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BIOLA HOUR HIGHLIGHTS

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FEATURING MARCH MESSAGES

How to Get Rid of Guilt the sinner's guide PSALM 51

PART II

By Dr. Al Sanders

There are a lot of people who have become absolutely deaf to the things of God's truth. Unfortunately, many of them, in earlier years, did listen to His voice, but now a coldness has swept over them. Oh, the prayer of David should be the concern of our hearts that He would make us (if necessary even force us), to hear joy and gladness. Only in this way can we find the satisfaction He so definitely wants to give us and which we so desperately need.

Now, notice that word "joy" in verse 8. And while you do, be sure to keep in mind it's not the same, nor is it even synonymous with the term "happiness." There is a song, I think it was written by George Gershwin, that seeks to encourage, "Come on, and let's get happy." What the lyricist is talking about is we should surround ourselves with friends, money, social prominence, anything to make us happy. But you see, joy isn't conditioned by outward circumstances.

At the rock of Gibraltar, the gateway to the Mediterranean Sea, there are two currents which flow in that great body of water. There is a current which comes from the Atlantic Ocean and flows into the Mediterranean and one into the Atlantic. Both of these strong forces are in the same body of water. Constantly they are running contrary to each other. Yet, they still exist in that great vastness. Think of that illustration in connection with your own life. It may be all about you things are dark and foreboding. You are besieged and beset with problems and perplexities. You may not have any of those items which would want to make you sing, "Come on, let's get happy." But with the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour you can still experience matchless joy and gladness. Your life today can be one of satisfaction, contentment and fulfillment. You don't need to be despondent and depressed. Oh, I know sometimes we get down and it seems we'll never be able to get up again. But here David is praying that the crushing burden that has been upon him because of sin might be lifted. This gladness for which he's petitioning is answered in abundance from the Lord. The term "gladness" originally meant "brightness," or which we might call "excitement." I wonder, has life become dull for you? Is it simply one continuous boring routine? Vance Havner describes a "rut" as simply nothing more than a grave with both ends kicked out. Maybe you are in a rut. Listen, the good news for the believer is God wants us to experience joy, satisfaction, contentment, gladness, brightness and excitement with our day-by-day existence. True conviction for sin normally will carry the physical as well as the spiritual effects. David certainly knew exactly how this worked and how the results came to him. Joy and gladness are really the certain and inalienable rights of the individual whose sins are forgiven. They are his positive possession when fellowship with the Lord has been unbroken.

Now, as we look at verse nine in Psalm 51, we find another petition David makes. He seeks to have the guilt and the stain removed from his life. How we need this, too. He says, "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities." Have you ever stopped to realize if God can't see our sins, then we can't see them either.

In this way, the guilt can be completely removed. When our sins have been confessed and when they've been completely cleansed thereby, God's face can no longer see them. God no longer looks upon sins now confessed and cleansed. David is praying, "Blot out all my iniquities." If God can't see our sins, why should we? Why the morbid desire to keep dwelling on the past? These things have been confessed and cleansed. We need to realize it's simply an insult to God to claim He can't do anything about our sins. That's in essence what we're saying when we keep bringing up the past. And it's not just a case of one or two of our sins.

In verse 10, David humbly prays, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." God's still in the creating business. What the Psalmist wants to see created on his behalf is a clean heart. The Lord is the one who has to do it. We can't.

This Hebrew word "create," as we find it here, is the same used in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God created." What did He do? Well, essentially, He took nothing and made something useful out of it. He takes our lives, blasted and blighted because of sin, and out of nothing creates something new, living and vibrant. Sin has so destroyed us that the Creator must be called in once again. Salvation is a marvelous display of God's supreme power. It's His desire to create what we can't do for ourselves. He makes absolutely new what we have given Him from the old.

Consider the last two words of this tenth verse. The Psalmist properly asks, "Renew a right spirit within me." So often when things aren't going right, and when problems face us, we may feel God ought to do something about it in others. Haven't you questioned, at least to yourself, "Why doesn't God change her?" or, "Why doesn't God change him?" In actuality, all the while it's really us who need the changing. The older I get the more convinced I am that one of the greatest temptations of the devil is to become critical and cynical toward life.

I guess it was a few years ago that I read an interesting "Dear Abby" column. It seems an individual had written, perhaps rather facetiously, to inquire, "How can one get the sparkle back in his eye, so he can enjoy again some of the experiences of earlier youthful days?" "Dear Abby" thoughtfully wrote back, perhaps not realizing fully what she was suggesting, "Why, to get the sparkle back in your eye you'd have to be born again, going back and starting life all over again." She was right! We need to have God create, to go back and make out of nothing once again, that clean heart; that new heart.

Do you have a right spirit? Simply, are you able to evaluate things for what they really are? In the original Hebrew, the word for "right" means that which is erect, that which is made to stand up. We all realize there are certain things today which aren't correct or upright. We've noted the involvement of people who have steadfastly proclaimed things to be correct while they have actually been shown to be erroneous, many times grossly so. This is why we need to have this renewal, and it's the renewal God has graciously promised to us.

Perhaps one of the greatest problems facing people with mental difficulties is the terrible feeling of loneliness. This comes not only to those who are elderly but to young people as well. They feel life has tricked them and they have the impression they have been left out of the mainstream. In verse eleven of this Psalm David prays, "Cast me not away . . ." Literally he is saying, "Don't reject me." There is a realization that the only way to find contentment and satisfaction in life is to be made in union with God. That can only be consummated when we come as believers, confessing our sins and seeking the cleansing which God alone can give. David had come asking for cleansing.

Notice in this verse that we have a reference to the Holy Spirit. We should underscore the word "holy" because that's exactly what He is. He cannot dwell and give

us victory if our lives are impure. This is the first Psalm in which the Holy Spirit is referred to. I don't believe any Christian today needs to pray this prayer, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me." In John 14:16 we have a very beautiful promise concerning the constant presence of God's Holy Spirit. What tremendous blessing from Christ's promise, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever." More than this, in the epistle to the Ephesian believers, there's a certain testimony too of the continuing presence of God's Holy Spirit. We're told in verse 30 of chapter four, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby you are sealed until the day of redemption." David realized, too, that he's praying here for the assurance given in Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

If the Spirit of God could be removed at certain times for various reasons from the saints of Old Testament times, think how much greater the privilege and responsibility we have in this age of grace. Since the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit has been given to every believer, never to be taken away again. We have some tremendous responsibilities as believers. God has given us the Holy Spirit, but He hasn't done so frivolously or without some directive purpose. The 16th verse of the fifth chapter of Galatians reminds us we are to walk in the Spirit so we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. Again, in Ephesians, the fifth chapter, there is a similar testimony which reminds us we are not to be drunk with wine wherein is excess, but are to be filled with the Spirit of God. And this is the privilege each of us have as believers.

I've been interested to see how nostalgia is back in and so popular. People are collecting old Coke bottles and even posters 30 or 40 years old. There is a great interest in the revival of old radio programs. Just think of old things being brought back again. Old cars are certainly in. My wife told me some of the clothes she kept in her closet long enough can now be worn again. (I like that!) Antiques are becoming popular. But of all of the products on the market available for the restoration of these different things, there is absolutely nothing which can restore our souls, apart from the prayer of confession and cleansing which David offers here.

Notice he is saying, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He's not talking about the assurance of salvation. He is not talking about the understanding of salvation, but rather the satisfaction derived from it. You know, if you truly received the Lord by faith, then God will never take away His Holy Spirit from you. Doubtless you have the realization of salvation and are eternally secure in that confident understanding. But, still, joy can be missing in your life. When you get right down to it, joy is the one commodity Christians uniquely possess and should show to the outside world.

Make no mistake, you can never have joy without first of all having forgiveness. If you need joy in your life, follow the pattern God, through His Holy Spirit, gave to David. If he could be forgiven his great sins of murder and adultery you can find cleansing and release from your guilt and shame.

And then we see here the joy of thy salvation. It's not my salvation, my church's, my mother's, or my wife's salvation, but it's God's salvation and His alone that can bring joy and satisfaction. There are so many things on every hand to depress us. Look anywhere in the world and see the multitude of perplexing problems facing every aspect and avenue of our existence. Does the knowledge of salvation excite you and bring you true and lasting contentment? It can if you look to the Lord for that blessed truth.

Here, the forgiven Psalmist, the sweet singer of Israel, prays, "Give me a will that wants me to do what You want me to do, even though I may struggle with it at times." Don't wait simply for a feeling that you've been forgiven. God said it, and that settles it. "Let a free spirit sustain me. Let me not be enslaved as I have been in

the past by my sinful passions."

In verse 13 the natural result follows in David's upward spiritual progression. He avows, "Then (because of this experience of confession, cleansing and forgiveness) will I teach transgressors Thy ways and sinners shall be converted unto Thee." This shows us very clearly the Psalmist's true expression of gratitude. I wonder, are we really thankful to the Lord for what He has done for us in the cleansing of our sins?

Dr. S. D. Gordon many years ago prayed, "O Lord, we may not be able to hold very much, but we can overflow lots." And, you know, this is our responsibility. We, too, are to teach transgressors the way of the Lord. Literally, the word "teach" in Hebrew means to disciple. Don't try to teach someone else until this joy or restoration of this satisfying experience is real in your own salvation. You can only teach what you personally have experienced. Perhaps you've heard of the very pious substitute Sunday school teacher whom most people in the church knew to be nothing more than a hypocrite. During the course of the lesson he asked, "Boys, why do you suppose people say I'm a Christian?" There was obvious silence. Finally, one little fellow, who probably didn't realize what he was saying, responded by declaring, "Well, sir, maybe it's because they don't really know you." Would this be an evaluation others could make of us? We're to teach God's ways, not our ways. From a human standpoint we're perhaps quite justified in asking the pertinent question, "Can any good come from David's sin?" With the prescription the Lord has given for confession and cleansing, even in this experience God will bring victory.

A friend of ours, Charles Swindoll, pastor of the First Evangelical Free Church of Fullerton, California, recently pointed out to his congregation the importance of discipling others. He suggested if each one of us would tell someone else the truth of God's love and grace, then soon the world would be evangelized. He illustrated that exciting possibility in this fashion. "If you told just one other person during the course of 1974 about the Lord, so that he became converted, and then the two of you next year, 1975, each told one more, and we continued this process in pyramid fashion for a period of thirty years, then by the time a single generation had passed, 536,870,912 people would be reached for Christ. Can you imagine it? More than half a billion! This is discipleship not by addition but by multiplication!

The greatest danger facing us today is that because of sin, men turn away from Christ. Nathan had to tell David, you remember, as recorded in II Samuel 12:14, "By this deed (that is the evil deed of taking Bathsheba and having Uriah killed), you have given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme His name." It's a fact that the detraction of the gospel actually comes from Christians who live sub-normal spiritual lives. Are we really willing to teach God's truth to those who need to know the way of righteousness?

Verse 14 pleads, "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." Now the allusion here is to the guilt of sin. It clearly shows the necessity of shedding blood or taking innocent life to atone for iniquity.

Carol Fulgate has recently been paroled from prison. She was involved, according to the court record, with one Charles Starkweather in a slaughter of human life without reason or sense. In the intervening years, although she had maintained her innocence, Carol Fulgate came to know Jesus Christ as Saviour. On television recently she told reporters she wants to spend the rest of her life giving a positive testimony for the Lord. She's literally prayed this petition, "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness. My tongue, as a result, shall sing aloud thy righteousness." Have you ever stopped to realize that some of us have killed other people? We're actually murderers, not perhaps with any specific physical deeds with some instrument or implement of death, but we have killed others at least with our words. And as a result we need to have

this definite bloodguiltiness removed from our lives.

Will you notice in this verse the result of being delivered from this sin? There is an almost spontaneous desire to sing the praises of the Lord. Praise is only a natural expression when the sense of sin is completely removed by the Lord. Paul testified, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Notice the pronouns here because they tell the story. It's my tongue and my lips, but it's thy righteousness and thy praise which I'm to sing. We are to sing aloud His righteousness.

Verse 16 is the correct admission, "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offerings." Samuel had to come to Saul to tell him that because of disobedience he had failed as king of Israel. God had given him specific instructions to utterly destroy the enemy. That included not only the human beings, but also all of their animals. It was too much for Saul. He foolishly took it upon himself to disobey. He decided to spare the King, Agag, and also the best of the animals. Then, when faced with his sins, he tried to excuse himself by piously pretending he would use the animals for sacrifices. Samuel came to this wicked king, who had given in to ideas not from God, to point out, "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifice as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

David, as we look at him here, is so afraid of himself because of his sins that he wants to commit his whole life and being to God's divine care. This provides us a perfect golden text. It is a beautiful petition for any preacher, Sunday school teacher or Christian worker. Underline it in your mind, if not directly in your Bible. "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offering." You see, God doesn't want to have your pocketbook until first of all He has you. He doesn't need your money.

Some churches, I'm afraid, become expert in producing spiritual corpses and then proceed to try to beautify them. I remember visiting a funeral chapel service several years ago to see the body of a friend of our family. This woman looked far better dead than she did when she was alive. They had performed some marvelous things with her as far as cosmology was concerned. The church may be able to beautify people and tell them how great they are, but just going to church and giving money and trying to live up to certain earthly principles is definitely not enough. God doesn't want a sacrifice of what you have until first of all you have given Him yourself.

David goes on to explain in verse 17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Anything that is crushed and contains a fragrance, such as a rose, has to go through the experience of being pulverized so the lovely perfume may fill the air. Listen, God wants your heart, my friend, but He'll take it broken. Let the warmth of God's love drive away the coldness and bring the sweetness of His Holy Spirit. David prays that he may understand what God wants.

In verse 18, we find a prayer not only for the Psalmist himself but also for others, "Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem." David realized again as King, his sin had affected the entire empire. The walls here are symbolic of the security of the land. David is praying that his favorite place, the city in which he hoped to build a temple, might find God's love and blessing upon it. I can only ask, has there been in your life or my life some walls broken down because of sin? Maybe with your involvement it's affected others in your family, your home, your neighborhood, your church, your school. These walls need to be rebuilt. Ask that God's good pleasure may be established. And you may be assured that His good pleasure is that no one should perish. Those four words are really the focal issue

of all we do and say. Underscore them, "In Thy good pleasure."

Verse 19, "Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar." No longer is it just a ritual or a perfunctory habit of going to church, attending Sunday school and prayer meetings, helping on visitation programs, or participating through stewardship. Look at it this way, every person is a king over some certain kingdom. We each hold some specific sphere of influence. It may be our family, friends, neighbors, workers, or fellow students. When sin reigns unchallenged in our lives things begin to fall apart. This is what happened to David. David experienced some great heartaches as did Bathsheba. She bore David four sons, including Solomon and Nathan. Her first child, the one who issued from this illicit union, died. On the other hand, as a result of David's coming for confession and cleansing, Solomon and Nathan had the privilege of being in the ancestral line of the Lord Jesus Christ. (This is shown in Matthew 1:6 and Luke 3:31.)

An architect friend of mine told me recently, and in a rather complaining vein, that all too many of his clients who ask him to design a house for them, have already made elaborate plans in their own minds. In exasperation he explained, "What they really want is simply my sanction for their plans." It won't work with the Lord. Only as we go God's way can we know God's will. He said, "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

May the Lord help us to see the challenge of how to get rid of guilt and how to find a blessed restoration in fellowship through our experiences day by day in the glory of our blessed Lord.

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BIOLA HOUR HIGHLIGHTS
ISSUE NO. 4
FEATURING MARCH MESSAGES

DAKTAR-Diplomat in Bangladesh

By Dr. Viggo Olsen

In John 12:12 to 26 we have an interesting passage describing five groups of people who remind me of my own experience in the Christian faith. In verse 19 we see, as usual, the Pharisees were wrong. In my own case, I was wrong about God and His Word. The second group of people is the great crowd (v. 12) who had come to praise the Lord. They were ready to make Him King. Because of His miracles they were moved to excitement. The third group were those who had actually seen the raising of Lazarus. Because of what they had witnessed they were not able to keep quiet.

This category reminds me of my wife's parents. Every letter from them included a tract or pamphlet about our need for conversion. They were kind and loving but they were persistent. Wanting to be through with their discussions, we agreed, "Okay, we'll study your unscientific religion. But then, we'll come to our own decision." They were delighted. We didn't know they had begun their vigil of daily and nightly prayer. On the other hand, our aim was to prove immediately that Christ was not the Son of God. We wanted to get them off our backs. We reviewed all the agnostic arguments we had ever heard in our university experience. We sought for scientific errors we were sure we could find in the Bible.

At that critical point, a young college student came to me one day and pointed out, "Doc, I understand you're studying religion. You might be interested in this book." He gave me "Modern Science and the Christian Faith." It was my very first introduction to Christian evidences. I didn't even know such a field of study existed. Using that volume, and a number of others, we learned remarkable things never known to us before. My wife and I went into some of the external and internal evidences of Scripture. Scientific mistakes we thought existed couldn't be found. Rather, we discovered the Bible pre-dated modern science in many ways. It was a thrilling experience. We even went into the study of fulfilled prophecy. With over 200 prophecies mentioned about Christ Himself, we found how they remarkably came true.

Verse 21 tells us about the Greeks, or foreigners, who comprise the fourth group. They came and stated, "We would see Jesus." In our studies we saw what a remarkable and incredible person Christ is. Like a magnet we were inexorably drawn to Him. There were still final obstacles.

One day in my hospital, a new argument against the Christian faith came to me. When I got home I told my wife what was on my mind. After I ran down she calmly pointed out, "After our hundreds of hours of study can't you see that Christ is exactly who He claimed to be, the Son of God?" There was something about the way she looked at me that somehow knocked down the last barriers of acceptance in my mind. Suddenly, eternity seemed to dawn on me at that one moment of time. The positive evidences vindicated my stand. I knew it was all true. In that little apartment in Brooklyn, New York, I believed and accepted Christ as my very own Saviour. I woke up that next day a new person.

The fifth group of people in this passage were disciples (v. 16). There were many things we didn't understand at first but day by day, as we studied, we began to learn many things. We came across so many dynamic verses of Scripture. Romans 12:1 and 2, for example, was a whole new idea. We had never thought of giving our lives for service. He would be satisfied with nothing less than the entirety of our beings, body, soul and spirit.

The day came when another step developed. We felt a call to service for the Lord. The mission agency to which we were greatly attracted was the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism. They didn't have the kind of field to which we felt God was directing us.

There was a tragedy that took place in the death of a lovely teenage girl in East Pakistan. There was a great area of 400 miles where not a single surgeon could be found. As a result, ABWE opened the field to medical missions. However, there was no hospital or surgeon. No Christian work had ever been done in this area in the entire history of the world. We knew this was where God wanted us.

It was a thrilling thing for us to have a part in the establishment of God's work in the infant nation of Bangladesh (previously known as East Pakistan). God's Word had never really penetrated this area at any time in the past. There was not a single known Christian. Yet there was great openness and opportunity.

In the work of deputation, faith was the great necessity. We were to establish a medical-surgical evangelistic outreach. First of all, it was necessary to gain the funds as well as a staff of 15 or 20 doctors, nurses, evangelists, teachers, and preachers.

We desperately needed someone with contracting skills. The missionaries would be busy in the study of the Bengali language. I drove a thousand miles to the mission headquarters in Philadelphia to present my concerns. No one knew of a qualified and available builder. We united together in prayer. About ten days later, a man from the Los Angeles area who was on business in Philadelphia, stopped by the mission office. We suggested to this dedicated Christian, Paul Goodman, that he consider the assignment in East Pakistan. He responded solemnly, "You've got to give me a little time to think and pray. You see, I just happened to have lived two years of my life in that land. I was a pilot there during the war and know a few words of the language." The Lord seemed to be speaking. Two months later I visited him in his home. I remember saying, "Paul, we've tackled all the questions; you've had a couple of months to give consideration. What's your decision about going to build for God in East Pakistan?" He responded, "Vic, I can see that this job has got my name written all over it. What kind of a Christian would I be to say, 'No.'" Through him, the Lord spoke to another layman who was an electrical contractor. He even had a little medical background so he could help care for injured laborers. He, too, volunteered and sold his car, his home, and his business. These men gave precious time in the construction of Memorial Christian Hospital.

Upon arrival in East Pakistan we found many problems. At times they seemed almost insurmountable. A great obstacle at one point was to get a certain survey of land done for official approval. The timing was all wrong. It occurred right in the middle of the monsoon season. We had the faith to believe God was going to work it all out. We got two seats on an airplane we didn't even know would take off, and on which we had no reservations. We visited Moslem officials about the survey and they laughed. "We don't survey in this kind of weather! It's been raining like this for days and it'll continue for days to come. Maybe a month from now we can help you." We insisted the survey had to be completed. I wasn't sure what I was saying, "Gentlemen, you don't have to worry about the rain. We're connected with God Himself. He'll take care of the problems. Let's plan the survey for tomorrow morning." They were willing and we prayed as we had never prayed before in our lives. We

awakened in the morning to find the rain still beating down on the roof. We still believed God and convinced the men to go with us despite the weather. Five miles down the road the intensity of the rain increased. It was a blinding fury. There was no sign of a let-up. We went on, but no change. There passed 26 miles, 27 miles, and no let-up. Then suddenly, at about 28 miles, as though a gigantic hand had reached up and sealed the heavens, the rain stopped. I saw a little tiny window of blue open up as though God were looking down and saying, "You see, you could afford to trust Me!" My Moslem friends were amazed. God had truly helped us in our hour of need.

The day came when construction on Memorial Christian Hospital was finished. Our work, prayers and dreams of several years were a reality. We began caring for the multitudes who had never had a hospital before. More significant they had never had any knowledge of Jesus Christ. There were many of them who came to that great moment of faith.

Obtaining visas was still a major problem. Our field council prayed we might be able to contact the President again. We weren't sure how it would be possible. One government officer, a patient of ours, came up with a plan to intercede at the airport. When the great day came it seemed a total impossibility for there were tens of thousands of people awaiting his arrival. Yet, when he came through the reception line, the President granted an appointment. When we met with him to explain the difficulty he simply replied, "I'll have to look into this." Shortly afterward I explained the problem to his chief assistant. Finally, when the files were flown across India to his locale, he recommended the visas be given to us. God had again worked a miracle.

Some months ago I received a letter containing the strangest birth announcement ever seen: "March 25, 1971-December 16, 1971, a nine month full term waiting period, including 14 days of agonizing labor, followed by the bloody Caesarean birth of the world's eighth largest nation: Bangladesh. Size: 75,000,000 people. Disposition: Extremely Jubilant. Prognosis: Democratic, Socialistic, and Secularistic." This was the country formerly known as East Pakistan where we have served for the last decade. This section of the world is known as South Asia. Before 1947 the area was just one country as a part of India. Then two sections were carved out on either side of India becoming a geographical absurdity. The two wings of the new country were separated by a thousand miles. Originally, in 1947, this was a time of great happiness for the Islamic peoples. Eventually, however, differences of opinion arose. The people in the East felt they were being mistreated by the Western government. Because of what they felt, oppression and exploitation, they started riots, finally erupting into the downfall of the government. An election was held in the East which seemed to be run fairly. The powers in the West were unwilling to accept the results and bloody warfare broke out. The elected leader was captured by the hostile army as he called for total independence. Innocent people died in incredible ways. Newspaper reporters were thrown out with their notes and pictures confiscated. With the tragic scenes still in their minds they tried to tell the awful story to the world. The oppressed people fled, and the refugee problem developed to unbelievable proportions. Ultimately 10 million people, almost half the population of Canada, emptied over into nearby India. Cholera, small pox, and other fatal diseases struck refugee camps. World morality seemed to hit a new low for very few protests from the outside were heard concerning these horrors.

India began training young men from East Pakistan to become guerilla fighters. They bravely tried to fight, but armaments were limited as much as numbers. With a two week lightening campaign, the Indian army stepped in to smash the occupation army of West Pakistan. Suddenly overnight the new nation of Bangladesh was born right on the shadow of death.

There is an interesting spiritual analogy in this entire situation. The people of

Bangladesh, incapable of gaining their own liberation, looked to India for help. Each of us desire spiritual liberation but of ourselves we are completely impotent. Only the Lord Jesus Christ can deliver us from the bondage of the alien force of Satan. India gave its young men to go across those borders where soldiers gave their life's blood. This is an excellent picture of our Saviour who died for our sins, according to the Scriptures. When a person places his faith in Christ many things happen. There is forgiveness of sins, a new home in heaven, a spiritual rebirth, to mention only a few. This is just like Bangladesh. Overnight, in a moment of time, when liberation became a reality, a new country was born into the community of nations. East Pakistan couldn't do a thing of themselves to gain all this wonderful help. They simply reached out their hands and received the needed assistance freely offered by India. This is all any of us can do. Reach out freely and receive the help God so graciously offers us in the person of Christ. The Bible underscores the imperative fact that we need to believe on the Lord Jesus to be liberated.

The people of Bangladesh were remarkably dedicated to their cause. Even an outside, modern, well-equipped army couldn't hold them in check. They were willing to give their most priceless possession, their very lives, for the cause in which they believed.

There have been several things of a positive nature which have issued from that bloody war. First of all, the new government has become very friendly toward us. In our hospital work we could care for many of the guerilla fighters injured during the war. The government is no longer a religious republic but rather a secular government. There is a separation between Mosque and State: politics and religion are no longer combined. And the new constitution is outstanding. It provides the right for anyone to profess, practice and propogate his religion. Wonderfully, too, visas have been available for our various missionary members who have gone to that land. Historically, visas are a very difficult problem in India and Pakistan. Yet, here in Bangladesh, we have found a miraculous open door. Listen, God too is able to bring good out of bad. The Bible talks about His bringing beauty from ashes. He is in the process of doing that now in the brand new nation of Bangladesh where many people are placing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and are becoming members of His true church.

Have you ever wondered what happens to those of us serving overseas in missionary service when a war breaks out? It can be an extremely difficult situation to say the least. East Pakistan died a horrible, ignominious death. Yet, from the blood and ashes of that nation rose a new independency known as Bangladesh. It is the nation of the Bengali race. When the conflict began the hostile army swept into our direction. A jeep pulled up in front of Memorial Christian Hospital. The people were shouting, "Take cover! Take cover! Jet planes are coming with bombs." Then they roared off to sound the alarm. We could hear in the distance the unmistakable detonations. We immediately gathered our families and made plans for their evacuations. This was no imaginary warfare. It was real and it was impending. We didn't even have any red paint with which to paint large crosses on the tops of our hospital buildings to encourage the bombers to stay away. Miraculously, however, while destruction raged on every hand, our facilities were saved from any damage at that time.

At 3:00 one morning I heard a knocking on my window. Fearing that a patient was in difficulty, I leaped from my bed to hear the news that guerilla fighters were all over the property. We went to the leader of the band and asked what he wanted. He explained the radio station they had been using to broadcast messages of hope to the people had been knocked out by enemy rockets. "We've come to establish the new Radio Free Bengal at your hospital." Our first thought was, what a target we would be for diving jet attackers. We argued with him until the sun came up. To prevent

certain destruction of the hospital we urged, "You know that once you broadcast from our hospital those jet planes with their modern equipment will pick up the beam and come diving in upon us. Pakistan troops will soon be coming down this way. Their machine guns will fire and what's going to happen if our hospital is smashed and our operating rooms put out of commission? You need this hospital far more than you need the radio. Put the broadcasting facility in some other place!" Like some strange divine working the hard looks began to vanish. Before long the soldiers were back in their trucks heading down the road. It's wonderful to be a Christian, having that marvelous sense of guidance from heaven at the key moment of time when the pressure seems greatest.

When our team was told to evacuate, no one wanted to leave. The Voice of America station, with an announcement from Washington, D. C. directed to American citizens declared, "We urgently advise you to depart immediately. We repeat, immediately! You can no longer travel to the north. We advise you to go into the nation to the south." That was Burma. The jungles of that country are Communist infested. We had a midnight meeting and decided that it was God's will for most of the group to leave. Four men, nine women, and 21 children were to make the trip. At one time they were on a boat which somehow wandered out into the ocean. It was nearly swamped with the rudder broken and engine out. Its battery dead, the ship was finally rescued by a Burmese naval P. T. boat. If only God had lifted His hand five or six days earlier they all could have left in an easy and painless way. Had the Lord made a mistake? Absolutely not, for it was essential that they end up in Bangkok. There, at the Pakistan Embassy, was a Bengali officer who knew us well. Through his friendship he was able to provide special four-year multiple journey visas worth a million dollars a piece to our team. New and difficult visa problems had come up. This was the only city on the face of the earth where those visas were available. How wonderfully the Lord provides. Although our Heavenly Guide may take us across rushing streams, deep, dark valleys and high mountains, yet He is always walking with us and before us. He's building Christian character into our souls, and we are learning to grow in grace.

After the evacuation, back at the hospital, some interesting things were happening to my surgeon colleague, Dr. Ketchan, and myself. There was a big job on our hands to get the Bengali hospital staff evacuated. I jumped on my motorcycle to arrange boats for the removal of our people. Just as I was at cruising speed, the main bar which holds the front wheel to the back wheel cracked in two. The machine collapsed and disintegrated under me. I felt a terrible pain in my right elbow (which is a bad place for a right-handed surgeon to feel pain). The later X-rays showed a serious fracture. In the operating room I felt sorry for my buddy. He had so many things against him. The anesthetists were all gone, along with the experienced operating personnel. There was a killing army heading down the road only a short distance away. He had a couple of things going for him, though. First of all, there was a certain steel rod necessary for that special operation. We had had that rod on order for a long time. The company hadn't been able to send it because nothing was moving into that war-ridden country. This Christian company in the United States approached the Washington government for funds so that they could airlift the equipment to us. God worked in the right man's heart and \$16,500 was granted to airlift what we had on order. It arrived just a few days before this episode. In that order was the one steel rod which was absolutely essential to successfully carry out the operation. Only two surgeons in the entire country at that time were capable of doing that operation: my colleague and myself. How thankful I was that my team members voted that the two of us be the ones to remain behind. The operation was a total success! How wonderful it is to be a Christian. There were not just five we counted in that operating room, three Bengali nurses, the surgeon and me, the patient. There were six for the Great Physician was also there. Remember, the dangerous place in the will of God is safer than the safe place out of God's will. This encourages us not to fear the unknown when we think of service on the mission fields of this world.

God has said to us to go out into the world and preach the Gospel. This old globe is so needy for the message of eternal redemption and salvation. Is the Lord speaking to your heart? Charles H. Spurgeon put it this way, "If God should happen to call you to be a missionary, don't stoop to be a king!" In my experience there is no greater thing in the whole wide world than to be called to be a servant of the living God someplace where people have never heard before.

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BIOLA HOUR HIGHLIGHTS
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PHILIPPIANS

By Dr. Lloyd T. Anderson

What did Paul mean when he testified, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13)? He realized the power of God at work constantly in his life. Is there such a thing as spiritual perfection? The Lord Jesus told His disciples, "Be ye, therefore, perfect, even as your Father, who is in heaven, is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). Weymouth translates that, "You, however, are to be complete in goodness, as your Heavenly Father is complete." The immediate context of the passage indicates how Christ was setting before His followers a new and higher standard than they had ever known from the Old Testament. There is no action which is meaningless in the realm of Christianity. If we fail to practice what our Lord teaches, it isn't the fault of the Teacher. The problem is the fault of the pupil.

We do not need to shrink from the word "perfection." However, several dangers need to be avoided. We must be on our guard concerning the one who declares himself to be sinlessly perfect. There is also a danger at the other end of the spectrum with those who are contented with imperfection. The bad habit a lot of people have is boasting that they don't have any bad habits. Christians are at an extremely low spiritual ebb when they don't even realize their own weaknesses and shortcomings.

God demands the highest on the part of His children. Every exhortation in the New Testament indicates that the attitude of God in relation to Christian living is never to excuse sin. We are told even to "abstain from the appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22). We are to separate ourselves from evil as well as reprove it (Eph. 5:11, 12). As believers we can in no way compromise with the world, the flesh, or the devil. We are not to stop short of measuring up to all of the grace the Saviour has willed for us (Heb. 6:1). We are to be spiritually mature in Christ. This is what growth in grace is all about (II Peter 3:18). Paul told the Corinthian believers that they were to be thoroughly adjusted to one another (II Cor. 13:11).

The standard of perfection is as much an Old Testament truth as it is seen in the New Testament. God told His servant Abraham, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. 17:1). Such is not an impossible attainment. By the grace of God any of us can do anything and everything He requires.

The apostle Paul readily knew the power of the Holy Spirit who lived within him. He testified through the power of Christ, there was nothing in the world, if God chose to have him do it, that he couldn't achieve (Phil. 4:13). This does not mean he believed in sinless perfection. We must be very careful we don't settle for anything less than God wants us to have. We should all desire to strive for spiritual maturity.

How utterly impossible it would be for any one of us to attain to a standard of perfection maintained by our Lord Jesus Christ were it not for the power of the Holy Spirit in us. When the Holy Spirit takes over your life and mine, spiritual

victory is always possible (Eph. 5:18). The basis for this wonderful position to which every child of God is called is the work of Jesus on the cross. There was nothing partial about Calvary. There was nothing left undone that should have been completed in providing our perfect salvation. His atoning work was perfect in providing a perfect redemption (Heb. 10:14). When the Saviour cried out on the cross, "It is finished," all imperfection was done away.

The Spirit of God who began a good work in every believer in salvation longs to complete that work which He began (Gal. 3:3). God has not saved us so we might live under low ideals of life. He desires spiritual maturity and perfection. He has provided us the Holy Spirit to make effective that which His divine will dictates (Heb. 13:20).

The instrument the Lord uses in producing perfection in the lives of His children is the Word of God (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints. . ." You see, no Christian can live the sinless life because everyone of us possesses the human Adamic nature. Through the means provided by God's grace, all of us can live a life pleasing to Him because He promises complete victory over our old nature if we avail ourselves of the means provided. The possibility of sinning is always with us. But we can have spiritual victory. It is all wrapped up in hiding the Word of God in our hearts.

There is a uniqueness about the believer in Christ. What unconverted person could say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me?" The redeemed child of God is the only one who has been twice born. He possesses eternal life.

In John 1:12 we read, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name." This means we are members of God's family. We are in union with the Son. It is erroneous to think God is the spiritual Father of all men, and thereby all men are brothers in His great family. This is absolutely fallacious. The spiritual brotherhood of God is a faith-limited fellowship. It is granted only to those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour.

The believer is the only individual in human life who has ever been born twice. Our natural birth was of corruptible seed. The second birth is incorruptible. A physical birth is not enough to make a Christian (John 1:13). The natural generation of man, in order to become a physical body, does not avail at all to bring about a right relationship to God. It is only the second birth that counts. He told us rightly, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Spiritual regeneration is definitely required. There is nothing a non-Christian can do to please or to find acceptance with God. He first has to receive Jesus Christ as personal Saviour (John 6:63). "The flesh profiteth nothing." The new birth is so tremendous that all three members of the Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are involved in it (I Peter 1:3). The new birth is an act of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

The Christian is the product of the Word of God, the Bible itself (I Peter 1:23). We are partakers of God's divine nature. This is the seed which was implanted by the power of God through His Word in the life of every born-again child of God (II Peter 1:4).

Another uniqueness of the believer is his citizenship is in heaven while he is living here on earth. How can a person be in two places at the same time? Positionally, in Christ, every child of God is in heaven. Scripture tells us we are seated together in heavenly places in Christ. Being physically on earth the believer is charged with tremendous responsibilities. He is in the world, but he is to be separated from it. It takes righteousness to get to heaven and by faith in the Lord,

the Christian becomes righteous in Christ. He covers us with His righteousness. Notice Colossians 3:3, "For ye are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God." What an amazing declaration! Where Christ is, there is the believer too! Hence we are in two realms at the same time. We actually possess a double citizenship.

The Christian is the only individual who is going to collect the wages and get the reward of what someone else has done for him. We have been saved for a purpose. There are divine objectives in salvation. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10). We are also exhorted, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto me" (Titus 3:8). How is the believer to serve his Lord? He is called upon to yield himself to the Lord. Jesus has reminded us in John 15:5 that without Him we can't do a thing. Our Lord can only work through us as we give ourselves over to Him. The only service acceptable to God is the service we allow the Lord to work out through the avenues of our personalities. Work for God which is done in the energy of human flesh and in the energy of the old sinful nature will not receive its reward at all. We are going to be rewarded someday at the judgment seat of Christ because of what the Saviour has already done for us. He made it possible for me to be saved.

The believer in Christ is the only human being who has ever already experienced a resurrection. We think of a resurrection in the future. The Christian has been raised from spiritual death to spiritual life. It is possible for a man to be alive toward the world and wholly dead in relationship to God. This is clear from I Timothy 5:6. Yes, in Jesus Christ as Saviour, all are made alive and have experienced a spiritual resurrection. "And you hath he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). Thank God for our uniqueness in Christ.

It was not empty boasting by any means which caused the apostle Paul to testify, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). He had experienced the power of the risen Saviour in his life and ministry in many different ways. He was a truly happy Christian. He rejoiced because of the faith and participation of the wonderful Philippian believers. They knew how he had been imprisoned in Rome for the sake of Christ. They were praying and helping in every way they could. Materially they had sent a financial gift to help Paul with his personal needs. Apparently no other body of believers in any other city had shown the same deep concern. How few churches today really consider the things about which the pastor is burdened. Some congregations are very constricted when it comes to thoughtfulness towards their own minister and the spiritual goals he has established.

This teaching of liberality toward others certainly would apply to missionaries, as well as to individual members of the church toward one another. We need to do what we can to patch up the broken hearted, to help those less fortunate than we are. The believer in Christ isn't to be thinking only of himself. There are many of you who could do a great deal to help this ministry of Biola. These are days of great spiritual opportunity which we must not let pass by. Many so-called Christian colleges have already departed from their God-honored basic purpose. Biola remains true to its sacred commitment of educating dedicated young people for places of leadership, wherever the Lord may call them.

As the apostle Paul commended the Philippian believers for their help, so I want to commend you who have been generous and thoughtful of the Lord's work here at Biola. Believe me, some day you are going to be exceedingly grateful that you did. Generosity is never just one-sided. The person or group on which the gift is bestowed is blessed of God, but then, so is the giver. There is also well-earned

rewards you will one day receive at the Judgment Seat of Christ if your investment and involvement were of the Spirit and not of the flesh. The pattern of things will be that the Lord will come for His Church and then the believers' judgment before Christ will take place. Only those who have been truly born again will be there.

On what kind of a foundation are you building your life? Those who are wise in the faith use gold, silver and jewels, while others simply are building with wood, hay and stubble. There is going to come a time of testing when the structure will be examined by fire (I Cor. 3:13). We need to realize that all of us together are the Church of God, and the Spirit of God lives among us in His home. Jesus Christ, of course, is the only sure foundation. Do not live to the flesh. How many there are who have never shown any spiritual generosity; they aren't sacrificial; they never led a soul to Christ; they don't read their Bible; they don't take time to pray; they don't exercise the disciplines of the Christian life. The result is that one of these days they will suffer tremendous loss of reward. What they have built will be quickly consumed by fire.

Have you been living very meagerly when it comes to the Lord's work? In the Old Testament the Jew gave a tithe which was a tenth of all he received. In the New Testament, under grace, certainly the believer ought to be giving even more than what was required by the exact demands of the law. Too many of us have been neglecting this part of our lives. We haven't been supporting the Lord's work, depending on other people to do our part, too. Someday we're going to stand before our Saviour. He will ask us what we did with the money He entrusted to our stewardship. Will you need to hang your head in shame or will you receive His commendation, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Even when it came to the subject of Christian giving the apostle Paul was optimistic and rejoiced in the Lord without ceasing. "Rejoice," "joy," "happiness" are some of the words which run concurrently through the book of Philippians. Instead of feeling sorry for himself being in a Roman prison, like so many of us do all the time, Paul commended the Philippian church for what they had done for him. Paul thanked the Lord because he was counted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Christ. His spirit was truly radiant with ardor divine. The buoyancy and dauntless confidence expressed in this epistle was born of God Himself. Christians were called even to rejoice in tribulation.

It was a glad spirit of heart which caused Christianity in the early days to win its way. Those believers had something for their souls which Grecian or pagan philosophy could never give them. The possession of the Saviour by faith in our hearts is the answer to the supernatural experience of optimism and joy. We have something far better than anyone else. The world knows absolutely nothing about it.

Rejoicing ought to be characteristic of the every day manner of our lives. Pessimism is given a death blow by the inspired pen of the apostle Paul in Philippians. Think of Paul's life as he was constantly beaten. He was shipwrecked in the deep and was in perils of water and in perils of robbers. Even his own Jewish countrymen wanted to put him to death because he was preaching Christ as the Messiah. It seems incredible that one person should be called upon to endure so much. Still he was not discouraged (II Cor. 11:30). Trials, testings and tribulations only caused him to rejoice the more in the Lord.

If we are living in the realization of our Lord's nearness and His coming again, it will not be difficult to rejoice evermore, being sacrificially generous with our money, time and talents. If God seems to be distant and not available to you, and your heart is downcast and discouraged, remember, it is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." I believe the Lord's coming is very soon for His church. There is no better rule to live by than this. To be sure, troubles abounded on every side. It wasn't easy to be a Christian in Paul's day and it's not easy today either. In

spite of it all, however, there is a victorious way which is really a direct command to "rejoice."

The hardships through which you may be passing seem overwhelming; the battle is terrific in its power. The marches are long and trying, and yet the Christian soldier is to rejoice. Why not when we are on the winning side? Victory is absolutely assured. To be sure, God wants His people to rejoice and He makes it possible for us to do so.

Do you suppose there is anyone who can be thankful to the Lord because of your material and spiritual generosity? We have seen from the fourth chapter of Philippians how grateful Paul is for the believers to whom he is writing. They had taken a vital, tangible share in his ministry. No wonder, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that he was so thoroughly optimistic (4:14-18). Earlier he had told the church at Rome, the city in which he was now incarcerated, "And we know that ALL things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (8:28). He didn't say just some things, or even most everything, but rather ALL things. This includes sorrows through which we pass. God has an eternal purpose for everything He allows to come into our lives. He never makes a mistake. The Lord knows the end even from the beginning. This is why rejoicing can be such a definite and fixed habit of life. It is really a reflex action of the believer. Our problem is that so often we doubt and question. This is why we find misery rather than happiness.

One rejoicing Christian can do more good than a dozen gloomy believers. Paul was radiant for he had a buoyant spirit. I think we could quickly fill our churches if all members obeyed this simple command to rejoice in the Lord. If we are inclined to be complainers, always fussing and criticizing, who would want to be drawn to Christ's love? The better rule is to talk to God about people rather than talking to one another. If you can't say something nice to another person then don't say anything at all. We are to show the world an uncomplaining spirit, no matter what we happen to be going through.

Our rejoicing is always to be "in the Lord." These three words find the key. This establishes the all-important boundaries. This little expression allows all the liberty necessary for our good and for His glory. To follow such a practice would make for a real transformation in every phase of our lives. Don't rejoice because you have been given certain gifts of miracle doing, but rejoice basically because you are a Christian and your name is written in heaven (Luke 10:20).

We can certainly rejoice in the power of the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanses from all sin. If there is a foolish tendency to be proud of our own personalities, indulging in self praise, come back to Paul's words to the Galatian believers, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14).

Rejoicing is a very definite test of our own spiritual condition. If we are not satisfied with the Saviour we won't rejoice in Him. That the practice is to continue "always" precludes the possibility of any irregularity. God doesn't intend for us to be on the mountain top one moment and then down in the valley of discouragement the next. His praise is to be continually in our mouths. Rightly prizing the Lord will not make it difficult to praise Him. Too many of us are very spasmodic in this matter. A steady stream of rejoicing is to flow from our hearts at all times (I Thess. 5:16).

For the Christian there is the definite promise of all our needs being met. J. B. Phillips translates Philippians 4:19, "My God will supply all that you need from His glorious resources in Christ Jesus." In an hour when nothing really seems

certain we have this previous promise that breathes security for our souls. Noble men of God through the years have borne witness to the glory and power of the Lord's promises. It was Spurgeon who declared that the promises of God were writings of Scripture which could be placed before Him with reasonable request, "Do as Thou has said." Yet, with impunity, we pay little attention to what God has said by way of His promises. Nothing must be allowed to entice us away from believing the promises of the Lord. We are to stand fast and to be strong in Him.

Isaiah was a great prince and a great prophet with God. He tells us to "enlarge the place of thy tent, to let them stretch forth the curtains of thy inhabitations, to spare not, to lengthen thy cords, and to strengthen the stakes" (54:2). We have a great spiritual responsibility to believe these precious promises. Remember, spiritual needs are always greater than physical needs. In the case of Paul, he always rejoiced no matter how much he suffered in the flesh. As children we must always realize that His will must be paramount above everything else.

The source of the supply for our need is expressed in the words "My God." There is nothing greater in all the universe than the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. His presence fills the entire world. His Word brings planets into existence. His wondrous eyes pierce even to the innermost thoughts of human hearts. He is before all things and above all things. Can you claim Him as "my God"? Paul could write so confidently because he knew Him in a personal relationship through faith in Jesus Christ. The Saviour's resources are not only infinite but also they are intended for every individual who trusts in Him. Isn't that wonderful? Like His brilliant sun shining in the heavens, ever giving forth light and losing none, so it is with Christ.

There was no doubt in the mind of the apostle Paul that his future needs would all be met. He declared, "shall supply." Haven't our own needs always been met? Why then should we ever question God's providence and care on our behalf? If we have prayed and no answer has come, it may be it is God's will at the moment that He not answer prayer for us. We must be content. Also, it might be that we are at fault. Perhaps there is sin in our lives which needs to be confessed. If we have needs which are not met, perhaps by faith we have not appropriated God's promises. Unbelief certainly has deprived many of us of the blessings He desires to bestow so freely. You remember it was said of Jesus that He could not do many mighty works in Nazareth because of the unbelief of the people of that city. They failed to trust the One who had grown up in their very midst.

God's faithfulness makes the supply absolutely certain. He never fluctuates, nor is there any shadow of turning caused by Him. As a matter of fact, his faithfulness isn't dependent upon my love or even my loyalty to Him. This is why to worry is an insult to God. If we really believe that God keeps His word we will continually rejoice in this blessed promise, "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

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Panel Discussions

Panel: Dr. Chase, Dr. Feinberg, and Dr. Sutherland

Q. "I've wondered if there really is only one group of people teaching the truth today, since there is really only one truth to teach?"

A. You are absolutely correct in that there is only one truth to be taught. Jesus rightly declared, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Notice the definite article in each of those statements. He is the only One who can make eternal life possible. We are thankful that there are faithful ministers of the Gospel in many different denominations who strictly adhere to and positively teach the truth which is revealed in Scripture. There are some people teaching the truth who are totally individualistic and yet, so long as they do not deviate from God's Word, their ministry is blessed of the Lord. In addition to the positive affirmation that salvation is by faith alone, apart from works (Eph. 2:8, 9), there have been peripheral doctrines which have come into existence. These views do not directly bear on one's personal salvation but avow still that Jesus Christ is the Way. There will always be this diversity of opinions on various interpretations of biblical passages. The primary thrust must be redemption only through the Saviour's shed blood. We are thankful to the Lord for the great host of people scattered around the world who firmly believe that Jesus Christ is THE Way. They constitute the group of those who are teaching the only truth today.

Q. "How can I explain to people that God only allows Satan to do certain things? I'm thinking about what happens to those who die in plane crashes and through disease."

A. Your question has baffled human minds down through the centuries. How can we who are finite ever explain that which is infinite? First of all, you are correct in the view that God only allows Satan to do certain things. Before the devil fell because of his pride, he was one of the created beings. As Lucifer, the son of the morning, he turned his back on the will of God. As a creature he is still responsible to the Lord. The first two chapters of Job give ample evidence of that. The enemy of our souls has certain boundaries which are set, about which we may be totally unaware. That's why it is so important to realize that our times are in the Lord's hands. To narrow down certain happenings such as a transportation accident or when a family loses a child, other things need to be taken into consideration. It may be at times we give Satan the credit more than he deserves. Remember, we have a three-fold enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil. A plane crash, as an example, may not involve him at all. It may well be human error or some type of a mechanical malfunction. In the loss of a loved one, particularly a little child, we know that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. The homegoing may be for the glory of the Lord. We've known of youngsters of unsaved parents who have died, and through that experience the mother and father have been saved. This couldn't be Satanic. The Lord's purposes are so marvelous and

inscrutable that they are beyond even the wisest person's wisdom. God wants us to be joyous and rejoicing in Him, but that doesn't mean life is going to always be a "bed of roses." Some of the saints who have brought the greatest glory to His name have been those who have experienced affliction and difficulty. In all the activities of our life we should be ready to acknowledge, "Not my will, Lord, but Thine be done."

Q. "I heard a message about how the church has always been in existence. Yet, the first mention of it in Scripture is Matthew 16. Do you think the ark or the tabernacle could have been the church?"

A. There are those who erroneously teach this view, however, such a view cannot be supported by Scripture. This is known as "covenant theology" and the adherents accept the promises God gave to the Jews, but they ignore the cursings pronounced at the same time. Exodus 31 explains very definitely the giving of the law to the children of Israel. We readily see the exclusivity of the law as Moses pronounced it (v. 12ff). Note the recurring words, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel." In the New Testament, through the 9th, 10th, and 11th chapters of Romans, Paul very explicitly states that the Jews are still to be dealt with as a specific nation. The church is something entirely apart and distinct from the Jewish nation or its religion. While the church was in the mind of God it was not brought into existence until after the death and resurrection of the Saviour. The first mention we have of it is the prophecy given to Peter in Matthew 16:18. The very word "church" means an assembly of "called out ones." In the book of Acts we are told that "the Lord added unto the church daily such as were being saved." These people had been "called out" from the pagan world about them. While Israel was "called out" from the pagan nations everything else in comparison to the church is in contrast. The ark or the tabernacle has absolutely no connection in any way to the church of Jesus Christ.

Q. "In the Bible we read Christ's declaration, 'If you deny me before men, I will deny you before my Father.' If this is true, what is the explanation for Peter? Was he saved, since he certainly denied the Lord?"

A. There is no question but that he did deny the Saviour, however, when he sinned he did not hesitate to confess and secure cleansing. He was certainly saved and a genuine apostle. The Holy Spirit would not use anyone to pen Scripture who was an unbeliever. To answer your question, consider the meaning of the word "deny." When questioned by the fire, his accusers didn't ask, "Now Peter, do you believe that Christ taught the truth of the Lord? Do you believe that He's the Son of God? Do you believe that He's the messiah of Israel? Do you believe that His sacrifice for sin can avail? Do you believe that through Him and Him alone you can go to heaven?" If these questions had been posed, on the basis of Scripture, doubtless he would have come through with a ringing testimony. His denial was rather based on admitting that he was even acquainted with the Saviour. That is a different matter. His sin was really committed to allay opposition. This shows that he was just as human as the rest of us. The Lord foresaw this and reminded His followers, "Satan has wanted to test you. This is why I have prayed for you that your faith would not fail. When you are turned around and cease being so proud, being brought to a stand still by the opposition, then strengthen your brethren." This prayer was fulfilled marvelously in Acts 2 as the apostle Peter carefully and effectively ministers the Word of life. Another test is the fact that the Bible never says that an unbeliever is filled with the Holy Spirit, yet Peter certainly was on the Day of Pentecost. You see, his denial did not involve doctrinal proportions. Otherwise, he would be an apostate who would question the deity of the Saviour. Rather, it was Peter who announced, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Q. "Will Armenia have any special part in the future? I believe that Noah's Ark

is located in this country. Do you think the Garden of Eden was located there?"

A. There is no indication in Scripture that Armenia has some special part in prophecies yet to be fulfilled. Doubtless some of this land is located in the territory which God gave to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This then would have a particular significance in the end time. No one specifically knows the location of Noah's Ark or the Garden of Eden. There seems to be a divergency of opinion on the geographical settings. Much of the area over there today is barren and waste although there is every evidence to show that at one time it was extremely rich and fertile. All we can do is to wait until God's own time for the final revelation.

Q. "Where do you believe the demons, who were embodied in the swine, went after the animals were drowned as recorded in Mark 5?"

A. We believe that in a very literal sense demons indwelt the poor man at Degara. What a horrible specimen of humanity he must have been before his conversion. He was so wild he couldn't even be bound with chains. That he lived in the tombs reminds us that demons have a great deal of affinity to death since this is related to sin. Notice the theology of these evil spirits as the maniac met the Saviour and shouted, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not." Their doctrine was more correct concerning the deity of Christ than a good many churches today. At their request, the Lord permitted them to enter the swine which went off the cliff into the water. There is no indication that the demons, like the swine, would be susceptible to drowning. Doubtless they went on about their business in plaguing others. Satan uses this part of his army to continue their devilish work.

Q. "Does Revelation 14:10, 11 apply only to those who live during the tribulation period? I've wondered if it is for all who don't accept Christ as their personal Saviour? Will people live in such torment forever, or be put into the Lake of Fire and cease to exist?"

A. In the first place, understand that the word "death" in Scripture means separation from God. In the Lake of Fire one does not cease to exist (Rev. 20:10). Only those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in this life will be raised unto the resurrection of life. Those who reject the Lord Jesus Christ will be raised to the resurrection of damnation (John 5:29). There will be a spiritual body just as there has been physical body. The former will be adapted for eternal punishment. The unredeemed do not cease to exist. Revelation 14:10 and 11 are two of the most sobering, dreadful verses recorded in Scripture. This refers to those who receive the mark of the beast. It refers to all who reject the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross. There He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. The only time in all eternity there was a separation of any kind between God the Father and God the Son was at this moment. Christ drank that cup for our sins on the tree. What we need is a proper concept of the awfulness of sin in God's sight. Only then can we fully understand something of the extent of the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf. Our Lord bore the wrath of God upon Himself because He loved us so much. Oh, the depth of the riches of the grace of our Saviour!

Q. "Is it possible that Satan has a part in the healing of bodies happening today, even though people performing such activities seem to be Spirit filled?"

A. It is not really the devil's desire to do anything which would bring joy to man. He is rather in the business of detracting glory from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. What we see happening today is nothing new. Read missionary accounts of how evil witch doctors among heathen tribes have brought about so-called cures. Of course, many are merely temporary. Sometimes the problems are functional, emotional or psychological. No two cases are exactly alike. We know, too, that there are

many who do not own allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ and some who are even Satanically impelled, who have gone into the field of medicine, seeking to heal people. Although not motivated by Him, yet they could be overruled by God. Satan himself is not unrelated to healing. The devil is very clever. He appears as an angel of light and a minister of righteousness. For this reason, it is possible that Satan is a part of the healing movement we see in so many quarters today. As to the aspect of so-called "divine healers" being Spirit-filled, this would be impossible to prove. No one has the ability to get into the mind and heart of another individual. Only the Lord really knows our exact relationship to Him. There are many today who are simply emotion-filled. Only the Lord can give one the attestation of the Holy Spirit's filling. Just doing work in Jesus' name is not sufficient. As His servants we must be under the direct authorization of the Saviour. Just because a person performs some type of ministry today doesn't mean that it is for this age. Even the apostle Paul couldn't heal Epaphroditus or Timothy. We would seriously doubt that an individual is Spirit-filled and yet doing something that God has not indicated for this age.

Q. "Does the Bible say that the people who have never heard the Gospel will perish as the beast?"

A. You may be certain that the God of all the universe is absolutely just and righteous. No individual perishes like an animal. No beast of the field has a never-dying spirit. The Lord Jesus clearly states, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28, 29). The statement "to do good" is explained by Christ, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (John 6:29). Only those who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ shall come forth unto the resurrection of life. In the first two chapters of Romans we read some very pertinent things about those who have never heard the Gospel, bringing the good news that they can be saved from sin. It clearly states beginning at 2:11, "For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another) in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my Gospel." This simply means that those who have never heard the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will be judged by the law written in their hearts. While they know they should do good, still they don't do it. The law written in their hearts condemns their action. This is the reason heathen offer sacrifices. They do what they know is wrong and yet their practices still go on. The heathen perish, based upon what they know is right. Everyone of them without exception have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

We live in the age of grace. There is absolutely nothing we can do to be saved. God in His infinite mercy has provided a way of escape. Therefore it is incumbent upon us that we do our very best to get the word to these people so that all may hear and have the opportunity to believe. This is why we send our Biola young people into all the world to preach the Gospel.

Q. "Are the cherubim, referred to in Exodus 25, typical of anyone or anything?"

A. These were considered to be figures of angelic beings. There were two cherubim on the mercy seat. This was the very place where the High Priest, once a year, made full and complete atonement for Israel. He sprinkled seven times the blood of the

goat offering before the mercy seat. It is always good when we want to find out the meaning of a doctrine to look at its first use. This is the law of first reference or occurrence. Cherubim are mentioned in Genesis 3 where it is recorded that Adam and Eve disobeyed God. Against this framework of sin and disobedience, Cherubim were placed where they could guard against entrance into the Garden. They really represent God's attributes of holiness and righteousness. This same truth carries through to the book of Ezekiel as well as into the New Testament. On each occasion these created beings are seen militantly protecting the holiness of God.

Q. "Do the names of all of the seven churches in Revelation have a special meaning?"

A. Symbolically they have a definite reference to different characteristics of churches in the past and present. We do not believe that there are any Scriptural significances connected with the naming of the seven churches. They were cities of Asia Minor, in existence at the time Paul and John lived. At the giving of the inspired revelation of Jesus Christ these were active, alive, vigorous congregations and communities. Many Bible scholars believe that these seven cities also refer to the seven epochs in the periods of the life of the church, beginning with the church at Ephesus, which typified the apostolic age, and concluding with the church at Laodicea, which typifies the totally apostate movement which will be seen at the end of this age.

