

What think Ye of the Bible?
Part 20, Faith in Christ (A)

In the previous article we examined "Repentance." While it is not feasible to examine all aspects of repentance in detail in these articles, it was mentioned that at minimum there must be repentance (change of mind) regarding God, God's laws, and yourself. Prior to salvation a person's concept regarding these three items is faulty, and through genuine repentance his thought life must align to the propositional truths as given to us in the Bible, God's Word to man.

(Please note: All of these articles have been posted on my website, and can be accessed and downloaded in PDF format by going to this link

<http://www.glorify-god.org/godbible9.htm>

I mentioned in the previous article (# 19) that I intended to cover "Faith in Christ" in this article. Faith in Christ, in essence, is the "Gospel," the Good News from God to sinful man. The Greek word that is translated GOSPEL into English is εὐαγγέλιον. The transliteration yields the following word in English letters: EUANGELION. Notice the first two letters are EU. This prefix has the idea of "GOOD," as in EULOGY. Eulogy is a GOOD WORD given about a deceased person at his memorial service. EUANGELION is a GOOD ANNOUNCEMENT, proclaimed by God to mankind that there is deliverance from the penalty of sin available simply by believing in God's sinless Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. To be a little more specific, for this FAITH to be valid and biblical, a person must believe in two aspects of Jesus Christ. First, a sinner must believe the Biblical truth about WHO JESUS CHRIST IS, namely have a full understanding and belief about the IDENTITY of His Person. Secondly, a person must understand and believe WHAT He has accomplished by His death, burial and resurrection out from among the dead to procure redemption for sinful humanity.

Let's begin with His IDENTITY. It might be very appropriate to cover the topic of who Jesus really is today, because of the approaching Christmas season. Almost all people in the Western World participate in some sort of Christmas festivities, whether they have any personal belief system in the true meaning of Christmas or not. In our western world there are more PRETENDERS than there are true, Biblical born again believers. I am reminded again of the verses in the Gospel of Matthew that address this truth. These verses were mentioned in a previous article, but it might be valuable to rehearse them once again. They are weighty, indeed.

Matthew 7:13-14 KJV

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: [14] Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Please note: "Many are on the path of destruction (Hell), and only Few are on the path to life (Heaven). It is sad, indeed, to think God's offer of forgiveness of sins, redemption, justification have been available throughout the ages, but only relatively few people have read the Bible, meditated on its content and believed in Jesus Christ of the Bible.

Well, again, there are those who say they believe in Jesus Christ, but their Jesus is a "truncated" Jesus. They removed the miraculous conception, the virgin birth, the resurrection, and divinity of Jesus, and thus are left with nothing but an empty shell, an IDOL, who cannot save or redeem. They are relying on their own "works of righteousness" to get themselves into heaven based on a human meritorious system. God is very clear in telling mankind that this approach will not work, - ever.

Galatians 2:16 KJV

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

The phrase "works of the law" simply means that the Jews, who were given the law are not able to keep the law, and Gentiles, who may have designed their own moral code, will always break it. Following one's own code of goodness will not suffice. It will always fall short of God's standard of righteousness.

It might be perceived that I am addressing only the western world and its wide umbrella of Christendom. That is not the case at all. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is for all of mankind. No ethnicity, race, color, tongue or language is excluded. Jesus Christ died for ALL. (I do not believe in limited atonement! I will not go into this theological persuasion in this article.)

Therefore, anyone hearing the Gospel is responsible to respond properly with repentance and belief, regardless on which continent a person lives.

The most familiar Gospel verse, John 3:16, tells us in no ambiguous terms that the Gospel of God has a world-wide extent.

John 3:16 KJV

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Also, although there are multitudes of idols and false gods in this world, there is only ONE TRUE, ETERNAL, IMMORTAL, IMMUTABLE, SELF-EXISTING SPIRIT BEING, who is GOD - The Tri-une God of the Bible. The "Pope" recently made an astounding statement. He asserted that all world religions are just different languages to the same God. I dont understand why those in that Catholic Systems are not rapidly escaping from that False Prophet, the Pope.

Now, let's start looking at the Gospel. First, a person must understand that God desires

that men KNOW HIM, intimately!

Jeremiah 9:23-24 KJV

"Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: [24] But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD."

This is a weighty passage, which tells us so very much about our Heavenly Father, and the relationship He wants us to have with Him. But, the first thing God wants man to know is how to be saved. So, let's examine the Good News about Jesus Christ. First, we will see what the Bible teaches about His identity - **Who He is**.

Actually, God had foreordained the plan of redemption before He created the world. Once creation occurred and the fall of Adam took place in the Garden of Eden, God's plan of redemption was manifested through progressive revelation.

For our current purpose we will pick up God's plan with the miraculous conception of Mary, the mother of the human Jesus. Isaiah the Prophet foretold this event 740 years before the birth of Jesus actually took place.

Isaiah 7:14 KJV

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emmanuel."

This event took place about 740 years later. We read in Luke 2:26-38 the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary that she would conceive a child in a miraculous, supernatural manner by the power of the Holy Spirit of God.

In Matthew 1:18-23 Joseph was told to accept Mary as his wife, even though he was not the biological father of the child in her womb. Joseph was instructed to name the baby Jesus, which means "Savior," and this virgin birth would be the fulfillment of the prophesy we read earlier in Isaiah 7:14.

And, the Bible said the baby would be **Emmanuel**.

We will make three observations about this Isaiah/Matthew passages.

1. Jesus was born of a virgin girl.

a. It was a supernatural conception. There is no reason to wonder about this conception. The God, who created this universe from "nothing" (Ex Nihilo) in 6 days, is most certainly able to fertilize an ovum in a teenage girl without the help of a human man.

b. The virgin birth ensured that the human Jesus would not possess the sinful, Adamic nature. This Adamic nature is always passed from one generation to the next by the husband. God arranged in His Divine Providence, that Jesus would have a human mother, but not a human biological father. Therefore, Jesus was sinless, and as such could be the pure, perfect, sin bearer of the sin of the world. John the Baptist exclaimed about Jesus.

John 1:29 KJV

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

If Jesus had not been sinless, he would have needed a Savior Himself, but as the perfect, sinless substitute for man's sin, God accepted the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ's death on the cross.

2. Joseph was instructed to name the child Jesus. **Jesus means Savior**. Many verses tell us of His Saving function.

1 John 4:14 KJV

"And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the **Saviour of the world**."

Luke 19:10 KJV

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to **save** that which was lost."

What exactly does Jesus save a sinner from? Well, He saves us from the WRATH OF GOD, from HELL.

Romans 5:9 KJV

"Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be **saved from wrath** through him."

Much is made of the love, mercy and grace of God. Rightly so. But, very little is said about God's wrath, and His hate for sin, unrighteousness, wickedness and evil. Wrath is very much an attribute of our wonderful God as is His love.

When Jesus died on the cross, He became a CURSE for us, as He suffered and died in our stead, as our substitute.

Galatians 3:13 KJV

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

Thus, Jesus was properly named "Savior." For a mighty Savior He is. And, He still saves

those who repent and believe in Him.

3. One more item must be addressed. He was also named EMMANUEL, which means **God With Us**.

Since this article is already past its limit of three pages, I will address the EMMANUEL issue in my next article.

It is of utmost importance and it will take some writing to explain it.

It is almost midnight. I enjoyed writing this about MY SAVIOR and MY LORD. I will post it now and do grammatical corrections in the morning.

Oh, my Dear Lord! This is my favorite topic in your Book, the Bible. Thank you for giving me the time, ability, and passion to write these truths. Please draw soul to the Savior through these articles.

In Jesus Name, Amen.

With Warm Regards,
Horst Adler
"For I am not ashamed of the
Gospel of Christ." (Ro.1:16)