



***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,

“Lovest thou Me?” (John 2:15).

The Lord Jesus addressed this question to Peter His disciples. A more important question could not be asked. Over nineteen hundred years have passed away since the words were spoken, but to this very day the inquiry is most searching and useful.

The true Christian is one who is so in his heart and life. It is what he feels himself and in his heart. It is seen by others in his conduct and life. He sees Jesus Christ as the Divine Savior whom his soul needs and commits himself to Him. Christ Himself is the cornerstone of his Christianity. Ask him in what he trusts for the forgiveness of his many sins, and he will tell you he trusts in the death of Christ. Ask him by what pattern he tries to frame his life, and he will tell you that it is the example of Christ.

But beside all this, there is one thing that is eminently peculiar in the true Christian. That thing is love to Christ. Knowledge, faith, hope, reverence, obedience, are all marked features in a true Christian’s character. However, the picture would be very imperfect if his “love” to His Divine Master was omitted. He not only knows trusts and obeys; he goes further than this—he loves.

Hear once more what our Lord Jesus Christ said to the apostle Peter after He rose from the dead. Three times He asked him the question, “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?” (John 21:1–17). The occasion was remarkable. He meant gently to remind his erring disciple of his thrice-repeated fall. **He desired to call forth from him a new confession of faith before publicly restoring him and giving him His commission to feed His own. And what was the question that He asked him? He might have said “Believest thou? Art thou converted? Art thou ready to confess me? Wilt thou obey Me?” He uses none of these expressions. He simply says, “Lovest thou Me?” This is the point He would have us know, that point on which a man’s Christianity hinges. Simple as the question sounded, it was most searching. Plain and easy to be understood by the most unlearned, it tests the reality of an apostle. If a man truly loves Christ, all is right—if not, all is wrong.**

I trust that you will enjoy the great articles in this issue during the summer months. It is our prayer that the Lord would use them for building you up in your most holy faith and help you to be established.

Thank you for your e-mails and notes of encouragement.

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

**Make sure that you visit our new and improved website!**

Yours in our soon-coming Lord,

*Emil S. Nashed*

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# TOWARD THE MARK

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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"*

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP?

**Q: Are musical instruments in Christian worship authorized by the New Testament?** (This question was put in the questions box at the Wayne Young People's conference, but time ran out before it could be answered)

**A:** There is one thing that we can say with certainty when looking at this subject: Although there is much written about musical instruments in the Old Testament, the New Testament is virtually silent about their use.

Do we find any passage where worship is connected with musical instrumentation? Let's take a look. The following is a list of the references in the New Testament where singing as a direct form of worship is mentioned: Mark 14:26; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:29; 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12; James 5:13; Revelation 5:8–9; 14:2; 15:2. The first two references are not occasions in which musical instruments would normally be used in any event. We find that that it is only in the last three references from the Book of Revelation that musical instruments are actually mentioned at all (harps in each case). But the Apocalypse is a highly symbolic book and the harps are very probably figurative and not literal...these three passages from Revelation are not looking at what has to do with present assembly order on earth, but are prophetic in character.

**The remaining six passages are Romans 15:9, 1 Corinthians 14:15, Ephesians 5:19, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 2:12, and James. 5:13; these have more directly to do with the assembly as it is now constituted in the Christian dispensation. A brief look at each of these will be helpful. They will show us that musical instruments were not used in the early Church's worship.**

Romans 15:9. This reference is a quotation from Psalms 18:9 to show prophetically that God would bring salvation to the Gentiles.

1 Corinthians 14:15. This passage is in view of an actual assembly meeting; the fact that there is no mention of instruments here is significant. But even more striking is that there are no musical instruments hinted at in the entire of the First Epistle to the Corinthians! This is especially important because Corinthians is the epistle that gives us New Testament Church order. Surely, if it had been God's will for Christians to use musical instruments in our worship this would be the epistle in which to mention it! Certainly if they had been in use, there would have been some regulations laid down by Paul about their use just as he did with the operation of spiritual gifts. But the reason he is silent is because they were not there in the first place!

Ephesians 5:19. No mention whatever is made of making melody through the means of musical instrumentation but rather making melody from our hearts.

Colossians 3:16. Again, as in Ephesians, the emphasis is on the heart—"with grace in your hearts."

Hebrews 2:12. This is a quotation from Psalms 22:22 by the writer to the Hebrews to show the Lord Jesus leading the worship in the assembly. The Bible says Christ the Leader in the midst of the assembly worship, but today His role has been hijacked by a rock band led by a "worship leader." Are we beginning to get the picture?

James 5:13. This is the final passage but again there is silence with respect to musical instrumentation.

If we consider the huge emphasis put on music in the Church today, the silence of the New Testament on this ought to be a voice to us that somewhere along the line we have departed from God's order in worship. Surely, if it were such an important part of worship, somewhere throughout the range of these twenty-seven books we would be given directions on the use of musical instruments for Christian worship, but there are none!

## **Outside the Camp**

The use of musical instruments and more recently the rise of "worship teams" as an aide to congregational worship is nothing less than turning back to what God had originally established to be only a

“shadow of the good things to come” (Hebrews 10:1). In many circles, the Lord’s Supper has been put in the shade and often is simply added to the end of the regular “service.” However, this feast ought to be central to the expression of Christian worship. Not only is the use of musical instruments drawn from the Old Testament, the whole worship team movement is modeled (perhaps unconsciously) upon the Levitical order of the Jewish system as well. We do not need a caste of people to “lead” the people in worship—we are all priests and are to be led by the Holy Spirit alone. Our responsibility then is to answer the call to “go forth to Him, without the camp” (Hebrews 13:13) in separation from all such developments.

Brian Reynolds

The above article is a condensed extract from a booklet titled “Musical Instruments and the Rise of the New Levites” published by Believer’s Bookshelf Canada and also available through Believer’s bookshelf USA.

## **Search the Scriptures!**

1. What city did Pharaoh burn before giving it to King Solomon?
2. Which prophet had a vision of a basket of summer fruits?
3. Where did Paul baptize 12 men who had received only the baptism of John?

## MEAT

*"Sanctify them by the truth"*

### **THE SPIRIT OF GOD! POWER, YET VEILED**

In the Spirit of God is living energy and activity that produces marvelous results. This is seen magnificently in the first reference to Him in Scripture: "The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was light" (Genesis 1:2-3). Here is great power in sustained movement, for light must travel at a speed of 186,000 miles per second. And this is a picture of the working of the Spirit of God in bringing to repentance and faith one who has before been in the darkness of sin and unbelief. Light dawns upon his soul, with its living, vibrant energy of sustained movement.

**But the Spirit is not seen: It is the light that is seen, for light is both revealed and revealing. In the light everything is manifested as it really is. And natural light is beautifully symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Therefore, in Christ we see God revealed as He really is, and the light of His face fully reveals us also. Such is the first great work of the Spirit of God with our souls, in the marvel of our being brought from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to the living God.**

This corresponds to John 3:8: "The wind blows where it will, and thou hearest its voice, but knowest not whence it comes and where it goes thus is every one that is born of the Spirit." A mighty work has taken place by an unseen power: One is born again by the Spirit of God, who remains the very energy of the new and eternal life implanted in the soul.

**This power is real, but the Spirit of God does not draw attention to His own work within the soul. Rather, His work is to attract souls to the blessed Person and work of the Lord Jesus, as He Himself told His disciples, "He shall glorify Me for He shall receive of Mine, and shall announce it to you" (John 16:14).**

#### **His work in the dispensation of grace**

But as well as the great work of the Spirit in new birth and eternal life (which was taking place before our present dispensation), there is a work now in which He is engaged that was never known before the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). For now the Spirit of God Himself has come to indwell the church of God. The beginning of this is seen in Acts 2; and since the Spirit of God has come, He has remained in every believer individually, and

in the entire church of God collectively. “Do ye not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you, which ye have of God; and ye are not your own?” (1 Corinthians 6:19). This was said even to the Corinthians, who were called “carnal” and “babes in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:1) and needed serious reproof. Each individual believer was indwelt by the Spirit, though he was not manifesting this properly. Also, they were asked, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16). This is not individual, but rather, unitedly the church is the temple of God, and the Spirit dwells in the church.

**This reminder was urged upon the Corinthians, not to make them glory in the fact of their having the Spirit but to stir their exercise of heart in building up the church of God; that is, that we might be acting consistently with the Spirit’s working in the entire body of Christ, or as it is called here, “the temple of God.” The sphere where the glory of God is displayed in the world today. It is good, solid, vital work that the Spirit does, though He Himself is veiled as it were behind the scenes.**

**“Filled with the Spirit:” What does it mean?**

If we are filled with the Holy Spirit,” such concern for the eternal blessing of souls and for the building up of God’s church will deeply affect us. For though the Spirit of God dwells in the church, this does not mean that the church is “filled with the Spirit.” And though all believers have the Spirit of God dwelling within them, none can dare to say that they are always filled with the Spirit. If so, we should not need the exhortation, “be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:18–19). Notice, we are told to be filled with the Spirit, not to claim to be.

To be filled with the Spirit does not mean having more of the Spirit, for He is a living Person, not merely an influence. But it does mean to allow Him full control in every department of our lives, so that Christ Himself is the one precious Object set before our eyes, so delighting our hearts that all else is nothing in comparison.

John the Baptist (Luke 1:15), his mother Elizabeth (Luke 1:41), and his father Zacharias (Luke 1:67) are spoken of as being filled with the Spirit before the day of Pentecost: All of them speaking of Christ. And this same blessed testimony is true too when the expression is used in Acts 2:4. The disciples were with one accord in one place; and when the Spirit of God came in His great power to introduce the new dispensation of the church of God, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began. to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

The object of this was by no means their own personal enjoyment. In fact, those of many nationalities were present, and heard them speak in their own tongues “the wonderful works of God.”



**The disciples were given power to speak their own thoughts in bearing witness to the reality of the death and resurrection of Christ, but in a language they had never learned. They knew what they were saying, for they were witnesses. And they spoke that which was intended for the true, pure blessing of all who heard it. Beware of imitations. Many since then have sought to imitate this great miracle. But these disciples were not seeking any such thing as speaking in tongues. This was the spontaneous, real work of God by His Spirit and the speaking in tongues was a precious sign that the Gospel of Christ was to be available for every nation under heaven, not only for Israel. It signifies that in the church there would now be a precious understanding brought about among believers of all nations, therefore a sign to promote blessed unity.**

If one claims this gift in such a way as to draw attention to himself, this is false. If one speaks in a so-called tongue, not understanding what he is saying, this is a dangerous imitation, for it does not even edify himself, let alone edify others, which is the proper object of all gift. The Spirit of God does not work in a disorderly way: He does not give sensational experiences that tend to exalt men. He draws attention to the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was true at Pentecost, and it is true now. When Stephen's face appeared like that of an angel (because certainly filled with the Spirit of God), he did not speak in another tongue, for it was Jews he addressed; but he spoke the precious, solid truth of God, focusing the attention of his hearers on the blessed Person of the Lord Jesus now at the right hand of God (Acts 6:15–7:56).

Peter, in Acts 4:8, filled with the Holy Spirit, faithfully spoke to the rulers of Israel of Christ crucified and risen (Acts 4:8–12). In the same chapter (v. 31) the disciples were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and spoke the word of God with boldness. Paul (Acts 13:9–11), filled with the Holy Ghost, gave a solemn sentence of judgment to Elymas the Sorcerer for his perverting the right ways of the Lord.

**Of all these occasions where the filling of the Spirit is mentioned, only one of them tells us of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4), and that because it was an occasion of especially outstanding importance, which will never be repeated.**

**But to be filled with the Spirit remains a precious privilege available to every believer, if he will willingly set Christ as the one absorbing Object before his soul. And this necessarily involves the honest self-judgment that does not allow the flesh to take any place of importance. How greatly blessed we shall be if we genuinely allow the Spirit of God to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ in personal and assembly life.**

L.M. Grant

## **Answers to Scripture Search!**

1. Gezer (1 Kings 9:16)
2. Amos (8:1)
3. Ephesus (Acts 13:1–7)

## EXERCISE

*"Exercise thyself unto piety"*

### *THE QUIET TIME!*

**"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).**

#### **I. THE IMPORTANCE OF QUIET TIME**

Each Christian should make it the habit of his life to spend a quiet time with God at the beginning and the conclusion of each day. Before he steps out upon the untrodden path of a new day, he should take time to listen to the voice of His heavenly Father from the Bible and commune with Him by prayer. The same should be true at the end of the day, before he retires for the night.

Through the reading of the Scriptures and prayer, the believer evidences his complete dependence upon God for wisdom, guidance, blessing, and the supply of his temporal needs. From this interview with God, the Christian emerges spiritually strengthened and prepared to meet the problems, temptations, and testings of the pilgrim pathway (Isaiah 40:29–31).

No one can begin the day well, go on well, or end up well who fails to make provision for this "quiet time" with God.

This period must be deliberately reserved and conscientiously kept for God. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with it, for nothing can compensate the Christian for its loss. The Devil, the world, and the flesh will combine in their attempts to crowd it out of the day's program, on the plea that "there is no time"; but time must be made and maintained for it, if one's character and testimony are to count for Christ. Just as Shammah, one of David's mightiest men, gained victory and renown by defending a piece of ground from the attack of the Philistines; so let us defend this "quiet time" from all attempts on the part of the enemy to take it from us (2 Samuel 23:11–12).

The tragedy of thousands of wrecked lives and ruined testimonies that we see around us would never have taken place had these Christians put God first in their lives by honestly observing this "quiet time." Their neglect of this resulted in carelessness of life, slackness in the discharge of their responsibilities, and their inability to resist temptation and sinful desire. Then came the consequent disaster that robbed them of their joy in the Lord and their usefulness in His service.

We are naturally weak and need strength; fearful, and need courage; ignorant, and need wisdom; wayward, and need guidance; sinful, and need restoration. The “quiet time” is where this strength, courage, wisdom, guidance, and restoration is supplied.

Let us, like the prophet Habakkuk, say: “I will stand upon my watch and set me upon the fenced place, and will watch to see what He will say unto me, and watch to see what He will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved” (2:1). May we, too, put a fence around this “quiet time,” and reserve it at all costs, for God.

## **II. THE PREPARATION FOR THE QUIET TIME**

Though we shall speak particularly of the morning quiet time, the same principles will apply to that of the evening.

1. Select the best time for it. This will vary with the circumstances. Be sure to allow time for dressing, for being prompt at the breakfast table, and for leaving in time to be punctual at school or business. Remember that, in selecting this period, you are reserving the most important part of the day for God.

2. Get up early and in time to observe this period. This getting up is not so easy as it sounds, for it calls for considerable determination and self-discipline. It is much easier to lie in bed and contemplate getting up, than to throw off the bedclothes and get up! A devoted Christian was once asked if he made it a matter of prayer about getting up for his quiet time. He replied, “I don’t pray about getting up—I get up!”

Rising on time is largely dependent on getting to bed on time the night before. The Bible put it thus: “It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late” (Psalm 127:2)! Cultivate the proper hours for retiring. The custom of rising at a particular time each morning will soon become habitual and will yield rich return in spiritual blessing to the believer. An alarm clock is useful if there is a tendency to oversleep.

3. Get washed and dressed promptly. This will thoroughly awaken you, so that you will not be half-asleep during the quiet time. This is most important, for one should be his best physically and mentally, lest he rob God and himself of this period by lack of concentration due to drowsiness.

## **III. THE OBSERVANCE OF THE QUIET TIME**

Each Christian must determine for himself the amount of time to devote to this “quiet time.” Let us suppose that he chooses fifteen minutes. It could very well be more, but certainly should not be less than this. We will

therefore take the irreducible minimum of fifteen minutes as the basis of our suggestions as the best use of this time for both morning and evening.

This fifteen-minute period should serve a threefold purpose: first, for the reading of the Scriptures; second, for meditation on what has been read; and third, for worship, praise, and prayer. It would be well to devote five minutes to each of these purposes.

1. The first five minutes should be taken up with the reading of God's Word. The average chapter of the Bible can easily be read within this time. It is best to follow a definite course of reading that will carry you consecutively through the Bible. A good plan would be to take a chapter from the New Testament each morning and a chapter from the Old Testament each evening.

This chapter should be read reverently and deliberately, and not raced through. Remember, it is the divinely inspired Word of God, which is "profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16). It is best to read it audibly but quietly, so as not to disturb anyone else. This will prove to be a great aid in concentration and will prevent the mind from wandering during the reading.

Seeing that by the reading of the Bible God's voice is heard in the soul, it would be good to ask God for spiritual enlightenment as you take the sacred book into your hands. David's prayer is a good one: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (Psalm 119:18). Thus, in simple dependence upon the Holy Spirit's guidance and teaching, the Word of God is carefully read (John 16:13-15).

2. The second five minutes should be spent in meditation, or in thinking about what you have read. This meditation is not easy, but it can be developed by practice. Meditation is to reading what digestion is to eating. Just as digestion turns what we have eaten into blood, muscle and bone, meditation expresses itself in a life lived to the glory of God and enables us to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Surely we shall not deny to God's Word the thoughtful consideration we give to other books.

As an aid to this meditation, here are a few suggestive questions each may well ask himself after he has read the portion from the Bible. The answers to these questions will serve to impress upon our hearts and memories what we have read so that the Scriptures will thus become an indispensable part of our lives:

- a. What persons and places have I read about, and what have I learned about them?

- b. What, in my own words, is the principal subject of this chapter?
- c. What, to my mind, is the best verse? Can I repeat it from memory? (Underline this verse with a pencil.)
- d. What example did I see in this chapter that I should follow? What command or precept did I read that I should obey? Let us never forget that obedience to the known will of God is essential to true discipleship (John 7:17; 8:31; 13:17; Luke 6:46; James 1:22–24).
- e. What warnings were there for me to heed?
- f. What prayer was there for me to echo?
- g. What guidance did I receive for my path today?

The answering of these questions will call for real concentration of thought, but the effort is well worthwhile, for it will make the Word of God a living reality to one's life and result in the formation and development of a sterling Christian character—truly an invaluable possession!

3. The third five minutes should be devoted to worship, praise and prayer. Let us think of them in order.

- a. **Worship.** This is literally “worth-ship,” or the ascription of the worth to the One who is worthy. It is the heart's occupation with God Himself, to the exclusion of all else. It is the overflow of a grateful heart under the sense of divine grace and favor. God desires and seeks the worship of His blood-bought people (John 4:23–24). It is the highest occupation of the child of God in this life and shall be his service for eternity (Revelation 4:11; 5:12). We praise God for His blessings; we pray to God for our needs; but we worship God for all He has revealed Himself to be in His beloved Son. Thus, with reverence, awe, and gratitude, the believer is occupied with God.
- b. **Praise.** God wants a praising and thankful people. “Whoso offereth praise glorifieth God” (Psalms 50:23). We are enjoined to “enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise” (Psalms 100:4). We should praise God for the gift of His Son, who gave Himself for us; for the Holy Spirit, who indwells, teaches, and guides us; for the holy Scriptures, God's full revelation to us; for all the spiritual blessings that are ours in Christ; for the many temporal mercies He has bestowed on us in the way of health, food, and clothing; and for answered prayers.
- c. Every Christian should cultivate the habit of thanksgiving and praise. Surely it is a poor thing to be always asking favors from God and never giving Him a word of praise for all He has done, and is doing and will yet do for those He has saved by His grace (Philippians 4:6–7; Epeshians.5:20; Psalms 69:30–31; 92:1).

- d. Prayer. By prayer, the believer expresses his absolute dependence on God for the supply of all his needs, and, at the same time, his supreme confidence that God will hear and answer his requests, if asked in faith and in accordance with His will (1 John 5:14–15). God commands, inspires, hears, and answers prayer (Hebrews 4:14–16; Luke 18:1; Matthew 6:6–12; Psalms 65:2).
- e. First, there should be prayer for oneself. This involves the frank confessing and forsaking of all known sin, “if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” (Psalms 66:18; compare 1 John 1:9). Make known to you Father in heaven all your needs with the simplicity, directness, and confidence of a child coming to its earthly father. The Lord Jesus said, “Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of” (Matthew 6:32). Spread your problems before Him and seek divine wisdom to solve them (James 1:5–7). Cast your care on Him, for it matters to Him about you (1 Peter 5:7). Remember, nothing is too small to mention to Him, for God delights to hear the simple fervent and believing prayers of His children.
- f. Then, there should be supplication for others. We should not be selfish in our prayers and think only of ourselves, but also remember the needs of others. God wants us to be intercessors on behalf of others (Ephesians 1:15–16; Colossians 1:9, 1 Samuel 12:23). We should pray for those in authority over us, that God will grant them humility of heart and divine wisdom that shall enable them to rule us wisely and well (1 Timothy 2:1–4). We should pray for all who are seeking to preach the gospel, either in the homeland or the foreign field.
- g. Remember, it is still true that “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16). Prayer is a mighty force because it moves the hand of Him who moves the world. Prayer changes things; therefore, pray!
- h. As an aid to memory, many Christians keep a prayer list and record the names of those they desire to remember at the throne of grace.

**Surely the Christian reader will agree that this “quiet time” is an absolute necessity to the child of God, and that fifteen minutes, as a minimum, is not too long to spend in the presence of God, reading and meditating in His Word, and communing with Him by prayer.**

**May it be yours and mine to make and maintain, at all costs, this essential preparation for each day of our Christian life.**

A.P.G

## REST

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

### **HE CAME WHERE HE WAS!**

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was” (Luke 10:33). **These four words, “came where he was,” aptly describe the stoop that the Son of God made when He descended from those heights of glory that were eternally His, alongside of His Father, down to the depths to which sin had brought us.**

The alienation that sin had put into our hearts was seen immediately at His lowly birth: “And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.” Likewise, at the beginning of His public ministry, at Nazareth when He began to preach the gospel to the poor, and they “rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill upon which their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong.” Later in His life, as this alienation became more and more apparent, the words of Psalm 118 were fulfilled: “The stone which the builders refused,” (v. 22), truly, He was cast aside as not fitting into their building and eventually crucified.

**The effect of sin having come into this world was not only seen in our minds, but in our bodies too.** Although He was rejected, yet He continued with the work that His Father had given Him to do. In Mark 6:56, we read, “And whithersoever He entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment: and as many as touched Him were made whole.” As the man in Luke chapter 10 was wounded and half-dead, so were those brought to Him from villages, cities, and country, and the touch of faith was answered by His power. But as the virtue went out of Him, as He healed each one, so He felt in His spirit the ravages that sin had wrought, as we read in Matthew 8:17, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”

**We see also that sin had not only touched our bodies but it had defiled us morally.** In Mark 7:32, we read, “And they bring unto Him

one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him.” After putting His fingers into his ears and putting His spit upon his tongue, He looks up to heaven and He sighed. We understand that this word describes an unutterable inward feeling. This man could not have received anything from God because he was deaf; and he could not respond to God because he could not speak. So the Lord Jesus felt in His spirit the distance that sin had brought in between man and God, and expressed by that sigh the deep feelings of God: “And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou.” (Genesis 3:9).

**But the ultimate effect of sin as to our bodies is death.** The scene at the grave of Lazarus illustrates for us His deep feelings over this calamity as far as God is concerned, as well as the sorrow of those who had lost a loved one. “When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.” (John 11:33–35). Here we have three words expressing our Lord’s deep feelings: He groaned, an acute inward feeling that cannot be expressed in words; He was troubled, literally, agitated; and then, He wept. Inwardly His feelings could not be expressed by words, but His tears could be seen by all, what a comfort to those two sisters!

**Not only did the Lord Jesus feel deeply the rejection of His own people, but in John 13:27 we read of the treachery of one that had consorted with Him for over three years:** “And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.” Verse 30 says, “He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.” So, humanly speaking was set in motion the awful happenings of that dark, dark night!

In chapter 18, verses 4 and 5, we read “Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered Him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I AM (he). And Judas also which betrayed Him, stood with them.” The moral darkness of that night is being made apparent. Judas, who had betrayed Him, stood with them. The light in which he had been privileged to stand, as being one of His disciples, had turned into deep darkness.



What sin had put into the heart of Judas, typical of the nation that was rejecting Him, as well as what our own hearts are capable of, is revealed by the light of His person! But He does not resist, truly, “He was led as a lamb to the slaughter.”

But have we yet reached the depths of ruin that sin has wrought? No, we must follow Him through the hours of the “night in which He was betrayed.” One has so beautifully written;

*Then dawned at last that day of dread,  
When desolate, yet undismayed,  
With wearied frame, and thorn crowned head,  
He now forsaken and betrayed,  
Went up for me to Calvary, and dying there, in grief and shame,  
He saved me, blessed be His name.*

**If we see hatred and treachery in the heart of the Jews, we see cruelty and depravity in the heart of the Gentiles. Psalm 22:14 describes the sufferings of Christ in His spirit, body and soul: “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.” Then as to the Gentiles: “For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me” (vv. 16–17). The two references to the bones of His precious body in these verses tell us of the intense suffering that crucifixion inflicts. It causes awful pain in the joints of the arms, chest, and shoulders and eventually makes breathing impossible.**

**But here we have to pause, because the depth of suffering He endured from the hand of a holy God, because “He was made sin,” is far beyond our ability to comprehend.**

Truly, He came to where sin had brought us, the judgment of a Holy and Righteous God against sin and in bearing that judgment for us, has indeed saved us from that judgment and brought us into the knowledge of sins forgiven and being “reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” Truly, blessed be His name!

Jeffrey Brett

## “FIRE IF YOU DARE!”

“Why are you not going to hell and why is God not going to judge you?” a college student questioned his Christian friend in a mocking voice. His friend remembered a true story his great grandfather had told him, which illustrated the fact that the Christian, a true believer in the Lord Jesus, is safe and secure from hell.

Years ago, said the Christian friend, in one of the Spanish-speaking countries in South America, a British citizen was charged with joining in a local riot. He was condemned to death and was brought out before a squad of soldiers to be shot. Without avail the British and American ambassadors protested against his execution.

Suddenly, just as the officer was about to give the word “Fire!” the British ambassadors rushed to the side of the condemned man, wrapped him in the British flag and cried,

“Fire if you dare!”

The result was that the soldiers put down their arms and the man was delivered over to British protection.

**This is a striking illustration of the sheltering value of the Savior’s blood. The sinner who believes in Jesus is saved from the judgment of God against his sins, being covered with the robe of Christ’s righteousness.**

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1).

**“The sinner who believes in Jesus is not condemned, but instead is redeemed...with the precious blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18–19) and is protected as one of God’s dear children.**

**“I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in Him will I trust” (Psalms 91:2).**

**“But 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).**

**“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31)**