

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

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GIVE ME THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

by Jim Stauffer

There are those who believe our faith is granted to us by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and therefore, can never be lost.

Of course, the Bible does not speak of such. We are told, *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."* (Romans 10:17) That we gain faith by hearing Christ does tell us the Holy Spirit is essential to our faith since He is the One through Whom Christ sent the gospel that produces faith (John 16:13,14).

Today let us focus on two major aspects man should understand concerning faith. As we have already noted, it is our response to the gospel that brings about our faith. We learn from the life of Christ and the remainder of His revelation that He is Immanuel, that is God with us (Mat. 1:23). Learning He died for our sins we soon learn that our redemption from sin rests in our access to the saving power of His blood (1 Cor.15: 3; 1 John 4:10; 1 Pet. 1:18,19).

We are further convinced by observing His life on earth and the power He demonstrated as recorded in the words of the apostle John. *"Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."* (John 20:30–31)

One of the best examples of faith is Abraham. We learn of his faith when he willingly goes to a land God will show him. Picking up and moving his immediate family away from the remainder of his family was a much bigger deal that we might conclude. He moved away from loved ones but subsequent to moving, accepted a complete change in his faith and worship. No longer was he to worship idols as his father had, but was to serve the living God.

As he served that God he became subject to the commands God gave. He did not choose which ones to obey because he had faith in God to such an extent it was, reckoned to him as righteousness (Gen. 15:6). As we indicated, his faith was known by his obedience to

God's commands. He did not have a faith that allowed him to rest, but one that led him to act as God required. The best example is the story in Gen. 22 where God told him to offer his only son Isaac as a sacrifice to the Lord. This was the son through whom the world was to be blessed. Yet Abraham's faith told him if God took Isaac He could just as easily bring him back again (Heb. 11:19).

It is this story to which James refers in his epistle as an illustration of the necessary faith one must have to be pleasing to God. *"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone."* (Jas. 2:21–24) James refers to works that are the obedience the Hebrew writer says is necessary to be granted salvation by Christ (Heb. 5:8,9).

Finally, note the evidence we can, if we become disobedient, lose this faith, *"You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace."* (Gal. 5:4)

As for me, please let me gain and practice the faith of Abraham, who obeyed God regardless of his personal preferences.

Their Loss of Life Has Meaning

I know that most, if not all of us, heard about the recent tornados that went through Tennessee last Monday night. Some of you might not be aware of the fact that there was a young family who are members of the Lord's church that were affected by the tornados (Amber, Josh & Sawyer Kimberlin). Sadly, all three lost their lives. How do we make sense of this?

The reality is, a terrible accident happened due to a weather related event. Is there more to it than that?

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There must be, else it makes the lives that were lost so meaningless. Actually it is the opposite. Being Christians, it was their duty, like all of us, to be mindful of the meaning of life, that being, fear God and keep His commandments (**Eccl. 12:13**). The reason this couple was committed to following the Lord was because they knew they possessed something greater than anything in this world, their soul (**Matt. 16:26**).

They, like every one of us, ought to be aware of making the most of the life we have because you never know when death will come. With their future ahead of them, with a young child, there is no way they woke up the day before the storm thinking this would be their last day on earth. Yet, if you would have asked them, "Are you guaranteed a tomorrow?" They would have responded, "No!" The Hebrew writer revealed that death comes to us all (**9:27**). We just do not know when, where or how.

Knowing that Lazarus was prepared for death and was in Abraham's bosom (**Lk. 16:22**), it won't be a shock to this couple, if they lived faithfully, that they are now in that place of comfort too. Life after death is real and especially God's children are very much aware of this. That's what makes the lives of this couple so meaningful. Because their lives had meaning, it's a great lesson for all of us. Just like we are told that Abel's life still speaks even though he died (**Heb. 11:4**), we are all today, listening to the lesson being taught to us by this family. Our prayers are with their families at this time.

Chuck Bartlett

Let's Think This Through, 3

We are thinking through the hypothesis "If there is no God, then what?" We first noted that (1) there is no creator and then (2) that man is not created in God's image if, in fact, God does not exist.

Our third point is that if God does not exist then there is nothing special about mankind. There is nothing that separates us from the animals. If you spend much time on the internet at all you will have noticed that it is illegal in America to destroy an eagle egg, under penalty of jail time. It is illegal to destroy a sea-turtle egg under penalty of jail time. Okay, fine, no problem. But if you destroy an unborn human being there is no penalty! One Governor (in Virginia) even proposed that parents of live born infants be allowed to dispose of their newborn with no penalty. How did this come to pass in America? The answer is very simple: That is the NATURAL AND INESCAPABLE outgrowth of atheism! If you read the Communist Manifesto (I have!) a FUNDAMENTAL POINT of socialism is the destruction of religion and faith. The same is true of

The Humanist Manifestos (1&2). All these documents approve of the elimination of populations which will not "get with the program" of atheism. It is no wonder then that Socialism murdered over 100 Million people in the twentieth Century. They were just "in the way". There is no essential difference between Socialism and Communism.

All this and yet we've been teaching our children atheism under the guise of 'science' for a century. I love science and always have. My degree is in Biology and evolution is NOT SCIENCE. It is philosophy.

David was right, "*The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."*" (**Ps. 14:1**)

Cleveland Reddinger

God Knows What We Need Before We Ask

by **Andy Sochor**

In teaching about prayer, Jesus taught to avoid using "*meaningless repetitions.*" He explained that using "*many words*" does not mean that God is going to hear us any better (Matthew 6:7).

Jesus went on to explain one reason why repeating the same words over and over is meaningless: "*Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him*" (Matthew 6:8).

We do not pray for God's benefit. God does not need for us to pray so that we might inform Him of what we need. He already knows. So why did Jesus go on to give an example of a prayer and include in it a request for things we need – "*Give us this day our daily bread*" (Matthew 6:11)?

One of the benefits of prayer, as God designed it, is that by praying for certain things we are reminded of our reliance upon God. God knows we need to eat to survive. Yet Jesus told us to pray for our daily bread anyway. We also know that we must work in order to have the daily bread that we need (2 Thessalonians 3:10). But God is the one who has made it possible for us to do this. By His providence, He has provided in His creation an environment where we can work and receive the daily provisions we need.

All things that are possible are possible because of God – whether we are talking about obtaining what we need to live, health being restored to those who are sick, forgiveness for our sins, etc. When we pray, we cannot help but recognize our reliance upon God. We would be hopelessly lost and destitute without Him. When we offer "*prayer and supplication*" to God, we must be sure we do so "*with thanksgiving*" (Philippians 4:6). God knows what we need before we ask, and He has seen fit to make provisions for us before we could even think to ask. Continue in prayer and do not take for granted the abundant blessings we have from God.

The Book Divine

Patrick Farish I Wauxahatchie, Texas, USA

The Bible is the *"word of truth"* (2 Timothy 3:15). It is *"Scripture breathed out by God"* (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Consider these facts about the Bible.

Consisting of sixty six books, it has two major divisions, the Old and the New Testaments. The Old Testament is divided into Law (five books, from Genesis to Deuteronomy), History (Joshua to Esther), Poetry (Job to Song of Solomon) Major Prophets (Isaiah to Ezekiel) and Minor Prophets (Daniel to Malachi).

The New Testament is divided into History (Matthew to Acts), Doctrine (Romans to Jude) and Apocalypse (Revelation).

The Bible is the history of man, and God's dealing with him, in three parts. The first part is characterized as the **Patriarchal** age; in this period God reveals His will by speaking directly to the fathers. This age or dispensation remains in effect when the second age, the Mosaic dispensation, is brought in. The **Mosaic** age, with its beginning at Mount Sinai, was especially and exclusively for the children of Israel. When Jehovah spoke to Moses regarding the Sabbath, He said:

"Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall be put to death. Therefore the people of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations as a covenant forever. It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed" (Exodus 31:15-17).

Who shall keep the Sabbath? *"the people of Israel."* No Gentile has ever been obligated to keep the Sabbath; because God said that it is a sign forever *"between me and the people of Israel."* The Law of Moses was the second age or dispensation of Jehovah's dealing with man.

Then, on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus, the third, the **Christian** dispensation, had its beginning. As it began, the earlier dispensations were ended. God forgave us *"all our trespasses by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross"* (Colossians 2:13-14).

It is fundamental to our correct understanding of the Bible's message that we appreciate that the law of Moses was taken out of the way, *"nailing it to the cross."*

Some appeal to the Old Testament for authority. They demand Sabbath observation, because it was required of those living in those days. They appeal to Psalms to justify introducing mechanical instruments of music to Christians and the church today. In **Deuteronomy 18:15-19** Moses made a statement quoted by Peter in **Acts 3:22-23**, *"The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. And it shall be, that every*

soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people" (Acts 3:22-23).

The law of Moses is not binding on anyone today. It has been taken out of the way, *"nailing it to the cross"* (Colossians 2:13-14). The apostle Paul wrote that Christ *"is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances"* (Ephesians 2:14-15).

Taken from Meditate on These Things, MOTT - October 2018

"Take Care Of ME!"

It doesn't take long for the parents of newborn babies to realize that those "little bundles of joy" also happen to be the most selfish and demanding creatures imaginable! They want to be fed on demand. They expect to be diapered promptly. They want to sleep without interruptions, and they require immediate attention as soon as they awaken. All of this would be very disturbing in an older person, but we know this is completely natural conduct for newborns.

We anticipate that in time the newborn will begin to lose some of that self-centeredness. They will start to realize that the needs and desires of others must be taken into consideration. We call this process "maturing". Often this "growing up" process demands appropriate action on the part of parents. Frequently this required action is in the form of discipline - the kind that is administered to the seat of the pants! The child has finally "matured" when he is able to think of others before self, when he is no longer the absolutely self-centered being he was at birth.

Spiritually speaking, we were *"born again"* when we were baptized into Christ (1 Pet. 1:23). At that point we were all *"babes"* (1 Pet. 2:2). As *"babes"* we were typically very self-centered. Our own needs, wants, whims, and desires were foremost in our thinking. But God expects us to mature (Heb. 5:12-14). As we "grow up" we should begin to lose our selfish way of thinking and demonstrate the signs of our spiritual maturity. Paul said it this way: *"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. . ." (Phil. 2:4,5)*. If this never happens, there is something seriously wrong.

Christian, are you still selfish and self-centered? Are you still primarily concerned about what others are doing - or not doing - for you? Have you not matured spiritually? Do you need to "grow up"? Think!

by Greg Gwin

Psa. 1:1 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

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Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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WEDNESDAY BIBLE CLASS: THE BOOK OF JOB - JIM STAUFFER TEACHER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: THE FAMILY AS GOD DESIGNED IT



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10