



***TOWARD
THE MARK***

***“I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE
OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS.”
PHILIPPIANS 3:14***

*A MAGAZINE FOR YOUNG CHRISTIANS
OF ALL AGES*

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Dear Reader,

“They are not of the world” (John 17:16).

A true believer in Christ is neither an optimist nor a pessimist, according to the way in which these terms are used amongst men. He takes neither a hopeful nor a despondent view of the state of this world, through which he has to journey for the glory of God. He is not occupied with either the bright or the dark side of things down here. He is not elated by the world’s apparent prosperity, nor do its wars, wickedness, or immorality cause him to imagine that it is coming to its end; this he knows will not take place while the church of God is upon earth. His judgment of it does not arise from what he sees it to be, or from any report he has of it from its own account of itself. When the rulers of the world have to confess that they are helpless to stop rebellion and unrest; when one set of politicians accuses the other set of lying, deceit, trickery, and treachery; when the judges on the bench declare that sinful practices are legal; when the Christian pulpits are preaching another gospel, the man of God has no different thoughts about this world, he knows that, whatever garb of religion it may put on, it is just the same old Devil-ruled system that murdered the Son of God, and which, from that day to this, has ruthlessly persecuted His glorious gospel.

Dear Christian, remember that we are heavenly people. We have a heavenly calling. We are strangers and foreigners here. We only desire a plain way through this world. We will keep the king’s highway; that is, we will be subject to every ordinance of man, for the Lord’s sake (1 Peter 2:13–17). We will pay for everything we get by the way, and will commit no trespass, but we must maintain our pilgrim character, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world (James 1:27). We are heavenly people, who have all our associations of life there. The cross has severed all the ties that bound us to this great world-system. “Ye are all the children of light, and the children of day: we are not of the night, nor of the darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.” Let us spend time daily in reading His word and praying so we can know His mind in our life. Let pleasing Him in everything be the desire of our heart in a world that opposing Him.

It is our prayer that the Lord will use the articles in this issue them to help you to grow and be established in Him. Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement. We love hearing from all of you.

Please keep praying for the Lord’s blessing on Toward the Mark!

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,
Emil S. Nashed

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TOWARD THE MARK

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If you would like to join the mailing list to receive the electronic version of Toward the Mark, simply visit www.towardthemark.org or send an e-mail to toward.the.mark@gmail.com to be added. If you would like copies of older issues, please mention it in your e-mail.

Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or the J.N. Darby translation.

MILK

"The truth shall make you free"

ZECHARIAH

Part Three: Chapters 7–11

Zechariah chapters 7 and 8

Most prominent phrase: **"Thus saith the Lord of Hosts."**

The Third Message:

The visions outlined in chapters 3 to 6 have ceased. Prophecy is about to begin.

It often takes some time for worthwhile exercises to develop. We should not, therefore, be surprised that there was a time gap of about two years between the last vision in chapter 6 and the beginning of prophecy in chapter 7.

Deputation from Bethel (7:1–3)

A query arose with the arrival of a deputation from Bethel. It was this: Is it necessary (indeed, is it right?) to continue to observe fasts which had been instituted by the nation's people and priests, and not by God Himself?

Fast 1: Fast of the fifth month

This commemorated the Destruction of Solomon's Temple (2 Kings 25:8–10 and Jeremiah 52:12–14).

Fast 2: Fast of the seventh month.

This commemorated the Assassination of Gedaliah, the appointed governor of the land, and of those who were not carried away into Babylon (read Jeremiah 41:1–2). The deputation only raised a query about the fast in the fifth month, but the prophet dealt with both in his fourfold answer.

First answer (7:4–7)

The questioner, not the question, was answered. "Get right, and keep right, with God." Secondly, "Who is the object of your fast? Are you doing it for Me, or for yourselves?"

Outwardly correct ceremonies are no real indication in themselves of the heart being right before God. Separation of activity, without separation of heart, is of no avail before God (Isaiah 29:13). Verse 7 of our chapter says, "Listen to the word of the Lord through the former prophets."

Second answer (7:8–14)

Having got right with God, by obeying His Word, the next thing to do is—be right manward.

True religion is essentially practical (James 1:27). What we are inside shows on the outside. You can only judge what's going on inside my heart by what you can see in my life, morally, not in merely ceremonial activities, but in practical godliness. The outcome of being right Godward (v. 4–7) is to be right manward (v. 9–10).

"Your fathers hardened their hearts against the voice of the prophets and had to be disciplined."

The trend follows the usual cycle:

5:3	Wrong Godward, wrong manward.
7:9–10	The warning message of the former prophets.
7:11–12	Warning disregarded.
7:13–14	Disciplinary judgments, sanctions applied.

The pleasant land (7:14)

The land of Israel should be the center and focal point of the earth's peace, plenty, and prosperity. Instead, it is the focal point of the world's bitterness, turmoil and unrest. What a travesty!

Third answer (8:1–19)

God has not changed His mind. The blessing of the land will come. Jehovah, the God of Israel, has committed Himself. It shall come to pass.

Read: Isaiah 14:24–27; 46:9–11

His indignation has been expressed against His own people.

His fury will be unleashed against the Gentile nations who have dared to touch Israel, the apple of His eye.

Marks of the blessing of God on the godly in Israel
(long promised in the Law).

- v. 4 longevity.
- v. 5 lots of children, many generations.
- vv. 7–8 dwelling in the Land.
- v. 12 prosperity (the land fruitful).
- v. 13 blessing to other nations.
- vv. 16–17 righteous living (now — in the light of what the prophet has said about the future).
- v. 19 fasting turned to feasting.

Fourth answer (8:20–23)

Nations shall be glad to come to Israel and Jerusalem.

Millennial conditions (which have certainly not applied for the last three thousand years since the days of Solomon, whose reign was itself a preview of millennial glory).

Jerusalem will be the capital city centre of:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| World government | Psalm 72; Psalm 9:8 |
| Teaching | Micah 4:2 |
| Worship | Jeremiah 3:17; Zechariah 14:16 |

“Behold thy King cometh unto thee” (9–11)

Read: Chapter 9:1–17; 10:1–12; 11:1–17

It may well be that some of the prophecies of these chapters have already had a partial fulfillment. We should not be surprised at that. “Coming events cast their shadow before them.” But a complete and final fulfillment has not yet occurred. Some of the prophecies have had no answer at all as yet, and await the final climax of God’s dealings on earth.

1. God’s vengeance upon the Gentile nations and its accomplishment (9:1–17).

The LORD will defend His people (9:1–8)

The cities mentioned in the opening verses were rivals to the preeminence of Jerusalem. That will not be tolerated. Jerusalem must be supreme.

Some of these statements are mirrored in the intermediate history of the nation of Israel, and Judah in particular. Examination of secular history will confirm that. Better still, and quicker: consult respected Bible expositors you have learned to trust. But, these partial fulfillments all look on to the LORD’s final deliverance of His beloved people and their establishment in the “pleasant land.”

Verse 8

The LORD takes account of the (largely) rebuilt Temple, the result of the labors of the restored remnant.

How will all this be brought about? (9:9–10)

The Coming of the King will resolve everything.

Verse 9

The presentation of the One in Whom alone Salvation will be found.

Title (official): King

Character as such (moral): Just; having salvation.

Personal and Moral Character: Lowly, riding on an ass...lowly in His Person and in His approach.

Only that which is personal and moral and came out in His first advent is quoted in Matthew 21:5.

The result of the Second Advent (9:10–17)

Dramatic deliverance (vv. 10–16)

v. 10 No more war in Israel, particularly Jerusalem, but universal peace and dominion, with Israel and Jerusalem the hub.

v. 11 The deliverance by power is in virtue of and depends upon their redemption by blood.

Cf:	Exodus 12		Exodus 14
	Passover	→→→	Red Sea
	Redemption by blood		Deliverance by power

The redemption by blood is the deeper work (before God) and is the basis of the deliverance (from men) by power. This covenant will be the outcome of grace and therefore new (Jeremiah 31).

v. 12 In the meantime, they are shut up to hope.

v. 17 Corn for the young men: Male concept → objective truth → eating → feeding on Christ (John 6).

New wine for the maids: Female concept → subjective truth → drinking → drinking of one Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13).

What sustains the Christian believer now will sustain Israel in the world to come. It will be continuous and characteristic for them then as it is for us now.

2. **Blessing enjoyed by Israel restored to the pleasant land (10:1–12)**

The Plan (10:1–3)

The LORD shall visit His flock for restoration and make them overcomers as having all strength in Himself. All Judah (the southern kingdom) and Israel (Ephraim/Joseph) (the northern kingdom) shall be included in the blessing. Hindrances shall be removed and the pride of their enemies will be broken down. He will regather His people to the pleasant land and strengthen them for Himself.

The Executor of the plan (10:4)

Who will effect this? Who will bring it to pass? Messiah!

v. 4 gives a terse summary of the character and mission of Messiah.

- a) Cornerstone
 - 1) Foundation (Isaiah 28:16).
 - 2) Bond of union between two walls.

- b) Nail
Tent peg? No! Internal peg for bearing all burdens and treasures. One capable of bearing all burdens, but also full of compassion, and bearing the glory (Isaiah 22:24; Zechariah 6:13).
- c) Battle bow Warrior King.
Subduing, destroying all enemies of God and of His people (Isaiah 63; 2 Thessalonians 1; Revelation 19).
- d) Oppressor Exactor, despotic, autocratic ruler.
Head of gold (Daniel 5:18–19; Acts 17:31).

The outworking of the plan (10:12)

As His representatives, they shall walk up and down, in His Name, dispensing blessing amongst the Nations.

3. **The solemn consequences of the rejection of Messiah (11:1–17)**

The grace of the LORD being refused has resulted in the people being subjugated to Gentile rule. Their own shepherds do not pity them. The LORD raises up the True Shepherd, Who feeds the remnant. The rejection of the Messiah in His life and ministry made it impossible to gather the peoples (nations) together (Genesis 49:10) so the stave Beauty had to be broken. The rejection of the Messiah in His death made it impossible for the time being to bring together all Israel (that is, the two and the ten to make the twelve). The church period fills the long gap between verses 14 and 15.

Verse 15 presents the Foolish, Idol, or False Shepherd, the Antichrist, whose character is the opposite to the True Shepherd.

Cf v 15–17 and John 5:43 with John 10:3–4, 7, 9–11, 14–15.
Cf 1 John 2. 22; 2 John 7 with John 10:1, 5, 8, 10a, 12–13.

The judgment of God will fall on Antichrist as we learn in Revelation 19:20. Not a happy consideration, but a necessary precursor to chapter 12.

The Fourth Message:

These prophecies (in chapters 9 to 11) have had a partial but not yet a full and complete fulfillment (see chapter 9:8).

The prophecies (chapters 9 to 14) are not in chronological order.

9:9 The Coming of the King has only partially been fulfilled.

11:12–13 Betrayal and paying of the price.

11:7–11 The nation scattered.

9:8 The victories of the King.

9:10–17 The program of the King.

This opens the door to chapters 12–14.

Ernie Brown

Search the Scriptures!

1. What is the shortest verse in the Old Testament?
2. What godly priest had a wife named Jehosheba?
3. Which gospel mentions that the Lord Jesus passed through those that intended to stone Him?

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

**THE ETERNAL SON OF GOD IN
HUMANITY!**

One of the challenging concepts of the Christian faith is the absolute humanity and deity of Jesus Christ. It is of utmost importance when considering the person of the Son of God to remember that no one but the Father has full knowledge of Him. This is true whether considering His deity or His humanity. God knows absolutely, intrinsically, essentially; we do not. With us, knowledge is dependent altogether on revelation from God. Remembering this will check the tendency to engage in speculation on what has not been revealed. However, we should not be deterred by the greatness of such subjects as the qualities of the Son of God and forbid ourselves from careful consideration of them. Investigating these holiest subjects carefully using Scripture and prayer can draw the believer closer to the God who loves him.

Much has been said by others about the so-called human limitations of the Lord Jesus. Some have robbed him of his true glory as a divine Person by claiming that the human body he took for himself contradicts the fact He was divine. Yet, we know that scripture explicitly states He is God; in fact, He is given the name Immanuel, God with us. In order for Jesus Christ to possess the truth of his name Immanuel, he must both be fully God and man. In John 1 we see the Word who was (and is) God was made flesh and dwelt here among men on earth. Many other evidences in Scripture show us Jesus Christ is fully God. Let us consider briefly how Christ's deity interacted with His humanity while walking here in this world.

As a man, Jesus Christ had full divine power and could and did use it. He also possessed full divine knowledge: He knew all

things and knew them absolutely and essentially. He was pleased to assume the form of a servant, to enter into human conditions, and the limitations of men. It was not as God that He grew in stature and wisdom (Luke 2:52), but as a man. He perfectly fulfilled these human conditions and never drew on His divine power and wisdom merely for Himself, however freely used them for others. He trod the path here on earth as men have to tread it. Men need the counsel of God and wisdom of God. In man's path, the Son of God sought the wisdom of God, sought where God had put it for them, and found it. He could say, "I will bless the Lord, who hath given Me counsel" (Psalm 16:7). In all His human conflicts He used only the means which God has provided for men to gain their triumphs—the written word of God. For example, He did not meet the devil in the desert with His divine power, but turned to what God had written for men to live by. "It is written" was His answer—His often repeated answer.

So always all along His human path He depended on the provision which God had made for those who were in the path. In matters about which God had not spoken, He did not necessarily turn to His own divine knowledge. Consider the following example. In Mark 13:32, the Lord is speaking about the coming of the Son of Man in the cloud with power and glory at His second coming. God has not revealed the day of this great event and furthermore has not spoken a word to men on the subject of the hour when this event will take place. So the Lord Jesus as the perfect servant of the Father does not draw on His divine knowledge. As a Man in man's place of dependence on what God has revealed to men and for men, He speaks, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father". How quickly do we tend to offer an often hasty and sometime foolish answer to a question, while our Savior responds with such humility? Let us be exhorted to remember, "In the

multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Proverbs 10:19)

There is need to deny Christ's deity in order to consider these things. If the very Son of God Himself could come down into our human path of dependence, and there perfectly fulfill the human conditions of that path, what honor has He thus put upon the path? If He could restrain the use of His absolute power, and tread the path down here as a mere man, although He were much more than this, does he not teach for us the blessedness of the privilege it is for us to tread a path the way He did: in submission to God's will and in the energy of the Spirit? Do we hope for the Lord's coming so the wrongs in our lives can be righted? Or are we willing to walk here in obedience to God, content in whatever state we are in? (Philippians 4:11)

The Lord help us to abide in the truth, and above all, the truth of His person. While we trace His human path, we must realize how perfectly human He was, the pure and complete meal offering to God. Yet, He never lost the divine glory that everywhere shone forth as manifesting Him to be the One who had in grace assumed a human form. He was the Son of Man, the Last Adam, the second man. The only man who perfectly fulfilled God's intentions for how man should be. May we be energized to live as ambassadors for Christ, the salt of this tired, weak world. All glory and honor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Adapted from C. Rain, in "Help and Food for the Household of Faith"

Contributed by Kevin G.

EXERCISE

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

THE SINGLE EYE!

PSALM 27

The Twenty-seventh Psalm very blessedly presents the experiences of a believer who, amidst all his trials, looks to the Lord with entire singleness of eye and desire (v. 4).

It opens by giving the experience that finds in the Lord an unfailing resource in the presence of every form of opposition (1–3). We then learn the secret desire of the Psalmist's heart after the Lord (4), and his confidence in the Lord (5–6). We listen to his prayer to the Lord (7–12); and finally learn how he waits to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living (13–14).

THE LORD THE RESOURCE OF THE GODLY

(Vv. 1–3). In all his difficulties and trials, the godly soul finds in the Lord his unfailing resource. The Lord is his "light", his "salvation", and his "strength."

Amidst the prevailing darkness the Lord not only gives light but He is light. The Christian can say that the Lord has trodden the path and met the contradiction of sinners and is the perfect example of the spirit in which opposition is to be met. Moreover, the Lord can deliver, and in the end will deliver from every enemy. In the meantime the Lord is our strength to support us through all the trials of life.

With the Lord as his resource, the believer can say, "Of whom shall I be afraid?" We may be opposed by individual enemies,

or by a host of enemies, or by "war"—prolonged opposition at every step of the journey. But the heart need not fear nor the soul lose confidence seeing we have the Lord as our light, our salvation, and our strength.

DESIRE AFTER THE LORD

(V. 4). Behind this confidence in the Lord, there is the earnest desire after the Lord. Above all else the Psalmist desires to live in the constant sense of the presence of the Lord—to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life; to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to learn of Him. In New Testament days we learn that the one thing that the Psalmist desired, is the one thing that Mary chose—to sit at the feet of the Lord and hear His Word.

CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD

(Vv. 5–6). Connected with desires after the Lord there is of necessity confidence in the Lord. If the Lord is my salvation He will hide me from all my enemies. If He is my strength, He will "keep me" in safety (N.T.) firmly established upon a rock; and, in due time, will lift up my head above all my enemies for His own glory and praise.

THE PRAYER TO THE LORD

(Vv. 7–12). In the prayer we see the exercise of this godly man in the presence of the Lord. In the presence of the enemy he realizes the strength of the Lord; in the presence of the Lord he is conscious of his own weakness and sin, for which he fears the anger of the Lord. Nevertheless he learns the evil of his own heart in the presence of the grace that can meet it all, for has not the Lord said to him, "Seek ye my face." Even so in the day of our Lord Peter discovers that he is a sinful man in the presence of the One whose heart is full of grace for a man that is full of sin (Luke 5:8).

Secondly, encouraged to seek the face of the Lord, he prays that the Lord will not hide His face—that he may be kept in the sense of the Lord’s favor shining upon him. It is one thing for the Christian to know that he is accepted in the Beloved and stands in the favor of God; it is another thing to walk in the conscious sense of this favor.

Thirdly, realizing that the Lord has been his help in times past, he desires that the Lord will not leave nor forsake him in the days to come, even though he may be forsaken by the nearest on earth. Seeing that the Lord has said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” the Christian can “boldly say, The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:5–6).

Fourthly, he desires to be taught the way of the Lord. It is not simply a way that he desires, but, realizing that the Lord has His way for His people, through this world, he prays, “Teach me thy way, O Lord.”

Fifthly, he realizes that there are many enemies that would seek to turn him out of the Lord’s way, therefore he desires, not only to be taught the way but, to be *led* in the way. He says, “Lead me in an even path, because of mine enemies” (N.T.). We need light to see the path, faith to take it, and grace to keep us in it.

Sixthly, realizing his own weakness in the presence of his enemies he prays that the Lord would deliver him from the will of enemies, who without conscience witness against him falsely, and without heart breathe out cruelty.

WAITING FOR THE LORD

(Vv. 13–14). Left to himself this godly man would have fainted. What sustained him? Faith in the goodness of the Lord that would bring him into the land of the living. The Christian can say the grace that brings salvation to me on earth will bring me to the glory in heaven. All around we see the evil of man in a world of sin and death, but faith walks in the confidence that

very soon we shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

For this we must with quiet patience wait the Lord’s own time.

Therefore, the word is, “Wait on the Lord.” All that we have to face on the way can be met with “good courage,” for the Lord will support us if walking in His way. He will strengthen the heart. So, whether it be for grace in the way, or the final mercy that delivers us from a world of death and brings us into the goodness of the land of the living, let us “Wait on the Lord,” with the single eye that leads us to say, “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple.”

Hamilton Smith

Answers to Scripture search!

1. 1 Chronicles 1:25
2. Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 22:11)
3. The Gospel of John (John 8:59; 10:31, 39)

REST

“*Shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?*”

“BUT IF I SIN...THEN WHAT ?”

1 John 2:1

The question often arises in the minds of the Lord’s people, especially of those who are young in the faith, “What is to be done if we commit sins after we have been saved?”

Many a child of God has said, “I know that I have believed in Christ, and see that my sins were put away by His blood; but what troubles me is the sins I commit now, and what am I to do with them?” The direct answer to this question is found in 1 John 2: 1–2, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins.” This is clearly written to believers, for the apostle addresses them as “my children”; that is, those who have been born of God. And again, “We have an advocate with the *Father*,” as it is only those who are born again who can call God their Father.

The first thing for us to see is, that, as believers in the Lord Jesus, *all our sins are put away before God by the one offering on the cross*, as we get fully brought out in the epistle to the Hebrews; because till this is seen there must always be confusion in the mind, confounding our *knowledge* of forgiveness of sins with the work of Christ that put them all away when they were all future. In Hebrews 10:11–12, 14, we read, “And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this Man [Christ], after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, *for ever* sat down on the right hand of God...For by one offering He hath perfected *for ever* them that are sanctified.” The priests, under the law, *stood* and offered “*oftentimes* the same sacrifices, which could never take away sins,” therefore

their work was never done; but this Man [Christ] offered *one* sacrifice, and “for ever sat down on the right hand of God.”

Do you see, dear reader, that there is only one sacrifice for sins, and that there never will be another? So that if all your sins were not put away then, they never can be, for Christ is not going to die again.

People often say, “I know that my sins were put away up to my conversion”; but Scripture never speaks in that way. When did Christ bear your sins? On the cross. Did He bear a part of your sins, or did He put them away up to the day of your conversion? `No; if He bore one, He bore them all when they were all future, when you had committed none of them; for, blessed be His name, He offered the “one sacrifice for sins,” and then “for ever sat down on the right hand of God.”

This word “for ever” is not that which is used for everlasting, but it has the sense of continuously, uninterruptedly, never to rise up to offer another sacrifice or to complete the work; and the reason that He is so seated at the right hand of God is, that, “by one offering He hath perfected *for ever* (same word) them that are sanctified.” He has perfected us for ever, therefore He has sat down for ever. The value of His one offering, which put away all our sins, is for ever; therefore He has nothing more to do throughout eternity with regard to the putting away of the sins of those that believe in His name.

Of course, when a soul is first awakened by the Holy Spirit, it could only be past sins that are brought to his knowledge, and that he knows are forgiven; but then, when we get the knowledge of forgiveness, we see that the work that put our sins away was accomplished when they were all future, and the value of that one sacrifice was not only up to the day of our conversion. Now we see the One that did the work “*for ever* sat down on the right hand of God,” because He has perfected us *for ever* by that one offering; and God says, “Their sins and

iniquities will I remember no more.” (Hebrews 10:17.) Forgiveness of sins is the common portion of all Christians, as we read in 1 John 2:12, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.” There would be no sense in saying our future sins are forgiven, for we have not committed them, and we ought not to contemplate sinning in the future; but we can always say, as Christians, as in Colossians 1:14, “In whom we *have* redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.”

But many have thought, “If we have the ‘forgiveness of sins,’ why do we read, in 1 John 1:9, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins’?” There is another sense in which Scripture speaks of forgiveness; when a child of God has sinned, and his communion has been interrupted, and he confesses his sin, he gets forgiveness, not in the sense of non-imputation, as in Romans 4:7–8, but of communion and joy being restored, which had been interrupted by the sin. The above verse (1 John 1:9) is a general statement, and would apply either to a sinner first coming to God and confessing his sins, and so getting forgiveness once for all on the ground of the death of Christ, or to a child of God who has sinned and confesses, and gets forgiveness as a child by the Father. The one might be called *justifying forgiveness* in the case of the sinner; and the other, *Fatherly, or governmental, forgiveness* in the case of a saint; and it is very important to distinguish between the two.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

**Q. What does it mean to
“marry in the Lord”?(1Corinthians 7:39b)**

JCL, USA

A. This question raises a most important principle found throughout this epistle: the rights of Christ, that is, His Lordship. His title as Lord is used at least 67 times (in combination or alone) in 1st Corinthians. While the immediate context of the verse is to a widow who desires to marry again, clearly the bearing of the chapter has to do with the marriage relationship, and the authority of the Lord. The question has been asked, “Does in the Lord mean marry none but a Christian,” and the answer is an emphatic YES! But the matter goes far deeper. Now it is clear that the marriage relationship unites a man and a woman into one flesh. It follows that one flesh cannot have two minds—there cannot be a joining together of light with darkness. Speaking of believers the apostle says: “Ye **were** sometime darkness, but **now** are ye light in the Lord, walk as children of light” (Ephesians 5:8). Again, “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Corinthians 6:14).

To “marry in the Lord” then is for the Christian man and woman to be set to seek His will and so subject to Him, to have the same mind as to the truths made know in the Word of God (both doctrinal and ecclesiastical), and thus to bring the Lord Jesus into the most intimate circumstances of our life.

JAP

ALL TRUTH IS NARROW!

Truth is always narrow—always. Not just some of it. All of it.

Mathematical Truth

Let me illustrate it this way: “Two plus two equals four.” Now, some fellow comes along and says, “I’m not mathematically narrow-minded. I believe two plus two can equal fifteen or twenty. I’m broadminded in my mathematics.” Well, let him go down to the bank and see how far he gets! He goes up to a teller and says, “I have a check here. I want to withdraw five hundred dollars,” and she looks at his account and says, “You don’t have but two hundred dollars in your account.” He says, “Why, that’s narrow-minded! I deposited one hundred dollars, and I deposited another hundred dollars, and in my math that’s five hundred dollars!” And the teller says, “You’re a first-class nut case!” *Mathematical truth is narrow.*

Scientific and Historic Truth

Imagine an athletic fellow who believes in all those things to make you strong and muscled. On a cold winter day, when the world up north is covered in snow, he stands on a bridge in order to dive into the river below. As he prepares to take that plunge, somebody comes up to him and he says, “Man, don’t you know that water freezes at 32 degrees? That river is solid ice!” He says, “I don’t believe water freezes at 32 degrees. I am broadminded in my acceptance of scientific facts. I happen to believe water freezes at 15 degrees.” And the fellow says, “Fifteen degrees? You dive off that bridge and you’re going to splatter your brains.” He responds, “I’m broadminded.” And he dives off that bridge...and discovers that *scientific truth is narrow!*

A broadminded historian might say, “I don’t necessarily confine myself to this great character living in any particular age. Being broadminded,” he says, “I don’t believe Caesar lived in 44 BC, I believe Caesar lives now, and that he’s in Texas.” You know what? If you did that, they would be after you with a net, and would examine you as to whether you are a threat to society...because *historical truth is narrow.*

God’s Truth

God’s truth is no less narrow. No broadmindedness will change the truth of the everlasting God. He says in His book, the Bible, that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23) also that “the wages of sin is death” (Roman 5:23). But there’s good news—the Lord Jesus Christ turns toward the sinner, like the physician turns toward the sick. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son [to die for our sins], that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Christ “suffered for sins, the just for the unjust [us!] that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh” (1 Peter 3:18). Then he rose from the grave three days later to prove he had accomplished what he came to do (1 Corinthians 15:4–6)! “Look unto me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth, for *I am God, and there is none other*” (Isaiah 45:22). “There is *none other name* under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The grace and mercy of God are for sinners! Because we are sinful and guilty, Christ made the ultimate sacrifice and died for us! He urges you to “enter in at the narrow gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction” (Matthew 6:13–14). And that is the *only* way God says we will ever be right with him and forgiven of our sins. **God’s truth is narrow!**