



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,

“The exceeding riches of his grace” Eph.2:7

“The exceeding greatness of his power” Eph. 1: 9

“Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” 2 Tim. 2:1

“Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might” Eph. 6:10

As we enter into another year, and begin afresh the walk and the warfare of Christian life, it is good for us to remind ourselves of the source from whence our strength comes.

Whatever the coming year may bring, our God is sufficient to enable us to meet every circumstance triumphantly. Grace for every kind of need and power for every act of service. **“Exceeding riches” and “exceeding greatness”:** these words inspire confidence to draw upon God’s resources without fear of exhausting them. **“Be strong”:** this word invites us to equip and furnish ourselves to the fullest so that we may stand girded for the work and armed for the warfare of the Lord.

We live in strange and testing times – times that surely reveal the end is near. But the “grace of God, whose name we bear,” is rich and free; enough for all our circumstances, superabundant for every need. “The exceeding riches of His grace” and “the exceeding greatness of His power” are at our disposal. The love of His heart and the strength of His arm are ours; there is enough within our reach to keep us right and to enable us to go on patiently, faithfully, and joyously serving, until our little day has run its course. **With girded loins and burning lamps let us then hold on our course, walking in the light as He is in the light throughout 2003, until He comes to take home.**

I would like to acknowledge those faithful ones who have been a source of help and encouragement to me: the Lord knows them and He will reward them. Also, I want to thank all of you dear readers for your overwhelming response to the magazine. I trust that you will enjoy this issue, and 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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Quotations from Scripture are generally taken either from the King James translation or J.N.Darby translation.

MILK

“The truth shall make you free”

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

“And that from a *child* thou hast known the sacred letters, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus “2 Tim. 3:15

“let no one despise thy *youth* ,but be a model of the believers, in faith ,in purity.”1 Tim. 4:12

“But thou o *man* of God flee these things, and pursue righteousness, piety, faith, love, endurance, meekness of spirit” 1 Tim. 6:11.

In these three scriptures the apostle Paul refers to Timothy as a *child*, a *youth*, and a *man*. While these expressions may refer to natural growth, I think we can look at them as stages in spiritual growth as well. Each one of us has to start as a child, and Paul comments on the privilege that Timothy had of being taught the Holy Scriptures as a child. We know, too, that he had a godly mother and grandmother and they were all characterized by genuine faith. This is essential if we are to grow spiritually in the things of God.

In this second epistle Paul wrote to Timothy (the last that he wrote) he emphasizes the importance of the word of God. In 1:13 he speaks of a “**form of sound words;**” then in 4:2 “**the word,**” v. 3 “**sound doctrine,**” and in v. 4 “**the truth.**” He had said in 3:15, “**The Holy Scriptures,** which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” But he goes on to say in vv. 16 and 17, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

It is only by careful study of the scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, that we can grow up into Christ.

As breathed of God they are able to deal with every condition of our soul, in order that there will be produced in us the features of men of God, making us perfectly equipped to serve God in this world.

Timothy certainly grew spiritually. When Paul departed from Ephesus, where he had labored for three years teaching the whole counsel of God, he warned the elders in Acts 20:29-30, "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." **So he needed someone he could trust to stay there to maintain the truth that he had ministered. He had no hesitation in asking Timothy to do this difficult job. Paul had watched this young man grow and develop those features that would equip him to do this work.** Read how he speaks of him in Philippians 2:20-22, "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel."

Not only was Timothy's faith in God genuine, his care for the saints was as well. He had proved himself worthy of the confidence that Paul had in him. Over against a dark background of the mass of believers turning away and seeking their own things, Timothy was concerned with looking after the things of the Lord. He was still a young man. Some had tried to take advantage of this, despising his youth. But Paul writes, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." **It did not matter that he was still a young man if his manner of life was in keeping with the truth that he was seeking to maintain.** But he needed to continue, and to not neglect the gift that he had or meditation on these things. So Paul says in v. 16, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee."

Let us ask ourselves the question, "Has the Lord confidence in me to maintain, by living out the truth, the doctrines that men of God 150 years ago recovered for the Church." Paul had that confidence in Timothy; may it be true of us as well.

But Timothy did not stop even there - he continued to grow. He has the distinction of being the only person in the New Testament that is called "a man of God."

It appears that Timothy may have become discouraged by the time of the writing of Paul's second letter. He was, perhaps, a timid person: Paul recalls his tears. He may not have had very good health and Paul gives advice about this. Things had begun to go wrong in the Church. Paul was in prison. All Asia had turned away from him. Sound doctrine was not acceptable to many and some, who once were faithful (like Demas), had gone away. Surely this was enough to discourage a man like Timothy? But no, Paul stirs him up to go on, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." So this man of God is charged, "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust," and again, "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

Many of us today have inherited a great wealth of truth handed down to us by godly men who are now with the Lord. The question I would ask myself, as well as all of us, is, "Have we grown spiritually so that we can maintain in our day what these men of God did in theirs?"

J. Brett

Meat

“Sanctify them by the truth”

HADES, SHEOL, HELL, AND PARADISE

The afterlife ! It is always a big question in the mind of many and a very interesting subject to study. Let us see what the Word of God would teach us about it.

Before we begin, let us establish one very important thing from the Word of God: **the immortality of man’s spirit.**

As humans we know that man is composed of body, soul, and spirit. But where do we go in the Word of God to prove that? In Genesis 2:7, we have body, soul, and spirit mentioned in the third part of that verse. The Lord God **formed** man; that is, the formation of the body. **The word “formation” in Hebrew is used for both the potter and the potter’s vessel.** In Jeremiah. 18, Jeremiah was told to go down to the house of the potter and see him making a vessel out of clay.

So we discover the word that is used for “form” in the Old Testament is also the word used for “potters.” Just as the potter takes the clay and his fingers shape and mold it into the vessel he had in mind, so the Lord God, the creator potter, did when He formed the **body** of man from the dust of the ground. There also in the same verse we find that which speaks of the **spirit**, “He breathed in his nostrils the breath of live.” And man became a “living **soul**.” So we can see how man’s body, soul, and spirit were created. There are other verses that show us that fact: see Isaiah 42:5, Job 32:8, and Job 33:4.

There was an occasion in the life of the Lord Jesus when the Sadducees came to test Him about the question of resurrection. He replied to them, “You do err because ye know neither the Scripture nor the power of God. Have ye not read...” Then the Lord Jesus quoted from Ex. 3 God’s words to Moses, “**I am** the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” **Although these three patriarchs were long dead, God did not say, “I was** the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

If we turn to 1 Thessalonians. 5:23, “Now the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly: and your whole **spirit, and soul, and body** be preserved blameless at the coming of our lord Jesus Christ.” **we can establish from the New Testament also that man is body, soul and spirit.**

It is also wonderful to see these three things are true of the eternal Son of God who became the perfect man, the Lord Jesus. As for His body, we read that Joseph of Aramathea and Nicodemus asked for the body of the Lord Jesus to bury Him. (Jn. 19:38-42). In Acts 2 and Ps. 16 it is said of the Lord, “thou shalt not leave my soul in Hades nor would thou permit thy Holy One to see corruption.” Concerning the spirit of our Lord, we read that He said, “Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit.”

We can gather from this that when death comes in, soul and spirit are separated from the body. The scripture’s definition of death in James. 5 is that the body without the spirit is dead.

Sheol? Hades?

If we compare Ps. 16, written in Hebrew, with Acts 2, written in Greek, we find the same word used in both. In Peter’s address in Acts 2, the word “hades” (translated as “hell”) quotes the word “sheol” from Ps. 16. Those two words are exactly the same and mean the same thing. Sometimes the word sheol is incorrectly translated as “the grave” in the King James Version, rather than “hell” or “hades.”

The first time this word is mentioned in Scripture is in Gen.esis 37. Jacob said, “I will go down to Sheol.”

You will be interested to learn that Sheol is mentioned in the Old Testament 65 times.

In the New Testament it is only mentioned 10 times and those 10 times are of interest. Four of them are in the gospels, spoken by the Lord Jesus Himself. Two are mentioned in the book of Acts 2, and the remaining four are found in the book of Revelation. Not once is Hades mentioned in the New Testament epistles. Do you wonder why?

Why is Hades mentioned so many times in the O.T.? Why is it mentioned from the lips of the Lord Jesus before the church was established, but not once in the epistles? Why does it appear again in the book of Revelation where we find the last mention of Hades in chapter 20 (when death and Hades give up their dead).

Let us now try to answer some of these questions.

What is Hades? Who is in Hades?

I believe that Hades or Sheol was, to the Old Testament people, the unseen, unknown world; the place for the departed souls of those who died, whether good or evil. Or, as Mr. Darby describes it, “a very vague expression used in general to designate the temporary state of departed spirits the unseen or invisible world of spirits.”

The Lord Jesus Himself gives us more light as to the kind of place Hades is. **He reveals to us that Hades is divided into two sections (Luke 16:19-31): a place of torment (hell) for unbelievers of every dispensation, and a place of rest and comfort (Abraham’s bosom) for the believers of the Old Testament. The two sections are separated by a great and fixed gulf; no one from one section could move to the other.**

Why do we not read of Hades in the N.T. epistles?

I believe the Lord Jesus Himself revealed to us that the blessed part of Hades, the place of rest and comfort or Abraham’s bosom, is now called, as a result of His spirit going there after His death, Paradise (garden of delight)!

There are only **three occasions** when the word Paradise is used in the New Testament. The first is in Luke 23:43 when the Lord said to the thief, “today thou shalt be with me in paradise”. The next reference to paradise is in 2 Corinthians 12 where Paul speaks of being taken to paradise. The third reference, in Revelation 2, is the promise to the overcomers found in the letter to the assembly at Ephesus.

From Psalms 16, Acts 2, and Luke 23 we can conclude that the blessed side of Hades, what the Jews called Abraham’s bosom, became a paradise when the Lord Jesus entered it for the three days that His blessed body was in the grave.

So what will take place when the Lord Jesus will come for His saints (the rapture).

Let’s look at 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18 where we read of those that are alive and remain. No matter when the Lord returns for His own, there will be a company of believers who are alive and remain. Note that the apostle Paul put himself with them, since he expected the Lord to come in his lifetime. If this was true in his

day, how much nearer is the fulfillment of this truth after over 2,000 years!

Next we read of those who are asleep. **Note that we never read (after the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus) that a Christian died. Christians do not die - they fall asleep. Death has lost its power because the Lord defeated it, “and death by dying slew.”** The Lord Himself (see John 14) shall come with a shout.

Now let’s look closely to this threefold shout:

A shout, the voice of an archangel, and the trump of God. What kind of shout is this?

It is an authoritative shout because it comes from Him; just as in John 11 the Lord with authority called, “Lazarus, come forth.” It is with that same power and authority He will shout at His return.

I wonder what He will say ?

It is an authoritative shout! It is an awakening shout and it is an assembling shout, and there will be a response from the spirit of the sleeping saints **in paradise**. They will come down to their bodies which will be changed, and we who are still alive will also be changed and together we will be caught up in the air with Him.

What about the voice of the archangel?

Perhaps it will raise the Jewish saints of the Old Testament. I believe so because of the close connection Michael the archangel has with the Jewish people. When Satan disputed over the body of Moses, it was Michael that defended his body. In Dan. 10 we read, “Michael, your prince” in relation to Israel, and in ch. 12, “at that time Michael, that great prince which stands for the children of thy people (the children of Israel).”

If then, the shout is for the church and the voice of the archangel for Israel, perhaps the trump of God will raise every other believer lying in the grave that is not part of the children of Israel all the way back to Abel.

“We will be caught up together ... to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

E. S. N

Exercise

“Exercise thyself unto piety”

DISCIPLESHIP

Luke 14:25-35

The subject of discipleship is not very frequently brought before us; if we neglect it, we lose a great deal that is most helpful to us in our Christian life and service. Let us consider it now, with the hope of benefiting by a brief study of things we ought to know if we are to be the Lord's intelligent and devoted disciples.

When the Lord first called His disciples, He said to them all He had to say in two words: “follow me.” The disciples, then, were his followers. In this way they learned their lessons. They saw Him, heard Him, and obeyed Him. The teaching they received had practical character. They did what He told them to do in simplicity of heart and with a ready mind. In His service they were happy, for His commandments were not grievous, nor was His yoke heavy.

In the scripture cited above, we see that at that time, “there went a great multitude with Him.” It could not be said that the Lord was a popular teacher, or that He ever aimed at attracting the populace, as such, to Himself. We read of Him sending the multitudes away (after He had ministered to their bodily needs) because in no sense were the multitudes his disciples.

They sought Him that He might heal them of their diseases, or give them food to satisfy their hunger, but beyond these creature necessities they do not seem to have had any particular desire for Him. The Lord knew this, and said to them, “ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled” (Jn. 6:26).

However, on this occasion the multitudes went with Him, and this gave the Lord the opportunity to give them the conditions of discipleship, saying, “if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, He cannot be my disciple.” This hating of one's own family, of one's own life, and bearing of one's cross were the essentials of discipleship. There must be a complete break with the old life.

If we allow natural feelings and reason to sway us as we consider these words, we shall greatly err. The spirit of God alone can teach us what they mean, and to His teaching we submit. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit” (Jn. 3:6). The reasoning and feeling of the flesh are fleshly, and the teaching of the spirit is spiritual.

Peter made a great mistake when he rebuked the Lord; He had told His disciples that He must suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed; though in three days He would rise again. But the Lord severely rebuked Peter, seeing Satan behind his words, for he savored not the things of God, but the things of men (Mk. 8:31-34).

Having said this to Peter, He called the people and His disciples to Him, and said, “whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”

Peter was governed by the things that are of men - a fatal error! But how easily it is done. We only need to give rein to our flesh and we run into error immediately. On the other hand, we have the flesh ruled out altogether when we bear our cross. The cross carries the sentence of death on the flesh. Only one thing ends it – death. The cross is the power to affect it; how important, then, that we should have the cross continually upon us.

Then we need to learn the lesson that the Lord taught in the two parables: the building of the tower, and the king going to war confronted by another king with twice as many men. In both cases the call is to count the cost. Not to count the cost is folly, yet there are many who start forth as Christians without considering the responsibilities to be faced. It behooves us to quietly and carefully reckon not simply how to begin, but also how to carry on and ultimately reach an honorable conclusion. If we do count the cost, we shall quickly realize that no power for these things is found in our flesh and that we may find all our sufficiency and power in the Spirit of God. He it is who builds up what is of God, and gives grace and strength for the conflict that is involved.

Of all this, the apostle Paul is a good example. He counted the cost and suffered the loss of all things, as he tells us in Phil. 3. He did his work well, ending it in honour and glory. He could say, “I have finished my course, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim. 4:7). What now remained for him was the crown. The cross when born

faithfully secures the crown. And this is what the Lord would have us emulate, an honorable ending to the path of faith; what Peter calls an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom.

Then again, if one king were to go to war with another, he would surely count the cost, and face the facts governing the conflict. True discipleship involves conflict, and we have no sufficiency for this save in the power of the Spirit of God. But if it were also asked, "What then has the disciple of the Lord Jesus to give?" In one word, His answer is, all. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

When the Lord Jesus was on earth, many would have liked to follow Him as disciples. One was rich, but when told to sell all that he had, and follow Christ, taking up his cross, he wanted to retain his riches. Another said that he would follow the Lord wherever He went, but when the Lord told him that He had not where to lay His head, and that in consequence he would have to suffer great privations, he turned aside and abandoned the thought of becoming a disciple.

The fact of the matter is that if we are truly disciples of the Lord Jesus, we cannot allow anything to come between us and Him, anything which would displace the supreme place which He is to have in our hearts.

Has the Lord called us to follow Him? Then let us answer to His call in a worthy way, by forsaking all else; that He may have the supreme place in our hearts; and that we may follow, and be with Him. He must be enthroned in our hearts, and there must be no rival there. Whether it be father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, friends, or even our own life, all must be left to acknowledge his supremacy and follow Him.

We should not think that those earthly relationships whom we leave in order to follow the Lord, are forever lost to us. No, we get them in a better way. Not simply now, as of old flesh, but rather as in the Lord. To have them in the flesh is to have them for the brief span of our earthly lives. When we hold them in the Lord, we have them forever; not only in this life but also in that which is to come. Set free from earthly entanglements, we truly became disciples of the Lord Jesus.

J. Houston

REST

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

GOD'S BEST

CHOOSING A MARRIAGE PARTNER

Part 1

In these articles we would like to show to all who are unmarried that there is a better way than the world would teach to find a marriage partner. "God's way" is the way of true blessing

INTRODUCTION

Christian marriage, with families living in the enjoyment of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus and living in accordance with the pattern set out in the Scriptures, is a wonderful blessing, and a pillar in the gatherings of the Christian Church.

As I pen these words of guidance in choosing a partner for life, I do so in the conscious knowledge that marriage is a gift from God; a blessing that is characterised by the giver; and one for which we can continually thank Him. I pray that with the help of God's Holy Spirit, and under the Lordship of my Saviour, I may be kept from failure in this area in which I am seeking to help others.

I am stirred to write as I see the sad effects in young people's lives of going their own way in their relationship with the opposite sex. The question of choosing a partner affects our whole spiritual outlook; how many promising lives have been ruined by a wrong choice! We all have to own our weakness and how much the old nature has to be kept in the place of death; but we can also be thankful that the grace of God is available for our every need.

The guidelines which I seek to give, you will realise, are completely contrary to those promoted by the world around; indeed, not even respected by some Christians either. In reading on, I would ask that you do not view things from the world's perspective, but prayerfully consider these things before the word of God. Young people, you probably think you know better (I did), but allow the Holy Spirit to open your mind to the teaching from

God's word, and the reward God gives for obedience, faithfulness and patience, will be more than you could ever imagine.

Older believers, parents, and those who work with young people, I believe we owe it to the generation following to be clear and uncompromising in our advice and principles in matters of this kind. What I am pleading for is a united stand against the levity with which relationships with the opposite sex are often treated with gossip and joking. Our young people's spiritual welfare is at stake and we look to see the joining of Christian young people in marriage, as guided by our Lord, with the resultant joy and blessing as they serve Him together.

If anyone reading these pages has not yet yielded to Christ and accepted Him as Lord and Saviour this must be the first step before anything else. These words are written for those who love the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord and desire to live their lives for His pleasure.

GOD'S PATTERN FOR MARRIAGE

"Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave to his wife and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24).

All the way through the Scriptures, beginning in Gen. 2, we see that in marriage a man and woman leave their parents and are joined together by God to set up a distinct family unit.

This is a picture of the marriage of Christ and His church (His bride) which He loved and which He gave Himself for. In speaking of marriage in Eph. 5: 32, Paul says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." The marvel of this great story of love; of the Love of Christ who gave all that He had that He might win that which He valued so highly. A marriage that will last for eternity, a picture of what we can experience now.

Our marriages should be full of this love of Christ; giving them a holiness and a powerful testimony in the world, which thing Satan hates. He hates all that is precious to Christ!

Marriage should provide a secure loving environment in which to raise children. We see the problem in society where children are raised without this security, and the instability it brings to children when this is broken.

In our verse, "a man" would indicate a mature person who is able to take the positive decision to "leave" his parents, and the responsibility that goes with that decision.

"Cleave" would indicate a bond of affection, which is enduring; literally to glue or cement; a permanent relationship of love.

Being "one flesh" would indicate oneness of activity and purpose and also the physical relationship.

Marriage is the God-given relationship for the display of our natural affections and desires.

Marriage is until the Lord shall come or death breaks the bond. Mat. 19:6 states, "What God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

In marriage, too, an individual loses his own identity and both become a new person: "And they twain shall be one flesh: so that they are no more twain but one flesh" (Mat. 10:8). If we take Christ as our pattern ("He loved us and gave Himself for us" Eph. 5:25), we should give our love to our partner, wanting only their love in return; and as this is displayed, love will grow.

The husband has a rôle of responsibility as head, and the wife a subject position. This is God's order to which we must be prepared to submit if we wish His blessing. "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husband, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife" (Eph. 5:22-23).

If you are considering marriage, are you prepared to share everything with your partner as one person: yourself, your time, your money, your interests, your friends so that all you do will be only that which you are both happily agreed upon before the Lord? "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of the Lord" (Eph. 5:21).

Brian Warnes

In the Beginning

"Thine are the heavens, the earth also is thine; the world and its fullness, thou hast founded them"

TELLING A GEOLOGICAL TALE

The Grand Canyon

Grand Canyon strata show geologic time is imaginary:

Visitors to the Grand Canyon hear the usual geological interpretation involving millions of years. We are told that the horizontal formation at bottom, the Tapeats sandstone, was deposited 550 million years ago, and that the Kaibab limestone that forms the rim is 25 millions years old. It is difficult to imagine the immense time involved in this interpretation.

Interestingly, the Grand Canyon strata extend over 400 kilometers (250 miles) into the eastern part of Arizona. There, they are at least 1,600 meters (one mile) lower in elevation. Supposedly, the uplift of the Grand Canyon area occurred about 70 million years ago – hundreds of millions of years after the sediments were deposited. One would expect that hundreds of millions of years would have been plenty of time for the sediment cement into hard rock. Yet the evidence indicates that the sediments were soft and unconsolidated when bent. Instead of fracturing like the basement did, the entire layer thinned as it bent.

The sand grains show no evidence that the material was brittle and rock-hard, because none of the grains are elongated. Neither has the mineral cementing the grains been broken and recrystallized.

Instead, the evidence points to the whole 1,200 meter (4,000 feet) thickness of strata being still "plastic" when it was uplifted. In other words, the millions of years of geologic time are imaginary. This "plastic" deformation of Grand Canyon strata dramatically demonstrates the reality of the catastrophic global flood of Noah's day.

Australia's Great Barrier Reef

A coral reef is a mass of limestone created as the polyps build their skeletons. How long it takes these reefs to form is a matter of conjecture.

It is commonly believed the existence of thick coral reefs proves the earth must be millions of years old, based on the assumption that coral growth was slow.

However, the discovery in 1992 of a substantial wad of coral growing firmly attached to modern shoe (less than four years old at the time) in the waters of the Philippines is just one indicator among many that this is not the case.

Marine biologists have discovered that coral contains growth rings, like those of tree. A study by the Australian Institute of Marine Science has found a connection between coral growth rates and seasonal freshwater run-off or floods from nearby land.

From strongly correlated historical records of river run-off and flooding, the researchers determined that the coral colony in question had taken only 118 years to grow 1.8 meters (6 feet).

This gave them new method for determining the age of all reefs that make up Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Based on this methodology, the outer barrier reefs (those furthest from the Australian coast and in the deepest water), which are about 55 meters (180 ft) thick, would be less than 3,700 years old – not millions of years old as has been believed.

Creation Magazine

Life style

WELL –PLEASING TO HIM

“Wherefore, we labor that whether present or absent, we may be well –pleasing to Him” 2 Corinthians 5:9

To be well-pleasing to any person, you must know him. So it is with your Lord. You cannot know Him intimately and well if you do not spend much time with Him. You must live unto Him and not unto yourself. If He died for you that you might live, the life you live should be unto and for Him.

I am not talking now so much of your service, though He does appreciate your service. It pleases the Lord when a young brother stands up, and out of a full heart tells what a dear Savior he has found, and when a young sister gathers a few children about her to tell them of Him. But this must flow from acquaintance with Him if it is to have its full value in His eyes.

When He chose His apostles, it was not that He might send them forth to preach, first of all, but that they might be with Him; the preaching followed that. We are well-pleasing to Him when we desire His company above all else, when His love is better to us than wine. John was well-pleasing to the Lord when he put his head upon His bosom. Nor was he an old grey-haired brother when he did that. He was the youngest of the disciples, and as far as we can make out, not more than 20 at the time. He found his solace in a time of trouble on that breast in which the tenderest heart in the universe beats, and when the great test came and all the older brethren fled, this youth of 20 with a few women stood by the cross of Jesus. And his Lord was able to entrust to him His mother, a most precious legacy.

Put your head on His bosom and as you do, you will live unto Him; you will be His friend and He will be able to trust you, and when the test comes, you will witness and your service will be well-pleasing to Him.

J.T. Mawson

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Q: I understand that the Passover lamb speaks of the death of Christ, but what do the bitter herbs speak of? Can you explain?

Your brother,

P. B.

A: My dear brother,

The answer to your question is of profound importance for each and every Christian to appreciate.

The bitter herbs speak of self-judgment brought into our souls through grace as a result of feeding on Christ as to His death, and as to the judgment He endured from the hand of God. Meditating on this will cause us to feel and regard sin and self the way God regards them. With the flesh roasted with fire there was the need to eat both unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The unleavened bread reminds us that we are to be apart from the corruption and inflation of the flesh, to abhor sin and to sin not (see 1 Jn. 2:1).

In the death of Christ man after the flesh has been judged and I need to have the same assessment as God and judge self practically (see Rom. 8:18).

In conclusion, bitterness was an act of self judgment (Num. 5:17-25, Rev. 10:9-10)

The myrrh that was offered to the Lord Jesus is derived from the same word, bitter, which speaks of the suffering love of Christ as He endured God's holy judgment.

J.A.

HOPE

And we shall see thy face,
And hear thy heavenly voice,
Well known to us in present grace!
Well May our hearts rejoice.

With thee in garments white,
Lord Jesus we shall walk,
And spotless in that heavenly light,
Of all thy sufferings talk.

Close to thy trusted side,
In fellowship divine;
No cloud, no distance, e'er shall hide,
Glories that then shall shine.

Fruit of thy bound-less love,
That gave thy-self for us;
Forever we shall with thee prove,
That thou still love'st us thus.

And we love thee, blest Lord,
E'en now, Though feeble here,
Thy sorrow and thy cross record,
What makes us know thee near.

We wait to see thee, Lord,
Yet now within our hearts,
Thou dwell'st in love that doth afford
The joy that love imparts.

Yet still we wait for thee,
To see thee as thou art;
Be with thee, like thee, Lord and free
To love with all our heart.

J.N.DARBY

A WORD TO THE SCOFFER

In 1778, the French philosopher Voltaire said that with one hand he would break off the edifice of Christianity, whereas the hands of the twelve apostles had been necessary to build it up. He prophesied that within a short period of time the bible would no longer be read. With this end in view he wrote a great number of blasphemous articles which were then printed in his own printing shop.

Voltaire died with the words; "I am now being cast into hell."

The great God so ordered that later Bibles were produced in Voltaire's own print shop.

If all the books that have been written against the Bible were stacked on top of each other, there would be a pile higher than the Eiffel tower. Then place Bible beside them! It is the conqueror and outlives all its enemies. No result of science, whether archeology, physics or geology, contradicts the Bible. Could it be otherwise? Would the one who formed the whole universe and all knowledge contradict him?

The Bible is complete. Pure gold is not gilded and rubies are not painted. So there is nothing that can improve the bible - you do not need to light a lamp to see the sun.

Neither does the sun need to prove that it is the sun; it is self-evident. So it is with the bible. It bears the seal of God.

The Bible urgently exhorts you to make your encounter with the lord Jesus Christ here and now. If not, you must come face to face with Him at the judgment, where you will no longer find grace, for, "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27)

Decided in time! There is no way out of this meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ as your judge if you do not accept him now as your Savior.