

A Divine Romance

By Johnny Ramsey

SURELY no verse in the Old Testament has the quaint beauty of Psalm 85:10 which reads: "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other." This divine romance makes sweethearts out of vibrant combinations. Such arrangements should last a lifetime and should never be divorced from each other! What a combination mercy and truth make. Just contemplate what righteousness and peace can accomplish together.

Micah 6:8 tells us that godly people love mercy. In Matthew 5 our Lord spoke of happiness for the merciful. Then Christ related in Matthew 18 how sad the lack of mercy made the unfor-giving servant. In Titus 3 we are taught that one of the grandest contributions to our redemption is the merciful nature of God in not giving us what we deserve, but rather extending to us His grace whereby we might be saved! But truth must be blended with mercy or justice would be a farce. In Hosea 11:8 Jehovah, with broken heart, admits that giving up Israel to captivity deeply saddened the halls of heaven. In spite of God's mercy and goodness, truth demands that Israel pay for their sins. As Nahum 1:3 tells us, so we must believe: "God will in no wise clear the guilty."

Again and again the Almighty will appeal to us to accept His will but if we stubbornly refuse, Judges 2:11-19 clearly lets us know that the justice of God will be served. To-

day even in the church, we have those who forget that truth goes with mercy. "Cheap grace" is one of the Devil's greatest arguments but it will not change the truth about salvation. Some people seem to think that the Creator is so merciful that even the ungodly and disobedient will be saved, but our Father is also so truthful that only those who obey Him will be redeemed (Heb. 5:9; Lk. 6:46).

Another heavenly tandem involves righteousness and peace. In Isaiah 57:21 we see clear evidence that "there is no peace...to the wicked." Only the righteous have "peace passing understanding" (Phil. 4:7). The lyrics of one of our hymns reads: "peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin: the blood of Jesus whispers peace within."

The hymn writer was in tune with many passages of Scripture when he wrote these vibrant words. Seeking first the kingdom and emphasizing proper treasures will bring serenity in the midst of an embattled world (Matt. 6:21; Phil. 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:1-2). As Psalm 92:12 tells us: "the righteous shall flourish like a palm tree."

If our lives lack peace, contentment and joy, we must confess that without the Lord we can do nothing (Jn. 15:5). Material prosperity cannot buy the best things in this life or treasures in the world to come. No message shines more clearly than Paul's exhortation to Timothy: "charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy" (1 Tim. 6:17).

Of course, Jesus Christ embodied all four of these attributes – mercy, truth, righteousness and peace – in an absolute perfect life. Let us follow in the matchless footsteps of Jesus to the best of our ability as we press on to the heavenly goal!

Heartland Herald

1899 Saint Joseph St.
Dubuque, Iowa 52003

Heartland Herald

Practicing 1st Century Christianity In the 21st Century

January 10, 2010
Volume 4 No. 27

Website—<http://www.dbqheartlandcoc.org>
Email: the_bible_says@dbqheartlandcoc.org

Heartland church of Christ

3430 Dodge St., Suite 1
Dubuque, Iowa 52003
(563) 588-1974

Evangelist

Michael Demory

Ministers

All members of the church

Schedule of Services

Sunday—9:30am
Wednesday—7:00pm

Evangelistic Efforts

Dubuque Advertiser &
TV Program

"The Bible Says"

Public Access
Cable Channel 16
Mon. & Thurs. @ 8:30pm
Tues. @ 2:30pm
Fri. @ 9:00am

Steps to Salvation

1. Hear the Word (Rom. 10:17)
2. Believe (Heb. 11:1,6)
3. Repent (Lk. 13:3)
4. Confess (Matt. 10:32-33)
5. Baptism (1 Pet. 3:21)
6. Remain Faithful (1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Pet. 3:14)

Is It a Disease?

By Mike Demory

THE wisdom of the world has for centuries tried its best to circumvent the wisdom of God, and for the most part has succeeded in capturing the hearts of the majority. Psychology has done nothing to help mankind understand life's problems. Built upon the tenets of humanism (shaping ones life in accordance with human, not divine values), this "science" defines all of life's problems as "disease" related. You name it, from alcoholism, to obesity, it's not your fault, you can't help it, it's a disease! After years of over indulgence, a 1035lb. man was removed from his home by his local fire department, winched into an ambulance and taken to a hospital to begin the arduous process of losing the weight. The man told the firemen that he just could not help himself, the "disease" was killing him. Since the beginning, men have put the blame for their problems on anything but themselves (Genesis 3:12).

Webster's defines disease as an "unhealthy condition" and in a spiritual sense humanity does suffer from a "disease"—it's called "sin." Despite man's attempts at taking credit for developing right and wrong, the only way that we could possibly know there is a standard of good or evil is because God, who is perfect in ALL His ways, revealed it to us (Deut. 32:4; Ps. 145:17). Because God is righteous, true, just, good, and merciful, it is He alone who established how we ought to live (Prov. 16:2, 7; Jer. 17:10; Rom. 10:3; Eph. 4:21-24). Many today are caught up in the sins of homosexuality, alcohol, drugs,

pornography, abuse, sexual addictions and gluttony; but unlike the world who downplays them to mere diseases that no one can prevent; God says differently. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are (these): fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, parties, envyings, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of which I forewarn you, even as I did forewarn you, that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal 5:19-21 ASV). Notice that the drinking of alcohol is a "practice" (habit) as are fornication, lasciviousness and the like—NOT diseases. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law" (Gal 5:22-23ASV— emphasis mine).

Peter reminds us; "Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in (your) virtue knowledge; and in (your) knowledge self-control; and in (your) self-control patience; and in (your) patience godliness; and in (your) godliness brotherly kindness; and in (your) brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, they make you to be not idle nor unfruitful unto the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-8ASV— emphasis mine). Society has accepted the standard that what is loving and kind is to allow, to tolerate and even empower the sin of others, rather than helping them out of it. The gluttonous man did not come to weigh 1035lbs all by himself, his family **empowered** him by purchasing the food for him, rather than refusing

and getting him immediate help. Alcoholics, drug and pornography addicts are also empowered by friends, and family, because they are afraid to endanger their relationship and therefore overlook or ignore the sin.

Unlike what most people think, silence is not golden. Both we and the sinner will answer for our deeds in that final day. For God has warned; "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die, and thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way; that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he turn not from his way; he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezek 33:8-9ASV). The world would have us believe that like recovering from heart surgery, we can also "recover" from alcoholism, homosexuality, etc., because it's in our genes, it is a family tradition. Recover? Yes. Not because it is a disease, but because one is seeking God's will for their lives and turning away from a sinful lifestyle.

It may not be popular to call homosexuality, sexual addiction, shacking up, alcoholism, gluttony, and a multitude of other issues "SINFUL ACTS," but that is exactly what they are. Is it a disease? No, they are choices made by individuals who seek the wisdom of the world, rather than the wisdom of God. Sin can be wiped out by an open and honest heart seeking the power of the gospel.



Standing Among You

By W.A. Martin

WHEN the people asked John why he baptized since he denied being the Christ, John answered, "there standeth one among you, whom ye know not. He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me" (John 1:26-27).

There is no doubt in the minds of Bible students that Christ has been here always. He was with God in the beginning. His earthly existence places no limit on His presence. He was with God when God said, "Let us make man in our image" (Gen. 1:26). Neither is there any doubt that Christ is present now. A physical body was not necessary to His being here before He was born of the flesh, and a physical body is not necessary to His being here now. When Jesus said, "I am with you even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20), and "where two or more are gathered in My name there am I in their midst" (Matt. 18:20), He was announcing His intention to abide with His people until the end. Hence Jesus is here. He stands among us. He walks among the golden candlesticks.

Jesus is here to encourage us. What can give us more strength than the realization that the Son of God is our guest? He who has always influenced His Father in man's behalf has lost none of that influencing power. Thus it is encouraging to know that One who is "tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin," (Heb. 4:15), is in our midst, and that He speaks to God on our behalf. Those of us who become discouraged have forgotten this. We need to increase our own faith when we are discouraged. We need the kind of faith Paul had when he said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

Not only is Jesus here to encourage us, but He is also here to help us. He knows we need Him and He wants us to see that need. Without Him we can do nothing. With Him all things are possible. Any failure on our part will come from reckoning without Him. There is no failure when Christ goes with us. "If God be for us who can be against us" (Rom. 8:31).



How Many Resurrections Will There Be?

By Scott Perry

THE theory of Premillennialism teaches that there will be two resurrections: a "secret" first resurrection of only the righteous dead and a second one of the unrighteous dead 1,000 years later. This "first resurrection" (rapture) of only the righteous dead is suggested by interpreting a highly figurative passage (Rev. 20:1-6) as literal, in spite of the fact that this interpretation contradicts numerous plain passages of Scripture that there will be only one resurrection at the last day of both the just and unjust (Jn. 5:28-29; 6:40; Acts 24:15).

In John 5:28-29 Jesus stated that "all who were in the graves will come forth" at the very same time or hour. He spoke of one resurrection of both the good and evil. Where is there room of a 1,000 years between resurrections of the righteous and unrighteous dead?

In John 6:40 Jesus stated that the righteous dead would be raised at the "last day." The theory of Premillennialism says the righteous dead will be raised 1,000 years before the last day..??

In Acts 24:15 Paul speaks of the only resurrection of which the rest of the Bible speaks: a general one of all who have lived. Paul specifically states, like Jesus did, that this

resurrection will be of both the "just and unjust." The word in the original "anastasin" is singular, not plural. Therefore, it can only refer to one resurrection.



Dimensions of Growth

By A. Dean Gittings Jr.

ALMOST everyone understands the principle of growth in daily life. We know that something is wrong with the newborn baby if, within a short period of time, evidence of growth isn't observed. Why is it that some are so blinded that they fail to see how this same principle of growth applies to the religious realm as well. When the word "Growth" is used, our minds seem to flash to the thought of increased numbers in our assemblies. This is, of course, a very desirable type of growth; one to be sought after. However, we need to keep in mind two things when we consider numerical growth. 1) It is God who gives the increase, we are only farmers of the soil, 1 Cor. 3:5-7. 2) Too often we overlook the fact that to be a successful farmer in the soil of lost souls, we, as individual Christians, must grow in other areas before we begin our task.

First, we must increase in grace and knowledge. 2 Peter 3:18 teaches, "but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen." Herein lies a hedge of protection against the Evil One. David wrote, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee" (Psalm 119:11). Just as a benefit of knowledge is added ability to refrain from evil, so also, a lack of knowledge brings destruction, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," (Hosea 4:6). This principle of growth in knowledge is also taught in Hebrews 5:12-14.

Another area in which each Christian must grow is in love. In 1 Thessalonians 3:12 Paul writes, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men." We notice on the list of "Christian Graces" or "Blueprint of Growth", given in 2 Peter 1:5-7, that love is the highest attainment for the growing Christian.

There are actually four areas in which we grow in love. 1) Our love for God. We must grow to love God with all our being, Luke 10:27. 2) Our love for the brethren, 1 John 4:11,20. 3) Our love for our neighbors (all mankind), Luke 10:27-37. 4) Our love for our self. Many in the world today have forgotten how to love themselves, Eph. 5:29. We are shown how this growth in love and knowledge work together in such verses as Col. 4:6, "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how the truth in love may grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ." As we grow in love and knowledge an expansion in numbers will come about, as God gives the increase.

Remember in Prayer

Special Prayers

- Russell Bender
- Sarah Harvey—recovering from surgery
- Naida Williamson—broken hip
- Julie Bender—Cellulitis
- Brother Prasad (India)- is facing many trials
- Brother Odom (Abilene)—COPD
- Laurie Davis—Multiple Sclerosis
- Cody Ledesma—Drug Rehab
- Eric Boor—blood disease
- Lyra Grochmal (7 yrs)—spine cancer
- Melissa McClish—Depression
- Lilly Rucker and family—
- Mamie Dennis—
- Rockfalls church of Christ
- Platteville church of Christ
- TV Program & Advertiser Ads
- State of our Nation
- The closing of Planned Parenthood
- The church
- The erring & the Lost

Evangelizing the World

- Garret Derouin—Webster, Wisc.
- Scott Nedland—Rice Lake, Wisc.
- Brian Sherrell—LaCrosse, Wisc.
- Bernie Guzman—Philippines
- Fred Rhodes—Newton, Iowa
- Johnny Robertson— Martinsville, Vir
- James Oldfield—Riedsville, NC
- Derrick Brown —Jamaica
- Gary Workman—Ukraine
- Kolakaluri Prasad—Nalgonda, Dist., India
- G. Prabhu Kumar—Chennai, India
- John O'Neal—India & Ghana
- Tom Wacaster—India & Russia
- Holger Neubauer—South Haven, Michigan

Military

- Chip O'Neal—Afghanistan
- Jonathan Duckstein—Afghanistan
- Michael Chlamon—Ft. Drum, NY
- Daniel Heflin—Ft. Drum, NY
- Jason Cunningham—Stateside
- Jon McCain—Basic Training
- Military families who are coping while loved ones in harms way