men brought gifts to Christ. What have you brought to Him? "What hast thou done for me?" I hope you don't get to the Judgment Seat of Christ and give God what you had to offer as far as service here on earth went,
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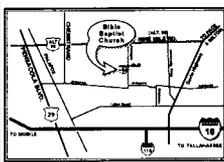
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The Gift and the Giver

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and have Him say, "Is that all I got out of you? After all I invested in you, is that all I got out of it?"

"The time for toil has passed, and night has come,
The last and saddest of the harvest eves;
Worn out with labor, long and wearisome,
Drooping and faint, the reapers hasten home,
Each laden with his sheaves.

"Last of the laborers, thy feet I gain,
Lord of the harvest! and my spirit grieves
That I am burdened not so much with grain,
As with the heaviness of heart and brain;
Master, behold my sheaves!

"Few, light, and worthless—yet their trifling weight
Through all my frame a weary aching leaves;
For long I struggled with my hapless fate,
And stayed and toiled till it was dark and late,
Yet these are all my sheaves.

"Full well I know I have more tares than wheat,
Brambles and flowers, stalks and withered leaves;
Therefore I blush and weep, as at thy feet
I kneel down and reverently repeat,
'Master, behold my sheaves.'

"I know these blossoms, clustering heavily,
With evening dew upon their folded leaves
Can claim no value or utility;
Therefore shall fragrance and beauty be
The glory of my sheaves.

"So do I gather strength and hope anew;
Full well I know thy patient love receives
Not what I did, but what I strove to do,
And though the full ripe ears be sadly few,
Thou wilt accept my sheaves."

(Elizabeth Akers)

As you get and open gifts this Christmas season, ask yourself, what have I given to Him? And if there is anybody reading this that may not be saved, won't you receive the gift God offers you through His Son? **"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:23).

“The Tabernacle of God Is With Men”

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Moses and Elijah present as the two witnesses (cf. Rev. 11:3–6), Peter inadvertently pipes up with **“let us make here three tabernacles”** (Matt. 17:4). We are told he did this **“not knowing what he said”** (Luke 9:33), because **“he wist not what to say”** (Mark 9:6). Knowing Peter, though, he had to say something. Even in this ignorance, he is used to connect the Second Coming to the Feast of Tabernacles.

Even more evidence is given in 2 Chronicles 5:1–5, when Solomon finished the temple at Jerusalem and brought **“the ark”** into **“the tabernacle”** **“in the seventh month”** at the same feast. **“The glory of the LORD”** then **“filled the house”** (2 Chron. 5:13–14), exactly as He will do when He returns the second time to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1–7 cf. Acts 1:9–11). Once again, notice the Feast of Tabernacles being kept (Zech. 14:16–19).

The scriptural evidence continues in Hosea 12:9, where the Lord calls it a **“solemn feast,”** when Israel once dwelt **“in tabernacles.”** The Bible then says in the very next verse (Hos. 12:10) that He **“used similitudes, by the ministry of the prophets.”** This **“solemn day”** is again connected to **“tabernacles”** in Hosea 9:5–6.

It should be evident that the two comings of the Lord Jesus Christ are on the Feast of Tabernacles. His humble birth in Bethlehem took place while shepherds were in the fields at night during September/October, not December 25. His next coming will be

in fury on that same feast.

The Bible student knows that the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to reign on this earth is preceded by His calling away of His Bride at the Rapture (1 Thess. 4:13–18), followed by the Tribulation period when the Antichrist will temporarily reign. The catching away of the Church-Age saints has indications that the Passover in the springtime is connected to that event. When Jesus died on the cross, He began His Church by breaking **“down the middle wall of partition”** between Jew and Gentile; this was done **“by the cross”** (Eph. 2:14–16). The death of Christ on Calvary was obviously accomplished on the Passover (Matt. 26:2; Mark 14:1; Luke 22:1; John 18:28). Though it was unknown to anyone, Calvary began the mystery Church Age, which was not revealed in writing until the Apostle Paul (Eph. 3:1–6). Just because it was not revealed does not mean it was not there.

With the beginning of the Church Age at Passover, John, as a great type of that Church, repeatedly revealed that this age will last **“two days.”** In the Gospel of John, Christ and His apostles go to a wedding that is on **“the third day”** (John 2:1). **“The third day”** from what? If you look in chapter 1, John the Baptist is baptizing at the Jordan (vs. 28); **“The next day,”** **“the Lamb of God”** appears to him (vs. 29). Then another day passes in verse 35 (**“the next day after”**), with two disciples following Jesus to His abode late that afternoon

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“The Tabernacle of God Is With Men”

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(vss. 37–39). Then **“the day following”** (vs. 43), Philip finds Nathanael (vs. 45). Then in 2:1, John says the marriage is on **“the third day”**! John gives the timing for **“the marriage supper of the Lamb”** with His Bride as taking place on earth (Luke 12:36) after the “two-day” Church Age (Rev. 19:9).

But it is much more than that. In John 4, Christ meets the Samaritan woman at the well and ends up abiding **“two days”** (vs. 40), before leaving the half Jew-half Gentile population and returning to the Jews in Galilee **“after two days”** (vs. 43). The Church is separate from both Jew and Gentile (1 Cor. 10:32).

Once more, in John 11, when Jesus hears that Lazarus is sick, He stays put for **“two days”** (vss. 5–6), allowing Lazarus to be **“in the grave four days”** (vs. 17). Where did the other two days go? Christ is within walking distance of Bethany (John 11:18 cf. John 10:40, 1:28). He waits two days but does not get there till Lazarus is dead four days.

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” (Rom. 11:33). From Adam to Christ is “four days” (4,000 years). Then there is a hidden mystery age of “two days” of the Church (2,000 years) before the Lord returns to revive a dead Israel to Himself (Hos. 6:1–3, **“After two days”**). Since this mystery age of the Church is “two days” long and begins on Passover, the type points to it ending with a rapture on the Passover. With the Second

Coming of Christ to land on this earth on Tabernacles in the seventh month, there is a six-month difference to reconcile (Passover in the first month; Tabernacles in the seventh month). Pray about that one a while.

As Christians, we can “use” this holiday season to try to reach the lost. As the missionary martyr Nate Saint said in December 1955, just prior to his death in early 1956: “As we have had a high time this Xmas, may we who know Christ hear the cry of the damned as they hurdle headlong into the Christless night without a chance. May we be moved with compassion as our Lord was. May we shed tears of repentance for those we have failed to bring out of the darkness. Beyond the smiling scenes of Bethlehem may we see the crushing agony of Golgotha. May God give us a new vision of His will concerning the lost and our responsibility.”

As fellow missionary martyr Jim Elliot once said: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lost.”

As Charles Spurgeon once said: “If sinners be damned, let them leap into hell over our bodies. If they perish, let them perish with our arms about their knees . . . and let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.”

As General William Booth once said: “Not called did you say? Not heard is more like it. Put your ear to the Bible and hear Him bid you to pull sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear to the agonized heart of humanity and hear the pitiful wail for help. Go

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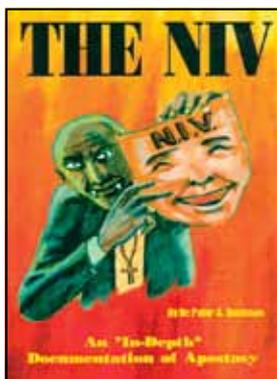
“The Tabernacle of God Is With Men”

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stand by the gates of hell and hear the damned beg you to go to their father's house.”

And as a certain Mike Stachura once said: “The mark of a great church is not its seating capacity, but its sending capacity.”

The problem with American Christians at this season is no different than the problem of the girl with whom Hudson Taylor fell in love. She told him, “Must you go to China? How much nicer it would be to stay here and serve the Lord at home.” She quickly became his ex-girlfriend.

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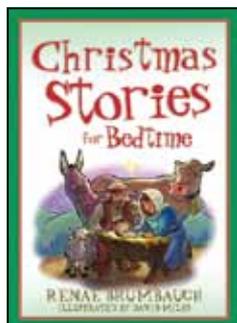
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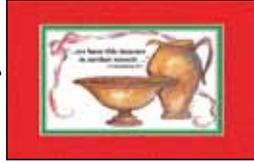
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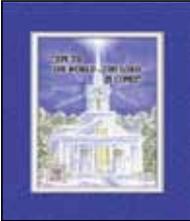
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Does Greek Help?

By Dean Hays (Part Two of Eight)

As we began our study on whether Greek helps to shed "light" on the Bible, we discovered that it is not so much "the Greek" as *Greek scholarship*. One can use "the Greek" to correct or interpret the Bible any way he wants right up to the point where he encounters someone else with more experience or education in the "original Greek." Then he yields the field.

Before getting into the different levels of Greek scholarship, I thought I would give you some more on *phileo* and *agape*. Here is a typical exposition of the words by a fellow named David Nelmes, in an article entitled "God is Agape Love." I want you to notice the amount of "**private interpretation**" (2 Pet. 1:20) Nelmes heaps onto his explanation of the meaning of *agape*. These things are said with no consideration given to their implications, scripturally or logically.

According to Nelmes, "Agape love . . . is always giving and impossible to take or be a taker." "This is the original and ONLY TRUE form of love." Then it is *impossible* for you to love God as you were commanded in Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30; and Luke 10:27. After all, Jesus Christ gives you the Comforter (John 14:16), peace (John 14:27), and eternal life (John 17:2); and if you love Him with the "only true form of love" (*agape*—Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27), it is "impossible to take or be a taker." Absolute nonsense!

"Agape love is seeing the answer and sharing that with whoever is seeing and experiencing the problem." Really? Then Jesus didn't love the multitudes, because He taught them in parables in order to *hide* His doctrine from them "**lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them**" (Mark 4:11–12).

"Agape love is never judgmental and is eternally patient with anything that must be learned." Are we talking about the same God here? Didn't the same Jesus who said God "agaped" the world (John 3:16) also say "**he that believeth not is CONDEMNED ALREADY, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God**" (John 3:18)? He sure wasn't "eternally patient" with Herod there in Acts 12:23, was He? Or Elymas the sorcerer in Acts 13:11, was He?

"Agape love is totally without demands or requirements." I suppose that is why it is "unconditional love." Of course, that is not what Christ said (John 14:15) or the "beloved apostle" wrote (1 John 5:3).

"Agape love is total truth." Only in the sense that Jesus Christ is "**the truth**" (John 14:6), and He is God "**manifest in the flesh**" (1 Tim. 3:16 cf. 1 John 4:8). But that "total truth" will someday cast sinners into "**everlasting fire**" (Matt. 25:41). That is as true as John 3:16. You reckon that's an expression of "agape love"?

"It does not change"; it "knows not of time since time does not exist in heaven." Then I suppose that love the Pharisees had for "**the uppermost seats**" (Luke 11:43) was changeless and timeless; after all, it was "*agape*" love.

Does Greek Help?

Continued from 15

“In a spiritual reality, only thoughts of agape love exist.” Where that puts Jesus Christ after His resurrection, I don’t know. In the upper room at the Last Supper, Jesus loved John with “*agape*” love (John 13:23). After the Resurrection, that love got downgraded to “*phileo*” love (John 20:2). I guess Jesus in His resurrected state wasn’t “in a spiritual reality.”

Do you see how such “scholarship” is completely divorced from scripture and common sense? It sounds great; David Nelmes really “waxes eloquent” on *agape* love. The only problem is, what he says has nothing to do with *reality* or the *facts*.

Now here are four levels of Greek scholarship, and as you advance up the ladder, the less advanced yields to the more advanced.

Level one: You can go to the back of a *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* of the Bible and look up the definition there. Anyone can use the simple lexicon in *Strong’s* to correct the Bible. (If you are really feeling your oats, you can try your hand at *Young’s Analytical Concordance*, although that doesn’t lend itself to as much Bible correcting as *Strong’s* seems to.)

Level two: You can go to an actual analytical Greek lexicon to look up definitions so you can correct your Bible from there. This usually requires a rudimentary knowledge of Greek.

Level three: You can go to a more advanced lexicon. One of the more popular ones is called the BDAG lexicon. It was put together by a scholar named Walter Bauer and edited by Frederick Danker. Its complete title is: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition. The BDAG will give you more definitions than an ordinary lexicon would, and it often can spend as much as half a page discussing each definition and its roots (from where the word came).

Level four: But if you want the “big enchilada” of Greek scholarship, get the works of Gerhard Kittel. Kittel wrote ten volumes discussing “the Greek.” Whereas an average lexicon might spend a paragraph on each word and the BDAG might spend half a page on some definitions, Kittel will take as many as *forty pages* to define a word. He goes back into the Egyptian, Babylonian, Latin, how the classical Greek used the word, how the Greek philosophers used it, how the Bible used it, and how the Church Fathers used it. He’ll tell you nearly everything you could ever find out about the word. I really like going to Kittel because you can skip all the baloney and the middle man, and go straight to the source. I have found that, a lot of times, all the other scholars just copied what Kittel said. Sometimes, Kittel will even disprove what the other Greek scholars say.

When I looked up what Kittel had to say about *agape* and *phileo*, here is what I found. Look at what this big German brain has for us:

“The main word for *love* in the Hebrew text applies to the passionate love between man and woman (Song of Sol. 8:6), to the selfless loyalty of friendship (1 Sam. 20), and to resolute adherence to righteousness (Psa.

Continued on 19

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We hope this information will help you in preparing your orders. In addition, we trust the Lord will give you a blessed holiday season.

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Does Greek Help?

Continued from 16

45:8). The Hebrew word thus covers all the wealth of the three Greek terms" (Kittel, Vol. I, pg. 38).

That's interesting. So if one Hebrew word can reflect all three aspects of love in Greek, what's the problem with one English word doing the same thing? That was what I found when I looked up *agape*, but far more interesting and pertinent to the discussion here is what I found when I looked up *phileo*.

"But it is more like that in chapter 21 [of John], as throughout the Gospel *agapao* and *phileo* are synonymous. Furthermore, the little clause *legei auto to triton* supports a parallel meaning, since it denotes 'for the third time,' not **"the third time"**" (Kittel, Vol. 9, pg. 135).

Kittel is saying that he knows the distinction a lot of teachers and preachers try to make of *agapao* and *phileo* in John 21, *but they're wrong*. They are wrong for two reasons: 1) the two words are synonymous throughout the Gospel of John, and 2) **"the third time"** actually should be "FOR the third time," implying the parallel meaning of the words.

I find that hilarious. Here is the Bible corrector of all Bible correctors pooh-poohing modern scholarship for correcting the Bible. That is just too funny.

Here is one last quote from Kittel concerning this *agape* and *phileo* "straw man" erected by all the teachers and preachers who want to *sound* smart.

". . . use of *phileo* along with the largely synonymous *agapao*" (Kittel, Vol. 9, pg. 128).

According to the biggest, brightest Greek brain there ever was—who actually was smart—the two words *mean the same thing* ("synonymous"). While it is true that he was a lost, anti-Semitic propagandist for Hitler who is in Hell today, as far as the biblical languages are concerned, no Greek scholar in the world today has the brains Kittel had.

We went to, what scholarship would consider, one of the biggest Greek brains there is, and he said the two words are synonymous. We went to the *King James Bible* and *showed* you they were synonymous. So the next time some pea-brain Bible corrector tells you you can't really understand Jesus' words to Peter, and Peter's reply to Jesus, in John 21 without knowing Greek, just laugh at him. He isn't even worth your time. If he were willing to sit down with you and let you show him what I showed you in these first two articles—and if he were open and willing to listen and learn—it might be, but most of those guys aren't.

Now let me ask you something: did I clear things up by going to "the Greek"? Of course not. I cleared things up by going to the *English*. Going to "the Greek" is usually just "smoke and mirrors" to impress the "rubes."

Next time, we will begin to look at whether going to "the Greek" will give you the "original text." We will start examining the manuscript evidence used to change your Bible.

GOD'S QUIZ PROGRAM

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

(Part One of Two)

One of the phenomena of television in the last seventy years has been the game show, in particular, *quiz programs*: The \$64,000 Question, Jeopardy, Who Wants to be a Millionaire, etc. That's a whole form of entertainment based on *trivia*, but God has a "quiz program" that has no trivial questions in it. Every question in God's quiz program is "loaded for bear"; they are all "nuclear bombs." Here is God's idea of a "quiz program"; it is far more important than any of the junk you see on the "glass toilet."

The first question is found in James 4:14. It is: "**what is your life?**" In the Bible, your life is a *trial* (Job 7:18). It is a *shadow* (Job 8:9), a *sailing vessel* (Job 9:26), a *cloud* (Job 30:15), a *flower* (Job 14:2), and a *servitude* (Job 7:1). Back in James 4:14, life is marked by its *brevity*.

The next question God asks you is when a man dies, "**where is he?**" (Job 14:10). Would you call such a question "trivial"? When a man dies, what happens to him, where does he go, "**where is he?**" He's somewhere. Well, "**where is he?**"

The Laws of Thermodynamics state matter and energy cannot be created or destroyed. One can be changed into another, but neither one can be destroyed. That being the case, what happens to a man when he dies? Someone says, "He's buried." That's true, but when you are buried, where are you? According to *that Book* and *observable, scientific fact*, your body will turn into something that can be sucked up in a vacuum cleaner (Gen. 3:19).

That's your *body*, but what happens to *you*— the *real* you? Where do *you* go? Where will *you* be? Job knew where he would be (Job 19:25-27). Jesus Christ knew where He would be (John 14:2, 16:10). Paul knew where he would be (2 Tim. 4:8; 2 Cor. 5:8; 1 Thess. 4:17). Peter knew where he would be (1 Pet. 1:3-4). John knew where he would be (1 John 5:13). *Do you?* If not, why don't you? Only Biblical Christianity can tell you for *sure* how to end up in Heaven; no other religion can tell you *anything* for sure.

The next question: "**how can he be clean that is born of a woman?**" (Job 25:4; see also Job 14:4). What do you think all those regulations back there in Leviticus on birth and sex are about? In that Book, a child is "**unclean**" unless sanctified by a saved parent; then he is accepted as "**holy**" (although not saved) (1 Cor. 7:14). Back there in Leviticus, a woman was unclean when she bore a child. When God came down on Sinai, He told the men of Israel to prepare to meet with Him on the third day by not coming near their wives (Exod. 19:15). When David fled from Saul and asked bread of the high priest, he was allowed to eat the day-old showbread as long as he and his men had kept themselves from women (1 Sam. 21:4-5). Why is all of that? Because everyone born of a woman is a child of disobedience and a child of wrath (Eph. 2:1-3).

The next question is: "**how should man be just with God?**" (Job 9:2). "**How then can man be justified with God?**" (Job 25:4). Knowing what's going on

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God's Quiz Program

Continued from 20

on Mars or Venus doesn't even compare with such a question.

Most men will try to justify themselves by their own goodness (Luke 16:15; Prov. 20:6). But according to the Book, a sinner who humbles himself, acknowledges that he can't save himself, and casts himself on the mercy of God will be justified over some self-righteous braggart (Luke 18:10-14). Job, Paul, and the rich young ruler were all better men than you are (Job 1:1,8; Phil. 3:4-6; Luke 18:18-23), and none of them were justified by their good lives. If you are going to be justified before God, you are going to need the blood of a sinless man (Rom. 3:24-26).

Another question: **"why dost thou judge thy brother?"** (Rom. 14:10). While you are busy judging your brother, God is busy judging *you*. You would do better to practice some *self-judgment*: **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged"** (1 Cor. 11:31). When it comes to a brother in Christ, you had better run your own race (Heb. 12:1) and let him stand or fall **"to his own master"** as he will (Rom. 14:4).

Here's a good question: **"Where art thou?"** (Gen. 3:9). An old colored preacher once said of this text: "First I want to say that every man has got to be somewhere. My second point is some of you folks is where you shouldn't ought to be. My third point is that those of you who is where you shouldn't ought to be is going to wind up where you wish you wasn't!"

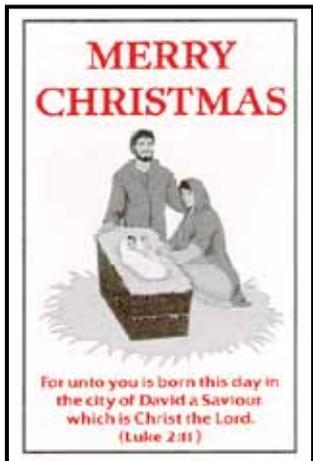
Where are you in your sight? Where are you in God's sight? If God were looking for you, could He find you? I don't mean is He *able* to find you. God is omniscient; of course He's able. I mean are you where God can find you for the purpose for which He wants you? He said in Ezekiel 22:30, **"And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: BUT I FOUND NONE."**

The Bible opens up with God saying to man, "Where are you?" (Gen. 3:9). Four thousand years later, man was searching for God, saying, "Where are you?" (Matt. 2:2). God sent His Son **"to seek and to save that which was lost"** (Luke 19:10), and it is the grace of God that says, **"I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me"** (Rom. 10:20).

Here's a good question in regards to the Lord Jesus Christ: **"What manner of man is this?"** (Luke 8:25). Compare His life with the life of Buddha who loafed and sat under a bo tree and never did a lick of work. Compare the life of Jesus Christ with the life of Mohammed who was so filled with lust that he couldn't control his own gonads. He had to have twelve wives, eleven concubines, and any number of sex slaves, including intercourse with his daughter-in-law and a nine-year-old girl.

"What manner of man is this?"? Well, He certainly wasn't like Joseph Smith, Confucius, Madame Blavatsky, Ellen G. White, Ghandi, or Martin Luther King Jr. Jesus Christ was sinless; they weren't. Jesus Christ could prophesy thirteen details of His death; they couldn't. Jesus Christ could perform public miracles, verified by eyewitnesses; they couldn't. And Jesus Christ is alive because He arose from

Continued on 24



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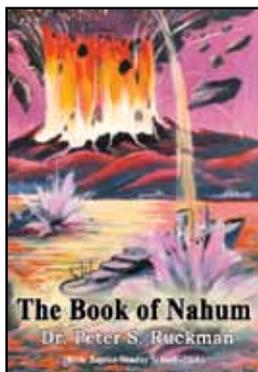
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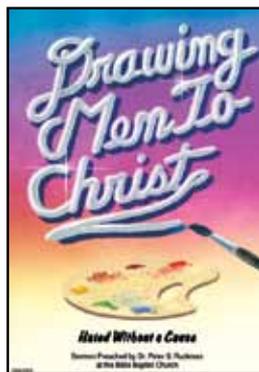
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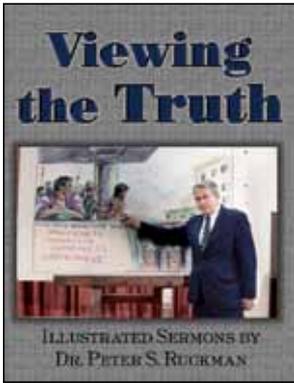
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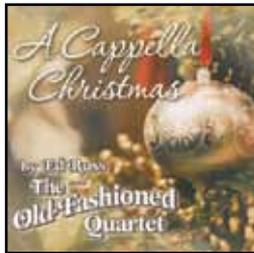
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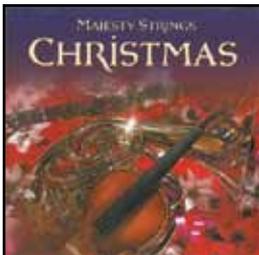
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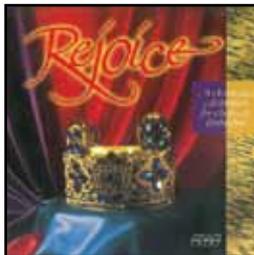
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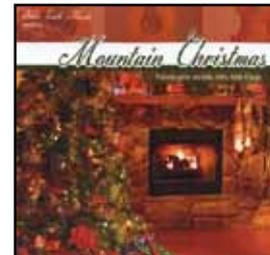
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God's Quiz Program

Continued from 21

the grave. All the men and women listed above lie "mouldering in the grave" like John Brown.

Jesus Christ puts this question to you and all mankind: "**Which of you convinceth me of sin?**" (John 8:46). The new "Bibles" try: they get rid of "**without a cause**" from Matthew 5:22 to make a sinner out of Him (Mark 3:5). Fourteen million Jews and a billion Moslems try: they call Him a liar and say He wasn't the Son of God, He didn't die for anyone's sins, and He didn't rise from the grave.

Mohammed trying to convince Jesus Christ of sin is the height of hypocrisy. I have Moslem histories by Moslem authorities on the life of Mohammed recording bribery, slavery (buy and selling), pederasty, lying, and the torture and murder of his opponents, and then his bragging about it, on the part of "Allah's prophet." You think a dirty dog like that is going to convince Jesus Christ of sin? Not legitimately he couldn't.

Here's another question on God's quiz program. Jesus asked this of the religious leaders of His day right before calling them sons of the Devil and liars (John 8:44): "**Why do ye not understand my speech?**" (John 8:43). What was their problem?

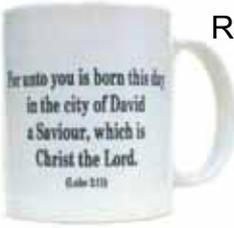
Well, it wasn't the veracity of what He said. His "**sayings are faithful and true**" (Rev. 22:6). It wasn't the plainness of what He said (Prov. 8:8-9). Mark Twain said it wasn't the things in the Bible he didn't understand that bothered him; it was the things he did understand. That statement is "right on the money." The words of Jesus Christ are so plain anybody can understand them.

So what was the problem? Jesus told you what it was right in the same verse where He posed the question: "**even because ye cannot hear my word.**" The reason those religious leaders couldn't "get" what Jesus was saying was because they weren't "**of God**" (John 8:47). They were just as lost as a golf ball in high weeds.

First Corinthians 2:14 says, "**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.**"

We will continue with "God's Quiz Program" next month.

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(Plus postage—see page 18)

A Christmas Visit

By Robert Militello

“Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for WHO shall bring him to see what shall be after him?” (Eccl. 3:22).

Without a visit by the Holy Ghost, no man is going to escape the penalty for sin: eternal damnation. Who brings a man to see what lies beyond the grave? Thank God for a book written by a ghost: the Holy Ghost. My salvation is the result of a visitation given me 38 years ago. A Christian, filled with the Holy Ghost, showed me where I was going at death. Conversion followed. My soul found its rest in Jesus.

In 1843, at the age of 31, a gifted writer, Charles Dickens, penned his classic novella (a short novel) *A Christmas Carol*. Use of the phrase *Merry Christmas* began with the publication of this Victorian-era treasure. The account of Ebenezer Scrooge's conversion is a Christmas staple. It has been made into numerous films and is performed live at Christmas time in hundreds of American communities. There's a warmth and a lift to the story that lights up the heart like a Christmas tree. Kindness defeats selfishness, and joylessness vanishes in the presence of kindness and love.

“I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and THAT THEY MIGHT SEE THAT THEY THEMSELVES ARE BEASTS” (Eccl. 3:18).

How can we see what we really are in God's sight without the work of the Holy Ghost? Charles Dickens employed ghostly visits to bring Scrooge to repentance. The last ghost, that of Christmas yet to come, took Ebenezer to the cemetery where he saw his own headstone, and the hardened, old sinner shook with fear. Would to God the Holy Spirit would use terror to wake up sinners I know who think death comes suddenly only to others. How can men see their need for a heart transplant unless they are convinced that what they now have is diseased beyond remedy. Ebenezer Scrooge begged the ghost of his business partner, Jacob Marley, to leave him alone, saying, “I am too old to change.”

Christmas is essentially a celebration that marks a visitation of God to man. Specifically, it is the fulfillment of a promise made to the descendants of Jacob. The God of Israel proved faithful to His word and sent His Word in a body of flesh and blood to a Jewish maiden. This was a visitation of such import that the world counts the passing of years and marks its calendar from this one event. Without a personal intrusion into our lives, we are dead in sin and without hope in this world (Eph. 2:1, 12). Untold millions who believe the Lord of Glory came to earth and was called “Jesus” have no experience of a personal encounter with the Holy Ghost and, subsequently, remain lost.

Dreams have been the subject of fascination for all of man's history. The first dream mentioned in Scripture is a terrible one.

“But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a DEAD MAN, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife” (Gen. 20:3).

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A Christmas Visit

Continued from 25

How's that for a wake-up call? One of the most famous dreams is that of Jacob and the ladder reaching from earth to Heaven.

“And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. 28:17).

Who has not been amazed, startled, or even frozen with fear by a dream that brought our subconscious mind far out of our familiar reality and pattern of thought? No doubt, almost all of us have had dreams we will never forget. Terror is a tool in the hands of our God for good, if you believe Romans 8:28. Charles Dickens recognized that and skillfully used it to change a man who said he was too old to change. The god of Ebenezer Scrooge's heart, money, was removed by a ghost. Is not the Holy Ghost able to do such things in our hearts today?

On December 21, 1823, a poem entitled “A Visit from St. Nicholas” was published in an upstate New York paper, the Troy *Sentinel*. Clement Moore, a Bible teacher at an Episcopal seminary in New York City, acknowledged writing the poem some fourteen years after its appearance in the *Sentinel*. He said that he wrote it at the insistence of his children. Moore was, for a long time, unwilling to be connected with the poem because of his station in life.

That poem, more than anything else, popularized and institutionalized Santa Claus in American culture. What an accomplishment for a well-respected Bible professor. Charles Schulz, using Linus from the “Peanuts” comic strip to recite the story of Christ's birth from the Gospel of Luke, did more to teach children the real meaning of Christmas. While Clement Moore helped create the fantasy of Christmas, Charles Dickens reminds us that sin pays wages (Rom. 6:23). Ebenezer Scrooge needed a miracle and received one—a gift for Christmas.

“Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil” (Jer. 13:23).

Man cannot change the essential nature of his heart. He needs a new heart, and only the Holy Ghost can transform him into **“a new creature”** (2 Cor. 5:17). Dickens wrote what is, essentially, a resurrection story. He magnified the greedy, covetous nature we all possess, and fashioned a loathsome character whom we can all agree merited eternal damnation. Scrooge is the kind of sinner to whom we can all point when feeling the need to think of ourselves as not wicked. When dealing with lost souls about sin, I have been reminded by many that they are far from the likes of the notorious Jeffrey Dahmer.

“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?” (Prov. 20:6).

I find the choice of the name *Ebenezer* for such a miserly soul proof of the influence of God's word on the mind of the great English writer (see 1 Sam. 7:12). Dickens believed in miracles, and *A Christmas Carol* testifies to that belief.

Dramatic conversions get our attention. They remind us of God's prerogative to intervene in our lives at any given moment. Paul being thrown to the ground and blinded was to be the messenger of hope to a world of lost Gentiles. Great things can happen when incorrigible men are turned to righteousness. John

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A Christmas Visit

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Newton's conversion gave the world "Amazing Grace," a hymn that preaches personal redemption like no other. Drunks such as Sam Jones and Mel Trotter went on to be living epistles (2 Cor. 3:2) of God's power to fix something badly broken, and make it new and useful. This is really the underlying appeal of the Dickens' Christmas classic. When it was written in 1843, the author could not have imagined the enduring effect his "Carol" would have on millions yet to be born.

"Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment" (Luke 16:27-28).

Here is the soul of the rich man burning in Hell and crying to Abraham to send Lazarus' ghost to his brothers. Don't we often think that what some of our loved ones or acquaintances need is for the hell to be scared out of them? Radical surgery must often be employed to save a body ready to die. In the mind of the rich man in Hell, his brothers needed to be terrorized; they needed a ghostly visitation as soon as possible.

Father Abraham rejected the request and pointed to the scriptures as the way to avoid the flames of Hell. What the rich man knew about his brothers is what we also believe about many we know: that they will not open God's word. This is heartbreaking, but a visit from a dead man will not persuade a sinner to repent if the scripture is not believed. Still, in the world of fiction, Charles Dickens found himself not bound by such constraints. His ghosts were going to accomplish their mission without scripture. Is there any Christian who has not, at times, thought his or her way was just as productive as God's way? When we wish to, we are not averse to employ means not sanctioned by God to bring about a desired end, amen?

"Knowing therefore THE TERROR OF THE LORD, we persuade men" (2 Cor. 5:11). It is difficult for many to associate the Lord with the word *terror*. Sadly, our rebellious hearts would rather emphasize the fact that **"God is love"** (1 John 4:8) than the idea that He is also **"a consuming fire"** (Heb. 12:29). From what I have read in history, revivals followed the preaching of **"the terror of the Lord,"** rather than the love of God.

Christmas, with all its festivities and merriment, has a terror attached to it for those lost in sin. It is a reminder, even attested to by our secular society, that God keeps His word. He came as He said He would, and His mission was to make payment for the sins of the world. Even secular history validates His existence on this earth 2,000 years ago. Knowledge of this should be a terror to anyone knowing his is sinful, but unwilling to trust the "Babe of Bethlehem" to save his or her lost soul.

Love came to earth to rescue sinners from the wrath of God. Don't expect any Hallmark greeting card sent at Christmas to make that point clear. No, our society wishes to receive messages of good cheer, season's greetings, and happy holidays. Obviously, the Scrooge character in the Dickens' classic

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A Christmas Visit

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was not the kind of man amenable to such expressions of endearment. His memorable “Bah! Humbug!” made clear to all that celebrating Christmas was a dreadful annoyance and an excuse for the lazy lower class to expect a day’s pay for no work. Could such a man be moved to repentance by hearing a sermon on the love of God? Charles Dickens had to find another way. Fear can work wonders when used wisely.

“The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly” (Prov. 18:23).

There’s no sin in being rich, provided your gain came honestly. Also, being frugal has virtue attached to it. Ben Franklin said, “A penny saved is a penny earned.” A Christian who keeps a very close eye on his or her expenditures is thought to be a wise steward of God’s resources. Nevertheless, a lost son or daughter of Abraham showing the same frugality is liable to be called a “cheap Jew.” Sadly, because of sin in us, we often see things through the lens of our own prejudice. Ebenezer Scrooge was loathsome because of the way he treated people, not because he found it torturous to part with a shilling.

Dickens’ use of contrast made *A Christmas Carol* a classic. Christmas is a season of giving, kindness, charity, and those things that warm the heart and lift the spirit. Ebenezer Scrooge is the antithesis of the Christmas spirit. In any “feel good” story, good must triumph over evil. To turn Scrooge around, Dickens had to use four ghosts: Jacob Marley and the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future. The heartless, old sinner had to be softened up before the ghost of Christmas yet to come could bring him to his knees.

“For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” (Mark 8:36).

Good question, don’t you think? This was my scripture of choice when I used to preach at lunchtime on the corner of Wall and Nassau Streets, opposite the New York Stock Exchange. Walking past me each weekday were thousands who rose to life or died daily with the fluctuations of the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Nowhere else in our nation can you see how powerful is the lure of money and the desire to be rich. It was fitting that before taking Ebenezer to his gravestone, the ghost of Christmas yet to come took him to the London Stock Exchange. What troubled Scrooge about that visit was the fact that he was not at his usual post under the clock.

“For the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Tim. 6:10). In the scene at the Exchange, two men are talking about someone who died and whether they would attend the funeral. One businessman said to the other that the deceased had left all his money to his firm. Scrooge had a nephew who married without his approval, so it appears there was nothing left to him. How black must a heart be to deny one’s only kinfolk of even a small inheritance because one thought one’s firm was more worthy? What on earth could change such a man? Nothing; that’s why Charles Dickens resorted to ghosts.

We who believe God’s word know of a Ghost who can change the vilest of

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THE CREED OF THE ALEXANDRIAN CULT

1. There is **no final authority** but God.
2. Since God is a Spirit, there is **no final authority** that can be seen, heard, read, felt, or handled.
3. Since all books are material, there is **no book on this earth that is the final and absolute authority** on what is right and what is wrong, what constitutes truth and what constitutes error.
4. There **WAS** a series of writings one time which, **IF** they had all been put into a **BOOK** as soon as they were written the first time, **WOULD HAVE** constituted an infallible and final authority by which to judge truth and error.
5. However, this series of writings was lost, and the God who inspired them was **unable to preserve their content** through Bible-believing Christians at Antioch (Syria), where the first Bible teachers were (Acts 13:1), and where the first missionary trip originated (Acts 13:1-52), and where the word "*Christian*" originated (Acts 11:26).
6. So God chose to **ALMOST** preserve them through Gnostics and philosophers from Alexandria, Egypt, even though God called His Son **OUT** of Egypt (Matthew 2), Jacob **OUT** of Egypt (Genesis 49), Israel **OUT** of Egypt (Exodus 15), and Joseph's bones **OUT** of Egypt (Exodus 13).
7. So there are two streams of Bibles. The most accurate—though, of course, there is **no final, absolute authority** for determining truth and error; it is a matter of "preference"—are the Egyptian translations from Alexandria, Egypt, which are "almost the originals," although not quite.
8. The most **inaccurate translations** were those that brought about the German Reformation (Luther, Zwingli, Boehler, Zinzendorf, Spener, et al.) and the worldwide missionary movement of the English-speaking people: the Bible that Sunday, Torrey, Moody, Finney, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Wesley, and Chapman used.
9. But we can "tolerate" these if those who believe in them will "tolerate" US. After all, since there is **NO ABSOLUTE AND FINAL AUTHORITY** that anyone can read, teach, preach, or handle, the whole thing is a matter of "PREFERENCE." You may prefer what you prefer, and we will prefer what we prefer. Let us live in peace, and if we cannot agree on anything or everything, let us all agree on one thing: **THERE IS NO FINAL, ABSOLUTE, WRITTEN AUTHORITY OF GOD ANYWHERE ON THIS EARTH.**

This is the Creed of the Alexandrian Cult.

A Christmas Visit

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sinners. John Newton met Him. The Ghost he encountered saves all kinds of sinners: miserable wretches as he once was, rich, poor, young, old, educated, or unlearned. Christmas often makes many more aware of a need to accommodate some religion in their lives. God's Ghost will bring salvation, if allowed, but not religion. That is the work of another spirit. **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God"** (1 John 4:1).

The Ghost sent by God is feared by those comfortable in sin and attached to this world because He is holy. Such a Ghost terrorizes and would not be welcome at the thousands of Christmas parties given by those who profess to be Christians.

For the billions who are yet lost and going to Hell, Christmas 2015 will be like Christmas 2014. A Book written by the Holy Ghost will be ignored, if not scorned. What happened in Bethlehem some twenty centuries ago will be repeated. **"The Saviour of the world"** (1 John 4:14) will find no room in the hearts of even those singing "Joy to the World." Why will this be so again for so many? Here's the simple answer.

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and MEN LOVED DARKNESS RATHER THAN LIGHT, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19).

Merry Christmas!

OCTOBER SERMONS

Brian Donovan

What Doest Thou Here, Elijah?
4 Ways God Answers Prayers
Give Me My Price
A Man After God's Own Heart
The Lord's Vineyard

Glenn Coppinger

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Faulkner, MD 20632
Pastor Bob Joseph
(540) 663-0192

January 15-17

Bible Believers Baptist Church
3857 Hartley Road
Jacksonville, FL 32256
Pastor David Peacock
(904) 334-5783

February 12-14

Little Band & Lowly Baptist Ch.
19702 E. Old Lexington Rd.
Independence, MO 64058
Pastor Mark Velder
(816) 550-7782

March 18-20

Red Lion Bible Church
105 Springvale Rd.
Red Lion, PA 17356
Pastor Steve Schmuck
(717) 244-3905

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Kansas City KCNW 1380 AM		6:30 P.M. Sat.
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Lupton WMSD 90.9 FM		8:15 P.M. Wed.
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Cody KOFG 91.1 FM International SS Hour		10:30 A.M. Sun. 6:00 P.M. Sun.
Theological Seminar of Air		1:30 A.M. Sat. 4:00 P.M. Sat. 2:00 A.M. Sun. 4:00 P.M. Sun.
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