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## GODLY SORROW OR WORLDLY SORROW?

Jeremy Butt, Columbia, TN

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Have you ever been caught in the act of doing something you had already been instructed not to do? I'm mindful of a time when I was out in a boat with my brother and my cousins, as they were visiting one weekend. Uncle Stan and my Dad were fixing a fence at the front of our property, and Stan Jr. decided he would play basketball. That left Cliff and Kyle, who joined us in the boat for a little fishing expedition.

One of the rules at our house was anytime we went out in the boat, we had to wear a lifejacket. Needless to say, the four of us got in the boat without a single lifejacket. Dad spotted us from the house and called us in to the bank of the lake, as he swatted us all for being disobedient. All four of us were punished. We weren't sorry we disobeyed; we were sorry we got caught!

Paul addresses the church at Corinth and commends them on their godly sorrow in 2 Corinthians 7:8-10. They were truly sorry their sins had hurt God. The opposite of this is what I call the cookie-jar syndrome. When someone is sorry they got caught, it's like getting caught with your hand in the cookie jar. That person isn't sorry they took the cookies; they are sorry they got caught! Those in Corinth experienced something life-changing. Paul says "For though I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it;

though I did regret it--for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while-- I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death (2 Cor. 7:8-10).

Many people in the world are only sorry when they get caught. God is pleased when those who sin against Him are pierced to the heart, even as the multitude did on the day the church was established (Acts 2:37). When we experience godly sorrow, we are led to repent from our sins to change our actions. Only when someone experiences godly sorrow will they show actions worthy of repentance. Worldly sorrow leads you down the wrong path. In fact, those who only experience worldly sorrow won't have the chance to put on their "lifejacket" when they are cast into the lake of fire after Judgment Day (Rev. 20:14). Which type of sorrow do you experience in your spiritual life: godly sorrow or worldly sorrow?

**WOT**

## EDITORIAL

# ENOCH, WHO WALKED WITH GOD

A study of the life of Enoch is an interesting character study. He is mentioned in only one passage in the Old Testament (Gen.5:18-24), and referenced only three times in the New Testament (Luke 3:37; Heb.11:5; Jude 14-15). Though an obscure personality from the standpoint of the scarcity of Divine revelation, everything said of Enoch portrays him as a man of great faith. Inspiration saw fit to include Enoch among the most memorable men and women of faith in what many refer to as "Faith's Hall of Fame" [Hebrews 11]: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God" (Heb.11:5). What was it about the life of Enoch that pleased his God? Moses summed up the life of this great man of faith when he penned that "Enoch walked with God" (Gen.5:24). He did not walk apart from God, nor did he walk ahead of God. Enoch chose a life of fellowship and favor with Jehovah, no doubt spending much time each day in communication with the Almighty, and in doing His will. What can we learn from this great man of faith?

In Enoch, we find a man who took seriously his responsibility as a father. The biography of the life of Enoch is very brief. We know that his father was Jared (the second-oldest man to have lived, 962 years), and that Jared was 162 years of age when Enoch was born (Gen.5:18). At the age of 65, Enoch had his first child, Methuselah (the oldest man to have ever lived, 969 years). Upon the arrival of his firstborn, we read, "And Enoch walked with God **AFTER** he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters" (Gen.5:22, emphasis mine, SPM). Prior to fatherhood, it seems that Enoch was walking his own path. There is no mention of his spiritual life before children enter into the picture. Oftentimes, husbands and wives give no consideration to their spiritual condition until they welcome children into the home. There is something about being responsible for the life of a child that awakens a sense of accountability to God. Though Enoch did not walk with God prior to fatherhood, he made the decision to begin his journey with Jehovah so that he and his family might walk in the way of the Lord together. Fathers are charged with rearing their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph.6:4). The ESV uses the expression "the discipline and instruction of the Lord." The burden of responsibility regarding

spiritual leadership has been placed upon fathers, and Enoch was one who took this task seriously. The same compliment paid to Abraham concerning the spiritual leadership he provided for his home could likely be said of Enoch: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment" (Gen.18:19). Enoch walked with God, and saw to it that his family walked with him in the way of the Almighty.

In Enoch, we find a man who took seriously his responsibility as God's spokesman. Jude records of this man of God, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against them" (Jude 14-15). Enoch, according to Divine revelation, was the earliest of all of the prophets mentioned in Scripture. His message was a message of conviction of sins, and warning of judgment to come. No doubt, the world of Enoch's day was waxing worse and worse, for just three generations later, in the days of Noah, we read of mankind that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen.6:5). Enoch attempted to warn man to turn from his wickedness, but it seems his message went unheeded, and for that reason, not long thereafter God sent the flood as judgment against man's sinfulness and stubborn refusal to repent. Enoch was not afraid to call things just as God called them: notice how many times the word "ungodly" appears in the prophecy of Enoch as recorded by Jude. In order to walk with God, one must agree with God (Amos 3:3), and this includes agreeing with the Almighty's view of sin. Enoch walked with God, faithfully proclaiming the word of Jehovah.

In Enoch, we find a man who was rewarded for his faithfulness. Perhaps the most interesting tidbit of information about the life of Enoch is what transpired at the conclusion of his earthly pilgrimage. Moses penned that Enoch "was not; for God took him" (Gen.5:24). The Hebrews writer gives a little more insight when he writes, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him" (Heb.11:5). The Greek word *metatithemi* (English translation "translated") carries with it the idea of being

transferred, or changing sides (Thayers). Enoch was spared having to venture through the portal of death to gain entrance into the realm of the unseen. God transferred Enoch from the temporal to the eternal, a journey that only one other in Scripture was privileged to make. Elijah, too, was spared from death, and taken to heaven in impressive fashion: as Elijah and Elisha were talking, God sent a chariot of fire with horses ablaze, parting the two prophets asunder, and taking Elijah in a whirlwind to heaven (2 Kings 2:11). Why God chose to allow these two this honor of circumventing death to gain Paradise, we are not told. However, we do know that both were faithful servants of Jehovah, and as such, they were rewarded for their fidelity to God and His will. Enoch walked with God while upon earth, and because of his faithfulness, he will walk with the Almighty eternally.

**WOT**

## [www.sixthavenuechurch.org](http://www.sixthavenuechurch.org)

We hope and pray that you will use our website for the honor and glory of God, and for your own personal growth in the faith of Jesus Christ. On our website you will find many resources available for your use. There are weekly bulletin articles, weekly newspaper articles that appear in our local newspaper, places to request Bible correspondence courses, Searching for Truth materials, and House to House/Heart to Heart materials, as well as audio sermons from our Sunday worship assemblies. You may also sign up to receive our weekly bulletin by email and submit Bible questions that you would like to have answered. On top of all of this, you will find each issue of the Words of Truth catalogued so that you may view them at any time. Miss an issue? Go online and you can read it in its entirety, or you may request a copy by emailing us. May God be glorified as we seek to spread His truth to all the world!

## *The Kingdom Is the Church*

Eva Nell Brown Naramore

The Bible clearly teaches us  
That the kingdom is the church.  
Established as was prophesied:  
Made sure by the Master's touch.  
Christ is the Rock! The solid Rock!  
Firm foundation that will stand.  
On which the Church of Christ is built:  
We're to live by his commands.

In the Kingdom, Church, the Body:  
There is work that must be done.  
God offered hope to everyone  
When He gave His only Son.  
Doctrines of men will find their death  
When tested and found untrue.  
The word of God is all we need  
To tell us what to do.

When we obey the word of God:  
We're in His kingdom then,  
He has the power to change the heart  
And deliver us from sin.  
We're translated from the dark  
To the light when we obey,  
It's not God's will that we be lost.  
He will hear us when we pray.

We're safe with God in the kingdom,  
We're safe in the Church: We're one.  
We are citizens of heaven:  
God will say to us "well done."  
Peter used the keys of the kingdom,  
On the day of Pentecost.  
When he taught the terms of entrance,  
To the people that were lost.

# COURAGEOUS PREACHING

*Ben Wright, Carbon Hill, AL*

Courageous is defined as, “having or showing courage; brave” (Webster’s New World Dictionary, pg. 139). As one reads God’s Holy Word, it is plain to see that God’s spokesmen on earth have always needed courage. Noah had to be extremely courageous in preaching to the vile people of his day. The prophets were courageous unto to death, so much so that we are told by inspiration that the “world was not worthy” of these men (Hebrews 11:38). John the Baptizer was a man of courage and it cost him his life. Once the apostles had seen the risen Savior they were extremely courageous. It takes courage to be a Christian, let alone a gospel preacher.

The book of Acts shows us how courageous the apostles were. In the face of beatings, being stoned, imprisoned and ridiculed the apostles would say, “... we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:20). They counted it a privilege to suffer shame for the name of Christ. There is one verse in the fifth chapter of Acts that allows us to see what God expects from His ministers and that is verse twenty: “Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people, all the words of this life.” This verse is small in number of words, but great in its impact. A preacher learns what courage is from this verse.

First, we see that we must go to the lost. Many today want to sit back in their padded office chairs and do nothing but come up with soft sermons that tickle ears. The angel of the Lord told these men to go to where the lost were, in the temple. Too many preachers are not willing to go out and talk and deal with the lost. The Hebrews writer reminded his readers they could, “with good courage say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Hebrews 13:6, ASV). It is a sin to be fearful and afraid (Revelation 21:8). It takes courage to go to the lost and let them know that they are lost. Too many today, in our “let’s not offend anyone” age, refuse to admit that anyone is lost because that would be judging and that is not right. Brethren and friends, if we cannot let someone know they are lost, then how are we ever going to convert anyone to Christ? There are different ways to go. Some go and knock doors, some make telephone calls, some work through the internet. The printed page has allowed great access into homes as well as being able to have television programs. The radio has long been a way to get into the homes of those who are outside the body of Christ. Whatever means of going is used is wonderful, but the fact remains that we must go.

Second, we see that we must stand. According to Strong’s, this word carries the meaning, “to be of a stead-

fast mind; of quality, one who does not hesitate, does not waiver.” Sadly, this does not sound like a definition that could be applied to a vast number of so-called gospel preachers. There are too many among us that waiver, that hesitate when the truth is attacked or questioned. God needs men of courage who will stand for the truth and defend it. We have too many today who spend their time apologizing for what God said instead of standing for it. Paul told the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God and then, when they had done everything they could, keep standing (Ephesians 6:13). Jude wanted to right an uplifting letter about the common salvation, but could not because “it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”(Jude 3). Jude wanted his readers to stand for the truth and we should today as well. Otherwise, many will go off into eternity unprepared to meet God in judgement.

Third, we see that we must speak. God is a wonderful God in that He never tells us to do something without telling us how to do it. In this passage, the apostles are told to speak. Many of us have that part down pat. Many sermons, every Sunday, are filled with a lot of talk. Many conversations with those who are lost are filled with a lot of talk. We talk about the weather, sports, hunting, whatever small talk comes to mind. Tragically, what is needed most by those to whom we are preaching or speaking is left out. The apostles were told to speak, but God also told them what to speak: “all the words of this life.” God wanted the gospel preached to the lost. If one of us just got out of prison for speaking about Christ we would probably have a lot of things about which to speak, the least of which would be Christ. God, in reality, said, “Get back in there fellas and preach it some more.” This took courage on the part of the apostles. Thankfully, they followed the command given them by God.

If the lost are going to be saved and the saved stay that way, then preachers are going to have to be courageous. Preachers are going to have to stand in the pulpits and preach the word of God without fear or favor. Paul told Timothy, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). Marshall Keeble said this meant to preach when they like it and when they do not like it. That is the command to preachers today. Let us remember the inspired words of Paul: “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to **fear**; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15, emp. mine, BW). **WOT**

# CHRIST'S DEATH UPON THE CROSS

Kerry Richardson, Northport, AL

“And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8). In a context of encouraging readers to model the “mind of Christ” (2:5), the Holy Spirit called attention to the fact that Jesus did not simply suffer death. Rather, he suffered *the death of the cross*. Though most of us today cannot identify with the concept, readers in first century Philippi were very well acquainted with this phrase. Death by crucifixion was, for them, the most heinous means of inflicting death... having been “perfected” by the executioners of Christ, the Romans. To state the matter clearly, the death of Christ was a punishment reserved for hardened criminals, intended by the Roman government to inflict the maximum amount of suffering to a victim while deterring others from violating Roman law (*DePasquale and Birch, 1963, p.434*). Thus, *the death of the cross* was not just an “ordinary” death... it was greatly feared by all those who lived under Roman rule.

As we study that *death on the cross*, it is helpful to briefly consider various activities experienced by Christ throughout the ordeal. Preliminary to virtually every Roman crucifixion was a “scourging” (*Hengel, 1977*). While the scourging process might vary to some degree in each province, it usually included (1) being tied to an upright post, (2) utilization of a short whip with metal/bone attached to cords, and (3) unlimited number of blows to a victim. Weakening victims through shock and blood loss, scourging was considered a vital part of the crucifixion practice, hastening death on the cross (*Harrub and Thompson, 2002*). Following Christ’s scourging (Mark 15:16-20), scripture reveals Christ began a journey to Golgotha, likely bearing the crossbeam, which would weigh approximately 75-100 pounds (*John 19:17*). The fact that the gospel accounts reflect that one “Simon of Cyrene” was recruited to carry the cross, a popular assumption is that Christ became physically unable to bear the load the entire way (*not an unusual occurrence*).

Upon reaching Golgotha, Roman soldiers stripped Christ of His clothing and crucified Him between two thieves (*Mark 15:24-27*). Data from archaeologists suggest tapered iron spikes 5-7 inches in length were the likely objects used to attach Christ’s hands and feet to the cross (*Clements, 1992, p.108*). Furthermore, with the placement of these nails into the hands and feet, it is nearly certain nerves suffered damage, sending shots of pain from the extremities to His torso. From possible mid-morning until the time of His death, a variety of medical conditions were likely experienced –hypovolemic shock,

exhaustion, asphyxia, dehydration, and cardiac complications being possible candidates (*Harrub and Thompson, 2002*). For Christ, the tragic scene would conclude in an exclamation (“*it is finished*”) and “giving up the ghost” (John 19:30).

When we assimilate all of the facts regarding Christ’s crucifixion, we are awestruck regarding *the suffering* He endured. From the time the first stripe was laid upon His precious body to His final breath around the ninth hour of the day, mere words cannot adequately express the pain our Lord experienced. Surely, David’s words of Psalm 22:14-16 echo loudly in our ears: “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of the death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.”

In addition to His suffering, the cross of Christ was *one of shame* (Hebrews 12:2). During the entire process, Christ received treatment as if He were a criminal, although Pilate believed Him to be innocent (John 19:6). He was mocked by captors (Luke 23:63), Jewish rulers (Matthew 26:67-68; 27:41-43), Herod and his men (Luke 23:11), Roman soldiers (Matthew 27:29-31; Luke 23:36-37), and the thieves crucified with Him (Mark 15:32). Furthermore, He was stripped of His clothing twice in public settings (Matthew 27:28; 35). Truly David’s prophesy in Psalm 22:6-8 predicted this embarrassment: “But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out their lip, they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he has delighted in him.’”

Finally, we notice *the solitude* Christ experienced in the crucifixion experience. Even though His mother and other women were present at the crucifixion scene along with the disciple whom Jesus loved, all of Christ’s followers had abandoned Him after His arrest, just as He had predicted (Mark 14:27-31; 50). Isaiah 53:3 would speak of this aspect: “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.”

As we study the gospel accounts of Christ’s execution, may we always do so with the utmost of respect and appreciation, for it was indeed “the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8). **WOT**

# THE DEMANDS OF GOD'S CHARACTER

Ronnie Hayes, Adamsville, AL

There are many characteristics of God. God is love. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8). God is also merciful. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" (Micah 7:18). The word of God tells us that God is good. "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him" (Nahum 1:7). One could go on and on about God's character but space will not allow it. There is one more that needs to be emphasized. God is HOLY! "Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders" (Exodus 15:11). "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3). "Art thou not from everlasting, O LORD my God, mine Holy One? we shall not die. O LORD, thou hast ordained them for judgment; and, O mighty God, thou hast established them for correction. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity: wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he" (Habakkuk 1:12, 13). Seeing that God is holy, His character demands that the problem of sin be addressed!

God's holy character demands that sin be judged. During the days of the prophet Jeremiah, God's children had turned their hearts away from their creator. God asked, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this" (Jeremiah 5:29). Does man honestly think that God is going to ignore the sin in their lives? Paul warned the church at Corinth, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). Solomon gave a similar warning, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14). In the depiction of the great judgment scene in Matthew 25, The King will judge those who are righteous (cf. Matthew 25; 37) and those who are not (cf. Matthew 25:45, 46). One needs to be aware of the fact that no sin is going to escape the judgment of God. One cannot hide the sin in their lives. We have already seen the warning of Solomon where God will expose "every secret

thing" (Ecclesiastes 12:14). Christ said hypocrisy will be uncovered. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops" (Luke 12:2,3). Man will not get away with sin. It is going to be exposed and judged.

God's holy character demands the sentence be just. Justice is almost unheard of in our day and age. Our court system is not interested in truth and justice, but a process. The courts allow criminals to go free because of procedural problems. This is not so with God. Man is not going to get off on a technicality! God has always demanded justice. God, not man, has determined the law. "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25). Man is promised blessings if he obeys God and punishment if he rejects God (cf. Mark 16:15, 16). In dealing with Cain and Abel God sets forth a principle which is still true today. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Genesis 4:3-7). The principle is "if we obey God, will not God accept us"? The answer is a resounding YES! God's holy character demands justice.

God's holy character demands His steadfastness for all. Seeing that God is holy and His holiness demands judgment and justice, then His holiness also demand His steadfastness. God will judge and demand justice for ALL. God's law is for all. Christ said, "For God so loved the world..." (John 3:16). God wants everyone to be saved (cf. 1 Timothy 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). Christ is the way (cf. John 14:6) and there is no other (cf. Acts 4:12). For God to maintain His Holy character, what He requires of one, he must require of all.

What will each of you do with the holiness of God?

**WOT**

# THE PRODIGAL

Mike Benson, Hattiesburg, MS

When I was a young teenager, a neighbor kept several cattle in a large pasture behind our house. Perhaps it be would more accurate to say, "...A neighbor TRIED to keep several cattle in a pasture behind our house."

One particular bovine found a broken strand in the barbed wire fence which separated the pasture from our property. Occasionally I would come home from school and find her traipsing around the backyard, browsing on the occasional patch of herbaceous vegetation, and scattering free fertilizer. Having spent my childhood in the streets of Dayton, Ohio, I didn't have a lot of experience corralling large livestock, but eventually I would manage to direct her back to her side of the enclosure -- at least temporarily, until she decided to try the Benson backyard buffet again.

Once she discovered the way out, it was difficult to keep her in where she belonged. For "Bossy", that twisted, three-strand barrier was the cow equivalent of the Berlin Wall and had to be breached. Those of you who have raised cattle know what I'm talking about. Stay with me for a minute.

I'm always taken back when I hear denominational preachers teach the "once-saved, always-saved" doctrine. Essentially they're saying, "You can't leave if you're 'in', and if you do in fact leave, you were never 'in' in the first place." People aren't cattle, but experience, observation, as well as the Bible tells us that sometimes folks, unfortunately, do wander (Hebrews 2:1; Psalm 119:176; Isaiah 53:6) from their saved state in the church (Acts 1:25; Acts 8:20-22; Galatians 5:2-4; Hebrews 5:12-6:6). For them, the grass appears greener on the other side and they want to "taste" what the world has to offer.

Remember the story of the Prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32)? A young man approached his father and asked for the immediate payment of his inheritance (v. 12). The request was granted and the son then left for a distant land. There he wasted his fortune, and then found himself on hard times (v. 13). Penniless, the young man was forced to seek employment feeding pigs (vv. 14-15). Eventually he came to himself, acknowledged his foolish ways, and headed back home (17-19). His grieving father saw him in the distance, ran to meet him, embraced him, and then gave a lavish party in his honor (vv. 22-23).

Now study the text carefully. The head-strong son "struck out on his own" and in so doing, severed his relationship with his father. The Bible says the lad journeyed to a "far country." Now watch it. He was "in" (saved); then he was "out" (lost). He had once enjoyed the privileges of sonship, but later found himself an

estranged, destitute, swine-feeding servant. Did the young man leave -- did he, in essence, "break out of the fence?" Obviously, he did. What was his status while he was gone? Jesus said he was "dead" (v. 24), lost, separated.

Calvinism says, "You can't leave...you can't be lost." Bossy left, at least, every once in a while. (A cow can't leave a pasture she was never in in the first place). The Prodigal left. (A son can't return to his father if he's never left in the first place).

Some of you reading this very message have left the faith. You've either departed (1 Timothy 4:1; 1:6; 3:1; 4:21; 5:7; Hebrews 3:12) from the truth by embracing religious error (Colossians 2:8; 2 Timothy 4:3-4; Titus 1:14, 2 Peter 3:17) or you have left in a practical way by engaging in sinful practices (Romans 8:12-13; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; 2 Peter 2:20-22) -- or both. In either case, you've left the safe-haven (Ephesians 1:3) of the body of Christ and alienated yourself from your Father in heaven.

Whatever your sin, you can come home again. Your Father is anxious for you to return. Come now.

**WOT**

## **CHANGE IN PRINTING FREQUENCY**

As printing and mailing costs continue to rise, the elders of the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ who oversee the publication of *Words of Truth* have determined that we will mail out 6 issues per year as of the beginning of 2011. This will allow our readership to increase without increasing the costs associated with publishing WOT. Due to financial constraints, the decision has also been made to forego the last 4 issues of 2010, and begin with the January-February issue of 2011. We hope this causes no inconvenience to our dear readers. We thank all of you for reading *Words of Truth*, and we pray that you will pass each issue on to your friends and neighbors.

## ASK A BIBLE QUESTION

**QUESTION:** I am afraid to die! I've studied Darwinism, Cryogenics, Reincarnation and Spiritism and can't find any hope. What does the Bible say about death?

**ANSWER:** It is clear that man is intended to be alive. The living God made man as a "living creature" (Gen. 2:7) with the intention that he should live forever in fellowship with His Maker. However, when sin entered, so did death (Gen. 2:17; Rom. 5:12), and man the living creature became man the dying creature. This happens because sin separates the sinner from God (Isa. 59:2). This separation occurs because sin by its very nature is the opposite of God, the very contradiction of his own morally pure and holy essence (Ps. 5:4-6; Isa. 6:3-5; Hab. 1:12-13; 1 Pet. 1:15-16). Thus sin by its very nature involves and even requires separation from God. The sinner turns his back upon God, and God turns his face away from the sinner (Isa. 59:1-2; 65:7). Thus the sinner becomes dead since he is separated from the only true source of life, the only one who "has life in Himself" (John 5:26). The sinner is "excluded from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18). In its basic nature death is nothing but a curse, an enemy, a foe. Even for Christians, both the event of dying and the disembodied state of death are unnatural. But Christians know one thing no one else on earth does: though death is an enemy, it is a DEFEATED enemy. Jesus Christ came into the world for the very purpose of meeting this enemy in battle and defeating it (Heb. 2:14-15). When Jesus died and rose again, he struck a deathblow to death; and in this sense the enemy is already defeated. The risen Christ had brought death under his control, and is able to release its captives (Luke 4:18).  
**READ:** Revelation 1:17-18. Christians face death not with fear but with confidence in the promise of redemptive resurrection when Christ returns (1 Cor. 15:25-26).

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