

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

January-March 2019

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Colossians 1:2). “I pray, that your love may abound” (Philippians 1:9).

**Indiana Meetings:** Lynnford Beachy and Bill Altman will be speaking in Madison, Indiana, April 5, 6. Call Bill Starr for more information: 812-493-5720.

**You are Invited:** We are having non-denominational Bible studies on Saturday evenings in Kansas, Oklahoma. We meet at 5:30pm for a light supper followed by music and a Bible study. All of our friends and neighbors are invited to join us. We hope to see you here! Call 304-633-5411 for more information.

## The Source of Love

by Lynnford Beachy

The world is earnestly longing for something that is increasingly rare in our world today. The Bible says, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:22). “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” (Romans 8:19). The world is waiting for God’s children to be manifested. How are they manifested? Jesus explained, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if

ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). The world is longing to see pure, unselfish love. This is unusual in a world where “the love of many” is growing “cold” (Matthew 24:12).

God’s true children are known more for their love than anything else. The Bible says, “Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5, NKJV). All of God’s instructions can be summed up in two things, love God with all your



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heart, and love others as yourself. Jesus said, “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matthew 22:40). Love is the foundation of everything. “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10).

John exclaimed, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (1 John 3:14). The identifying mark of all those who have the life of God flowing through them is that they genuinely and unselfishly love God and others. Without that love, it does not matter how many religious ceremonies you perform, how correctly you know the teachings of the Bible, or even if you can heal the sick and raise the dead. Without love in your hearts you are destined for eternal death (Matthew 7:22, 23; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Jesus shared a story, “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him” (Luke 10:30-34).

Three men passed by this injured man, but only one took care of him.

The real difference between these men was not what they did, but how they felt about the wounded man. The Samaritan “had compassion on him” which moved him to action. The Levite and Priest would have done the same thing if they had compassion for him. The compassion, or love, was the difference between these men. It is love, or the lack thereof, that will be the determining factor between those who live forever with God and those who perish (Matthew 25:31-46).

### **Tracing Love to its Source**

So love is what we need if we want to live forever, but how do we get it? Have you ever known someone you really don’t like very much, and you wanted to change the way you feel about them? How did that work for you? Love is not something we can generate on our own. In fact, the Bible says, “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love” (1 John 4:7, 8). Love is from God. There are a lot of counterfeits, but true love comes only from God. If you see unselfish love, you can be sure God is the source.

One thing we learn here is that those who have pure love are born of God. Being born again is a requirement to have this type of love. This is not an optional step (John 1:3); it must occur before true love can be manifested in our lives. (Please request a free copy of *You Must be Born Again*, to get more information on this vital step in the Christian walk. This is also available

for download at <https://presenttruth.info/product/you-must-be-born-again.>)

Another thing we learn from 1 John 4:7, 8 is that all those who love, know God. There is a direct connection between loving and knowing God. More specifically those who love know first that God loves them. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Our ability to love others is directly connected to our knowledge of God's love for us. He is the source of love, we are a channel. For us to truly love others, His love must flow through us, which starts with knowing His love. The greater our knowledge of His love, the greater we will love others.

This knowledge of God's love is supernaturally imparted to us by the Spirit of God, and then grows each day by the same Spirit directing our thoughts to see God's love where we could not see it before. The Bible says, "...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us" (Romans 5:5). "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Thessalonians 3:5). When God delivered me from drugs and alcohol, it was the thought of God's love for me that started the transformation and enhanced it every day (Romans 2:4). It was as if I was living in black and white, and God suddenly turned on the color. I began to see signs of God's love everywhere I looked. The Spirit of God was directing me to see His love which deepened my love for Him. (Please

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contact us for a free copy of *Rescued from Addiction* where I share my personal testimony of God's amazing, transforming love. This is also available for download at <https://presenttruth.info/product/rescued-from-addiction-a-personal-testimony.>)

Deepening our love for God by revealing a greater knowledge of His love is what He is seeking to accomplish in this world. Look at what the Bible says will be the result of this work: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the

riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:14-19).

**Notice the chain here:**

- 1) Strengthened by His Spirit
- 2) Christ dwelling in your heart
- 3) Rooted and grounded in love
- 4) Comprehension of His love grows
- 5) Filled with all the fullness of God

God wants us to be filled with all the fullness of God. For this to happen our understanding of His love must grow. In fact, our growth in Christ is in proportion to our understanding of God's love. Love is the

agent God uses to expel sin from the heart. Are you struggling with addiction? You need a greater revelation of God's love. Are you losing your temper? You need a greater revelation of God's love. Are you failing in your relationships? You need a greater revelation of God's love. Whatever your problems in life, you need a greater revelation of God's love. The more of God's love you see, the more of His love will flow through you (Matthew 6:22). Our love for God is dependent on knowing His love for us.

mountains which I will tell thee of' (Genesis 22:2). God could not have asked him to give a greater sacrifice. Abraham willingly obeyed the command, yet God stepped in to keep him from harming his child (verse 10-12). This tested Abraham's loyalty to the extreme. If God would have asked him to sell everything and give to the poor, we can be sure he would have done it. How do we know? He was willing to give something greater! If he was willing to give the greatest gift, then we can be sure he would have given

everything else.

## **The Greatest Gift**

Right after John explained that we must know God before we are able to love (1 John 4:7, 8), he wrote, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10). God demonstrated His great love by giving His most valuable gift. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32). Since God is willing to give His Son, we can be sure He will give everything for us.

Abraham was asked to give the ultimate sacrifice. God told him, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the

*Whatever your problems in life, you need a greater revelation of God's love. The more of God's love you see, the more of His love will flow through you.*

The incredible selflessness of the son to give his own life was secondary to the father who was willing to give his son. Some fathers don't love their children very much, so they may sacrifice their children to selfishly cling to their own lives.

But for Abraham it was not that way. Abraham loved his son immensely; in him rested all his hopes for the future (Genesis 15:2-6). The focus of Abraham's story in this test was on the father's love, not the son. Abraham's willingness to give his son was a greater sacrifice than if Abraham would have given his own life. I am certain that Abraham would have been much more willing to die than to participate in the death of his son.

This story was not given just to show Abraham's dedication, but to teach the world a lesson about God's great love. This was a demonstration of how much God is willing to do for us. God's love for His Son far exceeds

Abraham's love for Isaac (John 3:35; 5:20), and still God is willing to give Him up for us. It was a struggle, even for the King of the universe, to yield up His only begotten Son. "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" (John 3:16). The love on the part of our Father in giving His Son is greater than if He would have died Himself, which would have been impossible (1 Timothy 6:13-16).

One of the saddest statements I have ever read was found on a church sign that said, "God condemns, but Jesus saves." This is very far from the truth! It is terrible that this was put on the front of a church. It presents God as if He is eager to condemn us and Jesus stepped in to save us from His Father. It was the Father who sent His Son to save us! "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17). The Son was here on a mission to save the world **for** His Father, not **from** His Father. "For the Father himself loveth you..." (John 16:27).

## **The Key to Victory**

Right after John expressed the amazing love of God in giving His Son, he wrote, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (1 John 5:4, 5). Our ability to overcome is dependant upon believing that "Jesus is the Son of God." Why is

this so important? The Sonship of Christ is the key to knowing God's love. If Jesus is not God's Son, what happens to the love of God? Suppose He was just a human, what then? God's love would be reduced to "God so loved the world that He gave a human." That would be some amount of love, but it would fall far short of the reality of giving His Son. He could remain selfish and give a human. What if Jesus was an angel? Again, we would have the same problem.

Our understanding of God's love is directly connected to the value of the gift He gave for us. If it was anything less than His most valued possession, we could not be sure He loves us with all His heart. If we cannot see that He loves us with all His heart, then it will be impossible for us to love Him with all our hearts. Yet, this is the first and greatest commandment (Matthew 22:38). What if Jesus was God's best friend? Would that change things? Suppose I tell you "I love you so much that I am going to send my friend to die for you?" What would you think then? You may appreciate my friend's love, but you would question my love. You might ask, "Why don't you come yourself instead of sending your friend?" But if I said, "I love you so much I am going to send my only begotten son to die for you." Would that be different than me sending my friend? Of course it would!

It is extremely important to know who Jesus is in relation to His Father, for this is the key to understanding the Father's love. This verse is worth repeating: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,

how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32). This shows that God gave His greatest possible gift when He sent His Son into the world. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4:9). God sent His only begotten Son into the world. That means He had an "only begotten Son" prior to sending Him into the world. He did not send His friend into the world to pretend to be His Son. Nor did He send Himself into the world to pretend to be His own Son. Instead, He "sent His only begotten Son into the world."

Near the end of his gospel, John wrote, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30, 31). John emphasized that the whole reason he took the time to write his gospel was to get across one point, "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," so that you might have life through Him. John knew that this is the key to victory in our lives because it reveals the incredible love of God.

Jesus also emphasized this fact when He asked His disciples, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others,

Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the

gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:13-18).

Jesus was so excited about Peter's confession that He exclaimed, This revelation came from "my Father in heaven," and "upon this rock I will build my church." The rock Jesus was referring to was the confession Peter made about Jesus.

The rock is not just Jesus, but Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of the living God." The foundation of God's church is the identity of Jesus as the only begotten Son of God. Everything hinges upon this truth, for this is the key to understanding God's love.

At the beginning of His public ministry, God proclaimed about Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). Jesus went directly away from that proclamation and Satan came to Him saying, "If thou be the Son of God,..." (Matthew 4:3), and again, "If thou be the Son of God,..." (Matthew 4:6). Jesus knew who He is, and had just heard His Father proclaim it from heaven. His success here was

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dependent upon His knowledge of His identity. Our success is also dependent upon knowing His identity, which gives us our identity as God's children. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6).

Perhaps you are wondering why the Bible stresses the sonship of Christ so emphatically. If He is anyone other than "the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18), the whole plan of salvation crumbles and God's love is left in question. This would leave us unable to love God with all our hearts, for our love is directly dependent upon knowing God's love for us (1 John 4:19).

## **Truly the Son of God**

John the Baptist was sent to prepare the way for Christ. He proclaimed, "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John 1:34). Nathanael, a man of whom Jesus said, in him "there is nothing false" (John 1:47, *The Bible in Basic English*), proclaimed, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God" (John 1:49).

Jesus said of Himself, "I said, I am the Son of God?" (John 10:36). When His disciples were amazed by His authority over the storm, "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God" (Matthew 14:33). Martha said to Jesus, "I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world" (John 11:27). Even the devils knew who Jesus is, and proclaimed "Thou art Christ the Son of God" (Luke 4:41; See also James 2:19).

When Jesus was condemned to die, the main accusation was "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7). The Jewish high priest said, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God" (Matthew 26:63). When He was on the cross some jeeringly said, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross" (Matthew 27:40). The chief priests said, "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God" (Matthew 27:43). When Jesus finally died, a Roman soldier said, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark 15:39).

After His resurrection the disciples referred to Jesus as God's "holy child" (Acts 4:27, 30). When Philip was teaching an Ethiopian man who wanted to be baptized, he said to him, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:37). Immediately after Paul was converted, "...straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God" (Acts 9:20). Paul proclaimed, that Jesus was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4). He also wrote, "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession" (Hebrews 4:14).

John wrote, “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (1 John 4:15). “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:10-12).

The Scriptures powerfully proclaim Jesus to be the actual, literal, only begotten Son of God. The Father Himself declared from heaven twice, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17; 17:5; 2 Peter 1:17). What are we to make of this? It would appear that God wants us to believe that Jesus is His true Son. What does this mean?

## **The Son of God**

When Jesus came into this world He became “the son of man” (Matthew 18:11), but His mission on earth did not change His status as the Son of God. It is true that on earth He had no earthly Father, but His birth on this earth is not what made Him the Son of God, for He was God’s Son before coming into the world (John 1:15; 6:62; 8:42; Joshua 5:13-15). “For God sent... his Son... that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17). “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 John 4:14). “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into

the world, that we might live through him” (1 John 4:9). The sonship of Christ was not dependent upon Him coming into this world. If Jesus would have never left his seat “on the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1), He would still be God’s Son. When God gave His Son to be born of a human, that alone was a great sacrifice, yet He “humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:8). He will forever bear the weight of humanity upon Him.

For all eternity it will be possible that “one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends” (Zechariah 13:6). He says, “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me” (Isaiah 49:15). God’s love is amazing! It is thrilling to behold!

In the eighth chapter of Proverbs Wisdom is said to have a mouth and love (Proverbs 8:1, 8, 17). Who is Wisdom? “But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.... But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Corinthians 1:24, 30). “Wisdom” is a title that is applied to God’s Son, just as He also has the title, “the Word of God” (Revelation 19:13) because He speaks for God (John 3:34). Jesus is



an actual Person, not just God's knowledge, even though He has the title of Wisdom.

The Son of God declared concerning Himself, "When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth" (Proverbs 8:24, 25). *The Geneva Bible* says, "When there were no depths, was I begotten, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled: and before the hills, was I begotten." *The Bible in Basic English* plainly says, "When there was no deep I was given birth, when there were no fountains flowing with water. Before the mountains were put in their places, before the hills was my birth." That is astounding! Jesus claims that He was born before anything was created. The definition for the form of the original Hebrew word used here is "to be born, to be brought forth" (*Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*). This verb in this form is only used three places in the Bible, and here are the other two Scriptures where it is used: "Art thou the first man that was born? or wast thou made before the hills?" (Job 15:7). "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). As we can plainly see, the term "brought forth" in Proverbs 8:24, 25 can mean nothing other than being begotten, or born.

Let us continue reading in Proverbs chapter eight and learn more about the characteristics of God's dear Son. "While as yet he had not made the

earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there [See John 1:1-3]: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men.... For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death" (Proverbs 8:26-36).

The speaker here says that He was brought up with the Lord and was daily His delight, and rejoiced always before Him. This is a real Person. He then says, "For whoso findeth me findeth life." John wrote, "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). Jesus Christ is the one speaking about Himself in Proverbs chapter eight. He is truly the Son of God, just as John wrote, "the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love" (2 John 1:3).

The terms Father and Son, by definition, indicate the existence of one before the other. This may be why the Father is called, "the Ancient of days" (Daniel 7:9, 13). This was the understanding of the Israelites. In the book of Proverbs we read: "Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?

who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" (Proverbs 30:4). When Jesus was here the Jews did not dispute the fact that God has a Son, they disputed Jesus' claim to be God's Son.

The disciples and apostles of Christ's day, along with the large majority of Christians who lived in the first few centuries after Christ's death, understood Jesus to be the literal, begotten Son of God without any mysterious definition attached to these words. For example, Justin Martyr (110-165 AD), quoting from Proverbs 8, refers to Christ in the following statement:

When Jesus was here the Jews did not dispute the fact that God has a Son, they disputed Jesus' claim to be God's Son.

"The Lord... begets me before all the hills." He adds: "You perceive, my hearers, if you bestow attention, that the Scripture has declared that this Offspring was begotten by the Father before all things created; and that that which is begotten is numerically distinct from that which begets, any one will admit" (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, Chapter 129).

Novatian (210-280 AD) wrote, "God the Father, the Founder and Creator of all things, who only knows no beginning, invisible, infinite, immortal, eternal, is one God;... of whom, when He willed it, the Son, the Word, was born... the Father also precedes Him,... Because it is essential that He who knows no beginning must go before Him who has a beginning;... [The

Son has] an origin because He is born, and of like nature with the Father in some measure by His nativity, although He has a beginning in that He is born, inasmuch as He is born of that Father who alone has no beginning" (Novation, *Ante Nicene Fathers*, Volume 5, *On the Trinity*, Chapter 31).

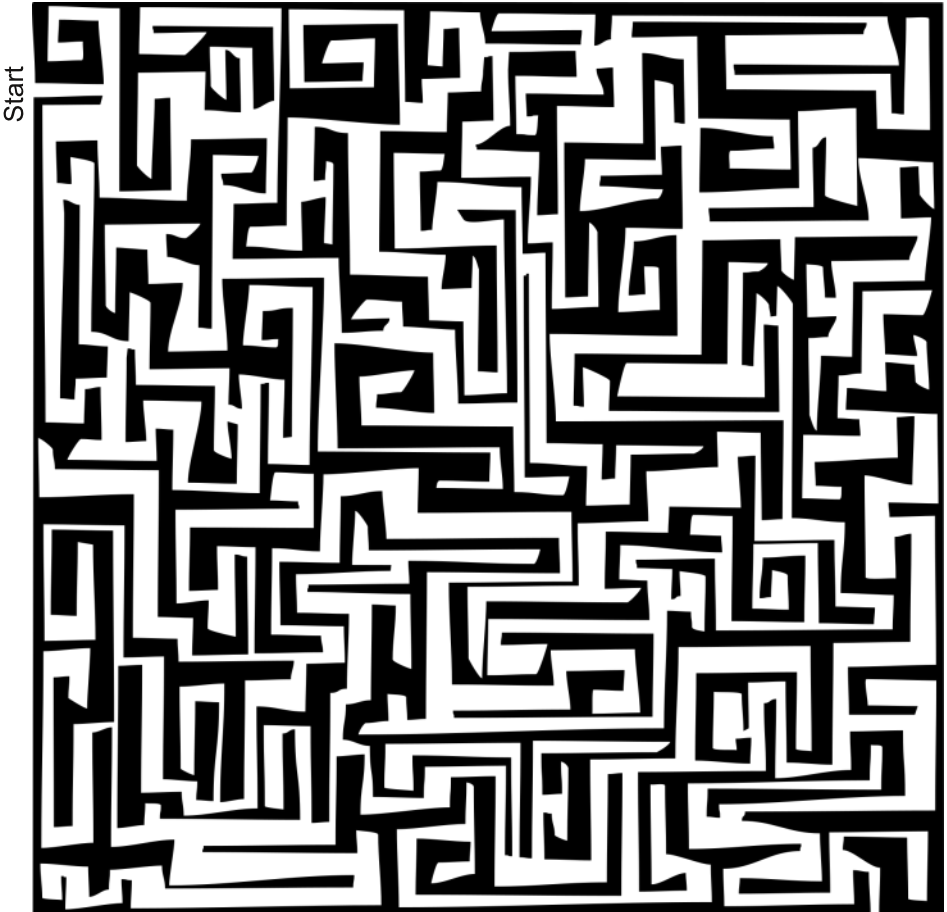
The vast majority (at least 279 of 318) of the bishops at the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD were led by Eusebius of Caesarea, who quoted Proverbs 8 as referring to Jesus, and maintained that He was literally "begotten... the first and only offspring of God" (*Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History*, Chapter 2, page 15).

Some people have mistakenly concluded that God used the terms "Father" and "Son" to get across to our feeble minds a divine relationship (not Father and Son) that they could not possibly explain in our language. To come to this conclusion one would have to assume that God just happened upon this strange type of beings who have a strange language and manner of reproduction, and then was left struggling to explain Himself to these strange creatures. You would have to forget that God created our language and designed our manner of reproduction, after He already had a Son. God designed us with the ability to have a son, and then He exclaimed of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son..." (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). He made us this way on purpose so we could say, "I get it, I know what a son is." God means



The path of the just is as  
the shining light, that  
shineth more and more unto  
the perfect day.

Proverbs 4:18



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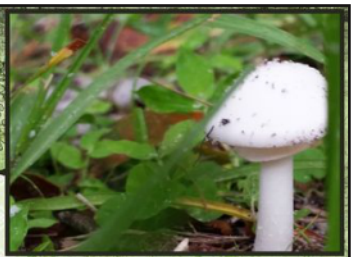
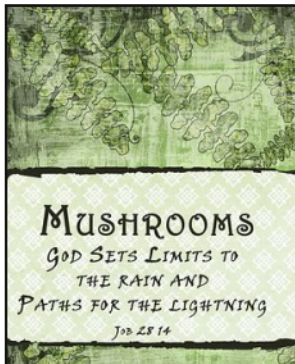
*Present Truth - Kids' Korner*  
**Bible Word Search**

**Find the underlined words...**

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”  
 (1 John 4:7, 8)

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I pray you are so  
 blessed today that  
 everyone around  
 you will be blessed  
 by the overflow

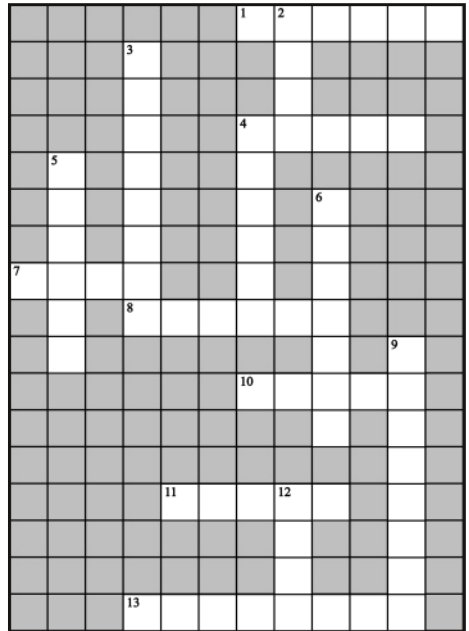


How cool is it that the same God who created galaxies looked at you and thought the world needs one of you too.

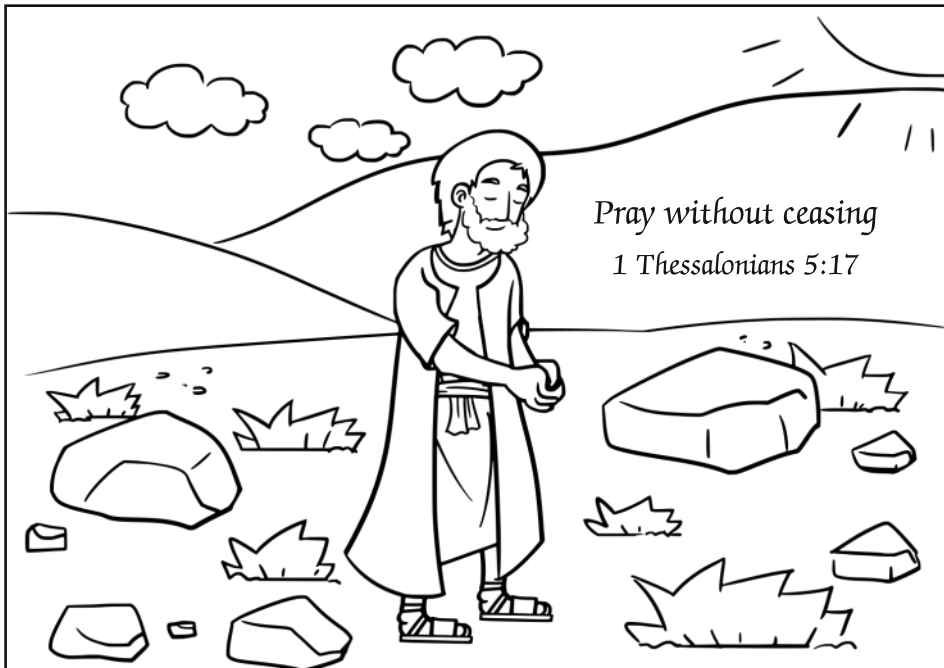
*Present Truth - Kids' Korner*  
**Bible Study Crossword - Personality of God - Part 10**

(The King James Version is required.)

- “For this cause I bow my knees unto the \_\_\_\_ of our Lord Jesus Christ,” Ephesians 3:14—**4 Down**
- “Of whom the whole \_\_\_\_ in heaven and earth is named,” Ephesians 3:15—**1 Across**
- “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his \_\_\_\_ in the inner man.” Ephesians 3:16—**8 Across**
- “That \_\_\_\_ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,” Ephesians 3:17—**5 Down**
- “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious \_\_\_\_: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” 2 Peter 1:4—**3 Down**
- “He that hath the Son hath \_\_\_\_; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not \_\_\_\_.” 1 John 5:12 (1 word)—**7 Across**
- “To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this \_\_\_\_ among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27—**6 Down**
- “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God \_\_\_\_ in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Romans 8:9—**11 Across**
- “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the \_\_\_\_ of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20—**4 Across**



- “Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the \_\_\_\_.” 1 John 4:4—**10 Across**
- “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of \_\_\_\_, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” Romans 8:15—**9 Down**
- “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, \_\_\_\_, Father.” Galatians 4:6—**2 Down**
- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only \_\_\_\_ Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16—**13 Across**
- “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the \_\_\_\_ Adam was made a quickening spirit.” 1 Corinthians 15:45—**12 Down**



Pray without ceasing

1 Thessalonians 5:17

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Answers

				F	A	M	I	L	Y	
		P							B	
		R							B	
		O		F	A	I	T	H		
C	M		A							
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Bonus

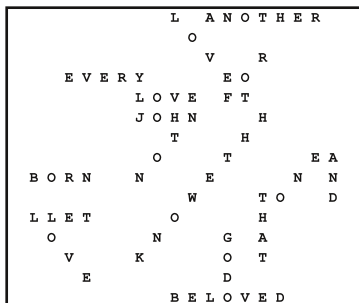
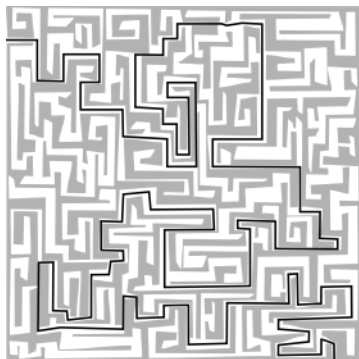
How many times can you find the word "life" in the first article?

Answer for the

Last

Issue:

Inside 12



what He says even regarding our human relationships of father and son that He designed in His own image.

According to the Bible, Jesus Christ was begotten, which literally means born, before anything was created—long before God sent Him into the world (Colossians 1:15-17). How He was begotten is not for us to know (Deuteronomy 29:29), but God wants us to realize that He and His Son have a close, genuine, father-son relationship that is not just a role, or an act. It is this fact that guarantees Jesus to be just like His Father, and guarantees that God giving His Son was the ultimate sacrifice, proving beyond a shadow of a doubt that “God is love” (1 John 4:8).

## **The Son Highly Exalted**

The first chapter of Hebrews contains the strongest collection of verses used to prove the exalted nature of Christ above all creatures. Paul wrote, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1, 2).

God appointed His Son to be the heir of all things. An heir is “one who receives his allotted possession by right of sonship” (*Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*). All things the Son has, He received from His Father, including life itself. Jesus said, “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.” (John 5:26).

Continuing in Hebrews we read, “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his

person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Hebrews 1:3).

An image is a likeness of the original. In this case, Jesus is called, “the express image” of His Father. *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon* defines this as a, “precise reproduction in every respect.” As the Son of God, Jesus Christ is the image, or reproduction, of His Father. It is impossible to be an image and the original at the same time. You can be one or the other, but not both. Would it be right or proper to say that the Father is the image of the Son? No, and that is likely why He is never referred to in this manner, because He is the original. People have approached me saying, “Your son looks just like you.” It would be rare for a person to say, “You look like your son.” Why? My son is the image of me, not the other way around, because I came first.

Continuing, Paul wrote, “Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Hebrews 1:4). By right of sonship, Jesus Christ received a more excellent name than the angels. Angels are not literal sons, and therefore do not receive what Christ naturally inherits because He really is God’s Son.

Paul continued, “For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?” (Hebrews 1:5). Notice the argument Paul uses to distinguish Jesus from

the angels. Over and over again he argues that Jesus is better because He is the Son of God, because He was “begotten,” because He is “the express image” of His Father, because He is the “heir of all things,” because He naturally receives an “inheritance” from His Father.

Paul wrote, “And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom” (Hebrews 1:6-8). Here, Paul is telling us that Jesus is divine because He is really God’s Son. His language used to emphasize this is abundantly clear. Jesus is better than the angels because He was literally born of His Father, which cannot be said of any of anyone else.

When Paul comes to the point of Jesus being called God, he wrote, “But unto the Son he [the Father] saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Hebrews 1:8, 9). As the Son of God, Jesus is, by right of inheritance, God by nature. A true Son of God could be nothing else or nothing less than God.

There is a law in nature that creatures can only have offspring “after their kind” (Genesis 1:24, 25). The offspring of a dog is always a

dog, the offspring of a bird is always a bird, the offspring of a human is always a human, and the offspring of God, naturally is God. It is right and proper to refer to Jesus Christ as “God,” for God, the Father Himself calls Him, “God.” Yet, in the same breath, the Father makes it clear that He is the God of His Son. He says, “thy God, hath anointed thee...” Jesus is God, yet He has a God above Him who is also His Father.

Paul wrote, “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him” (Ephesians 1:17). Jesus said to Mary, right after His resurrection, “Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God” (John 20:17). Jesus told His disciples that His God is the same God as their God. He also explained who this God is, the Father. He assured the disciples that His Father, is also our Father, and His God is also our God.

Long after His resurrection, Jesus promised, “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Revelation 3:12).

Paul wrote, “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is



God” (1 Corinthians 11:3). In explaining hierarchy, Paul stopped when he came to God. Why? He can’t go any higher! The Father is “the most high God,” and is the head of Christ. The Father is the only being in the Bible given the titles, “most High” (Mark 5:7) or “the Highest” (Luke 1:32).

The Bible says there is, “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:6). And again, “As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Corinthians 8:4-6).

The Bible is clear that “there is but one God, the Father,” and “there is none other God but one.” Jesus proclaimed the same in His closing prayer at the Last Supper: “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father,... And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:1-3). Jesus said His Father is “the only true God.” That would mean there is none other “true God,” but what does that mean. The Greek word translated “true” here is also used in Hebrews where Jesus is said to be “A minister of the sanctuary, and of the **true** tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man” (Hebrews 8:1-2). Here the word

“true” is used to distinguish the original from its likeness or image. The original tabernacle is the one God pitched in heaven, and the image or copy is the one Moses built on earth. There is only one true (original) tabernacle.

The Father is the “only **true** [original] God,” and His Son is the “express image” of “the invisible God” (Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15). This in no way detracts from the exalted nature of the Son of God, for He was “in the form of God” and the Father has “highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name” (Philippians 2:6, 9).

(For more information on the love of God in giving His Son, request *God’s Love on Trial, Understanding the Personality of God, and Answering Objections*. These are all available for free download at <https://present-truth.info>.)

## Conclusion

The Bible declares that love is the foremost identifying characteristic of God’s people. All of the ceremonies and rituals no matter how strictly observed are useless without God’s love in our hearts. The presence of love in our hearts is the sign that we have “passed from death unto life” (1 John 3:14). All true, unselfish love only comes from God, and we can have it by being born again and knowing God’s love for us (1 John 4:7-19). Our ability to love is in proportion to our knowledge of God’s love for us.

This love is demonstrated in many ways, but the incredible love of God in giving His Son is unparalleled in

the universe. It is this great gift that will be the theme of our study for eternity. The Bible links our ability to love others and overcome the world to knowing that God gave His Son to die for us (1 John 4:7; 5:5; Romans 5:8). Knowing the identity of Jesus Christ as the Son of God is the key for us to see our standing before God as His beloved children. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another" (1 John 4:11).

Failing to find words to adequately express the amazing love of God, John simply said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God..." (1 John 3:1). Behold the love of God! Spend a thoughtful hour each day contemplating the unspeakable gift of God. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Corinthians 9:15). Any man-made theory about the identity of Jesus that diminishes the great gift God gave for us, must be viewed with suspicion. "...let God be true, but every man a liar" (Romans 3:4). That includes me! Don't take my word for anything, but accept God's word for everything, for He "cannot lie" (Titus 1:2). I pray that we will accept what the Bible says about Jesus and fall in love with God more and more each day.

The key to success in this life and access to the life to come is knowing God's love. This knowledge will improve every aspect of your life. The greater your knowledge of His love, the greater you will succeed in life (Daniel 11:32). You will still have trials and tribulation, but it is so much easier to handle knowing you are

loved by the Creator of all things, who made the vast galaxies and complex cells, and thought the universe needs one of you too. God does not promise to remove all difficulties from your life, but He does promise to be with you through it all (Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; John 14:18). Do everything in your power to increase your knowledge of God's love, for this will trickle down to the way you treat everyone around you.

One thing that I have found to be very helpful is listening to the Bible often. This can easily be done by downloading a free MP3 copy from [www.audiotreasure.com](http://www.audiotreasure.com). I have put it on my phone and play it almost all the time. My son asked me, "How many times have you heard that, Dad?" I don't know, but it has been a lot. I have learned so much this way, and learn new things every time I listen. A really nice thing about listening to it is you can get a large context of what the Bible is saying. If you cannot access it on a computer, get someone to help you. You can also call them to get a CD at 757-741-8457.

Regardless how you do it, focus on enlarging your knowledge of God's love, and ask Him to show you more each day. The last message of mercy to be given to the world is a revelation of God's character of love. I pray that you will be blessed with many reasons to rejoice after seeing a deeper picture of God's love every day. >>

(I pray that you have been blessed by this article. It will be available as a booklet to share with your friends and family.

*Editor)*

## **Moral and Civil Law**

by Alonzo T. Jones

As God is the only moral governor, as his is the only moral government, as his law is the only moral law, and as it pertains to him alone to punish immorality, so likewise the promotion of morality pertains to him alone. Morality is conformity to the law of God; it is obedience to God. But obedience to God must spring from the heart in sincerity and truth, or it is not obedience; for the law of God takes cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart. But "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). By transgression, all men have made themselves immoral. "Therefore by the deeds of the law [by obedience] there shall no flesh be justified [accounted righteous, or made moral] in his sight" (Romans 3:20). As all men have, by transgression of the law of God, made themselves immoral, therefore no man can, by obedience to the law, become moral; because it is that very law which declares him to be immoral. The demands, therefore, of the moral law, must be satisfied, before he can ever be accepted as moral by either the law or its Author; but the demands of the moral law can never be satisfied by an immoral person.

If ever men shall be made moral, it must be by the Author and Source of all morality. For "now the righteousness [the morality] of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness [the morality] of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned [made themselves immoral], and come short of the glory of God"

(Romans 3:21-23). It is by the morality of Christ alone that men can be made moral. And this morality of Christ is the morality of God, which is imputed to us for Christ's sake; and we receive it by faith in him. Then by the Spirit of God the moral law is written anew in the heart and in the mind, sanctifying the soul unto obedience—unto morality. And there is no other in this world. Therefore, as morality springs from God, and is planted in the heart by the Spirit of God, through faith in the Son of God, it is demonstrated by proofs of Holy Writ itself, that to God alone pertains the promotion of morality.

God, then, being the sole promoter of morality, what body has he made the conservator of morality in the world, the church, or the civil power?—The church, and the church alone. It is "the church of the living God" (1 Timothy 3:15). It is "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). It was to the church that he said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15); "and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20). It is by the church, through the preaching Jesus Christ, that the gospel is "made known to all nations for the obedience of faith" (Romans 16:26). There is no obedience but the obedience of faith; there is no morality but the morality of faith. Therefore it is proved that to the church, and not to the state, is committed the conservation of morality in the world. This at once settles the question as to whether the state shall teach morality, or religion. The state cannot teach religion. It has not the

credentials for it. The Spirit of God and the gospel of Christ are both essential to this teaching, and neither of these is committed to the state, but both to the church.

But though this work be committed to the church, even then there is not committed to the church the prerogative either to reward morality or to punish immorality. She beseeches, she entreats, she persuades men to be reconciled to God; she trains them in the principles and the practice of morality. It is hers by moral suasion or spiritual censures to preserve the purity and discipline of her membership; but hers it is not either to reward morality or to punish. This pertains to God alone. Morality or immorality have their springs in the secret counsels of the heart; and as God alone knows the heart (1 Kings 8:39), he alone can measure either the merit or the guilt involved in any question of morals.

By this it is demonstrated that to no man, to no assembly or organization of men, does there belong any right whatever to punish immorality. Whoever attempts it, usurps the prerogative of God. The inquisition is the inevitable logic of any claim of any assembly of men to punish immorality; because to punish immorality it is necessary in some way to get at the thoughts and intents of the heart.

By all these evidences is established the plain, common-sense principle that to civil government pertains only that which the term itself implies,—that which is civil. The purpose of civil government is civil, and not moral. Its function is to preserve order in society, and to cause all its subjects to rest in assured safety, by guarding them against all incivility. Morality belongs to God; civility, to the state. Morality must be rendered to God; civility, to the state “Render therefore

unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21).

But it may be asked, Does not the civil power enforce the observance of the commandments of God, which say, Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, and thou shalt not bear false witness? Does not the civil power punish the violation of these commandments of God? The civil power does not enforce these, nor does it punish the violation of them, as commandments of God. The state does forbid murder and theft and perjury, and some states forbid adultery, but not as commandments of God. From time immemorial, governments that knew nothing about God have forbidden these things. If the civil power attempted to enforce these as the commandments of God, it would have to punish as a murderer the man who hates another (Matthew 5:21, 22); it would have to punish as a perjurer the man who raises a false report; it would have to punish as an adulterer the person who thinks impurely (Matthew 5:27, 28); it would have to punish as a thief the man who wishes to cheat his neighbor; because all these things are violations of the commandments of God. Therefore if the state is to enforce these things as the commandments of God, it will have to punish the thoughts and intents of the heart; but this is not within the province of any earthly power, and it is clear that any earthly power that should attempt it, would thereby simply put itself in the place of God, and usurp his prerogative. >>

(This article was taken from the July 15, 1889 edition of *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*. Some minor editing was done for this publication. *Editor*)

*Present Truth*  
**A Last-day Message**

by Tom Wofford

There is a special message that is going out to the entire world. It is a last day warning message that is being given by angels who work through God's last day people to awaken the world to God's Biblical truths and make ready a people for Jesus coming again. This message comes a response to the mark of the beast crisis mentioned in the previous chapter of Revelation.

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:6-12).

A lot of the signs of Jesus' return have already been, and are being, fulfilled. But we cannot know the exact day or hour of His return. We can read the signs to know that He is coming back soon and that we are living at the final moments of this earth. God is longsuffering with mankind. He does not want anyone to be lost.

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:32-36).

The Lord will only come as a thief in the night to those who are unprepared (1 Thessalonians 5:2-4). Satan has invented many false teachings about Jesus the Messiah and His second coming. There's no reason to be deceived. We only need to prayerfully study His word and we can find the truth. A person should not take my word for it nor the word of anyone else. They should take what I say and what others say and test them with a "thus saith the Lord." Be like the Bereans who "were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11). Search the Scriptures, for the Lord is coming soon. >>

(This study was written by a prisoner in Oregon. I pray it is a blessing. *Editor*)



# Letters from our Readers



“Thank you Pastor Lynnford for the *Rescued from Addiction* booklets. What a wonderful testimonial to share. My nephew has, just this week, come to the prelease home from the drug addiction program (9 Months) and previous to that a four year prison sentence, plus many previous sentences. I will share with him. Perhaps he will share with others. You are a blessing to our faith. I am so happy I made your acquaintance a few years back, at a camp meeting, where my sweet friend was baptized. My health has been very fragile. Please keep me in your prayers. May our blessed Saviour and our Father God be with you Lynnford, and with your family.” **Montana**

“Dear *Present Truth*, please send me everything you can to help me grow in Christ.” **Arkansas**

“To all at *Present Truth*, May God abundantly bless your ministry in 2019 and may many souls be saved through your works. Lynnford, we always enjoy your *Present Truth* articles. Much love to all.” **Idaho**

“Thank you so much for sending the book *The Formulation of the Doctrine of the Trinity* per my telephone request. It was just what I thought it would be; a concise explanation! It arrived Friday before Sabbath, so I was able to read it on Sabbath afternoon. Thank you and may you be abundantly blessed.” **South Dakota**

“I enjoy Plain Truth so very much. Thank you for mailing it to me. Now I am asking you to please send me the Truth on ‘Vain Religion.’ May God bless you.” **New Mexico**

“We have been so blessed by your ministry. Can’t thank you enough. Thoughts and prayers.” **Tennessee**

“We love your articles and your puzzles even though we are not kids. Here is a little donation. We will keep you on our giving list and send as we are blessed. Thank you for sharing with us. Please keep it up until the end time comes. May our Lord bless you immensely.” **Alabama**

“Greetings in the name of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! We hope this finds you well, of good courage and prospering in the Lord. We have been blessed by your ministry and the truth-filled materials you produce and want to thank you for your dedication and diligence in this work. We would like to receive some copies of your newsletter when you have a chance to send them. Please pray for us as we continue to attend our local church but yearn to fellowship with like-minded brethren. We are praying the Lord will give us opportunity to share the enriching truth He has brought to us which portrays the depth of His love so beautifully. May God bless you above all you could ask or think in Christ Jesus! We look forward

to seeing you at camp meeting, Lord willing if He should tarry. Yours in the Blessed Hope.”

*Virginia*

“Could I get some small pamphlets? Ten each, *The Love of God, What Must I do to be Saved, Finding Your Identity*, and *25 The Holy Spirit*, and anything else you think I might need. I am in trouble with my church for using this literature. Please pray I can tell it as the Bible says it. I am praying for you and your family.

*Indiana*

“Hello I would like to be put on your mailing list for your awesome newsletter. I thank you for your ministry. May God our Father continue to bless you all through Jesus Christ our Lord. I have been reading through all your tracts and books, and praise God for them. I got myself a printer and started to print your tracts. I work as a delivery driver and thought I could put it to use by spreading your tracts. Thank you very much. For the love of the truth. Many thanks.”

*Canada*

“A friend of mine recently gave me a book, *God's Love on Trial*. It has opened my eyes. I would love to receive your newsletter. Thank you for the work that you are doing. I think the great shaking of our church has begun. Again thank you so very much. With much warm love.”

*Indiana*

“I am writing to request that you place me on your mailing list for a subscription to your booklet, *Present Truth*. I have recently read a few of the back issues that a friend and brother has, and I would love to start receiving them for myself. I truly appreciate your work and what you do to spread the gospel. Thank you very much.”

*Prisoner in Michigan*

“I must share my gratitude for what you have written. I confess my blind phariseical resistance. By reading the works of you and others I have learned and am still learning beautiful truths from the Word of God I never saw before. I wanted to say thank you! In your writings you made reference to a book you have written on the council of Nicea. How may I obtain this book? Again thank you. May God the Father bless you with joy and peace.”

*Colorado*

“Thank you for your *Present Truth* newsletter. We appreciate the articles and are glad to receive each issue. May our God supply everything you need and more.”

*Minnesota*

“I love these studies [Bible Lessons] and so look forward to them. I like how the studies are laid out and appreciate the verses. I would like to do more.”

*Prisoner in New York*

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**Editor:** Lynnford Beachy, PO Box 315, Kansas, OK 74347, **phone: (304) 633-5411.** Jim Raymond, phone: (407) 421-6025, e-mail: [newsletter@presenttruth.info](mailto:newsletter@presenttruth.info).

## *Present Truth Fellowship*

PO Box 315  
Kansas, Oklahoma 74347  
U. S. A.

“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.”

*John 3:16*

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**Phone:** 304-633-5411

**Email:** [newsletter@presenttruth.info](mailto:newsletter@presenttruth.info)

**Website:** [www.presenttruth.info](http://www.presenttruth.info)

“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

*John 17:3*