

- **I still have God (Psalm 63:1-2).** Despite what circumstances plague our lives, the Lord is always near to us when we long to find Him (Matthew 7:7). The propensity of humanity, however, is to do the exact opposite. We often sing, “Where Could I Go But to the Lord,” but I suspect it is easier to pay lip service than life service to this principle. We like picking ourselves up by our own bootstraps instead of depending on the Lord (II Corinthians 3:5).
- **I still have a song (Psalm 63:3-4).** Let’s be honest; it is hard to have a song in our heart when we have turmoil around us. However, when we sing the Lord’s praise, our spirit is nourished (v.5) and circumstances seem to be put in their proper perspective. One of my favorite hymns is “Count Your Blessings.” It sure is hard to get down and stay there with that kind of perspective and that kind of God (Ephesians 3:20).
- **I still have joy in the Lord (Psalm 63:6-11).** If you can’t rejoice in your situation, you can always rejoice in your Savior! Because of His past help (v.6), His present protection (v.7), and His future help (v.8), we have nothing to fear. The problem is that we don’t see it as short term. But when we place things in the prospective of Paul “our light affliction that is but a moment” (II Corinthians 4:17), we can endure all knowing **our God loves us and sustains us (Philippians 4:19).**

Oh yes, things will be tough. The Lord never said Christianity was easy. But compared to the alternative, it is the only way! Look at what we have in Him!

The Family of God

by Ruel D. Catlett

GOD is family-oriented! The home was His first institution designed to provide for the social needs of humanity. When God brought forth His eternal purpose of an intimate universal fellowship, it was again within the framework of family; He established the church, the Family of God.

The church, in some measure, can compensate for the personal deprivation that has resulted from the mismanagement of our natural families. But the family of God was not created primarily for compensation. Our relationship to one another as children of God is intended to fulfill even deeper needs than can be satisfied in the very best of natural relationships. As long as the Holy Spirit rules as our shared motivation and as the functional standard of our attitudes and behavior, those intense needs will be met in a loving, caring, and mutually supportive fellowship.

The fullest blessing is realized when our natural family is also our spiritual family. But when that isn’t possible, God is still able to satisfy our longing for family security through the brothers and sisters He has given us in the church.

If you’re a child of God, don’t neglect the wonderful opportunities of family life! Commit yourself to really BELONGING to the family! Learn to know those with whom you share life’s most precious interests and hopes! Draw close to them for warmth and nourishment. Take full advantage of opportunities for comfort and encouragement. Share in the family’s joys, sorrows, and dreams. Love the family. Defend it, depend upon it, serve in it, and be a part of it!

Heartland Herald

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Michael Demory

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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

Free Bible Studies

Steps to Salvation

- **Hear the Word**
(Romans 10:17)
- **Believe** (Hebrews 11:6)
- **Repent** (Luke 13:3)
- **Confess Christ**
(Matthew 10:32-33)
- **Baptism** (1 Peter 3:21)
 - **Faithful Living**
(Revelation 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58)
 - **Bearing fruit**
(Colossians 1:10)

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Practicing 1st Century Christianity in the 21st Century

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Commitment to Christ, Or Comatose Christianity?

By Johnny Ramsey

JESUS clearly taught that men must not only purge evil from their lives, but they must also fill their days with purity and other positive attributes (Lk. 11:24-27). We must, as Paul wrote, “be dead unto sin and alive unto God” (Rom. 6:11). Amos 5:15 declares; “hate the evil and love the good.”

Christians must abstain from worldliness and develop the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Gal. 5:19-24). It is not enough to say that “old things are passed away”; we must also seek first the principles of spiritual integrity and growth (Col. 3:1-5). If Jesus truly is all the world to us, we will depart from iniquity (2 Tim. 2:19), and give ourselves as a living sacrifice to His blessed glory (Rom. 12:1-3). Commitment to Christ really does demand the surrender of all to Jesus.

Balance and commitment in Christianity demand that we oppose error (Eph. 5:11) because we love the truth (Jn. 15:1-8). Since we are on earth to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31), we will have a natural aversion to false doctrine. Balance in living for Jesus will result in our opposition to false worship while we strive to offer homage that is scriptural, pure and spiritual (Jn. 4:24). In fact, we will worship the Lord in the “beauty of holiness” (1 Chron. 16:29) and never count it a tedious matter (Mal. 1:13).

Seeking the Lord with our whole heart precludes flippant attitudes and shallow concepts (Ps. 119:2). We are challenged as Christians to keep the church pure while we manifest a deep, abiding, genuine love for brethren who need discipline. Love and the proper exercise of discipline go together (Rev. 3:19). In order for the church to be “unspotted from the world” (Eph. 5:27), we must exhort one another “daily” lest we be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (Heb. 3:13). God cannot be glorified by members who are overwhelmed by licentious behavior (Eph. 4:17-24).

Someone wisely spoke these words: “The highest reward for man’s toil is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it.” Commitment in the Redeemer’s religion manifests itself in folk who are totally dedicated but never self-righteous. Sometimes it becomes difficult to maintain this steady approach to life. Presenting ourselves sacrificially to God should not cause us to have disdain for others who have lower standards. Rather, it causes us to show them lovingly, by our example, what they are missing. Humility and gratitude are two attributes that will cause us to give the Lord the glory instead of boasting of our own accomplishments and attainments (Lk. 17:10).

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves (2 Cor. 3:5), and without the grace and mercy of the Master we would be forever lost (Titus 3:3-7). This approach produces compassion for lost ones who have yet to taste the sweet blessings of the gospel as well as for wayward brethren who do not truly appreciate the greatness of Christianity.

Remember in Prayer

Evangelizing the World

Garret Derouin—Webster, Wisc.
 Scott Nedland—Rice Lake, Wisc.
 Brian Sherrell—Rockfalls, IL.
 Bernie Guzman—Philippines
 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
 Ernie Lawrence—Hutto, Texas

Military

Jonathan Duckstein—Afghanistan
 Daniel Heflin—Afghanistan
 Jon McCain—Tech Training
 Soldiers defending our borders
 Military families who are coping while loved ones
 in harms way

Special Prayers

ViJaya Prasad's aunt injured in fall
 Hanna Prasad is ill

Wade Miller—diabetes
 Bubba—has improved some from e-coli infection
 Toni Waddings step-mother—leukemia
 Susan Noel— that she studies to understand God
 Russell Bender— that he studies to understand God
 Sherrell family
 Charles Pogue
 Harris family
 Bonnie Dempsey and family
 Brett Boor—recovering from open heart surgery
 Lyra Grochmal (8 yrs)—spine cancer— tumors are
 stable
 Preston Estes family
 Mya Kulle - a tumor that turned out to be a cyst
 Our new evangelism effort
 Lilly Rucker & family
 Laurie Davis—Multiple Sclerosis

Yolanda Ritchwood—M.S.
 Natalie Bauman—M.S.
 Freeman Dudley—liver cancer
 Kaiser family
 Eric Boor—blood disease
 Rockfalls church of Christ
 TV Program
 State of our Nation
 The closing of Planned Parenthood
 The church
 The erring & the Lost

There is no way to have proper commitment and balance as Christians until we determine to take the gospel to the whole world. Although we constantly realize we are not of this world, this world needs to be taught the gospel of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20). Early saints "went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Their "sound went forth" throughout the Roman Empire (Rom. 10:18). Yet, as a whole, they lived above the stench of sin as living epistles to their neighbors (Phil. 2:15; 2 Cor. 3:2). Many early Christians came out of a shameful environment of evil and had drawn close to the Lamb of God (Jn. 15:19).

When we come to understand that Christians are the "peculiar" treasure of heaven (1 Pet. 2:9-12), we will reach out to those sinking in sin (Acts 19:20). Christians ought to be so fervent and committed to evangelism that they had rather risk upsetting lost neighbors with the truth then letting them go to hell in a good humor! Never forget what someone said: *"The trouble with most of us is that we would rather be ruined by praise than saved by criticism."*

Commitment to Christ means we are serious about heaven but we enjoy peace and happiness in this life. God never intended that His people live some brand of comatose Christianity with no challenges, joys and happiness. The difficulties we face will turn out to be triumphs in the Lord (Jas. 1:2). In the midst of worldly frenzy, we find peace beyond measure (Ps. 144:15). A place is prepared for us (Jn. 14:3), but in the interim there is joyous work for us in the service of our King (Jn. 14:12). In this life we have many challenges but multitudes of blessings (Mk. 10:30). Our citizenship is in heaven, but there is labor now for the precious cause of Christ (Phil. 3:2; Rom. 8:18).

As the hymn says: "hilltops of glory" beckon us (cf. Heb. 9:24), but we have much to do before our final summons comes. While here on earth we dwell, let us never cease to be committed to Christ, and let us glorify God as Christians (1 Pet. 4:16).

Jesus as the Radiance of God's Light

By Jeremy Morris

BEFORE entering a lengthy discourse on the preeminence of Jesus in book of Hebrews, the Spirit concisely describes Jesus as, *"being the brightness of [God's] glory and the express image of his person..."* (Hebrews 1:3). A superficial consideration of this passage brings to our understanding that the Son manifested the very glory and person of God the Father while on earth.

However, in converting from the Greek language into English we lose an entire dimension of this passage's meaning. When we take time to push further into God's Word and look into the meaning of the original words, we often open unto ourselves entirely new literary pictures lost in the translation.

"Brightness," as found in Hebrews 1:3, comes from the ancient Greek word *"apaugasma"* which means, *"a shining forth, of a light coming from a luminous body."* A good analogy would be looking at the stars at night. When we look at the heavenly lights above, we don't see the stars themselves, but merely the light radiating from the stars, or the stars' *"apaugasma."*

As, *"the brightness (or shining forth) of God's glory,"* when Jesus trod these earthly roads, those who beheld him in a very real

manner were beholding God the Father. Even those closest to Jesus didn't understand this concept. During the Last Supper Philip commented, *"Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."* (John 14:8).

Jesus used the moment to teach us the power of his presence on earth when he replied, *"Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"* (John 14:9).

Philip and others failed to recognize who they saw when looking at Jesus. Certainly they saw Jesus of Nazareth, but as *"the brightness of God's glory,"* they should have also seen God. Think of it, entire generations longed to know what the Almighty God looked like and how he would conduct himself among the people. For over three years the glory and personage of God was among them and they didn't even know it.

The clouds of heaven have long since carried our Savior away from the earth but we can still look to Jesus and therefore see God. Like any other person, our real knowledge of Jesus does not concern his appearance or physical characteristics, but in his character, demeanor, values, and thoughts. Via God's Word and four personal testimonies of Jesus while on earth, we can read of Jesus, and in reading, know and see Jesus and therefore know and see God the Father.

More importantly, though, the *"brightness of God's glory"* cannot stop with Jesus. Many people today yearn to know and see the Creator of heaven and earth. Many people want to know the character, thoughts, and demeanor of the Almighty. If we are the type of sons and daughters as we ought, if these people know us, they should also know God.

How? *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I, who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20).

In looking on us, others ought to see Jesus Christ, and in seeing Jesus, they should see the radiance of God the Father and God himself. Of course, we can only do this by giving our lives wholly and unselfishly to God and his purpose which happens to be exactly what Jesus did.

Calendar of Events

- **July 27—Aug. 1**—County Fair Booth
- **August/2nd week**—Power Lectures—Southaven, MS
- **Sept/3rd week**—St. Louis Lectures
- **October 18-21**—Lectureship—Dubuque, IA

When Your World Comes Crashing In

By Scott Lambert

INSURRECTION is never a good thing for the King or his people. But how much worse is it when the insurrection is mounted by the King's own son? This is exactly what David was dealing with when he penned the 63rd chapter of the book of Psalms.

Absalom grew up in a family that could be described as "dysfunctional." Couple that with the responsibilities he had as King and you get the picture of an overworked man. On one particular occasion one of his sons, Ammon, raped his own sister---a half sister who was born to the same mother as Absalom. David, not handling the situation like a good father should, prompted Absalom to take things into his own hands. Two years after the sexual crime was committed, Absalom would have Ammon murdered and consequently fleeing from his family for the span of three years, bitter, and full of anger towards his father.

After the time of running was over, Absalom came back to Jerusalem with an agenda to accomplish (II Samuel 15:4). The text informs us that he stole the heart of the people (II Samuel 15:6), and forced his father out of the city. The text says, *"David went up by the Ascent of the Mount of Olives, and wept as he went up"* (II Samuel 15:30). You can imagine the pain and agony that David must have been experiencing as he ran from his own throne. This is the background that promoted the writing of Psalm 63. It is during these times that we find ourselves in our own wilderness that some self-inventory of the things that are really important to us is needed. Can we acquiesce with David?