



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*

**April 2016
Vol. 15. No. 2**

April, 2016

Dear Reader,

“The power of his resurrection” (Philippians 3:10).

The most remarkable display of divine power that God ever gave was in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. There we learn “what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion” (Ephesians 1:19-23).

This was the power the apostle desired to know in a practical way. He had spoken of it to the Romans and to the Ephesians; he had encouraged Timothy to lay hold of it; but he wanted to know it experimentally in the details of his daily life. What could the enemy do with one who did not fear death, and who lived superior to all his assaults? The more the apostle knew experimentally the working of this divine power in his life, the more he was made superior to every trial and difficulty, and every assault in the conflict. He wanted to bring the truth of Christ’s resurrection to bear upon everything that he faced, and he had much to face. He was about to face Nero, but he was unafraid. His whole concern was to magnify Christ, whether by life or death. What could the power or raging of Nero do to one who knew the power of Christ’s resurrection?

The knowledge of the power of Christ’s resurrection in our souls day by day enables us to be superior to every difficulty, trial, and affliction in these last days. Things are likely to get worse in this world, if the Lord tarry, and the path of the faithful will become more difficult; but we can be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and rise above every difficulty, and meet every artifice of the enemy as knowing the power of Christ’s resurrection.

May the Lord use this issue of Toward the Mark to help you grow and be established as you read it. Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement.

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

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

Emil S. Nashed

Please send your questions and comments to:

Toward The Mark

c/o Wayne Christian Assembly

60 Smith Lane

Wayne, NJ 07470-5354

Attention: Emil S. Nashed

www.towardthemark.org

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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"

SEVEN THINGS OPENED IN THE GOSPEL **ACCORDING TO MATTHEW**

Introduction

The Lord Jesus glorified in heaven—God and Man in one Person—once made the solemn statement that He “opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens” (Revelation 3:8). We could follow throughout the entire Bible this line of thought that God opens and closes, but in this article we will only consider the seven opened things that we find in Matthew’s Gospel.¹ We will conclude with something that was not opened: A door that remained closed.

(1) Treasures Opened for the Lord

“When they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (2:11). This passage refers to the Magi² who were attracted by the renown of God’s King, the Messiah born as King (2:1), and who had come from afar to adore according to the limited knowledge they had (cf. Daniel 9:24–27). In contrast to those “wise men,” the scribes and other Jewish leaders were living nearby and knew exactly what was written in God’s Word concerning the King who would come

¹ Passages in Matthew will be given without specifically referring to this book and are mainly taken from the New King James Version.

² These were oriental wise men who, having discovered by the rising of a remarkable star that the Messiah had just been born, came to Jerusalem to worship Him. The name “magi” was given by the Babylonians (Chaldeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, etc. The prophet Daniel had been made their chief (Daniel 2:48), of course without engaging himself in occult practices.

(Micah 5:2 and other Scriptures), but they had no interest for the King of kings. Isn’t it wonderful to note that the first thing opened in this Gospel was to honor the Lord Jesus? Thus the Magi gave an answer to the Lord’s greatness, as being God’s King, Priest, and Prophet, which was expressed in the gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They acknowledged His royal and divine glory (gold) and presented a portion that was for God alone (the frankincense was entirely for God, Leviticus 2:2; 6:15). The myrrh designated the path of Christ’s sufferings (cf. Mark 15:23; John 19:39), in order to reach the glory. This last point the Lord Himself explained and it is confirmed by many passages of Scripture (cf. Luke 24:26; 1 Peter 1:11).

(2) The Heavens Opened for the Lord

“When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him” (3:16). One could almost write a book on this passage: The heavens are opened for a Man on earth, the very first time in the Bible! The Holy Spirit identifies with this Man—who is at the same time God’s eternal Son—and the Father’s voice was heard saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (3:17). What blessed mysteries are revealed, but also what a perfect Model is placed before the eye of faith: Let us worship Him! After His accomplished work on the cross, His death, burial, and resurrection, the Lord Jesus ascended into the heavens and was received by God and given the place of honor (Hebrews 2:9; 5:10). In other words, the Object for the heavens on earth was now Himself received into the heavens. There He has become the supreme Object for His people on earth, as we see demonstrated in Steven, the first martyr of the Church (Acts 7:56). Christ’s present position is the basis for the free access Christians have. Christ glorified is the reason for the rapture: A heavenly people, now on earth, will be taken away from this earth and brought into heaven (John 14:1–3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 1 Corinthians 15:51–54), where the marriage supper of

the Lamb will take place (Revelation 19:7–10). After those wonderful events, the heavens will be opened in judgment (Revelation 19:11–21); those who rejected God’s offer of grace will not have another chance! The fourth occasion of opened heavens will be during the millennial reign of peace. This was indicated by many prophets, but confirmed by the Lord to Nathanael (John 1:50–51). As the Son of man He will be the Centre of the whole universe and the Link between heaven and earth. Angels will ascend from and descend upon Him, a continuous public display of blessing, a flow of prayer and response into heaven, and a stream of blessing from heaven (Revelation 21:9–22:5). Spiritually and morally this is true for the Church today, and previewed in Jacob’s dream (Genesis 28:12–15).

(3) The Lord Opens His Mouth

“Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5:2–3). The Lord knew that His testimony would be rejected, in spite of the fact that God had honored Him (3:16–17). Thus, He instructs His disciples to show an appropriate attitude before God, seeking to promote His interests among a people that would refuse Him and in a world that would crucify Him. Let us therefore pay attention to the words coming out of the mouth of the true King, who is also our Teacher (11:29). In Matthew 13 the Lord presents eight parables in connection with the kingdom of heaven, as entrusted to man’s hands after the Messiah’s rejection by the leaders. Nevertheless, He continues to work “behind the scenes.” He confirms that His way to present things was in agreement with what the prophet had predicted in the Old Testament: “I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world” (13:35; cf. Isaiah 42:9).

(4) Things Opened: The Lord’s Promise for His Disciples

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks

receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened” (7:7–8). A disciple is not only to listen; he must also act to put the teaching into practice (John 13:17; James 1:22). For this purpose, he must be really exercised, as demonstrated in the necessity to ask, to seek, and to knock (note the progression in intensity). The Lord promises obedient disciples that they can count on the help of the Master, on “an open door” (cf. Revelation 3:8).

(5) The Eyes of the Blind Opened

“Their eyes were opened” (9:30). Presenting Himself to the Jewish people as being the awaited Messiah, Christ accomplished miracles that people knew He only could do. Thus, the Lord gave several public and irrefutable proofs demonstrating that He was the Messiah according to the Scriptures. The healing of these two blind men was such a miracle by which the Messiah was declared to be authentic; the number two accentuates the aspect of a public testimony, often emphasized in Matthew. In a similar case, toward the end of the Lord’s public ministry, again two blind men were healed, after having asked, “Lord, that our eyes may be opened.” Then we read: “So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him” (20:33–34). What a beautiful testimony: on the one hand, to the Lord, who had compassion for these blind men, even after He had been rejected by the people’s leaders! On the other hand, this verse gives a lovely testimony to these blind men who had just been healed: they had only one Object to follow; their eye was “single”³ (see Matthew 6:22 and Luke 11:34). In other words, the quality of an undivided eye/heart is found in God and this feature is to be displayed in Christ’s disciples. Indeed, these blind men, now healed, only had an “eye” for the Lord! This makes me think of the conversion and healing of Saul of

³ The noun derived from the same root is found in: Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 1:12; 8:2; 9:11,13; 11:3; Ephesians 6:5; Colossians 3:22; as adverb (liberally, generously) in James 1:5.

Tarsus (Acts 9:3–20), who then became an effective follower of the Lord (Philippians 3:7–14). What about us? Are we really following the Lord, or is our heart “divided”: a part for this world or for myself and a part for the Lord? Only complete devotedness to the Lord will honor Him and will protect us against evil. What are our priorities?

(6) The Fish’s Mouth Opened

The way the Lord provides help is wonderfully demonstrated in the story of the fish’s mouth that was opened. In Matthew 17:27 we read, “Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you.” In the beginning of Matthew 17 we see the glory of the Lord on the mountain of transfiguration. Thus He gave to the three disciples who were with Him a special assurance and also a foretaste of His forthcoming glory which He was going to reach through sufferings. The disciples could not follow their Master in His expiatory sufferings, but one day they would be identified with Him in His glory! However, during the time of His rejection, the Lord showed special grace towards His disciples, while identifying with them in their needs. He did not yet claim any of His own rights, but He humbled Himself (Philippians 2:5–8), and He is the great Companion disciples have with them, then and now (Matthew. 28:20)! Let us learn to rely on the Lord who is going to provide a testimony for Himself in the time of His rejection.

(7) The Graves Opened—A Testimony to the Value of Christ’s Sacrifice

“The graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised” (27:52). This verse demonstrates the power related to Christ’s work accomplished on the cross. This work is so great and marvelous that in each Gospel it is presented in another way, according to the different character of the Gospels. Matthew demonstrates the greatness of the King,

the Lord Jesus. Having died on the cross, He seemed to have failed, but actually He overcame the power of sin, the power of death and of Satan. Therefore, many graves are miraculously opened, having contained the bodies of a number of saints that are raised, thus demonstrating the victory of the Lord, even at the moment of His death on the cross. The text specifies that these saints, having been reintroduced into this life (but going to die later like in Lazarus’ case who had been raised by the Lord) had to wait for Christ’s resurrection before leaving the tomb. This was ordained by God to thus give honor to the One who was going to introduce an entirely new order of things. For He “is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the pre-eminence” (Colossians 1:18). There were also other proofs of the greatness of Christ and His accomplished work, like the rent veil of the temple showing that God was finished with Judaism as a religious system, as well as the earthquake that split the rocks. The epistle to the Hebrews provides many details about this change. However, in the world to come, God is going to reintroduce Judaism, but then it will be according to His thoughts, as He had given to Moses. This future fulfillment of God’s plans for Israel will be on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice. How great is He, how great is His work!

One Thing That Was Not Opened

One thing was not opened in Matthew, and we find it in the Lord’s last parable in this Gospel. “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you’” (25:11–12). The Lord Jesus speaks of two categories of people submitting themselves to Him. On the one hand, there is a group of virgins who took oil in their vessels; they are characterized by reality, and in spite of obvious shortcomings, also by true devotedness. On the other hand, a group exists marked by absence of real love for the Bridegroom, only having a profession of serving the King, but without life or reality, with no oil in their vessels, just having lamps. Both the “wise” and

the “foolish” virgins fall asleep, so that for a while no obvious difference is seen, but this difference will soon become evident. With the foolish virgins, although they know the Lord, no personal link exists between them and Him, whereas the wise virgins, in spite of their failures, are recognized and honored by Him.

Notice what solemn event occurs: the door was closed, never to be opened again! Dear reader, the door of grace is still open, but the Lord Jesus may come back today and if you have not yet repented it will be forever too late for you. Then you will remain outside, just like the “foolish virgins.” And like the people in Noah’s days, who had enough time to enter into the ark, but who did not want to go in during the seven days the door remained open. But then God closed the door!

Finally, the expression, “Who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens” (Rev. 3:8). We could follow throughout the Bible this line of thought that God opens and closes. Let us pay attention to Him who knows everything, also our works, who opens and closes and who provides strength to those who realize their weakness! The title of this article is suggested by Christ’s message sent to Philadelphia. The Lord Jesus, glorified in heaven, said (and we quote part of His message): “To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, “These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens. I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name” (Revelation 3:7–8).

Alfred E. Bouter

MEAT

"Sanctify them by the truth"

THE SEVEN THINGS MAINTAINED CONTINUALLY IN THE TABERNACLE!

The seven things in the tabernacle that were to be maintained continually, by the priestly family, as typical of things that it is essential to maintain in the House of God today.

1- The burning of the fire on the brazen altar.

(Leviticus 6:13)

The fire shall be ever burning upon the altar; it shall never go out.

The apostle, writing to Jewish believers, in the epistle to the Hebrews says in 12:28–29, “let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.” When we come together, to the Lord’s name, we must ever maintain the holiness and righteousness of God. Every word and every act must be in accord with the One to whose name we are gathered. Thus Paul in writing to Timothy, in view of the departure from the truth that had already come in, says in his first letter, “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God” (3:15).

2- The offering of two lambs every day. (Exodus 29:42)

This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee.

The basis of God dwelling amongst His people, is the death of Christ. In Ephesians 5:2, we read, “Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour.” Those two lambs remind us

of the perfections of God's beloved Son, here as a man, giving Himself sacrificially for the pleasure of God, that He may be glorified in every way. We likewise, when we come together, primarily, must have the pleasure of God before us that as Christ was prepared to offer Himself for God's pleasure, so we must, cost what it may, and seek to maintain what is pleasing to God.

3- The continual burning of the lamps. (Leviticus 24:2)

Command the children of Israel that they bring unto thee pure olive oil beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.

We read in Exodus 25:37, "They shall light the lamps thereof, that they may shine out before it." The light of those lamps was to illuminate, first of all, the candlestick itself. We are not told the size of the lampstand, but that it was made of one piece of pure gold a talent in weight. It speaks of the person, and glory of the Father's beloved Son. The pure gold of His deity, He who eternally is the Son, and dwells in the bosom of the Father. The Holy Spirit ever delights to engage our hearts with the glory of this person, John 16:14 says, "He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." So all our service Godward must be in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the light of who the Lord Jesus is essentially.

4- The setting of the twelve cakes on the table of showbread. (Leviticus 24:8)

Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.

As the loaves were set in place on the pure table every Sabbath, then we can assume that they remained there for seven days. They were placed there according to God's order. They were made of fine flour, as was the meal offering, and frankincense put upon each row and maintained in place by the

inner crown of pure gold, and the light from the lampstand, undoubtedly would shine upon them.

These loaves speak to us of the saints of God set before Him and maintained in Godly order, by the person of Christ, only thus could they have a fragrance of Christ upon them. This Godly order is the subject of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, which he wrote in order to set things right as there were divisions amongst them, because man's will was more important than God's will. The fact that they were there for a whole week shows that we have a responsibility to maintain what is according to God all the time, not just when we come together.

5- The burning of incense on the golden altar. (Exodus 30:8)

And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

In Revelation 8:2 in the JND translation, we read, "And much incense was given to him, that he might give efficacy to the prayers of the saints," thus we can say that the incense arising from the gold altar is typical of prayer. Paul writing to Timothy in his first letter says, "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting" (2:8).

Sadly we live in a day when very often the local prayer meeting is neglected, whereas Paul in his instructions to Timothy in regard to behaviour in the house of God, makes it quite clear that prayer is a vital part of priestly service both Godward and manward, and the neglect of it will result in the weakening of the testimony from the local assembly.

6- The twelve stones upon the breastplate. (Exodus 28:29)

And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth into the holy place, for a memorial before the Lord continually.

These twelve stones were set in the breastplate according to divine order and yet each one had a peculiar glory. They represented Israel as God's people, set in the testimony according to the place that He put them in. The breastplate was one complete whole, it was foursquare, and was upon the heart of the high priest.

In maintaining the truth of the one body of Christ on earth, we have to recognize every saint on earth at any given time as being a member of that one body and where saints gather to the Lord's name in any locality that they are set there, in the testimony, according to God's will and we have a responsibility to maintain locally, where the Lord has placed us individually, that we express in a minute way and perhaps in great weakness, what is true corporately of the whole body of Christ.

7- The golden plate on the mitre. (Exodus 28:38.)

And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.

It may be that the mitre was the only garment of the high priest, that he always wore, and upon his forehead connected to that mitre was the golden plate inscribed with, "Holiness to the Lord." Thus the high priest with the golden plate upon his head presents Christ as the One who maintains everything in regard to priestly service according to the holiness of God.

In our service to God today, whether it be thanksgiving, praise or worship, there is ever the possibility that we do not always act in the power of the Holy Spirit, because we still have the flesh in us. But the Lord Jesus, Our great High priest, takes what we offer, in all our weakness but yet in true affection for Himself, and presents it to God in a way that is perfectly suitable to Him. This is a great encouragement, especially to younger believers who may be hesitant in taking part in the meetings in case he should

make a mistake. The Lord alone knows our hearts and where there is true, affectionate response to Him, then He will accept it into His hands and present it to God in perfect accord to His Holiness.

Jeffrey Brett

Search the Scriptures!

1. Who had a vision of the Ancient of Days seated upon a throne?
2. By what other name was the tax collector Matthew known?
3. What is the name of the angel of the Abyss?

EXERCISE

"Exercise thyself unto piety"

PURPOSE OF HEART !

In the closing days of this dispensation. what is the condition of soul most usually met with in the greater number of Christian assemblies? Is it not almost uniformly laxity and lukewarmness, with very little heart for Christ? Yet what our blessed Lord most craves for, (I write with all reverence) is surely the heart affection of His beloved saints. There may be much scriptural knowledge, combined with great zeal for work; but nothing can take the place of deep heart affection: "My son, give Me thine heart" (Proverbs 23:26).

In these last days the enemy is using his utmost endeavors to draw away the hearts of Christians by earthly things. Where he succeeds, the heart grows cold and careless as in the last of the seven letters to the churches (Revelation 2–3) where the Lord is seen outside, in tender grace knocking and inviting individuals to open the door, that He may come in, and they may sup together.

These lines are written especially for those who may be conscious of such failure and lack of love. Perhaps the Spirit has brought home to you your sad condition, and given you the desire to return to your "first love." You realize your utter weakness, but hardly know which way to turn.

Let us search the Scriptures, and see if we cannot find help. Turn to Ezra 7:10, "For Ezra **had prepared his heart** to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it." Then, again, Daniel 1:8, "But Daniel **purposed in his heart** that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat." There are other similar Scriptures, but these will suffice. Both Ezra and Daniel had

determined in their *hearts* that they would be true to the God of Israel, whatever others might do, and whatever it might cost them. Their *hearts* were set on this one thing, and their God did not pass it by unnoticed.

Now let us turn to Acts 11:22–23, where we read that Barnabas was sent to Antioch, in which town many had believed, and on coming he exhorted them all "that with ***purpose of heart*** they would cleave unto the Lord." This is what we so greatly need, purpose of heart. Christ must occupy the first place in our hearts.

Read what the beloved apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians in chapter 3: "**This one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.**" Christ in glory had appeared to him, and from that moment all earthly objects ceased to have any value for his heart; indeed, he counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. His *heart* had been captured by the Lord of glory.

You may perhaps think or say, "Ah, but no such glorious vision has been given to me"; true indeed, but on the other hand you have learnt by faith to know Him as your Savior. The trouble is that through carelessness of walk you have grieved the Holy Spirit, and in consequence there has been no growth in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Someone once said: "You may have just as much of Christ as you want." I believe this is perfectly true; the great point is, "What is your heart set on?" If you desire to know more of Christ, and to enjoy His fellowship and love, you must cleave to Him with purpose of heart.

The reward offered for following such a pathway is wonderful, past all description: "If a man love Me, he will keep My words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and

make Our abode with him.” Notice that this promise is entirely individual, and thus it is made to you personally.

Many years ago one wrote: “To my mind nothing is more exquisitely beautiful than the thought that God should covet to be the object of the affections of this poor little heart of mine.

He might have called me and left me to die at the eleventh hour, but oh! what grace that He should say, ‘You must choose Me as I have chosen you: you must live to Me as My Son lived.’ It is touching grace. Shall my answer be that I cannot do it?

If God is working in me is it difficult?” Maybe you are much discouraged, having often tried and failed over and over again. Do you know the reason? You have tried to fight in your own strength, and have forgotten that the Lord tells you that “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Even such a veteran as the Apostle Paul needed to be reminded, “My grace is sufficient for thee.”

The Lord grant that these few words may encourage some souls to start afresh, looking unto Jesus, and relying on His strength to enable them to cleave unto Him with purpose of heart.

G. F. Barlee

REST

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

“THRICE I SUFFERED SHIPWRECK”

2 Corinthians 11:25

When the Lord sent Ananias to open the eyes of Saul of Tarsus, whom He had called on the way to Damascus to be His servant, He said to him, “I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake” (Acts 9:16).

In the Acts of the Apostles, and in 2 Corinthians 11, we read of some of the “great things” that Paul suffered for the Name of Jesus, His Lord and Master.

Among these “great things” are the shipwrecks of our title.

Paul had written the second epistle to the Corinthians some years before the shipwreck recorded in Acts 27, so that the apostle was involved in four sea disasters.

The voyage on the way to Rome, and the wrecking of the ship, are given in considerable detail by the Spirit of God, whereas the three former shipwrecks are not even noticed in the Book of the Acts.

We can take for granted that the Lord was as interested in His devoted servant in the trials mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11 as in those on the way to Rome, but in His infinite wisdom He only records what suits His purpose, and what He desires us to know. Genuine interest, and natural curiosity, would like to know more of the details of what the apostle suffered for Christ’s Name, but sufficient has been given to show that not a single moment of our lives is hidden from His all-seeing eye, and that He directs all the circumstances and conditions of our lives for His own glory and our richest blessing.

Paul, having passed through many trials, was rich in experience, and having already been thrice shipwrecked he offered his advice when danger threatened; but his wise counsel was rejected in favor of the experienced men of the world and of the majority.

When the time of disaster drew near, it was evident to all that his wisdom excelled the wisdom of the world; but he had something else to tell his companions in their time of need, he had a message from God, a message of salvation.

How meek and dignified the servant of the Lord was throughout, superior to the circumstances, restful in spirit, and with complete confidence in God and His word.

Every detail of the first three shipwrecks are written in heaven, if they have not been given on the page of inspiration: and every detail of what the saints of God pass through in faithfulness to the Lord Jesus is treasured up by Him who is unwearied in His watchfulness and care for those He loves, and whom He has called to serve Him in this world. When the bride of Christ is seen in heaven, “arrayed in fine linen, clean and white” (Revelation 19:8), we shall know then, if we do not know now, that the Lord has observed, and treasured up for Himself, all that His own have been for His pleasure amidst the trials and difficulties of their earthly sojourn.

Answers to Scripture search!

1. Daniel (Daniel 7:9)
2. Levi (Luke 5:29–32)
3. Abaddon or Apollyon (Revelation 9:11)

CAUGHT ON CAMERA!

An unnoticed camera was rolling one night in a little store. The night clerk was alone behind the counter when a young man came in looking for money or drugs. The clerk refused, and the intruder leaped over the counter, gun in hand, and fired one shot. There were no witnesses, at least, no living witnesses, but the videotape showed the whole sequence of events clearly. The pictures were all too clear, making an impossible task for the defense lawyer! **There was no arguing with the camera!**

Even the small details of everyday life do not escape that continual surveillance. Unmanned tollbooths on the highway have tempted many drivers to pass without paying, only to be surprised a few days later to receive a notice that the license plate was photographed and they are fined. Even your encrypted data can be revealed with today's technology.

We little realize how often our actions are "caught on camera"—how many little cameras are rolling all over the world. Technology has made possible a huge network of surveillance, although it cannot compare with the all-seeing eye of God. Now that is something to think of with wonder and awe. We know that God is omniscient. Do we know what that means? He knows all. All? Yes, truly all. Even the "thoughts and intents" of your most secret heart. "Intents?" Acts only thought about? If God can do that, sinning without His knowledge is an impossible task.

The Lord Jesus Christ, said, "Nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither anything hid, that shall not be known" (Luke 8:17). If even your worst, most sinful thoughts are known to God, what chance have you of entering into His holy heaven where nothing corrupt or defiling can enter? None at all, in your own efforts, your own goodness.

But, there is coming a day the Bible tell us: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works...And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:12,15). What will you do then?

But God, "who is rich in mercy," has made a way for you to escape the final judgment you deserved because of your sin and to save you from spending eternity in the lake of fire. He gave His Son, His only beloved Son, to die for our sins, to take His righteous judgment for you. Isn't that just overwhelming? **God's Word, the Bible, says it so plainly: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). More than that, we are promised that "whosoever believeth in Him [Jesus] shall receive remission of sins. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23).** Come today and admit to God that you are a sinner and receive His forgiveness. There is no way into heaven without it!