

My Favorite Verses

(Volume V ... February 2017 – June 2017)



*... a collection of brief commentaries
on some of the Bible's most beloved
(and least understood) passages,
parables, verses & sayings*

via *Scaughdt*
an (i)am publication



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An Introduction to what Follows

I think it goes without saying to anyone who has even briefly glanced at the contents of a Bible that it is an objectively marvelous collection of language -- that regardless of one's religious bent (or even complete lack thereof), the Bible is a tome literally filled with passages that are both mysterious & moving – that it is a collection of writings literally overflowing with metaphoric drama, symbolic violence, profound wisdom, and good old fashioned common sense ... Of course, it is getting folks to take even that first glance that is often the problem. For the vast majority of Christians & Jews refuse to do anything other than cast a cursory look at its contents; preferring instead to blindly accept the often extremely limited interpretations thereof provided by their preachers & pastors, reverends & rabbis. Just as troubling, the vast majority of the non-religious (often in response to being “damned to Hell” by the well-intended ignorance of a conservative Christian or two) tend to vehemently discount the contents of the Bible's texts without ever reading any of them for themselves.

For roughly the first 15 years of my life, I was harangued by the former group – condemned by friends and strangers alike as “unworthy”; labeled an ignorant “heathen” by those in my community who ironically were just as misinformed about the contents of the Bible as I myself admittedly was. Then, in direct response to such crystallized callousness, I joined the latter group for the next two decades thereafter – loudly blasting Christianity (& its Bible) as “ridiculous” & “unethical” & “primitive”; and doing so with the same arrogant, indignant vigor with which its followers had blasted me before.

Then one day in 2004, I decided to actually read the Bible for myself ... And lo & behold, once I did so it became flagrantly apparent that “the Good Book” didn't say half the horrible things I had been told it said – and that even the horrible things it *did* offer were often mixed in metaphor or swaddled in symbolism. In essence, after almost four decades of living in the rank shadows of its man-made religion, I finally had the humility & the courage to read the Bible for myself --- to discover for myself the brilliantly beautiful and potently pragmatic Truths wrapped within its pages. After having lived so long bridled by hatred for its mythical madness, I was finally able to set aside all bias & preconception, and I fell madly in Love with what I found thereafter therein.

And ever since that fateful day, I have been on a mission to reawaken Christians & non-Christians alike to the wonders of the Bible's words. For most Christians I know remain blind followers of a dogma that completely ignores the far greater God of a far greater Love residing within the passages of their own holy tome --- and most non-Christians I encounter still choose to arrogantly discount the same words; and thus remain equally ignorant of the profound & practical psychological truths that rest therein ...

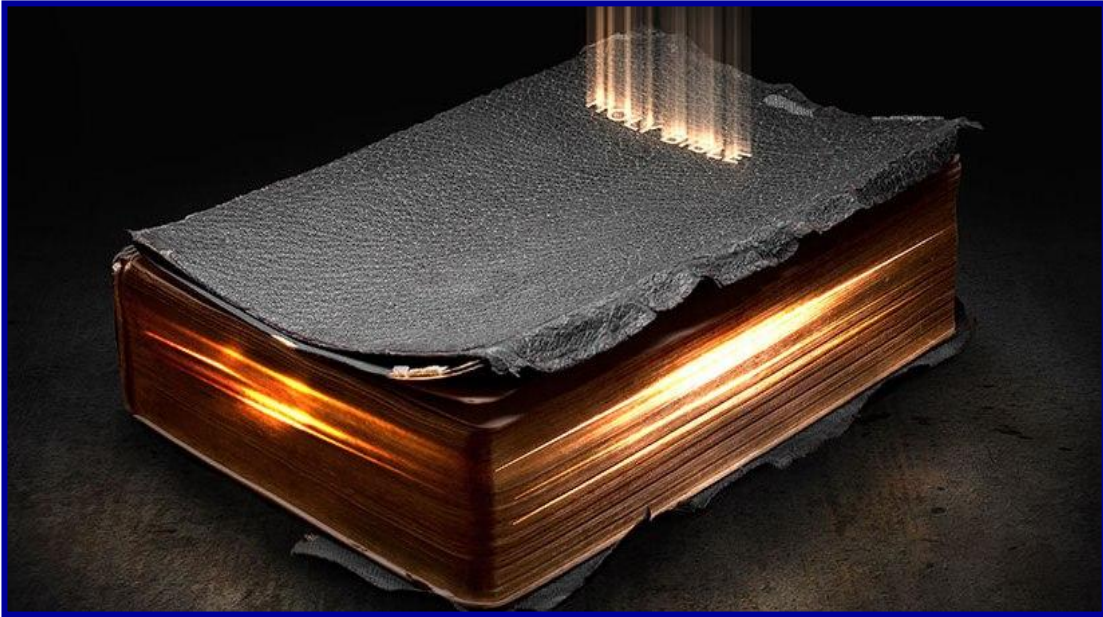
And it was in response to this great tragedy that I decided to periodically share some of the profound Biblical interpretations that I have personally tested and found to be True; doing so in various shorter books & articles, and doing so within the loose confines of the shorter commentaries that follow herein as well ...

May you all enJOY accordingly!

Scaughdt

(September 2017)





“The Bible has noble poetry in it... and some good morals ... and a wealth of obscenity ... and upwards of a thousand lies.” ~ Mark Twain

“The Bible is very easy to understand. But Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. They pretend to be unable to understand it because they know very well that the minute they truly understand, they will be obliged to act accordingly.” ~ via Soeren Kierkegaard

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*“The real thing is not a path. **The real thing is the authenticity of the seeker.** Let me emphasize this. You can travel on any path, and if you are sincere and authentic, you will reach your destination. Some paths may be difficult, some may be more comfortable, some may have greenery on all sides, and some may have you moving through deserts. And yet if you are sincere and honest with the yearnings of your Soul – if you are authentic to the urgings of your conscience – if you are true to the summons of your True Self, then every path will lead you to your goal ... So it simply can be reduced to one thing: that authenticity of Soul-Self is the path. And thus the opposite is also true: that no matter what path you choose, if you do not authentically reflect your Soul-Self, then you will not get anywhere. It is your authenticity and your authenticity alone that brings you back home, nothing else matters ... Imitation cannot lead you anywhere. Imitation means that the ideal comes from elsewhere, and as such is not happening within you. You have a seed within you; and if you are only imitating others that seed will remain dormant ... To know your Soul, you must **have the Courage to Be your Self**” ~ anonymous*

Galatians 3:25 ... The Freedom in Faith

(02/22/2017)

“But now that [internal] Faith has come,
we are no longer subject to [an external] disciplinarian.”

~ Paul (Galatians 3:25)

Actually, while my additions [in brackets] here do indeed accurately reflect the beliefs of Paul, they do not necessarily reflect the Truth of The Way of Christ – for Christ knew quite well that **Faith** was anything but an internal thought or belief or feeling – he knew that real **Faith** was a verb or nothing at all (see [Matthew 13:18-23](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [John 14:12](#) et al) ...

In addition, Jesus – unlike Paul (see [Romans 12:2](#), [Romans 13:1-6](#) et al) – was fully unconcerned with external disciplinarians (as evidenced by the many times he directly flaunted the authorities of his day without fear and indeed, without coming to adverse consequence – [Luke 2:41-52](#), [Luke 4:30](#), [Matthew 26:62-64](#), [Matthew 27:11-14](#) et al) ... Instead, Jesus was concerned with being judged by the Self residing within ([John 12:47-48](#)).

Now what *is* true regarding this verse is the fact that once we do choose to enliven our Faith – once we do choose to make our lives about sacrificing for others selflessly & willingly – then we do indeed not care in the least what others have to say about the same, and we are indeed in such moments truly “no longer

subject to a disciplinarian” (as in the passage “Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple ... If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town” ~ Jesus Christ in [Luke 14:26](#) & [Matthew 10:14](#) – see also [Matthew 22:15-46](#) et al) ...

And these are the moments we become truly Free.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Actually, it is far more important to shake the dust from your feet *before* you serve others, not afterwards ...

Matthew 9:29 ... According to your Faith (02/23/2017)

“According to your Faith let it be done for you
... and their eyes were Opened.”
~ unknown (Matthew 9:29)

First & foremost, it is important to note that Jesus did not perform a miracle here (nor anywhere else in the Bible, for that matter), but rather empowered those with the requisite **Faith** to allow the God Essence within them (see [John 14:20](#)) to heal them (see also [Matthew 8:13](#), [Matthew 9:29](#), [Mark 5:34](#), [Mark 9:23](#), [Mark 10:52](#), [Luke 7:50](#), [Luke 8:48-52](#), [Luke 17:19](#), [Luke 18:42](#), [John 9:39](#), [John 11:4-11](#) et al) ... Note as well that Jesus said quite plainly that even if his followers did choose to believe that he was in fact healing them himself, that they were under no circumstances to tell anyone else such falsehoods (see [Matthew 8:4](#), [Matthew 9:30](#), [Matthew 12:16](#), [Mark 1:44](#), [Mark 5:43](#), [Mark 7:36](#), [Mark 8:26](#), [Luke 5:14](#) & [Luke 8:56](#)) ... In addition, please remember that – for Jesus at least – **Faith** was a *verb*; not an internal thought but an external *action* (see [John 10:37-38](#) & [John 14:12](#)).

Also, please note that by the measure of *their Faith* were they healed – meaning that those who came for personal benefit only received temporary &/or partial healing, whereas those who came to be healed that they might serve others become Whole once more.

And finally, note in closing that "[their eyes were Opened](#)" as a result – that they could **SEE** clearly once again as a result of that **Faith** – that they had been blinded by self-interest and sin beforehand, and yet they had been blessed by the presence of Christ in Jesus (which reawakened the Christ within them – again [John 14:20](#)); a presence that allowed them to remember that life was about serving others (see [Mark 10:45](#) & [John 13:15-17](#)) instead of themselves. Yes, their eyes became closed once more thereafter (to the degree that they refused to go forth thereafter and live accordingly), and yet at least for that one moment of being exposed to The Way of self-sacrificial Love they could truly **SEE** again – with the same clarity they had when they were infants, and with the same empathy they knew when they were toddlers (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)).



Amen ... Let it be so.

James 1:2 ... Nothing but Joy

(02/24/2017)

“Whenever you face trials of any kind,
consider them nothing but Joy”

~ James (James 1:2)

One of Jesus’ favorite and most trusted disciples (see [Gospel of Thomas 12](#)), James was correct to encourage us in this way -- for he knew that deeds are only powerful enough to bear “[The Fruit of the Spirit](#)” (see [Matthew 21:43](#)); when they are both exceedingly difficult and exceedingly well-intended (see [Matthew 5:10-12](#)) ... Indeed, this Truth (of the Power of Selflessness) is in all likelihood what James was referencing in the verses where he claims that “[faith without works is dead](#)” (see [James 2:14-26](#)). And indeed, mere mental faith (the feeble faith of Paul) is nothing unless empowered by courageously [Faith-full](#) actions ([James 2:17](#) et al) – deeds done despite difficulty, despite challenge, despite fear, and despite potential (if not probable) pain or loss for one’s self ... And this is the primary reason why we are to consider our trials as “[nothing but Joy](#)” – for without Love our lives mean nothing, and without difficulty our deeds of Love remain neutered and weak.

Indeed (in-Deed), even Paul agreed in one of his more lucid moments – where he noted that the only faith that counted was “[faith working through Love](#)” (see [Galatians 5:6](#)). Yes, it is true that Paul didn’t really understand the true depths of unconditional Love, and yet even the most deluded of false prophets will stumble across the most profound of Truths on occasion – which is what Paul indeed did here. For true Love cannot exist in its purest form except in those moments when it is most purely actualized – and it can only be purely actualized when said actualization is difficult – dangerous, even; only in those moments where there is no guarantee of survival or success; only in those moments where enlivening Love is the boldest act of [Faith](#) – a [Faith in Love](#) itself ... And because Love does always “work” – because it does always bring Peace in direct proportion to the



difficulty of its effectuation, and because walkers of The Selfless Way are indeed only concerned with the Peace of others, such daring Doers of Love do indeed feel that same raw Bliss whenever confronted with a trial or tribulation; knowing as they do that such difficulty automatically makes each & every one of those concurrent acts of Caring a true Peace-bringer to others – and thus inadvertently a true Joy-bringer to themselves.

Philippians 4:5 ... The nearness of the Lord

(02/25/2017)

“Let your gentleness be known to everyone ...
The Lord is near” ~ Paul (Philippians 4:5)

The Lord is indeed always near, my Friends -- not in the “benevolent dictator hovering above” sense meant by Paul (and his followers in the modern-day Christian church), but rather in the “always residing within” sense of Jesus Christ (see [John 14:20-26](#)) ... And whereas Paul would have us be gentle towards others for fear of rebuke from God, Jesus would have us be gentle to others solely for *their* benefit – and only therein & thereby remember how it feels to act as an agent of God, instead of as a mere worshipper thereof (see [Matthew 5:48](#), [Luke 6:36](#), [Matthew 8:21-22](#), [John 16:33](#) et al) ... Note as well that that Paul’s “everyone” is not the same as Jesus’ “everyone” – that the former implies those who are nearby and primarily those who are one’s allies (Paul is only admonishing fellow believers in [Philippians 4](#)), while Jesus means for us to actually Love *everyone* ([Matthew 8:21-22](#)) – especially our enemies ([Matthew 5:40-44](#) + [Luke 10:25-37](#)) &/or the downtrodden among us ([Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al).



Mark 13:37 ... Remaining Awake

(02/26/2017)

“Be alert; I have already told you everything ... Heaven & Earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away ... And what I say to all: Keep Awake.”

~ Jesus (Mark 13:23, Mark 13:31, & Mark 13:37)

That the Earth is fundamentally impermanent and inevitably passes away is a Truth known by every Master – Jesus included (see [Matthew 24:35](#), [Mark 13:2](#) et al). Of course, his statement here that “Heaven” could also “pass away” is a bit more problematic, and yet we should remember two things when considering the same: **First**, that Heaven for Jesus was an *internal* reality (see his comments on “the Kingdom of God” in [Luke 17:20-21](#)), which is why it too can “pass away” (the Greek *pareusontai* – Strong’s #3828, which actually means “to pass out of sight”, *not* “to cease to exist”) once one’s physical body dies and no longer contains the same ... and **Second**, note that the Greek word used for “Heaven” here was not related to a spiritual paradise, but rather meant “the heavens” or “the sky above” (the Greek *ouranos* -- Strong’s #3772), a conglomeration of material entities that indeed will one day all “pass away” as well.

In addition, note that Jesus is telling his listeners to “Be alert” here (see also [Matthew 22:42](#), [Matthew 25](#), [Matthew 26:40-41](#), [Luke 21:34-36](#), [John 12:34-36](#) et al) – a state of clear awareness that was a key prerequisite to walking his Way; the recognition of the Truth of Oneness that we have known since our conception ... And note as well that he says here that he has “already told [his disciples] everything” – essentially (for literalists, at least) that we need only look to his words as found in the Scriptures to know all there is to know about his Way of Selfless Service (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) and his Truth of unconditional Love (see [Matthew 5:40-44](#) & [Matthew 18:21-22](#) et al) and his Life of Joy-full self-sacrifice (“Take up your cross and follow [my Way]” ~ [Matthew 16:24](#)) ... And indeed, there is no need to speculate on what else Jesus might have said or what



else he might have learned or where else he might have traveled or even where he might have gone after his crucifixion. The words he offered during his ministry were more than enough for anyone to find and enliven his Way – at least anyone humble enough to See that Way within those words, and courageous enough to leap onto that Way by setting the same into motion (see [John 12:47-48](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.

Romans 6:10-11 ... Dying to death

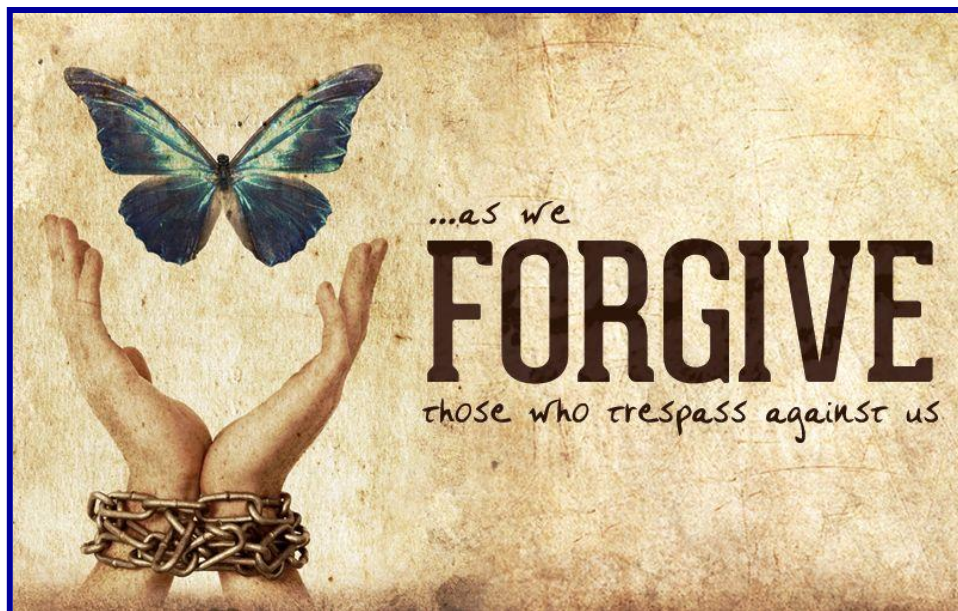
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“The death he died, he died to sin ... But the Life he lives, he lives to God.
Consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God” ~ Paul (Romans 6:10-11)

First of all, note that Paul is speaking here about Jesus’ crucifixion and supposed resurrection; key points in the “Gospel of Atonement” that Paul himself invented (see [Acts 13:30-38](#), [Acts 17:3](#), [Acts 17:31b](#), & [1 Corinthians 15:13-14](#) et al) -- a gospel which was a **very** different to “the Good News” taught and encouraged by Jesus Christ (see [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#)) ... And while it was well done on Paul’s part to (almost certainly inadvertently) imply that Jesus did not die to life but merely “**died to sin**” – *his* own sin, Paul mistakenly chose to believe that Jesus did indeed die for all of our sins as well. Of course – at least as far as Jesus himself was concerned – this was quite clearly not the case. In fact, Jesus put himself on the cross to show us how we could all **cleanse our own sins** by “**taking up our own cross**” and emulating (i.e. following) his Way of selfless Love (see [Matthew 16:24](#), [Mark 8:34](#), [Luke 9:23](#) + [Matthew 5:40-44](#), [Matthew 18:21-22](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al).

Finally, please note that – again, at least for Jesus – the phrase “**living to God**” does not mean bowing down in subservience to a celestial dictator, but rather means fully honoring the God-Essence **within** (see [John 14:20](#)) by acting as an agent thereof in our dealings with others (see [Matthew 22:37-40](#)). And it is in this sense and this sense alone that Paul is correct when he says that we are to consider ourselves “**dead to sin and alive to God.**”

Amen ... Let it be so.



Romans 12:2 ... Renewing the Mind

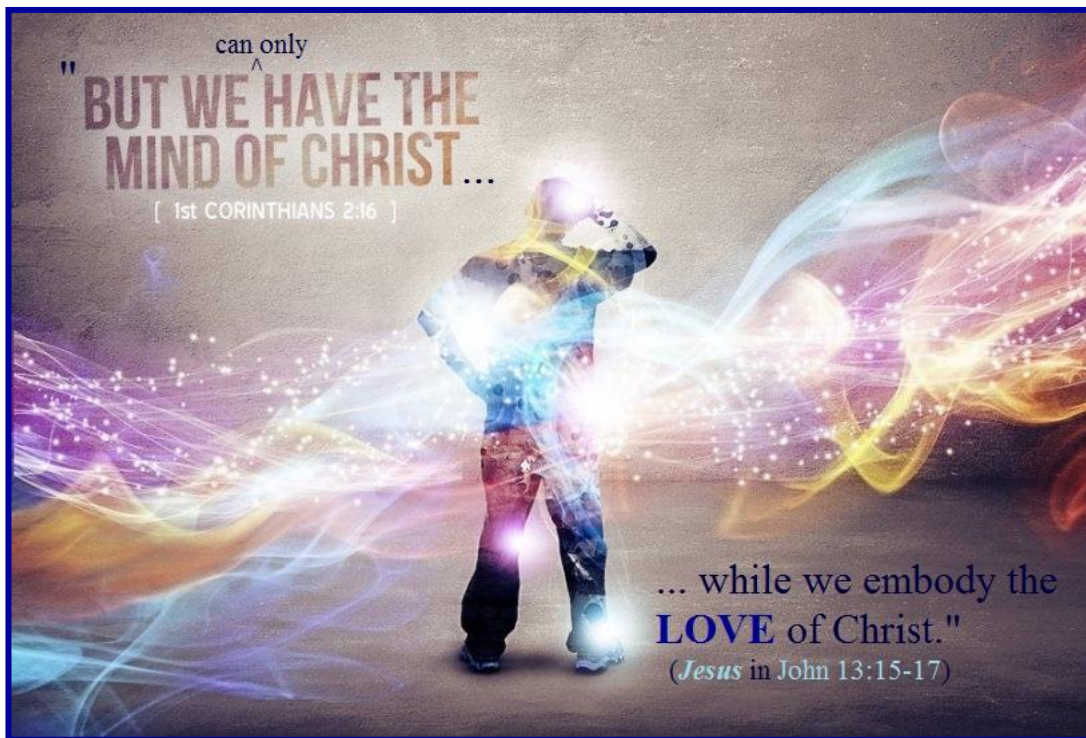
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“Be transformed by the renewing of your minds,
so that you may discern what is the Will of God”

~ Paul (Romans 12:2)

While it is true that the “renewing of our minds” (i.e. the refreshing of our perspective – primarily by becoming “humble as an infant” in the way we choose to see both our station & the others therein; see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)) does enable us to “discern the Will of God”, that discernment will not become truly lucid until we **choose to charge forth** and engage a Great Leap of Faith into the radical acts of Love mandated by the same. This is why Jesus said that “only those who **do** what is true will come to the Light” (John 3:21) and that “those who have **done** Good will rise to Live” (John 5:29) and that “you should **do** for others as I have done for you” (John 13:15) and that “If you understand these things, blessed are you while you **do** them” (John 13:17) and that “Not everyone who merely says to me ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only those who **do** the will of the Father in Heaven” (Matthew 7:21-23) – a will which is active, perfect, unconditional Love ([Matthew 5:48](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



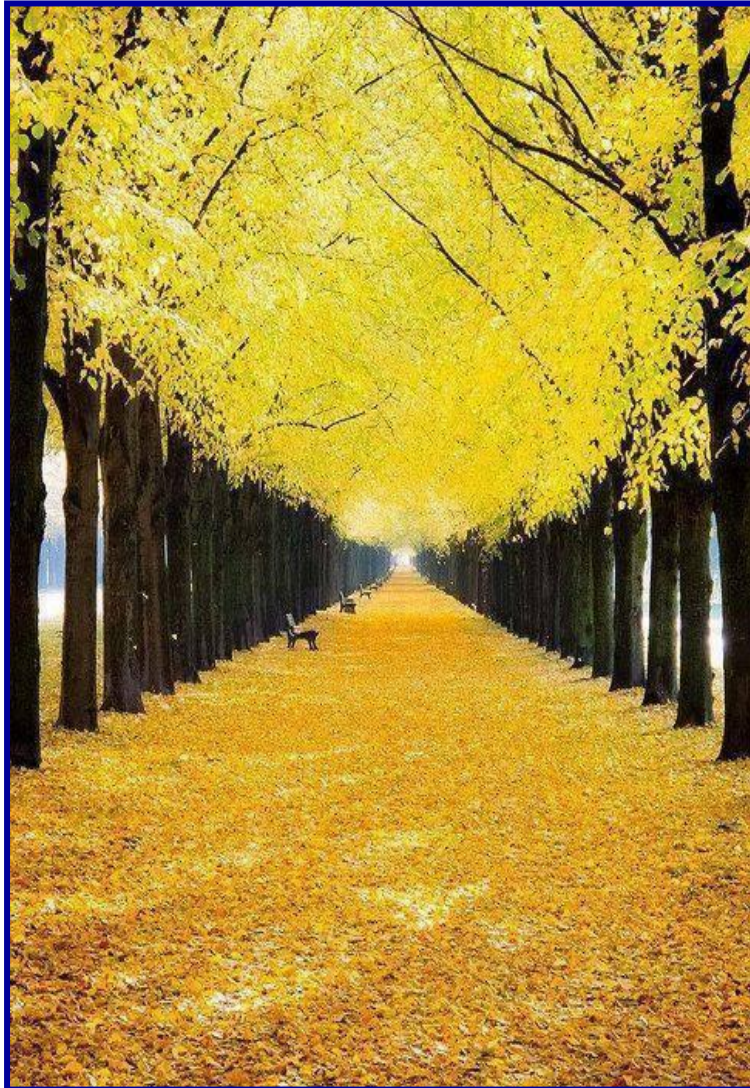
Matthew 7:13-14 ... Walking the Narrow Way
(03/01/2017)

“The Narrow Way is wide enough for every being
to walk it both uniquely and simultaneously.” ~ anonymous

Yes, it is true that there is only one Way to real Redemption, and yet there are currently well over 7 billion sentient beings (each with millions of choices of action) who can indeed simultaneously walk that one Way with their one unique gait and with their own unique tempo ... What must stay the same for all, of course, is the *direction* in which the Way-walker is facing – namely, towards the horizon of bringing more Peace *to others*; of lessening *their* burdens or furthering *their* Joy. And even though this is incredibly difficult for any being to do (seeing as how our brains are selfishly hard-wired for protection & survival over all

else, with the reptile brain instinctively analyzing every single encounter using the rubrics of “friend or foe” & “fight or flight” – and doing so ¼ of a second before the neocortex can hope to make a different decision about the same), it is still always possible to do so. Indeed, as Jesus himself noted: “For wide is the gate [of the ego] and broad is the road [of selfishness] that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate [of the Soul] and narrow the road [of selfless Love] that leads to life. As such, only a few find it ... though all who seek it find it indeed” (Matthew 7:13-14 & Matthew 7:7-8).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Luke 4:4 ... By bread Alone

(03/02/2017)

“One does not live by bread alone.”

~ Jesus (Luke 4:4)

First & foremost, it should be clearly stated that the one who lives in the purest expression of Love need not live on bread at all – that those who choose to Love perfectly (i.e. with humble deeds of willing self-sacrifice for others) receive all the sustenance they need therefrom. Indeed, this is why it is so often witnessed that aid workers can go many days without food or sleep and yet remain fully energized when responding to a tragedy ... Yes, it is true that these moments are often few & far between – and thus that the vast majority of sentient beings do indeed need to partake of food & water & rest on a regular basis. And yet this is so not because these things are inevitably needed by us, but rather because the majority of us are tempted to seek these desires and submit to them (much like Satan was attempting to get Jesus to do in [Luke 4](#) -- see also [Matthew 4:1-11](#)); in essence, to make our own needs more important than the needs of others; to be served rather than to serve (see [Matthew 20:28](#)).

Just as important, we see here the mention of “[bread](#)” – a metaphor Jesus consistently used to describe acts of selfless service, with the emphasis being placed on the selflessness of those deeds. For it is true indeed that it is not enough to merely “do good deeds” without founding the same in conscious intentions of serving others therewith. It is not enough to “be good” unless those actions are imbued with the desire to have them bring others some measure of solace – unless those deeds are soaked fully in the “[wine](#)” of unconditional Love (see [Matthew 26:26-28](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.





The Glory of the New Covenant

"The days are surely coming,' says the Lord, 'when I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the Covenant that I made with their ancestors ... And this is the Covenant that I will make with [them]: I will put my Law in their minds, and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall not reprimand one another or say to each other, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall *all* know me -- from the least of them to the greatest. And I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.' ... Know that in speaking of "a New Covenant," He has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete will soon fade and disappear."

~ unknown (Hebrews 8:8-13)

"Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them ... And this is my commandment: that you *LOVE one another* just as I have loved you"

~ *Jesus* Christ (John 14:23 & John 15:12)

Matthew 10:16 ... Like Sheep amongst Wolves (03/03/2017)

“I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; So be wise like serpents and gentle like doves.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 10:16)

There are actually a number of profound Truths embedded in this seemingly innocuous verse ... Consider the following: **First**, realize that **wolves** band together to kill sentient others for survival, while **sheep** band together while eating kill-free to serve others; that **wolves** thrive on violence (and are thus often reviled), while **sheep** thrive on giving (and are thus often honored) ... **Second**, realize that human “**sheep**” are never so powerful (and thus, ironically, never so safe) as when willingly & lovingly going amidst their “**wolves**” (for Love is the ultimate empowerment – driving away both all who live based in fear and fear itself – see [1 John 4:18](#)) ... Indeed this is how Jesus was able to “**pass through**” the angry crowd of “**wolves**” in [Luke 4:30](#), this is how Jesus remained so calmly stoic in the face of his ultimate trial and final persecution (see [Matthew 27](#), [Mark 14](#), [Luke 22](#), and [John 18](#)), and this is how each of us can harness fear and aggression in our lives as well ... **Third**, realize that **serpents** are **wise** because they know when to hide and because they attack only when severely threatened, and that we are to be “**gentle like doves**” because the peaceful interaction is the one most likely to be received and ultimately emulated (Jesus didn’t ever coerce others into doing as he said, and he never once demanded that they worship him; only offered them the chance to “**follow**” him instead – see [Matthew 4:19](#), [Matthew 19:21](#), [Mark 2:14](#), [Luke 18:22-23](#), [John 1:43-44](#) et al) ... And when we apply these aforementioned Wisdoms to this particular verse, we come to realize that it is essentially reminding us of two things: **A**) to share the message of selfless Love with others (with our actions more than with our words), and **B**) to pay attention to those with whom you share the same – to recognize the difference between those who will truly listen to the message (and then go forth to bear Good Fruit in direct proportion to how often & how courageously they apply the same) and those who won’t. For the former, offer your Truth fully (“**gentle as doves**”) -- and for the latter, offer the same fully at first meeting and then, after they show an obvious intention to ignore &/or disrespect the same, calmly “**wipe the dust from your feet**” and move smoothly & non-judgmentally on to the next potential Hearer thereof (see [Matthew 10:14](#) et al).

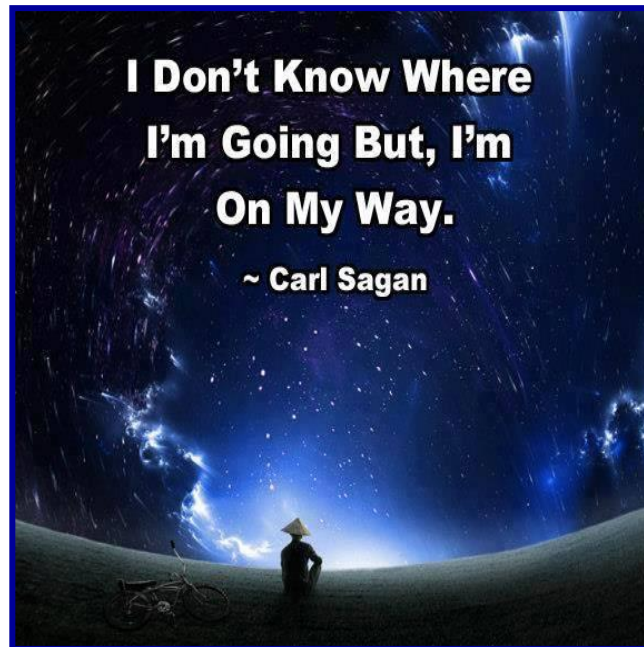


2 Corinthians 5:7 ... Walking by Faith

(03/04/2017)

“We walk by Faith, not by sight.”
~ Paul (2 Corinthians 5:7)

I am frequently called to disagree with Paul, if for no other reason than the vast majority of his theology bears the horrible fruit of division, selfishness, sadness, &/or anger when put into practice ... That having been said, there are a number of verses from Paul’s letters that do indeed bear the Good fruit of Peace &/or Joy – if they are read alone on their own, &/or if they are read through the “lenses” of the all-Loving Way of Christ. And this particular verse is one of them (with others being [Romans 2:1](#), [Romans 2:13-15](#), [Romans 8:5-6](#), [Romans 8:14-16](#), [Romans 12:10](#), [Romans 12:14-21](#), [Romans 13:8-10](#), [Romans 14:4](#), [Romans 14:13-14](#), [Romans 14:19](#), [Romans 14:22](#), [1 Corinthians 3:16](#), [1 Corinthians 6:17](#), [1 Corinthians 10:24](#), [1 Corinthians 13:2](#), [1 Corinthians 13:8](#), [1 Corinthians 16:14](#), [2 Corinthians 3:18](#), [Galatians 5:6b](#), [Galatians 5:14](#), [Philippians 2:4-5](#), [Philippians 4:5](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:15-18](#), [Colossians 2:20](#) & [Colossians 3:12-14](#)) ... For it is true indeed (and True in-Deed) that we can only potently walk The Way of Christ when we caringly walk that way in **Faith** – not at all certain of the rightness of our beliefs, not at all being certain of our fate in the hereafter, not at all certain in the nature of our God, not even at all certain that our God even exists. For real **Faith** in action has no idea what might come as a result of our Love, and yet *Loves anyway* – has no idea how our Love might be received by the other, and yet *Loves anyway* – has no idea how witnesses to our Love will respond thereto, and yet *Loves anyway* – has no idea whether or not the Love given is even “good” or “right” or “true”, and yet *Loves anyway* as well ... Admittedly, Paul probably didn’t intend any of this when he himself spoke of “faith” (see [Romans 4:1-5](#), [Romans 5:1-2](#), [Galatians 3:22](#) et al), just as it is almost certain that Jesus most certainly *did* when he did (see [Matthew 13:1-30](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 7:21-24](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) & [Thomas 12](#) + [James 2:14-26](#) et al). And yet the basic Truth of this verse shines past Paul’s delusions regardless, for when it is put into practice purely, it always bears Good Fruit (see [Matthew 7:15-20](#)) – when it isn’t, it doesn’t.



Luke 11:41 ... Alms from Within

(03/05/2017)

“Give for alms those things that are within;
and everything will be clean for you.”

~ Jesus (Luke 11:41)

First and foremost it is important to realize that Paul (much as he did for most of the other major theological concepts in the New Testament) had a very different approach than Jesus to tithing ... While Jesus encouraged all (especially his disciples, the ones who were to do the preaching of his message) to serve selflessly *without payment* (“You received without payment; give without payment” ~ Matthew 10:5-8), Paul made frequent justifications for doing just the opposite – saying “to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due” (Romans 4:4) and “if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.” (2 Thessalonians 3:10) ... In addition, Paul went even a step further when he noted that preachers specifically were due payment for their preaching (see 1 Timothy 5:17, Galatians 6:6, and 1 Corinthians 9:14 – the latter being a verse which contradicts The Way of Christ quite directly in stating that “the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel”).

Of course, a bit more important is what **Luke 11:41** means for the rest of us who are not preachers; how we are supposed to tithe in accordance with this teaching? Note that the answer to this apparent conundrum is not so difficult to decipher, seeing as how it is LOVE that is for Jesus ever “within” – not only



LOVE, but both the heavenly **Father** and His **Kingdom** as well (see **John 14:20** & **Luke 17:20-21**). As such, tithing to others Jesus-style is really quite straightforward; requiring us to simply Joyfully *sacrifice for others* -- especially those least deserving of the same (**Matthew 5:40-44**) &/or those who are being scorned or downtrodden (**Matthew 25:35-40**). This is how we give of God or Heaven, for Heaven is made of God -- and God is made of Love (**Matthew 5:48**).

Romans 6:17 ... Obedient from the Heart

(03/06/2017)

“Become obedient from the Heart
to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted.”

~ Paul (Romans 6:17)

When examining this particular verse, it helps to start by remembering that by far the most important teachings in life do not come from external “celestial” sources (as Paul errantly believed), but rather *from within* ourselves (e.g. the moral guidance of the conscience related to our choices, the psychological guidance of the limbic system related to our interactions with others, and the interactive guidance from our surroundings related to inspiration & intuition – three forces that combine to enliven “the Advocate” in John 14). And not surprisingly, Jesus Christ believed the same (see John 1:3-9, John 8:31-32, John 14:20-26, John 15:26 et al) ... Secondly, note as well that “the Heart” only knows one Calling, and for us to be obedient thereto is to *Love others* without measure (see Matthew 5:40-48 + Matthew 18:21-22 + Matthew 19:21 & Matthew 25:35-40 et al) ... This is the **Teaching** we have all known since our very first conscious Awakening in the womb, this is the **Teaching** that all true Masters teach, this is the **Teaching** to which we have all been entrusted, and this is the **Teaching** we have all been Called to “become obedient” (i.e. to enliven).

As a final aside, it is intriguing that Paul would make this statement at all – seeing as how he himself did not live true to the Teaching to which *he* was supposedly entrusted. But then again, it was not Jesus Christ who spoke to him on the Road to Damascus, but rather one of the deceiving Elohim who did so (compare Acts 9:1-9 with Luke 10:18). This is possibly why his gospel is dramatically at odds with The Way of Christ (contrast 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 10:9 with Matthew 10:7 & Matthew 24:12-14) – for the simple reason that Paul errantly heeded the call of another, far lesser spirit, rather than following the Divine Conscience within himself that simply wanted him to Love perfectly and preach a perfectly limitless Love.



Thomas 1:24 ... Within a person of Light

(03/07/2017)

“There is a Light within a person of Light
and It illuminates the whole world.”

~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 24)

Before I make a few comments on some of the deeper Meanings in this beautiful (and extremely insightful) verse, it is worthwhile to consider the very beginning passage from the [Gospel of John](#) – a passage which reads: “[In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. It was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through it, and without it not one thing came into being. What has come into being in \[the Word\] was life, and the life was the Light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it](#)” (John 1:1-5) ... This passage is especially intriguing when we realize that the term “[Word](#)” used therein is the Greek term *Logos* (Strong’s #3056) – a word that essentially meant “[the Divine Essence that animates all sentient life](#)” to the educated folk of Jesus’ day. It is also interesting to re-read the same passage replacing the words “[the Word](#)” with the word “[Love](#)” – seeing as how Jesus thought that God was indeed the actual perfect fulfillment thereof (see [Matthew 5:48](#)) ... On a more practical level, it is important for us all to repeatedly remember that there is always a beautiful Light within every sentient being – even those seemingly residing in Darkness; those who harbor the very same Light in the very same quantity as the others we consider to be allies or friends or lovers or heroes. Their Light cannot be seen by the inattentive because it is covered in deeds of varying manifestations of greed &/or wickedness, and yet that same glorious Light is indeed within them – trapped and cold and yearning to breathe free ... That is why it is up to those of us who are “[in the Light](#)” to actively & courageously Love those who are not – for the former are the only ones who can Love the unlovable; dismantling their prisons of fear & self-loathing and setting their inner Light free ... Finally, it is worthwhile to note that the Light that comes from such courageously Caring Deeds is bright to the same degree that it is difficult. And because those who are truly “[in the Light](#)” can **See the Light** within those who are not, and because those who are truly “[in the Light](#)” have the liberation of others as their one true Mission, they are the ones who do indeed



Care for the uncaring, and they are the ones who Give to the greedy, and they are the ones who Forgive the unforgivable – and thereby they are the ones who illuminate not only the objects of their self-sacrifice, but the rest of the entire world as well.

Luke 3:8 ... Bearing worthy Fruit

(03/08/2017)

“Bear fruits worthy of your repentance.”

~ Jesus (Luke 3:8)

First & foremost, this verse cannot be truly understood without understanding what Jesus meant by “**repentance**.” Indeed, contrary to popular understanding (which sees “**repentance**” as some sort of mental &/or verbal admission of sinfulness, culpability, or regret) the Greek word in the ancient manuscripts commonly translated as “**repent**” is *metanoeo* – a word that had very little to do with self-judgment and nothing at all to do with confessing one’s sins. Rather, it meant to “**completely alter one’s way of living**” (see Strong’s #3340; also *metanoia* Strong’s #3341) – namely: to turn away from arrogant, judgmental self-centeredness and turn towards humble, caring selflessness; to turn away from a life of worry & fear and turn towards a life of Service & Love; to turn away from striving for one’s own personal salvation in the Hereafter and turn towards working to bring others Peace in the lifetime we already possess ... In essence – at least in the case of every traditional Christian believer, to truly “**repent**” means to turn away from the teachings of Paul (which errantly intimates that “**repentance**” requires a self-critical admission of personal sin – see [Acts 20:21](#) et al) and turn towards a life of humbly & selflessly & lovingly living The Way of Jesus Christ. (“**Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is even now at hand ... The time has been fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; so repent, and believe in the Good News ... I tell you; unless you repent, you will all perish as [the Galileans who were executed by Pilate] did.**” ~ Jesus Christ in [Matthew 4:17](#) + [Mark 1:15](#) + [Luke 13:3](#)) ... As such, pure **Repentance** – at least according to Jesus – **always bears Love**, and thus always bears Good Fruits worthy of the same (see [Matthew 21:43](#) -- “**Therefore I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the Kingdom**”) ... **Secondly**, Jesus could also be implying here the Truth that “**Grace is not a gift but a given**” – meaning that **Repentance** is always a choice encouraged by the Soul, and thus always a choice available to the sinner -- and as such it is an inevitability that he or she will (hopefully sooner rather than later) enjoin the same. And this is why we are to “**bear fruits worthy of our repentance**” – or, more wisely stated, why we are to bear fruits in accordance with our inevitable Divinity ... Of course, it is also possible that Jesus is speaking in more mundane terms – encouraging his listeners to not only repent verbally, but to actualize the same. After all, if Salvation was a verb for Jesus (i.e. if Salvation was known by enlivening Love as a humble deed – [Matthew 18:3-4](#) + [John 13:15-17](#)), then **Repentance** would have to be an active embodiment as well.



Thomas 1:41 ... To be ever Given more

(03/09/2017)

“He who has something in his Heart will be given more; while he who believes he has nothing will be deprived of even the little he has.” ~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 41)

Before one begins to analyze the deeper meanings of any passages from the Gospel of Thomas it is well worth it to refer to the passages from the biblical Gospels where Jesus says things similarly (in this case [Mark 4:25](#), [Matthew 13:12](#) & [Matthew 25:29](#); see also [Luke 12:48](#) & [Luke 19:26](#)) ... In addition, I also admit straight away that I have indeed amended the traditionally accepted translation of this verse (which tends to normally read something akin to “The person who possesses will be given more. And the person who does not have will be deprived of even the little that he has”) in order to make it harmonize better with the context of the aforementioned places in the canonical Gospels where Jesus says essentially the same thing -- as well as to have it more obviously align with The Way of Christ taught & lived by Jesus throughout his ministry.

As far as analyzing the verse itself goes, it must first be noted that Jesus cannot be speaking of material wealth here, otherwise he would be contradicting major portions of his other sermons and radically diverging from a major anti-materialistic tenet of his message (see [Matthew 6:25-34](#), [Luke 21:1-4](#), and even [Acts 20:35](#)). As such, it must be clear that Jesus is speaking here of *service* – that



A man's true Wealth is the Good he does for others ... A woman's true Wealth is the Kindness she shows to those unknown.

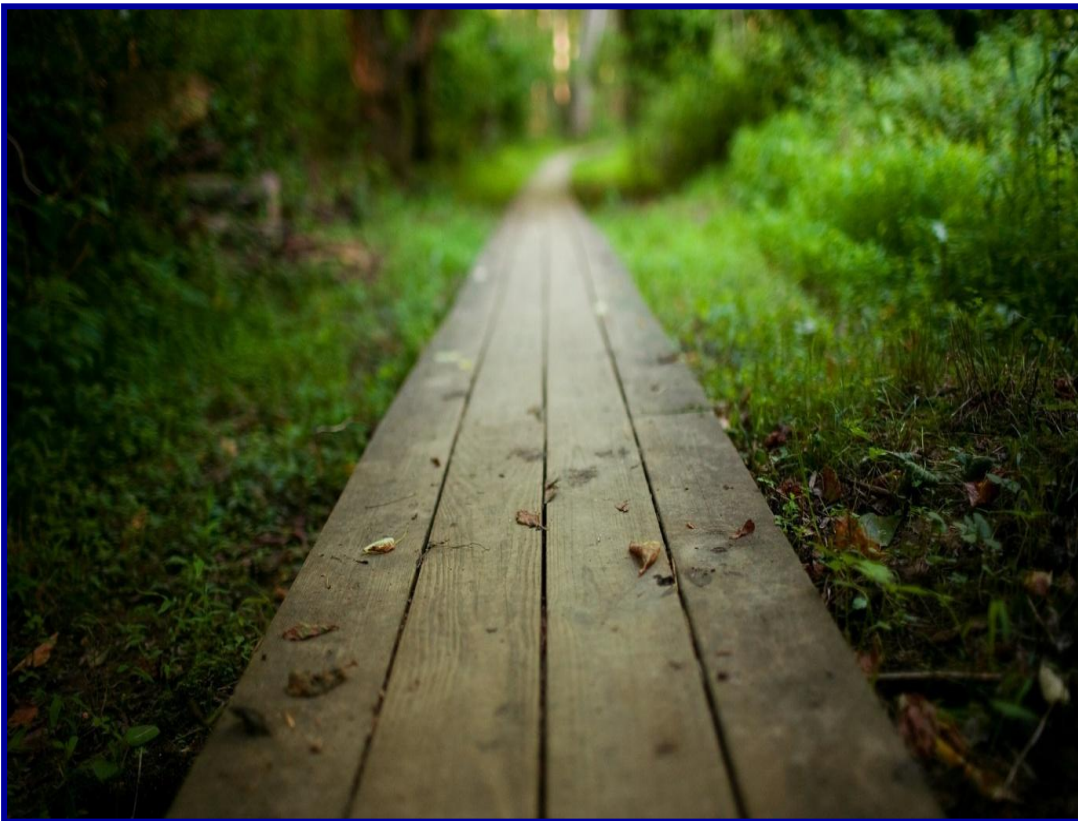
whomever is engaged in an act of selfless Goodness will be blessed by calling additional like-opportunities to his or herself thereafter. Similarly, this verse reflects the Truth that those who focus on what they lack will indeed suffer as a consequence, not only inevitably losing what little they have, but suffering from that loss while depriving themselves of the Joy that they could have known instead – the Joy that could only have come from selflessly looking to what they could have been giving to others instead.

John 14:4 ... To Know where we are Going
(03/10/2017)

“To allow your Self to be led,
stop blindly following.” ~ Jesus Christ

As it turns out, it is actually the text of [John 14:4](#) that is being echoed here, for indeed we all innately “[know the place to where \[Jesus\] was going](#)” ... Consider: ****We know*** the way to Love is via Caring when least inclined to do so, for those least deserving of the same ... ****We know*** the way to Heaven; that Heaven is an internal eternity, accessed during every deed of selfless Kindness ... ****We know*** the way to Salvation; that Salvation comes to those who humble their own selves ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)) by Caring for those in need ([Matthew 5:40-48](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) ... And perhaps most importantly of all, we need not “learn” any of these Truths from a book or another person. Perhaps most importantly of all, while guides of Truth are indeed ever-present (we can know them by their Fruits), they are not in any way necessary for us to recognize (and then re-Member) The Way of Christ.

Amen ... As it was in our infancy, let it again be so.



Genesis 9:7 ... To be truly Fruitful (03/11/2017)

“Why don’t you just pair ‘em up in threes?” ~ Yogi Berra

Interestingly enough, this is exactly what God (YHWH) would have done in the Beginning – had the Elohim not interfered and made their creation (including humanity – the creation in which we currently reside) incomplete. The evidence for this is seen in the way humanity is still primarily behaving like a virus on the planet – spreading rapidly, depleting all natural resources, warring with one another, and oppressing &/or murdering all other life-forms (which is exactly what the Elohim commanded humankind to do when they told us to “have dominion” over the Earth in [Genesis 1:26](#) and then to “be fruitful & multiply” in [Genesis 9:7](#), as the ancient Hebrew of these phrases more accurately reads “authoritatively possess” and “multiply in swarms” – see *weyirdu* Strong’s #7287, along with *urebu sirsu* Strong’s #7235 & #8317), and the evidence for this is seen in the ancient Hebrew of the Bible itself ... Concisely stated, in the first chapter of [Genesis](#), we see the Elohim (translated incorrectly as “God” in most English Bibles) presiding over the first creation mentioned therein. And, seeing as how whole creations were always represented by the number three in Judaic thought at the time [Genesis](#) was written, it is no surprise that the first Creation happened in a series of three’s – light coming from waters & darkness on Day 1, the waters above being separated from the waters below by the “dome” of the “sky” on Day 2, vegetation in general & plants yielding seeds & trees bearing fruits coming forth on Day 3, the Sun & the Moon and the stars shining forth on Day 4, larger marine animals & fish & birds coming into being on Day 5, and finally wild animals & domesticated animals & all “ground crawlers” entering the scene on Day 6 (see [Genesis 1:1-25](#)) ... Note that none of these trinities were directly created by the Elohim, but rather were all allowed to come forth from something else, and everything that came forth was part of its own complete triad.



And then the **Elohim** decided to create something by themselves – humankind. And instead of creating us whole & complete in our own triad, they – being the incomplete, “fallen” spiritual beings that they themselves were – created us incomplete as well; created us *in their image*; created us as binary beings -- either anatomically male or anatomically female (see **Genesis 1:26-27**) ... And this flagrant imperfection gave rise to a level of catastrophic overpopulation & brutal violence very similar to what we ourselves are experiencing today, which is why the **Elohim** then “utterly destroyed [commonly mistranslated as “finished” – see *waykal*, Strong’s #6515] all that they had made” on the seventh day – which then paved the way for **YHWH**-aligned **Elohim** (translated as “**LORD God**” in most English Bibles) to then create a whole, gender-neutral human (the *ha’adam* of Strong’s #120) to tend a peaceful Garden in the subsequent Creation seen in **Genesis 2**.

Yes, it is true that these whole humans (again, thanks to the interventions of the **Elohim**) also fell into incompleteness and proceeded to create the challengingly barbaric mess in which we are all living today (assuming the tale is more than merely metaphorical, of course), and yet it remains ever possible for us to amend their failings – to rise above the temptations of the **Elohim** to dominate and defend and attack and abuse, and choose to peacefully tend our own section of The Garden instead – in essence to “pair ourselves up in threes” -- to pair the past & the future with an immersion into the Here&Now, to pair our culture and our conscience with a courage that injects the latter into the former, to pair every stranger & every enemy with every Soulmate (by treating the formers like the latter) – essentially to actively pair “self” & “other” with **LOVE**.

Amen ... Let it finally be so.



Isaiah 32:8 ... On planning Noble Things
(03/12/2017)

“Those who are noble plan noble things,
and by noble things they stand.”
~ unknown (Isaiah 32:8)

First & foremost, it is crucial to remember that true nobility is actually a *verb* – it is the raw actualization of selflessness both in our dealings with the circumstances that come to us and the others who inhabit those happenings. As such, those who are truly Noble do not merely **plan Noble things** – they **DO Noble things**. And this is indeed the reason why “**by Noble things they stand**” – because the resonance of those Noble Deeds prop up their present with real Power and infuse their imminent future with deep-seated Peace. And this interpretation is not only supported by the Good Fruit it always bears when put into practice, but also by the ancient Hebrew of **Isaiah** as well – for the Hebrew word translated here as “**noble**” is actually *nadib* (Strong’s #5081); a word that doesn't mean "moral" or "stalwart" or "ethical" or "decent", but rather means “**willingly generous.**”



Matthew 19:21 ... Becoming Perfect

(03/13/2017)

“If you wish to be perfect then go, sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor. Then you will have Treasure in Heaven ... Afterwards, come and follow me.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 19:21)

First & foremost, despite the ego’s flagrantly errant protestations to the contrary (e.g. “But I’m only human,” “But there has to be a balance between caring for others and caring for myself” etc etc) perfection *is* possible for us all – at the very least in the context Jesus intends in this verse ... Please consider the following biblical facts: **A)** God is perfect Love (Matthew 5:48) ... **B)** God – and therefore that same Love – resides within us all (John 14:20) ... and **C)** All we have to do to actualize the same is to selflessly do & caringly be just as Jesus chose to do & be in the Gospels (John 14:12).

Impossible, you say? Over the course of an entire lifetime, of course it is ... And yet that is not what we have been Called to do. We have been Called to “**be perfect**” in our Love for only one instant of our lives – *this* instant. We simply have to take Life – and Give it perfect Love – one moment at a time (Matthew 6:34) ... Of course, directly tied to this Truth is the self-sacrifice implicit in selling everything you have and giving the proceeds to those who have less – in Caring for the downtrodden repeatedly in small but significant ways (Matthew 25:35-40). For to do otherwise is to fall into a zombie-like existence of monetary gain &/or the monotonous accumulation of material wealth. And as Jesus oh so correctly pointed out, “**No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot [simultaneously] serve both God and wealth**” (Matthew 6:24) ... And after said cleansing of the superfluous has been fulfilled, note that the one detaching from such superficialities (and having selflessly given the proceeds to the downtrodden thereafter) “**will have treasure in Heaven**” – remembering that for Jesus “**Heaven**” as not a post-mortem reward elsewhere but a *pre-mortem* Bliss that comes to us during such salvational deeds (Luke 17:20-21 + John 13:15-17 et al) ... And what are we to do thereafter? What are we to do after cleansing ourselves from our attachment to all our possessions (if not actually giving away a large portion thereof)? Most importantly, once these self-centered comforts have been washed clean, it is necessary to go forth into Life and “**follow**” Jesus – i.e. *emulate* his Way of Loving – i.e. taking up our own unique crosses of courageous self-sacrifice and carrying them daily throughout our lives. (Matthew 16:24)



Amen ... Let it be so.

John 16:33 ... To conquer the World

(03/14/2017)

“In the world you face persecution. But take courage; for I have conquered the world.” ~ Jesus (John 16:33)

First of all, please note that Jesus is **not** claiming here that he has conquered the world itself, otherwise he would have accepted the kingship offered him by Satan (which he clearly *rejected* in [Matthew 4:8-10](#)), the kingship offered him by his followers (which he openly *rejected* in [John 6:15](#)), and the kingship indirectly claimed for him by Pontius Pilate (which he again *rejected* in [Mark 15:2](#)) ...

In addition, if Jesus had been claiming here to have conquered our material world he would not have quite clearly exclaimed that his kingdom was “**not of this world**” ([John 18:36](#)), and he certainly would not have organized his own crucifixion thereafter ([Mark 10:32-34](#), [Mark 14:3-8](#) et al), much less tell everyone over & over & over again that he was **not** the violent, Rome-overthrowing, Earth-ruling Davidian Messiah for whom they had so long hoped & prayed (see [Matthew 16:20](#), [Matthew 22:41-45](#), [Matthew 24:1-2](#), [Matthew 24:23-27](#), [Matthew 26:63-64](#) + [Matthew 16:28](#), [Mark 1:24-25](#), [Mark 3:12](#), [Mark 8:27-30](#), [Mark 10:17-18](#), [Mark 12:14-17](#), [Mark 12:35-37](#), [Luke 4:5-8](#), [Luke 4:41](#), [Luke 9:18-21](#), [Luke 18:18-19](#), [Luke 22:70](#), [John 7:18](#) + [John 14:20](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44-45](#), [John 12:49](#) & [John 13:13](#)) ... No indeed, if Jesus had “conquered the world” in any traditional sense of the phrase, he would not have spent his entire ministry preaching the Truth that selfless service for others is The Way to Salvation (see [Mark 1:38](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ...



In truth then, the reason Jesus said he had “conquered the world” is because “the world” to him was a reference to everything material – including the fear-based suffering that came from our attaching thereto. In Truth, *this* is why he advocated giving up material needs (see [Matthew 19:2](#)), *this* is why he told us that those who persevered through persecution in Love would be saved (see [Matthew 24:13](#)), and *this* is why he noted “Peace I leave with you, and my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.”([John 14:27](#))

Amen ... Let it be so.

Mark 6:8-12 ... To proclaim Repentance

(03/15/2017)

“He ordered them to take nothing for their Journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts ... So they went out and proclaimed that all should repent.”

~ unknown (Mark 6:8-12)

It will be of initial interest to note that while **Mark** (the original Gospel – penned first, and from which the authors of **Matthew** & **Luke** clearly borrowed) allowed for the disciples to take a staff with them on their journey, the Gospels of **Matthew** & **Luke** had Jesus quite clearly telling them not to do so (see **Matthew 10:9-10** & **Luke 9:3**). While it is not clear why the authors of these later Gospels made this change (maybe they were describing the outset a different missionary journey altogether, or maybe they felt that the disciples taking absolutely nothing with them evidenced a greater Faith in The Way of Christ), it is consistent among all three accounts that the disciples were instructed to “walk on faith” – to take nothing with them when they departed and to ask for no assistance while underway ... My personal experience (having lived “on faith” for many years, and having even once “walked on faith” from Chattanooga to Miami as well) has shown that such an order served many purposes for the disciples, among them the following: **A**) It dramatically enhanced the difficulty of their journey, and thereby dramatically intensified the **Faith** of those taking it -- which thereby dramatically intensified the power of all their words & deeds during the same ... **B**) It “preached” the Truth of Providence (i.e. that giving one’s life to selfless service is almost always “rewarded” with a shower of serendipities) to others without a single word needing to be said ... **C**) It inspired those witnessing the same to remember the Joy of Giving in their own lives -- a Giving without expectation of reward or hope for reciprocity ... **D**) It encouraged others to be open-minded and interact with the disciples more humbly (and thereby Hear what they were saying more clearly) ... and, **E**) It lowered the inner wall of “friend or foe” in the minds of all passersby – allowing them to more readily approach the disciples, instead of the disciples having to do the approaching ... Most importantly of all is the fact that what the disciples were to proclaim was “**repentance**” (the Greek word *metanoia* -- Strong’s #3341); **not** that Jesus was Master or King or Savior (see **Mark 10:18**, **John 5:41**, **John 6:15**, **John 7:16**, **John 8:50-54**, **John 12:44** et al), but rather that Salvation came from “**becoming again as a very young child**” (**Matthew 18:3-4**) and completely shifting one’s behaviors (“**repent**” = *metanoëó* Strong’s #3340) by extending selfless Love to others (**John 13:15-17**) – especially one’s enemies (**Matthew 5:40-44**) &/or the downtrodden (**Matthew 25:35-40**).



John 2:7 ... Full to the Brim

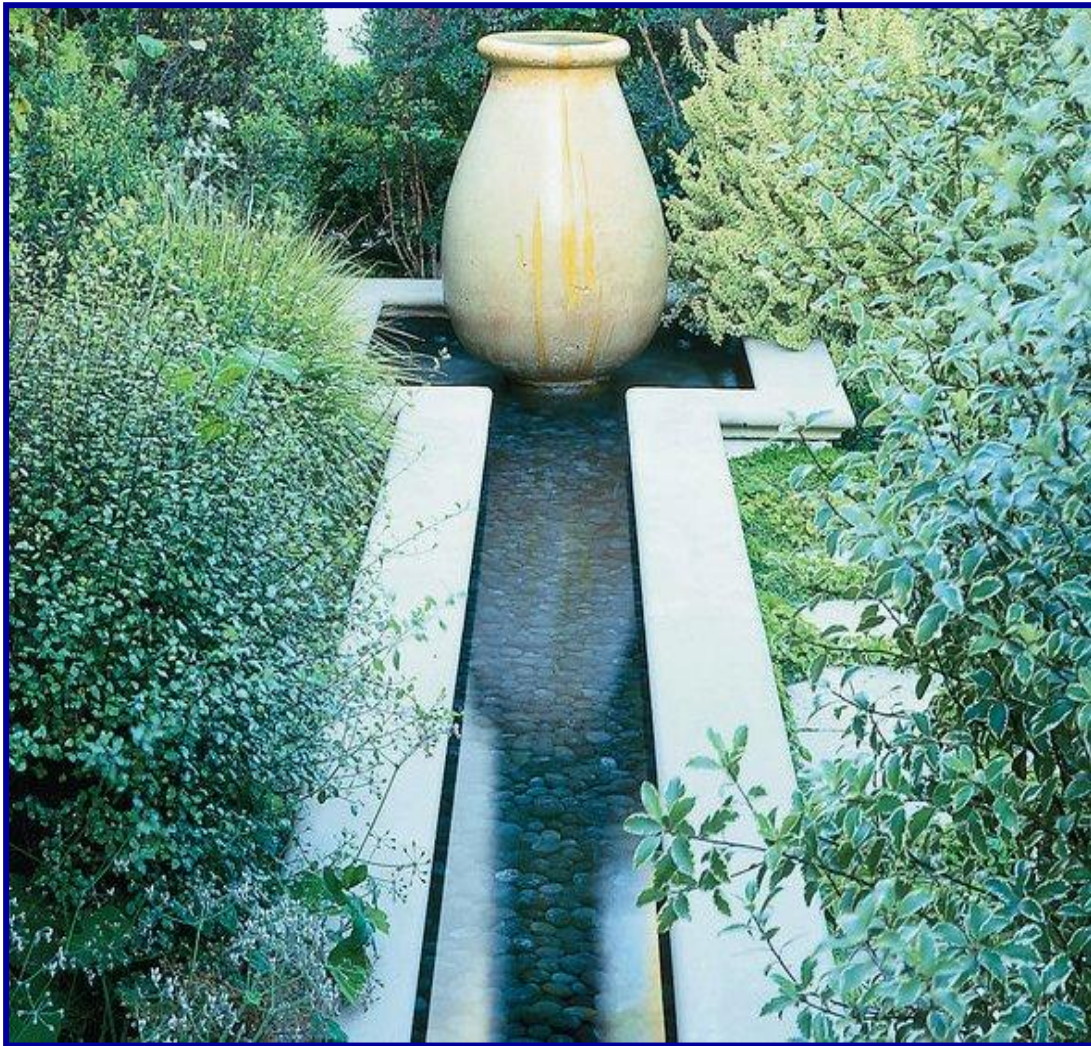
(03/16/2017)

“Jesus said to them: ‘Fill the jars with water’
... and they filled them to the brim.”
~ anonymous (John 2:7)

According to many, this “miracle” (turning water into wine) was Jesus’ first – and if so, then appropriately so, for it was also one of his most symbolically profound “deeds of power.” In Truth, there are potent metaphors at play in the tale of him turning **water** to **wine**; metaphors that provide much Wisdom & Guidance to this very day ... Consider *first* of all that “**water**” for Jesus was a symbolic reference to the animating Spirit within us (see [Matthew 3:11](#), [John 4:14](#), [John 7:38-39](#), & [Thomas 108](#) et al). Some people call this Spirit “consciousness” and others refer to it as “the Holy Spirit” and still others refer to it like Jesus did – as “[the Advocate within](#)” (see [John 14:20-26](#)). Interestingly enough the authors of this very Gospel referred to it as “[the Word](#)” (Greek term *Logos* – Strong’s #3056) in the very first passage thereof (see [John 1:1-5](#)). And this metaphor makes complete sense – for from the waters of the ocean our species emerged into the land, and from the waters of our mothers’ wombs we each emerged into life – a life that was imbued with conscious awareness; a spark of divinity that we have carried with us (and carry within us) from beyond – Indeed, this is “[the Spirit](#)” ... The *second* metaphor in this verse’s surrounding passage is, of course, “**wine**” – for that is what Jesus did at the wedding in question: he turned **water** into **wine**. And yet what does the **wine** represent? Well – to Jesus at least (and for the authors of the Gospels as well), “**wine**” was the symbolic representation of the “perfect Love” of the heavenly [Father](#) – the perfect Love that resides ever within us (see [Matthew 5:48](#) + [John 14:20](#)), and the unconditional Love that can be re-enlivened at any moment of our choosing (see [Matthew 9:17](#), [Matthew 26:26-29](#), [Matthew 27:34](#), [Matthew 27:48](#), [Mark 14:22-25](#), [Luke 22:14-20](#), & [Luke 23:36](#) et al). So already here we see that the “**wine**” (Love) has run out at the wedding ceremony, and Jesus takes the “[water jars](#)” (the Spirit within the body) that remain and refills them with “**wine**” (Love) once more ...



Thirdly, note as well that there are *six* of the water jars in this story (6 in the Bible represented imperfection; always one short of 7, the number that represented Wholeness to authors and theologians in Jesus' day), and note as well that the jars were made of *stone* – meaning that their contents would not become ritually “unclean” if touched by an “unclean” guest (unlike water jars made of clay – see [Leviticus 11:33](#) & [Leviticus 15:12](#)) ... *Fourthly*, note that the jars were “filled to the brim” – symbolizing the Truth that real **Faith** knows no exceptions; there is enough of its Love to be give to all ... And, *fifthly* and finally, note that this is all happening at a wedding ceremony – even though Jesus was not a fan of weddings to say the least (see [Matthew 22:30](#)) – indicating another metaphorical reference; namely, the union of self with Self and then Self with environment and thereby self & Self with God – all via selfless acts of Love.



John 16:25 ... Speaking in Figures (03/17/2017)

“I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you figuratively, but will show you plainly of the Father.” ~ Jesus (John 16:25)

This is actually one of the very last things Jesus says in the Bible*, which means that almost everything said by Jesus in **Matthew, Mark, Luke & John** was in large part metaphorical and should be read & enlivened as such (with the implications of this Truth for conservative Christians and other “biblical literalists” being hopefully obvious). So now that Jesus is starting to speak more literally with his disciples in this passage, what did he mean here with “**the hour is coming when I will ... show you plainly of the Father**”? Why, he is speaking of his own crucifixion, of course – the moment **he chose** to stop merely speaking about The Way of Joyful Self-Sacrifice and chose **to show** his followers that most dramatic example of it instead! And this is no mere hollow theory – to the contrary, the Bible is filled with concrete evidence pointing directly towards this interpretation ... Consider the following points of Truth:

01) For starters, Jesus said almost from the very beginning of his ministry that he did not want to form any new religion, but rather that he merely wanted a radical reform of the hyper-conservative Judaism of his day (**Matthew 5:17-18**) ...

02) In addition, despite the stark protestations of many, he openly stated in no uncertain terms that he did **not** want to be worshipped (**Mark 10:18, John 5:41, John 7:16, John 8:50-54, John 12:44** et al), that he did **not** bring any miracles or perform any healings himself (**Matthew 8:13, Matthew 9:29, Matthew 12:38-39, Matthew 16:4, Mark 5:34, Mark 9:23, Mark 10:52, Luke 7:50, Luke 8:48-52, Luke 11:29, Luke 17:19, Luke 18:42, John 9:39, John 11:4+11** et al), and that he did **not** want anyone falsely claiming that he was the Messiah (**Matthew 8:4, Matthew 9:30, Matthew 12:16, Mark 1:44, Mark 5:43, Mark 7:36, Mark 8:26, Luke 5:14, Luke 8:56**) ... In Truth, Jesus was immensely frustrated with his followers (**Matthew 12:34, Matthew 15:7-9, Matthew 17:17, Mark 9:19, Luke 9:41, John 8:25, John 8:43, John 14:10**) and as such set about a way that he could stop talking about his Way and show others the same instead ...



03) So he planned his own crucifixion – He reconnoitered Jerusalem well beforehand (Mark 11:11, Luke 9:52, Luke 10:1, Luke 19:5 & John 7:10), ... he pre-arranged the final meal he would take with his disciples (Matthew 21:1-6, Matthew 26:18, Mark 11:1-6, Mark 14:12-16, Luke 19:29-32 & Luke 22:10-13), ... he set his plan in motion by aggressively overturning the money-changing tables in the Temple and then making a hasty exit (Matthew 21:17, Mark 11:19 & Luke 21:37), ... he purposefully timed his grand entrance into Jerusalem to coincide with the Festival of Booths (Matthew 21:8-9, Mark 11:7-10, Luke 19:35-38 & John 12:12-13), ... he gave himself up knowingly in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:52-53, Mark 14:47-49, Luke 22:50-51 & John 18:11a), ... he refused to defend himself before both the Sanhedrin and the Romans (Matthew 27:12-14, Mark 14:61, Luke 23:7-12), ... and then he quoted Psalm 22:1 from the cross itself (Matthew 27:46 & Mark 15:34) – a Psalm well known by many at the time, and a Psalm that clearly showed that Jesus had purposefully set himself up for his final selfless sacrifice (Matthew 26:54, Luke 4:21, Luke 24:44, Psalm 22:6-8, Psalm 22:14-16, Psalm 22:18, Psalm 22:24).

04) And as if that isn't all evidence enough, Jesus told his disciples many times exactly what was going to happen to him in Jerusalem; told them many times that he had indeed already planned his own crucifixion (Matthew 16:21, Matthew 17:22, Matthew 20:18-19, Matthew 20:22, Matthew 23:34-36, Matthew 26:2, Matthew 26:6-12, Matthew 26:21, Matthew 26:24, Matthew 26:32, Matthew 26:45-46, Matthew 26:54-56, Matthew 28:6, Mark 8:31-32, Mark 9:31-32, Mark 10:33-34, Mark 14:21, Mark 14:28, Luke 9:22, Luke 9:44, Luke 11:30, Luke 11:49-51, Luke 13:33, Luke 18:31-33, Luke 22:15, John 2:21-22, John 3:14, John 6:51, John 7:33, John 8:21, John 8:28, John 10:11+15, John 10:17-18, John 12:8, John 12:23-25, John 12:27, John 12:32-33, John 13:18, John 14:30, John 16:7, John 16:16 & John 18:11b) ...

05) And finally – and by far most importantly, it is crucial to remember that Jesus' primary intention (if not his sole intention) during his entire ministry was to reawaken others to the “perfect Love” of God within them (Matthew 5:40-48 + John 14:20) by living a life “of the Father” – namely, a life that inspired others to “take up their cross” of self-sacrificial service and then “follow” him by enlivening the same (Matthew 16:24 et al) ... And this is precisely what he did on Golgotha – he exemplified The Way of selfless Love in the plainest way possible; by allowing himself to get nailed to a cross; and thereby providing an incredibly clear example of the willingly self-sacrificial Love of which he had been exhorting for the three years beforehand.

***NOTE** that the book of Revelation does not speak either of or for Jesus Christ, but rather of another “Jesus” entirely -- a “Jesus” whose ideas and attitudes actually directly *contradict* the “perfect Love” of The Way professed by the Jesus of whom we read in the Gospels.

Matthew 9:12-13 ... Mercy over sacrifice

(03/18/2017)

“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but instead those who are ill. Go and learn what this means: I desire Mercy, not sacrifice -- for I have come to call not the righteous but those who sin.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 9:12-13)

First & foremost, it is critical for those wishing to deeply understand this passage that Jesus is speaking not about sacrifice in general, but rather directly referencing the animal sacrifices still demanded by the barbaric religious customs of his day ...

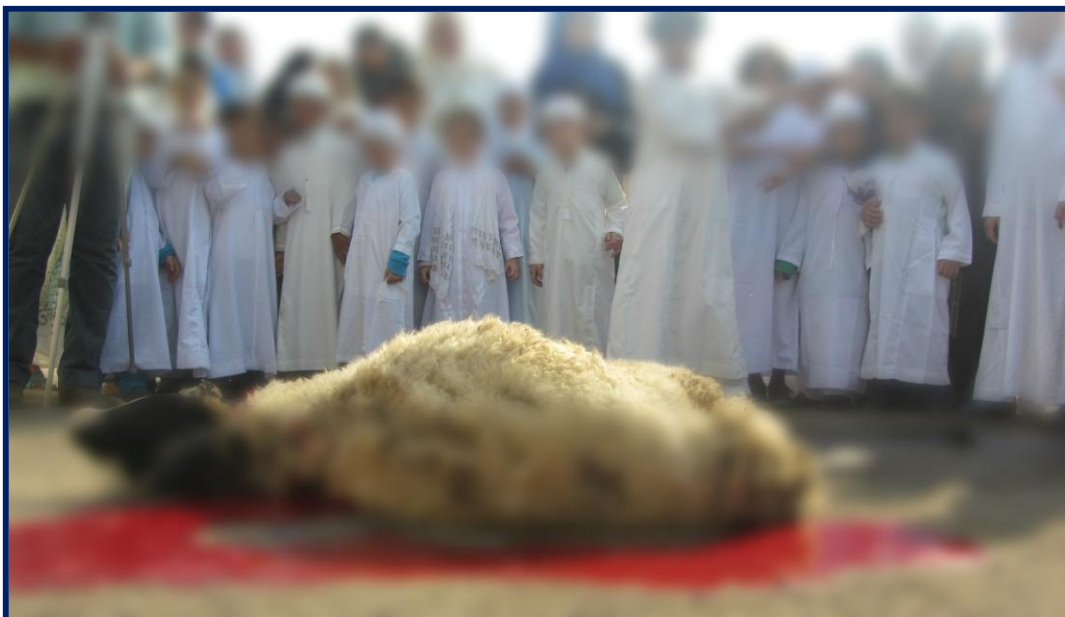
Jesus was a prophet of Love & Justice, and as such he knew that persecution of the innocent in the name of a supposedly Just & Merciful God ([Luke 6:36](#) & [Matthew 8:21-22](#) et al) was flagrantly hypocritical. And Jesus despised hypocrisy almost as much as he despised injustice (see [Matthew 23](#)). And so he preached against them both, and he did so by openly and flagrantly turning the Old Testament's 613 laws (called mitzvot) on their heads – making some more lenient (e.g. harshly constraining [Exodus 21:23-24](#), [Leviticus 24:19-20](#) & [Deuteronomy 19:21](#) with [Matthew 5:38-41](#), harshly constraining [Leviticus 4:27](#), [Numbers 5:7](#), & [Leviticus 19:17](#) with [Matthew 6:14-15](#), and harshly constraining [Exodus 23:12](#) & [Exodus 23:32](#) with [Matthew 12:9-12](#) et al), ... making others more strict (e.g. dramatically intensifying [Exodus 20:13](#) & [Deuteronomy 5:17](#) with [Matthew 5:21-22a](#), dramatically intensifying [Exodus 20:14](#), [Deuteronomy 5:18](#), & [Leviticus 18:20](#) with [Matthew 5:27-28](#), and dramatically intensifying [Exodus 23:19](#), [Deuteronomy 18:4](#), & [Deuteronomy 18:26](#) with [Matthew 6:1-4](#) et al), ... and even taking some of those laws and abolishing them completely (e.g. dismantling much of [Leviticus 11](#) & [Deuteronomy 14](#) with [Matthew 6:25-26](#) & [Matthew 26:31-33](#), denouncing [Leviticus 13:44-45](#) & [Numbers 5:1-4](#) with [Matthew 8:3](#), and discarding [Numbers 28:3](#), [Exodus 30:7-9](#), [Exodus 12:6-10](#), & [Exodus 13:2](#) with [Matthew 9:12-13](#) & [Matthew 12:7](#) et al).

Indeed, this explains why [Hebrews 8:11-13](#) said what it said later in the New Testament (“And they shall not teach one another or say to each other, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest -- for I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more. In speaking of ‘a new covenant’, he has made the first one obsolete. And what is obsolete and growing old must soon disappear”), and this explains as well why it is actually a form of blasphemy for anyone professing to be a Christian to use any Old Testament verse or passage to attack or condemn or judge anyone else.

“But what about [Matthew 5:17-18](#)?” those Christians might ask – the passage that has Jesus saying, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.” Of course, what those Christian friends have obviously not yet been taught is that the Greek word commonly translated as “fulfill” in this passage (*pleroo* – Strong’s #4137) is far more accurately defined as “honed” or “perfected” or “brought to completion or fullness” – which is exactly what Jesus did throughout his ministry when he “cleaned house” by amending or abolishing almost every single one of the Old Testament laws in effect in his day!

As such, when we look to [Matthew 9:12-13](#) again, we can clearly see that Jesus doesn’t desire for sinners to be shown mercy from above (a false, Paulinist belief), but rather desires that sinners atone for their misdeeds (and thereby rebirth their True Selves – see [John 3:1-8](#)) by “repenting” therefrom (the Greek *metanoia* – Strong’s #3341); by giving mercy to their own enemies – by openly Caring for those who have sinned against them ([Matthew 5:40-44](#) & [Luke 10:29-37](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



"But if you had understood what it means -- 'I will have Mercy, not sacrifice,' you would never have condemned the guiltless."

~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 12:7)

Luke 24:5 ... Living among the Dead

(03/19/2017)

“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”

~ unknown (Luke 24:5)

First & foremost, it is important to realize the context surrounding this particular verse – namely, that Jesus had been removed from the cross only the day before, and had only been (supposedly) in the tomb overnight ... It was indeed only the previous day that “The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid. Then they returned, and prepared spices and ointments.” (Luke 23:55-56) And these women did indeed return the next day with what was in all likelihood *healing herbs* to tend to the wounded-but-not-dead Jesus – seeing as how Jesus in all likelihood pre-planned the entire crucifixion event, including the women bringing him healing salves to tend the wounds he received while on the cross (wounds that normally took several days to kill those who received them, not the mere few hours Jesus was up on the cross -- see [Matthew 27:45-50](#)) ... Besides, it was Jewish custom to anoint a body with burial liniments *before* it was placed in its tomb, not afterward. This would explain their surprise the next day when they arrived at the now empty tomb – not that they were surprised to see that Jesus was no longer dead, but rather that he was no longer there to be tended by them.

And this is when the “two men in dazzling clothes” spoke with them, asking the above-cited “Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen.” Their “dazzling clothes” probably meant that they were dressed in white – much like the Essenes were known to have dressed in Jesus’ day. And this is especially intriguing, seeing as how the Essenes were known to practice a lifestyle very similar to the one preached by Jesus; seeing as how Jesus was probably baptized by an Essene at the very outset of his ministry (see [Matthew 3](#) & [Luke 3](#)); and seeing as how more than a few biblical scholars go under the assumption that Jesus was an Essene himself ... It is intriguing as well that these two “men” (Note: they were *not* described as angels in this passage) very clearly stated what Jesus himself had told his disciples many times over the previous three years – that he would be persecuted, that he would be crucified, but that he would not die therefrom; that he would indeed “rise on the third day” (see [Matthew 16:21](#), [Matthew 17:23](#), [Mark 8:31](#), [Luke 9:22](#), & [Luke 24:7](#) et al) ... And this makes perfect sense, seeing as how Jesus had also said over & over & over again that his followers were *not* to worship him as God (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al), that each of them had the same divinity within them as he did (see [John 14:20-26](#)), and that they could all do & live exactly as he had done & exactly as he had lived (see [John 12:47-48](#)).

Indeed, Jesus was all about refocusing his listeners not on the Hereafter, but rather on *this* lifetime (see [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Luke 17:20-21](#)) – not on their liberation from the Romans in the near future (He avidly proclaimed that he was not the Davidian Messiah; see [Matthew 22:43-45](#) et al) – not on the days to come but rather solely on today ([Matthew 6:34](#)) – not on personal fears of anxieties, but rather on serving others (see [Matthew 16:24](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#)).

Indeed, his heavenly Father is a “God of the living, not of the dead” ([Luke 20:38](#)), and his Way was a Way of the living as well, not of the dead. And this is why Jesus kept telling folks over & over & over again not to worship him but to “*follow*” him instead (see [Matthew 4:19](#), [Matthew 9:9](#), [Matthew 16:24](#), [Mark 8:3](#), [Luke 5:27-28](#) et al) – and not to wait to do so at some point in the future, but rather to do so immediately, lest death catch them unawares (see [Matthew 24:42](#) & [Matthew 25:1-13](#)) and they suffer the raw deathbed consequences of a life unlived (see [John 3:36](#) et al).

So let us all therefore cease seeking “the living among the dead” – let us all choose to live our lives to the fullest, by ceasing to chase after Life among activities fully deadened.

Amen ... Let it be so.

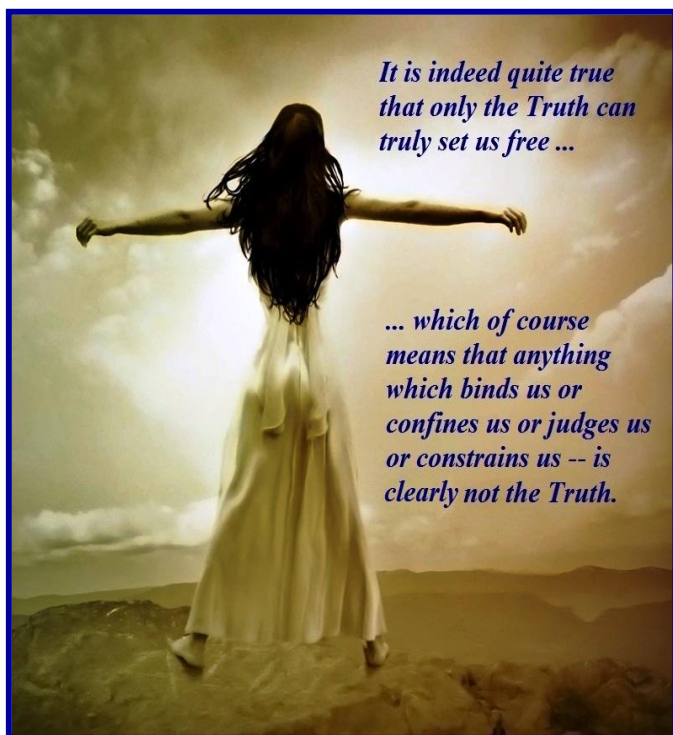


John 8:31-32 ... To continue in His Word

(03/20/2017)

“If you continue in my Word ... You will know the Truth,
and that Truth will set you free.” ~ Jesus (John 8:31b-32)

There are actually quite a few interesting Truths buried within this verse; a verse spoken specifically to “the Jews who had believed in him” (John 8:31a) ... Consider the following: **First**, note that “continue in my Word” (sometimes translated with the equally active “abide”) here means to **actively emulate** the core of Jesus' teachings – meaning to actively live a life of selfless self-sacrificial Love (see John 13:15-17, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 16:24, & Luke 8:4-15 et al) ... **Second**, note as well that “the Truth” to which Jesus is referring here is *his* Gospel -- *his* “Good News”; namely, the Truth that Heaven is alive & well in every present moment (see Matthew 10:7 – also Luke 17:20-21) and that its Bliss is accessible for anyone who chooses to devoutly Love the Divine by selflessly Loving others (see Matthew 24:12-14 – also Matthew 22:37-40) ... **Third**, note additionally that the phrase “set you free” (more accurately translated from the ancient Greek as “liberate you”) refers to setting his followers free not only from their own sinful, self-fixated instincts, but also from fear itself -- most potently from their innate fear of death (the fear which keeps us all from self-sacrifice in the first place – see Hebrews 2:14-15). And this makes perfect sense, for if the heavenly Father of Jesus Christ is perfect, completely unconditional Love (1 John 4:8, Luke 6:36, Matthew 8:21-22 et al), and if



*It is indeed quite true
that only the Truth can
truly set us free ...*

*... which of course
means that anything
which binds us or
confines us or judges us
or constrains us -- is
clearly not the Truth.*

we are all to “become perfect as the Father” (Matthew 5:48), and if fear is the opposing force to Love and thus prevents Love from blossoming (1 John 4:18), then we must indeed set aside our fear before “the Truth [of Love] can set [us] free” ...

Fourth, it might be important for conservative Christians to consider the fact that – if the Truth is indeed what sets us free, then all that binds us (like conservative religious dogma) or constricts us (like evangelically judgmental beliefs) cannot be seen as the Truth!

Amen ... Know that it is so.

Matthew 5:39-45 ... To LOVE the enemy

(03/21/2017)

“Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also ... Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may then be children of your Father in Heaven; for He makes his Light to shine on the evil and the good, and sends rain upon both the righteous and the unrighteous.” ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:39-45)

*Note first of all that we are called in this passage to avoid resisting “**evildoers**,” not evil deeds or evil itself. And this is an extremely important distinction – one that happens to explain the apparent contradiction some have noticed between Jesus’ injunction against judgment in [Matthew 7:1-2](#) and his apparent encouragement in support of judgment in [John 7:24](#) ... As it turns out, the former – much like the passage above – deals with judging *people*, which makes sense, as it is impossible to sincerely Love others while we are condemning them as individuals in any way.

This Truth is actually echoed in the first half of [John 7:24](#) as well, where Jesus clearly says “**Do not judge by appearances**” ... That having been said, we *are* called to examine situations and “**judge with right judgment**.” In other words, we are to examine situations and determine if any vestige of evil is being perpetrated, and once we have discerned that there are victims being in any way inflicted or abused, we are indeed to stride forth and place ourselves directly between them and those who would bring them harm. And know that this is in no way the same as “**resisting the evildoer**”; this is resisting *the evil* being done. In harmony with Jesus admonitions here, we are to do so courageously & firmly, *and yet* also compassionately – condemning the evil acts even while openly professing an open & humble forgiveness for the confused Souls who are perpetrating them.

*Note as well that it is not appropriate to provoke another in order to create the possibility to turn the other cheek. As well-intended as that might seem (for those bystanders who could thereby witness real Forgiveness in motion), it is an act that actually causes great harm to the one so provoked ... As such, we are to avoid provoking others to attack. Instead, we are simply to allow wrongdoings to arrive (rest assured, they will), and then to be ready to offer the other cheek to those "wrongdoing" them.

*Note in addition that *Love is a verb* with Jesus – that praying for those who persecute us is not in & of itself enough – that we must Love them and pray for them (while we Love them) ... Note as well that we do not do so in order to become Children of God, but rather do so solely to enable the perpetrator to remember his or her own innate Divinity -- and thereby *inadvertently* become Children of the Father ourselves thereby.

*Finally, note in closing that the Bible quite clearly shows that Jesus' heavenly **Father** judges no one (see [John 5:22](#) & [Luke 14:15-24](#) et al), but rather that He shines his **Light** (i.e. His unconditional, perfect Love – [Matthew 5:48](#)) on *all* and sends the spiritual nourishment of his “rain” upon *all* as well.

Amen ... Praise be that it is so.



1 Corinthians 15:47 ... The 2nd Man

(03/22/2017)

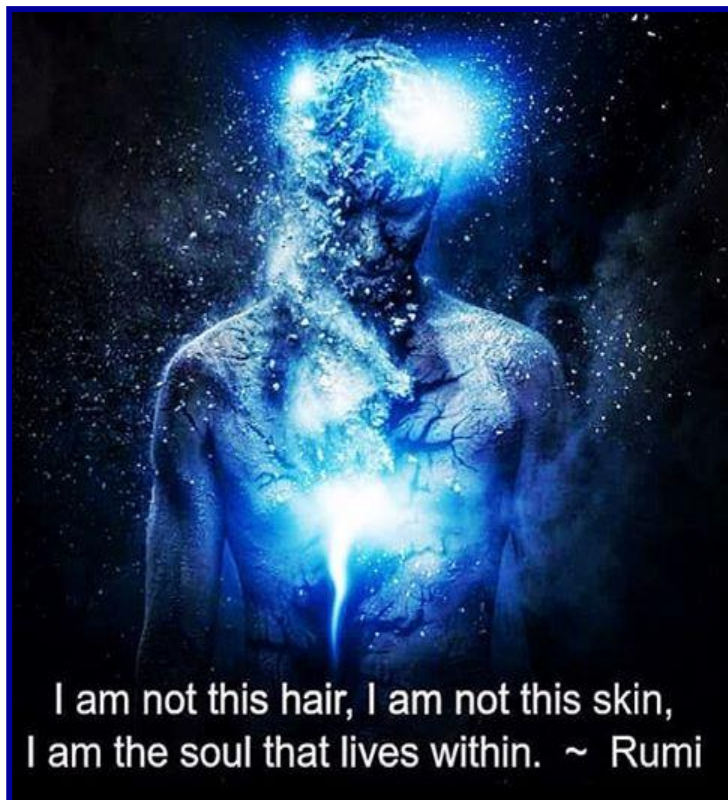
“The first man was from earth, a man of dust;
the Second Man is the Lord from Heaven.”

~ Paul (1 Corinthians 15:47)

Here is yet another brilliant example of Paul unwittingly “getting it” without actually getting it. For Paul is here speaking of the principle of a post-mortem salvation that comes solely to those who have chosen to worship Jesus Christ as their “only Lord & Savior.” Of course, as is so often the case, Jesus had a completely different take on that particular matter (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) -- just as he would have had a very different take on this particular verse ... Indeed, if we look to the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels, it becomes readily clear that he would see the “first man” in each of us as the ego that is sustained by every act of sinful selfishness, and that he would see the “Second Man” in each of us coming to life in every moment of Purposeful self-sacrifice for others. For – to Jesus at least – this is how humans could attain Salvation (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al) and this is how we could be ever “born again” (see [John 3:1-8](#)).

So in closing, keep in mind that “the Lord from Heaven” mentioned in this verse is *not* a celestial ruler residing somewhere “up above” us (as Paul believed), but rather is the Divine Essence residing *within* us all (according to Jesus -- see [Luke 17:20-21](#) + [John 14:20](#)); an Essence that comes to light whenever we choose to Love others selflessly ([Matthew 16:24](#)) – especially our enemies ([Matthew 5:40-44](#)) &/or the downtrodden in our midst ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



I am not this hair, I am not this skin,
I am the soul that lives within. ~ Rumi

John 6:37-38 ... What the Father gives

(03/23/2017)

“Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away ... For I have come down from Heaven; not to do my own will, but rather the Will of Him who sent me.” ~ Jesus (John 6:37-38)

The *first* part of this passage (“Everything that the Father gives me will come to me”) implies the Truth that we need never strive for opportunities to serve others – that there is always someone nearby for whom to Care &/or always something nearby that is ready to be cherished or beautified (for these are the opportunities that any all-Loving Father would always supply) ... The *second* portion (“anyone who comes to me I will never drive away”) exclaims the obvious for any awakened Child of God – namely, that whomever comes to them in need will be served as if they were a Soulmate and cherished as if they were a friend of God Himself. For this is indeed the will of Jesus’ all-Loving Father; the God who Loves everyone (Matthew 5:40-48), showers Mercy upon everyone (Luke 6:36), Forgives every transgression (Matthew 8:21-22), and judges no one (John 5:22 + 1 John 4:18) ... *Thirdly*, note in conclusion that the Greek of Luke 6:38 does indeed say “I have come down from heaven” even though Jesus obviously knew that Heaven was an *internal* residence (see Luke 17:20-21). Maybe he said this to better communicate with his audience (many of whom were pining for a higher heavenly hereafter), maybe he was referring to the psychological perception-based reality that Divine Inspiration (that actually wells up from within) does indeed *feel* like it is falling down upon us from above, and maybe he was simply speaking a greater Truth – that maybe our portion of the Cosmic Consciousness, the portion that resides within our mind-bodies during our lifetimes, does indeed literally descend from the heavens to enter the Heaven within our bodies while they are in the womb ... Who knows?



No matter, of course, for regardless of why Jesus uttered this particular phrase, it remains clear that the will of God is that we each choose to transcend our selfish instincts in order to Care for the others around us, and that if we do so with sincerity & humility & courage, we will indeed enter “the Kingdom of God” and know the bliss that accompanies the same.

Amen ... Let it be so.

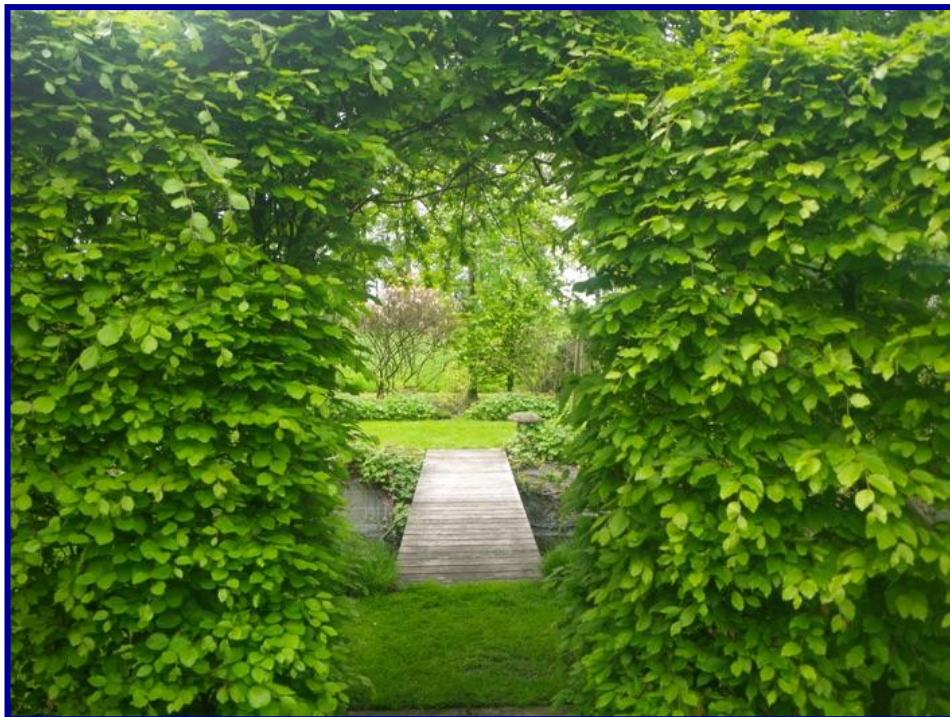
Psalm 142:3 ... To Know one's Way
(03/24/2017)

“When my Spirit was overwhelmed within me,
then You knew my Way.” ~ unknown (Psalm 142:3)

Psalm 142 generally speaks of a man in a state of hopeless despair, calling out to God for support and assurance. Interestingly, the Hebrew word here for “overwhelmed” is *ataph*, a word which can also mean “failed” or “weakened” or “shrouded” (see Strong’s #5848) ... As such, an “overwhelmed Spirit” is actually a *repressed* spirit; a Spirit overshadowed by fear or anxiety or desire or sadness. And this verse seems to relay the Truth that even in such instances – indeed *especially* in those instances – the heavenly **Father** within still knows The Way; still calls for us to Love & still calls for us to Serve & still calls for us to Give to others anyway. And if we heed these Holy Summons, the **Spirit** that was once so “shrouded” is freed from its oppressions, and no longer overwhelms us (or better stated – no longer allows the ego to do that overwhelming).

Note as well that the Hebrew translated here as “knew” is *yada*, a word which also means “acknowledged” (see Strong’s #3045), implying the Truth that in those times when we feel most lost, the **Advocate** within us (**John 14:20-26**) will point us back towards our true Path – away from fear & despair, and towards Love & Faith in Love.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Thomas 1:37 ... Undressing the Soul

(03/25/2017)

“When you can undress without being ashamed, and take your clothes off and put them under your feet the way little children do ... then you will comprehend the Child of the Living One.” ~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 37)

How intriguing this verse is when contrasted with the shame Adam & Eve felt after their “Fall” in the Garden of Eden ([Genesis 3:7](#)), and how intriguing as well that Jesus would have uttered such a verse – especially considering the fact that he was very well versed in Old Testament scripture, and that one of the primary purposes of his ministry was to radically *reform* the Judaic laws of his day (see [Matthew 5:17-18](#) – where the word commonly translated as “fulfilled” therein is actually the Greek *pleroo*, a word which actually means “honed” or “perfected” or “brought to completion”) ... Regardless, this particular verse from the Gospel of Thomas metaphorically refers to purposeful vulnerability – the purposeful opening of oneself completely to the other; even at the cost of ridicule or rejection (public nudity was a huge no-no back in Jesus’ day -- see [Leviticus 18:6-18](#)) – once again showing Jesus using a bold example to champion self-sacrifice that was almost completely beyond misinterpretation.



Matthew 16:19 ... The Keys to the Kingdom (03/26/2017)

“I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven ...
Whatever you bind on Earth will be bound in Heaven,
and whatever you loose on Earth will be loosed in Heaven.”
~ Jesus (Matthew 16:19)

First & foremost, please note that Jesus does not give anyone **Heaven** itself, only “**the keys**” thereto. And this is indeed spot on, for **we** are the ones who must do the insertion thereof into the lock on Heaven’s door (by choosing to envision purposefully selfless intentions) and **we** are the ones who must do the turning of that door’s handle to enter there (by choosing to courageously enliven selflessly Caring actions thereafter -- see **John 13:15-17** & **Luke 8:4-15** & **Matthew 24:12-14** & **Matthew 7:21** & **Matthew 5:43-48** & **Matthew 25:35-40** et al) ... Note as well that “**Heaven**” for Jesus was an **internal** experience (**John 14:20** + **Luke 17:20-21** et al), and that when this is taken into account, this verse takes on a meaning that is fully more profound. For if “**Heaven**” is within us, then anything that “**binds on Earth**” (i.e. all the mental & emotional attachments innate to our ego-based interactions between the mind-body and its surroundings) simultaneously “**binds in Heaven**” (i.e. creates a thicker layer of “tarnish” or “sludge” around our Hearts – further encapsulating us in our own lives, separating us further from our innate inner Divinity, and making it that much more difficult for us to pierce that “dirty veil” and re-experience a Oneness with our neighbors) ... Similarly, whatever we “**lose on Earth**” (or whatever is “**loosed**” on Earth; i.e. implying the Love that flows forth after all acts of intentionally detached Kindness) will be “**loosed in Heaven**” (i.e. they will free inner feelings of Bliss & Contentment, along with an overwhelming desire to continue serving others).

There is one final point here that is quite worthy of note, and that is that the word translated as “**bind**” here is the Greek word *desete* in the ancient texts (Strong’s #1210); a word that actually meant “**compel**”, “**prohibit**” &/or “**declare unlawful**.” This is especially intriguing considering the fact that one of Jesus’ primary missions during his 3-year ministry was to deeply reform all the overly strict regulations & all the primitively condemnatory laws of the Hebrew Bible (a.k.a. the Old Testament).

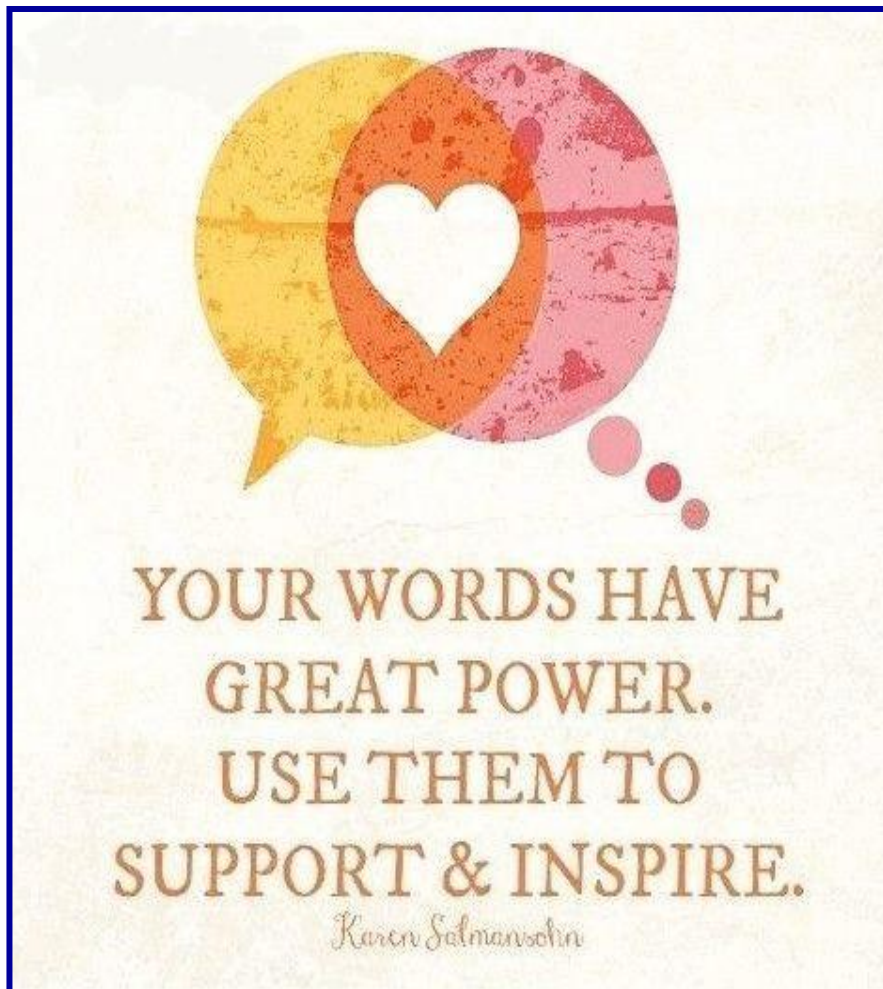


2 Corinthians 2:17 ... As those sent from God
(03/27/2017)

“In Christ we speak as persons of sincerity;
as those sent from God and standing in His presence.”
~ Paul (2 Corinthians 2:17)

Actually, the vast majority of the time those who are truly “in Christ” are serving others and not speaking at all ... That having been said, it is possible to “speak in Christ” as well – whenever we encourage those in despair or compliment those in depression; whenever we speak words of Kindness to strangers or words of Forgiveness to enemies ... With sincere Love is the only way to speak as those sent from a God of perfect Love ([Matthew 5:48](#)), and with sincere Love is the only way to speak as those who are standing in God’s presence – as those choosing to act as humble embodiments thereof ([John 14:20](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Romans 8:28 ... Working for Good

(03/28/2017)

“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God; who are Called and who answer that Call – each according to their Purpose.”

~ Paul (Romans 8:28)

The last phrase here provides the Divine Context for this verse (though in all probability not the context that Paul originally intended) – for we are all Called to Care for others (**not** to worship Jesus and thereby attain salvation for self, as Paul was wont to errantly believe – see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) ... Indeed, we can all enliven that Caring in ways unique to our station and our capabilities therein, and we all indeed answer that Call when we begin to **do** that Caring for others (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al – noting that praying for others or worshipping devoutly or harboring good-intentions or even making verbal affirmations of hope or faith are not enough; **action must be taken** to Love the way of The Way) ... And if we have both the humility to accept this Truth ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)) and the courage to put it into practice ([Matthew 5:43-48](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al), then this becomes also the Way that we truly LOVE – and thereby devoutly worship – the heavenly **Father** of Christ (see [Matthew 22:37-40](#)).



John 14:6 ... The Truth of the Way of Life

(03/29/2017)

“I represent the Way [of Oneness],
the Truth [of Love], and the Life [of God].”

~ Jesus (John 14:6)

This verse traditionally reads “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me”, and is extremely popular among conservative Christians – those who believe wholeheartedly (actually half-heartedly, for no truly whole Heart can believe such exclusivist rhetoric) that it proves their belief that the self-appointed apostle Paul was right; namely, that Jesus Christ is the only Son of the only God, and that salvation in the eternal Hereafter can only be attained by worshipping him as Lord ... And I will freely admit: taking this verse all by its self (i.e. refusing to read it in the context of Jesus’ entire ministry) and neglecting to examine the actual Greek words used in its ancient manuscripts could very well lead one to harbor such a dramatically errant belief ...

And yet when we do apply context and scholarship to this verse, a very different meaning blossoms forth ... Please consider:

First, remember that **the Way, the Truth, and the Life** of Jesus Christ consisted first & foremost all of one primary message – a message he called “**the Good News**” (or “**the Gospel**”) – a message that for him at least consisted of two parts: first, that Heaven was already “**at hand**” (i.e. already fully available in every moment of our current lives – see **Matthew 10:7**), and second, that entry into this internal experience of Paradise was made by serving others with acts that were both selfless & Loving (see **Matthew 24:12-14**). This **Gospel** was very different from Paul’s self-created “gospel” (see **1 Corinthians 15:1-4** & **Romans 10:9**, the message of which Jesus openly and vehemently **rejected** in **Mark 10:18**, **John 5:41**, **John 7:16**, **John 8:50-54** & **John 12:44** et al) and yet Jesus’ is the **Gospel** that we must keep in mind if we ever hope to accurately decipher what he meant by his words ...

Second, remember that Jesus’ heavenly Father was an **internal** essence (**John 14:20**); an essence that was viable in the “**Heaven**” available in each & every present moment (**Luke 17:20-21**) – not an external, celestial, benevolent tyrant looking down from some “elsewhere heaven” to which only the “worthy” could go and live eternally after their deaths ...

Third, note that the word translated in the second half of this verse as “**through**” was the Greek **dia** – a word that did not mean “via” or “because of”, but rather meant “**throughout**” or “**on account of**” (see Strong’s #1223) – in this case referring to the emulation of **The Way** that Jesus taught, not the worship of the man he was (he always said “**follow me**”; never “worship me”) ...

Fourth, note that Jesus' heavenly Father was composed of unconditional, perfect Love ([Matthew 5:48](#)); a Love that showed constant mercy ([Luke 6:36](#)), a Love that radiated limitless forgiveness ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)), and a Love that punished no one ([John 5:22](#) + [John 8:15](#) + [John 12:47](#) + [1 John 4:18](#)) – all scriptural facts that in & of themselves fully preclude the validity of the conservative interpretation of this verse ...

Fifth, for Jesus “[I am](#)” never ever meant “*only* I am.” Instead, every time he told us all what he was, he was also showing us what *we too* could choose to become (see [John 14:12](#) + [John 12:47-48](#)). In support of this Truth, note the Greek used here – not merely “I am”, but “***I, I am***” (*ego eimi* – see Strong's #1473 & #1510), an emphasis that did not pertain to Jesus himself, but rather to the common “[Advocate within](#)” that we all share (see [John 14:20-26](#)) ...

Sixth, Jesus was also clearly a fan of combining Truths listed in a series (e.g. his 2 Commandments were actually two planks of one sole Commandment – namely, Love God wholeheartedly by selflessly Caring for others – see [Matthew 22:37-40](#)), and the same is true here – it is not that he is the Way & the Truth & the Life, but rather that he is ***The Way*** (i.e. the interactive embodiment) ***of the Truth*** (the raw viability of selfless Love) ***in the Life*** (lived accordingly).

Amen ... Let it be so.



2 Corinthians 12:8-9 ... A 3rd Appeal

(03/30/2017)

“Three times I appealed to the Lord ... But He said to me: My Grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect through temptations of weakness.” ~ Paul (2 Corinthians 12:8-9)

Interestingly enough, Paul was answered here in direct accordance with the weakness of his query. For we are not to pray to God for personal benefit or to appease our own suffering, but rather in raw Gratitude for life itself -- by asking humbly for more opportunities to relieve the suffering of others. Indeed, to do the latter is the only way to pray “in Christ’s name” and thereby always receive that for which one prays (i.e. the awareness needed to notice the omnipresence of said opportunities – see [John 14:13-14](#)), while to do the former is to suffer to the same degree of the selfishness of our request – in Paul’s case, immeasurably.

Note as well that “Grace” here is the unrequested gifts from God (Grace is not a gift, but a *given*) – namely the “trinity” of self-awareness, internal moral guidance, & the free will to apply the latter to the former. And this is why God’s “Grace is sufficient”, for the simple reason that the application thereof transcends all suffering and trumps all challenge – and this is why the immense Power thereof is made perfect (i.e. made real) “through temptations of weakness.”



Galatians 4:29-5:1 ... two Children; one Freedom

(03/31/2017)

“But just as at that time when the child who was born according to the flesh persecuted the Child who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also ... For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and submit never again to a yoke of slavery.” ~ Paul (Galatians 4:29+5:1)

Note first & foremost that the ego (i.e. the “child who is of the flesh”) always rejects the will of the conscience (i.e. “persecutes the Child of the Spirit”), for the ego is generated by the “reptile mind” (the most primitive portion of the human brain) and as such built solely on fear & selfishness -- whereas the conscience (otherwise known as the “Heart Brain”) is constructed from the Soul, and as such is built only of Love – compassion for & service towards others.

Most important of all, we must understand how these two “selves” interact with one another – understand that the former always starts from an assumption of danger, and that the former always assesses reality ¼ of a second before the latter can even begin doing so ... This means that the “reptile brain” of the ego does indeed always in a sense “persecute” the “Heart Brain” of the conscience, for the former is always responding to every situation before the neocortex even begins to activate the latter, and the former is always doing so using the only analyses at its disposal – namely, “friend or foe” & (once “foe” is registered) “fight or flight.” The former believes that any selfless deed is a loss – a vulnerability to attack – a giving to others and thus a lessening of self – a weakness that can be exploited by the malicious & the mal-intended.

And as such the ego continually “persecutes” the conscience – constantly reminding our minds that self-sacrifice is only for the Noble -- and that we are “only human” -- and that we are “only one person” -- and that being Kind to mean people is dangerous or irresponsible or masochistic (or even deadly) -- and that being Kind to our enemies only encourages them to be even more mean or disrespectful or abusive or cruel or annoying towards us in the future ...

All of these internal encouragements are lies, of course, and yet unless the person hearing them has the humility to pause and the courage to go forth and **Love anyway**, he or she will ever listen to the worm-tongued whisperings of the ego, and the Joys only accessible via his or her conscience (the Soul) will remain fully dormant until his or her death.

And yet the best of **Good News** is indeed the **Good News** of Christ – namely, that liberation from such selfish superficiality is available in every moment of our lives (**Matthew 10:7**) and that we can all access the same through simple acts of courageous Caring for others (**Matthew 24:12-14**) ...

Paul's teachings will not lead us to this Freedom, of course. Indeed, it is most ironic that the teachings of Paul (the same teachings that were used to found and build up the modern-day Christian church) are one of the very "**yokes of slavery**" from which Jesus' Way of humble, non-judgmental, all-accepting, self-sacrificial, & unconditional Love provides liberation.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Hebrews 5:4-5 ... When Called by God

(04/01/2017)

“And one does not presume to take this honor, but instead accepts it only when Called by God ... So also Christ did not glorify himself in becoming High Priest.”

~ unknown (Hebrews 5:4-5)

Note that while this verse seems to indicate that only a few of us are to become “preachers of the Word”, the authors of Hebrews seem unaware of the following Truths: **A**) that “the Word” we are to preach is selfless, self-sacrificial, unconditional **Love** (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#) + [John 8:31](#) + [Matthew 28:16-20](#) et al), and **B**) that that we are **all** Called by God (i.e. the Divine Essence that resides within us – see [John 14:20-26](#)) to relay that Word to others.

Yes, it is true that Jesus did **not** glorify himself when he chose to become a “High Priest” of The Way (Note that this verse says “High Priest”, **not** “the only celestial Son of God”) – but rather repeatedly deferred all praise to God during his ministry (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al). It is also just as true -- and just as important -- that we have **all** been Called by Jesus himself to take up our own unique “crosses” of self-sacrifice and then go forth to **emulate** his Way, his Truth & his Life by **following** him (*not* by worshipping him – see [Matthew 16:24](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Luke 14:15 ... Eating Bread in the Kingdom

(04/02/2017)

“Blessed is anyone who eats Bread in the Kingdom of God.”

~ Jesus (Luke 14:15)

For the traditional Christian, this verse has Jesus arrogantly referring to himself as the “bread” that is the source of salvation (even though it would have been highly hypocritical for him to have done so – see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)), but only salvation for those who chose to believe that he is the only Son of God (a claim he himself refuted – see [John 14:12](#)) and then worship him accordingly (an abject subservience which Jesus did not want, and indeed which he repeatedly rejected; see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) ... Of course, for hyper-conservative evangelical Christians this verse takes on a bizarre bent, indirectly encouraging them to become cannibals (see also [John 6:50-71](#)) by somehow literally transforming the Eucharist into the actual body of Jesus and then consuming the same. Of course, Jesus himself made it quite clear that he wanted nothing of the sort, with him informing his disciples in [John 16:25](#) that *everything* he had told them up to that point had been essentially metaphoric, and thus was not in any way to be construed literally – and this included the statements he made in [John 6](#) about being “the bread of life” (along with the summons he made at the Last Supper for his disciples to symbolically partake of his message -- see [Matthew 26:17-30](#), [Mark 14:12-26](#), [Luke 22:7-38](#), and [John 13:1-35](#)). No, to correctly comprehend this particular verse, it is important to realize that “bread” for Jesus was essentially *selfless service* – the crux of his entire ministry (see [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 13:18-25](#), [Matthew 7:21](#) + [Matthew 5:48](#) et al) – a fact emphasized in this very verse, where he noted quite clearly that “blessed is anyone who *eats*” the bread of which he spoke



(i.e. those who actively performed acts of humble selfless service); **not** those who merely worshipped the same. Even [John 6:32](#) notes that the “bread” of which Jesus spoke was “from *Heaven*” – the same *internal “Kingdom of God”* mentioned in [Luke 14:15](#), and the same “*Kingdom of God*” that he had already stated resided *within* us all during every moment of our current lifetimes (see [Luke 17:20-21](#); also [Matthew 4:4](#)).

Matthew 13:23 ... Sowing the Good Soil

(04/03/2017)

“But as for what was sown on Good Soil, these are the ones who hear the Word and understand It; who indeed bear its Fruit” ~ Jesus (Matthew 13:23)

First & foremost, it is important to realize that this, the Parable of the Sower (see [Matthew 13:1-23](#), [Mark 4:1-20](#) & [Luke 8:1-21](#)), is essentially “the Parable of Parables” – the very first parable Jesus ever utters in the Gospels, and the parable upon which all others are founded ... And the hub of this particular parable revolves around the “seeds” that have landed in “the Good Soil” – the metaphoric representation of those people who actually comprehend what Jesus was teaching and what his ministry was truly all about.

And how can we know who these people are? How can we know if we are one of those so “saved”? Well, Jesus makes it all quite clear; noting in this verse that those who qualify as his true Followers (i.e. those who are the “seeds” residing in the “Good Soil”) are those who have the humility ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)) to hear the Word of selfless Love ([Matthew 24:12-14](#)) *and* the courage to fully understand that Word by *experiencing* it – by setting it into motion via *acts* of selfless service for others (see [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 7:21](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al).

Indeed, it is the fruit of our actions that tell us quite clearly whether or not we have indeed walked [The Way](#) ([Matthew 7:15-20](#)), with all the deeds feeling Peace-full (via bringing Peace to others) counting as Right Action blooming from “Good Soil,” and all the deeds feeling stressed or discordant (while serving ourselves &/or bringing pain or stress to others) counting as wrong actions withered in “rocky ground” or choked by “thorns” (see [Matthew 13:20-22](#)).

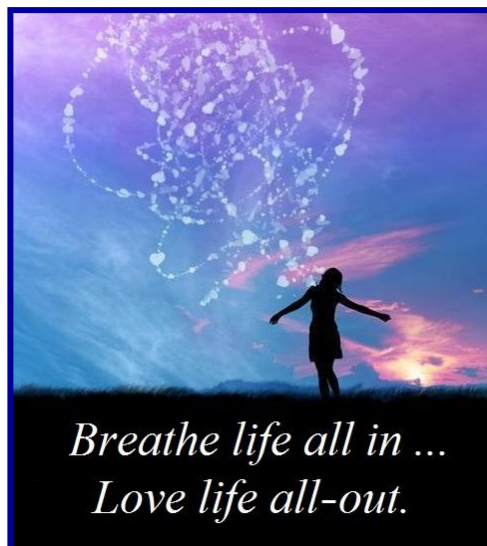


John 13:36 ... To follow Afterward

(04/04/2017)

“Where I am going, you cannot follow me now; but you will follow afterward ... You know the way to the place where I am going.” ~ Jesus (John 13:36 & John 14:4)

In an interesting twist, this particular statement from Jesus was actually meant to be more literal than figurative ... Please consider the following points: **First**, realize that Jesus had clearly stated over & over & over again the patent Truth that everyone can walk The Way in exactly the same manner he walked it (see [John 14:12](#) – along with [John 14:20-26](#), and his repeated admonitions to “follow me” & call for us all to “take up your cross”) ... **Second**, it is important to remember that Jesus was speaking here of his own crucifixion – an event that he had pre-planned and fully organized himself (see my book *Exhuming Easter* for a thorough biblical proof thereof). As such, it was a simple statement of fact that the disciples could not join him on Golgotha on that day, for the simple reason that it was enough of a logistical nightmare for him to arrange for himself to be crucified, to be drugged unconscious while on the cross, to be removed after only a few hours, and to be taken to a nearby tomb that had never been used and that remained unguarded throughout the night thereafter ... **Third**, the “you will follow afterward” here was more of a hopeful statement than a prognosis – as evidenced by the fact that **A**) his disciples did indeed seemingly self-sacrifice thereafter (even though most did so errantly; to honor Jesus instead of to embody his selfless Way – see [Matthew 22:41-45](#), [Matthew 16:20](#), [Mark 8:30](#), [Mark 10:18](#), [Luke 9:21](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) and **B**) his disciples never ever truly “got it” while he was with them – as evidenced by their unending desire for reassured post-mortem rewards before his crucifixion, as well as their incredulity when he reappeared to them thereafter (see [Mark 8:14-21](#), [Matthew 16:12](#), [John 6:32-35](#), [John 6:68](#), [Matthew 15:2-16](#), [Mark 8:27-33](#), [Mark 9:33-34](#), [Mark 16:13](#), [John 20:9](#), [Mark 10:24-32](#) et al) ... **Fourth**,



after living with him for the three years of his ministry, it is quite true that his disciples most certainly *did* know The Way to the Heaven to which he was going during his final act of self-sacrificial Love (see [Luke 17:20-21](#) + [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al) -- even though it also became clear that most of them never did choose to walk that same Way.*

*Note that there is some evidence that Judas, Mary Magdalene, Thomas, &/or James did eventually enliven The Way of Christ.

Galatians 5:18 ... Subject to the Spirit

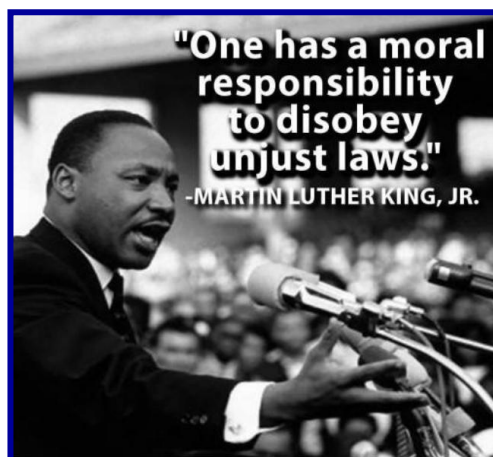
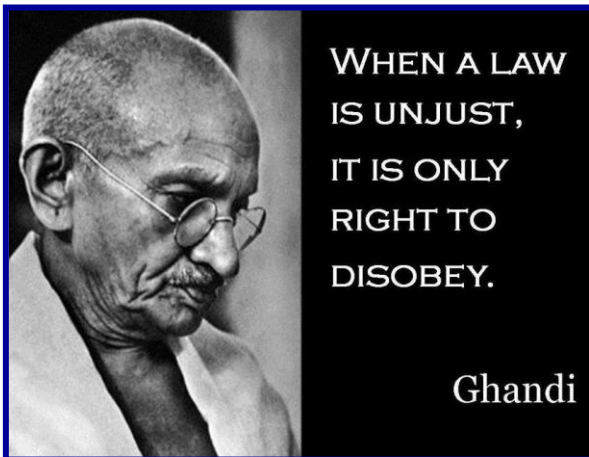
(04/05/2017)

“If you are led by the Spirit,
you are not subject to the law.”

~ Paul (Galatians 5:18)

This statement from Paul is true enough, though it is important to realize that he made this statement to affirm his own self-created (and fully morally-warped, primarily entitlement-based, and thoroughly fear-steeped) theology of Atonement – a theology that existed in direct contradiction to The Way of Christ as taught & enlivened by Jesus himself ...

In essence, Paul brazenly claimed that **the Law** no longer mattered so that folks would be tempted to agree with him (and thereafter follow him & his teachings); thereby boosting his own low self-esteem (while counterproductively circumventing their own) ... Jesus, on the other Hand, said quite clearly in **Matthew 5:17-18** that we must all humbly & courageously “fulfill” (the Greek word *pleroo*, which meant “hone”, “perfect” or “bring to completion” -- see Strong’s #4137) every “jot & tittle” of **the Law**, and that we are to do so by transcending the way **the Law** had been warped by the Jewish religious authorities of his day – that we are to do so by expanding & fulfilling the intent of those Laws by doing more than they required, and thereby come to know **the Kingdom of Heaven** available to all those who chose to purely Love others in that way (instead of using **the Law** as a cheap excuse to condemn others &/or protect oneself -- see **Luke 17:20-21** + **John 13:15-17** + **Matthew 16:24** + **Matthew 24:12-24** + **Matthew 25:35-40** et al) ... This Truth is evident when contrasting the greater context of **Galatians 5** (where we see Paul openly rebuking and condemning the sinfulness of humankind) with the greater context of **Matthew 5** (where Jesus is speaking openly of the potential glories of becoming fully Human).



Isaiah 40:23 ... Homage to the Power of God

(04/06/2017)

“[The Power of God, that] brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the Earth as though nothing.”

~ unknown (Isaiah 40:23)

This is a most important verse if for no other reason than it comes from “**Isaiah II**” – the author of **chapters 40-55** of the Book of **Isaiah** -- the Hebrew Bible author Jesus seemed to cherish above all others). Indeed, Jesus either specifically quotes or directly alludes to passages from **Isaiah II** over 50 times in the Gospels. And this is no accident, as archaeological evidence to date shows that Isaiah was by far the most popular of the “2nd Temple prophets” (those who prophesied in the days between the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BCE & the destruction of the second Temple in 70 CE) ... More importantly, the concepts found in **Isaiah II** form the foundation for Jesus' entire theology – with **Isaiah II** seemingly serving as the inspiration for Jesus' revolutionary stance towards human authorities (see **Isaiah 40:17 + Isaiah 40:23 + Isaiah 41:12** et al), ... for Jesus' seeing himself as a shepherd for the lost (**Isaiah 40:11**), ... for Jesus encouraging others to “**be not afraid**” (**Isaiah 41:10 + Isaiah 43:5 + Isaiah 44:8** et al), ... for Jesus' message being called a “**light to the nations**” (**Isaiah 42:6-7 + Isaiah 49:6** et al), ... for Jesus being the messenger of a New Covenant that transcended the old (**Isaiah 43:18-19**), ... for that message being one of unconditional forgiveness of sins (**Isaiah 43:25-27 + Isaiah 44:22** et al), ... for Jesus' claim that our true **Treasure** resides within us (**Isaiah 45:3**), ... for Jesus' teachings on Loving the enemy and turning the other cheek (**Isaiah 50:4-6**), ... for Jesus' summons for us all to go forth and shine **the Light of The Way** for others (**Isaiah 50:11 + Isaiah 51:4 + Isaiah 52:7** et al), ... and for Jesus' belief in an all-Loving God and a Joy-filled redemption for all (**Isaiah 55:12-13**) ... As such, the “**power of God who brings princes to naught**” mentioned here is – at least as far as Jesus was concerned – **The Way of Selfless Love** alluded to in **Isaiah II** – a Way that calls for a Humility that allows “**princes**”



(i.e. each and every one of us) to abdicate their own “**power**” (i.e. the inclination we have to care first & foremost for ourselves), **and** a purity of Love within our Hearts that inevitably throws down all man-made, fear-based “**power structures**” -- in all those moments the same is enlivened for the benefit of others.

Amen ... Let it be so.

Acts 26:16-18 ... To Rise & to Stand

(04/07/2017)

“Get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you to awaken these purposes: both to serve and to testify to the things in which you have seen me ... to open others’ eyes; that they may then turn from the darkness into the Light.”

~ unknown (Acts 26:16-18)

First & foremost, it is critical to understand that this particular passage is **not** directly quoting Jesus Christ, but rather shows Paul quoting a spiritual entity that he *assumed* was the spirit of Jesus Christ; a spirit that was not only **not** the spirit of Jesus Christ, but in all likelihood was a spiritual *opponent* thereof ... Consider the following facts that support this claim:

A) This particular account of Paul’s supposed “conversion” on the Road to Damascus was told by Paul himself – a man with a proven penchant for passive-aggressive manipulation – a man with a notably low level of self-esteem who frequently spoke to build himself up with others, not to liberate them with Truth (see Acts 20:20-21, Romans 11:13-14 + Romans 15:17, 1 Corinthians 15:10 + 1 Corinthians 9:15, 2 Corinthians 2:9, 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, 2 Corinthians 6:6-10, 2 Corinthians 7:2-10, 2 Corinthians 8:2-8, 2 Corinthians 8:24, 2 Corinthians 9:5, 2 Corinthians 11:7, 2 Corinthians 12:19-21, Galatians 1:24 & 1 Thessalonians 2:2+10 et al) ...

B) The entity that spoke to Paul demanded that he “testify to the things in which you have seen me” (i.e. the things he had “looked upon” that day – see the Greek *eides* in Strong’s #3708), and yet Luke (the author of Acts) points out that Paul did not look directly at his mysterious visitor *at all* (indeed, he was actually cowering in fear with his eyes averted instead – see Acts 26:14), and that Paul was actually blinded for three days immediately after the encounter (see Acts 9:8 & Acts 22:11) ...

C) Interestingly enough, after regaining his sight, Paul was then inspired to go forth and preach a gospel that was directly *opposed* to The Way of Christ as taught by Jesus in the Gospels (contrast 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 10:9 with Matthew 10:7 & Matthew 24:12-14, contrast Romans 6:5 with Luke 17:20-21, contrast Romans 14:9 with Luke 20:38, contrast Romans 8:3 with Mark 10:18, contrast Romans 8:3 with Matthew 9:13, contrast Romans 8:9 with John 12:47-48, contrast Romans 12:2 with Matthew 17:24-27 & Matthew 22:15-22 et al) ...

D) Jesus actually warned his followers of false prophets like Paul (compare [Matthew 15:13-14](#) with [Galatians 1:14](#) & [Philippians 3:4-5](#), compare [John 5:43](#) with [Acts 13:9](#), and compare [Matthew 24:26](#) with [Acts 9](#) & [Galatians 1:11-12](#)) ...

E) Jesus even described [Satan's](#) fall from [Heaven](#) in a way that was eerily similar to the way Paul described his encounter with the blinding spirit on the Road to Damascus (see [Luke 10:18](#)).

Secondly, and independently of all the aforementioned, note that having the wherewithal to stand on our own feet is always a precursor to exuding real & selfless Love – which was the one thing Jesus wanted us all to Do; the one thing required for us to Walk *his* Way and thereby enter *his* Kingdom (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 7:21](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) ...

And **finally**, note as well that Jesus did not come to directly save anyone (his words, not mine), but rather to “[open their eyes](#)” to The Way of Christ – that they might choose themselves to walk its gentle course, and *save themselves* thereby (see [John 13:15-17](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 20:26-28 ... Not to be served but to Serve

(04/08/2017)

“Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve – to give his life as a ransom for many.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 20:26-28)

Once again, here we have Jesus reiterating the primary purpose of his ministry – namely, to encourage (see, in-Courage – [John 14:27](#) et al) us all to live lives of Joy-full service & willing self-sacrifice ...

And here again as well we have Jesus using the term “**Son of Man**” not to describe himself (otherwise he would not only be exposing himself as a liar – see [Matthew 16:28](#), but would also be outing himself as a hypocrite – see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)), but rather to refer to the free will that resides within *all* of us – to the Human-ness that lets us *all* choose between being a selfish “**Son of Adam**” or a holy “**Child of God**” (see [Matthew 9:2](#) & [Matthew 9:22](#), [John 1:12-13](#), [John 12:36](#), [John 14:12](#), [John 14:20-26](#), [John 15:26](#), [1 John 3:1](#), [1 John 5:19](#), and even [Galatians 3:26](#)).

And even if we were to hypothetically assume that he was referring to himself in this passage, Christians & non-Christians alike would do well to remember that Jesus told his listeners quite clearly that they were to *emulate* his Love-filled life (see [Matthew 16:24](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [John 14:6](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [Matthew 7:21](#) et al) –

that they too were “**Children of God**” who could do just as he did and make their lives about serving instead of being served (see [Matthew 20:28](#), [John 12:47-48](#)); about not striving for personal salvation in the Hereafter but rather choosing to bring the Calm of Heaven to the lives of others Here&Now (see [Matthew 5:9](#), [John 14:27](#), [Luke 17:20-21](#), [Matthew 10:7](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 8:20-22 ... Nowhere to lay our Head

(04/09/2017)

“Foxes have dens and birds have their nests; and yet the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head ... Follow me, and let the Dead bury their dead.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 8:20-22)

In order to be able to explore the deeper reaches of Truth available in the Scriptures, it is necessary that we put their teachings into practice. And in order to put them into practice in ways powerful (and thus prescient), we must remember that Jesus preached humility over all other virtues – even making it a prerequisite for entrance into his version of Heaven – the state of being he called the “**Kingdom of God**” (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#) -- also [Matthew 23:12](#), [Luke 22:27](#), [John 8:7](#) et al) ... In addition to this, Jesus quite clearly despised hypocrisy over all sins (see the majority of [Matthew 23](#) – especially [Matthew 23:3](#) & [Matthew 23:13](#); also [Matthew 6:1](#), [Matthew 7:5](#) & [Matthew 15:7-9](#) et al). As such -- as is quite obviously the case in [Matthew 16:28](#), there is almost no chance that Jesus is referring to himself here when he uses the term “**Son of Man**”, for to do so would be the epitome of arrogance – and thus, the epitome of hypocrisy as well. No, when we look closely at the Gospels, we can actually see quite readily that Jesus was preaching a theology that was practical in *this* lifetime (see [Luke 17:20-21](#) + [John 13:15-17](#) + [Matthew 6:34](#) + [Matthew 11:7-8](#) et al), not one focused on any heavenly reward based in his errantly-hoped-for status as the Davidian Messiah (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al).

Indeed, this is why he told his listeners to “**let the dead** [i.e. those concerned with religious rituals and lives after their current one] **bury their dead**”, and this is why he repeatedly encouraged others not to worship him, but rather to “**follow**” him (see [Matthew 4:19](#), [Matthew 16:24](#), [Matthew 19:28](#) et al) – treating every person we encounter as a Friend (especially our enemies – see [Matthew 5:43-48](#) &/or the downtrodden in our midst – see [Matthew 25:35-40](#)), and treating every place we are as if it were our heavenly Home.



1 Corinthians 14:33 ... The God of Harmony

(04/10/2017)

“God is a God not of disorder but of harmony.”

~ Paul (1 Corinthians 14:33)

This verse is actually laded with quite a bit of irony, seeing as how Paul himself was actually a powerful agent of disorder & conflict, and a potent enemy of Harmony & Peace (see [Acts 13:9-11](#), [Acts 15:39](#), [Romans 1:32](#), [Romans 16:17-18](#), [1 Corinthians 5:4-5](#), [1 Corinthians 6:1-6](#), [1 Corinthians 5:11-13](#), [1 Corinthians 9:24](#), [1 Corinthians 10:20-21](#), [1 Corinthians 11:19](#), [1 Corinthians 15:23-25](#), [1 Corinthians 16:22](#), [2 Corinthians 10:6](#), [2 Corinthians 11:4-5](#), [Galatians 1:9](#), [Galatians 2:11](#), [Galatians 3:1](#), [Galatians 5:12](#), [Colossians 2:8](#), [Philippians 1:28](#), [Philippians 3:2](#), [Philippians 3:18-19](#) & [1 Thessalonians 2:15-16](#)) ... Whereas the Way of Jesus Christ was indeed a teaching that would have brought harmony amongst all peoples were it to have been furthered & adopted, the “unway” of Paul (the theology of exclusivist Atonement that he created out of thin air) has indeed already led both to the creation & the spread of the modern-day Christian church -- one of the greatest forces for disorder & discord & denigration in the history of the human race.

*Indeed, where Paul preached that we are to blindly obey human political authorities ([Romans 13:1-6](#)), Jesus taught that we are to heed the moral Law of the Divine over all man-made competitors thereto ([Mark 12:17](#)) ...

*Where Paul preached that the “[Good News](#)” was Jesus’ resurrection and immortality for all who worshipped him ([1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) & [Romans 10:9](#)), Jesus taught that his “[Gospel](#)” was **A**) that Heaven was already Here&Now ([Matthew 10:7](#)) and **B**) that entry thereto was granted to all who chose to selflessly Care for others ([Matthew 24:12-14](#)) ...

*Where Paul preached that Jesus was the only Son of God and must be worshipped accordingly ([Romans 3:21-24](#)), Jesus taught that he was not to be worshipped at all – that he was to be *followed* instead ([Mark 10:18](#) + [Matthew 16:24](#)) ...

*Where Paul preached that the goal was one’s own salvation ([1 Thessalonians 4:16-17](#)), Jesus taught that the goal was self-sacrifice for others’ benefit – a goal which inadvertently granted one access to the “[Kingdom of God](#)” in this lifetime ([Mark 9:35](#) + [Luke 17:20-21](#) + [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ...

*And where Paul preached that humans are innately & unalterably sinful beings ([Romans 3:23](#)), Jesus taught that humans are innately [Children of God](#), and that we can be reborn to this holy status in any moment we choose to act accordingly ([John 14:16-17](#) & [John 3:3-9](#)).

[May the former teachings soon fade & perish, and may the latter ones come to blossom and thrive.]

Of course, if God is indeed a God worth worshiping (i.e. a God of unconditional Love – a la [Matthew 5:48](#), a God of limitless Grace – a la [Luke 6:36](#), and a God of unending Forgiveness – a la [Matthew 8:21-22](#)), then Paul is inadvertently correct in his assessment here. And if Paul is indeed correct in this verse, then we should – quite ironically – disregard the vast majority of his other teachings and *follow The Way of Jesus Christ* instead!

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 13:12 ... More to be Given

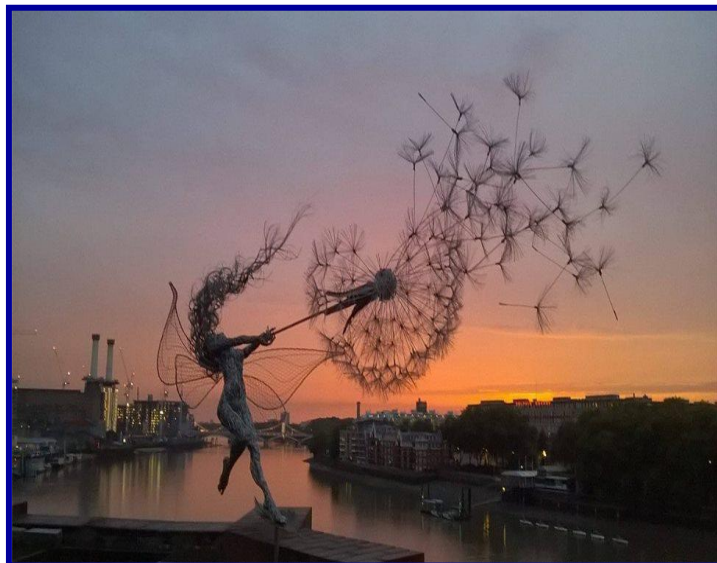
(04/11/2017)

“For to those who truly Have, more will be given ... but from those who do not Have, even what little they possess will be taken from them.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 13:12)

For those mired in self-focus this verse sounds almost masochistic. Indeed, why would more be given to those who already have? And why would everything be taken away from those who already have nothing? When read on its face, it just doesn't seem fair. And if we are speaking from a standard, self-focused mindset, it is indeed an unjust statement – no doubt about it ...

And yet Jesus was quite clearly *not* speaking in alignment with the standard way of thinking, just as he was quite clearly *not* ever acting in harmony with the normal way of doing things. He had come with a very different message – one that would require others to renew their minds (Matthew 7:5) by awakening their hearts (Luke 6:35), via a way that required them to repeatedly alter their ways of dealing with one another (i.e. become repeatedly “born again” a la John 3:3-8, by actively Loving one's enemies a la Matthew 5:43-48 &/or actively Caring for the down trodden a la Matthew 25:35-40). Indeed -- for Jesus at least, true wealth was not related to material things at all (“either God *or* riches” a la Matthew 6:24), but rather was a spiritual reward that came from choosing selfless Love (the “if you would be perfect” of Matthew 19:21 et al). Yes, at least for Jesus, those who “Had” were those who were engaged in acts of willing self-sacrifice – those engaged in selfless giving – those engaged in community service – those engaged in Love. And for these people – for those fully immersed in his Way of perfect Love, more & more opportunities to serve would be given them (not only because more would be attracted thereto, but also because the more one Loves the more one opens one's eyes to Seeing the need for Love that is all around us in every moment of our lives) ...

Conversely, those who “do not Have”, those who refuse to care for others or refuse to give generously or refuse to Love humbly, all that they have accumulated instead will become a source of suffering for them; all will be either lost or taken away or become meaningless ballast on their feeble meanderings through life.



Mark 9:49-50 ... All of us salted with Fire

(04/12/2017)

“For everyone will be salted with Fire and every sacrifice will be cleansed with Salt. Salt is good, and yet when salt loses its taste, how can one restore its saltiness? Have Salt in your selves by being at peace with one another.” ~ Jesus (Mark 9:49-50)

First & foremost, it is crucial to realize that “fire” was seen by Jesus (and many others of his day) as a purifying agent, *not* as a punishing one -- a fact that was intimated by John the Baptist when he noted that Jesus’ spiritual teaching (i.e. his “baptism”) was going to come *not* via water but “in the Holy Spirit and fire” (see [Matthew 3:11](#) & [Luke 3:16](#)) ... And it is good that this is indeed the case, for otherwise Jesus would come across as far less than Loving (and actually as quite the hypocrite) when he said “I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled!” in [Luke 12:49](#) ...



Second, please note that “salt” was a highly valuable agent of purification & preservation in Jesus’ day. Salt was used to cleanse burnt offerings ([Leviticus 2:13](#) et al) and salt was used to preserve food (the metaphorical sustenance of the Soul) ...

Third, note that the final phrase of this verse admonishes us all to “have salt in yourselves (i.e. be internally purified by thoughts of gratitude and humility) and *be at peace with one another* (i.e. be externally purified via selfless acts of Love).” Please remember that Jesus came to bring a message of [repentance](#) – the Greek word *metanoia* (Strong’s #3340); a word that meant not self-criticism or self-judgment, but rather a radical change in behavior; a change that first requires that we undergo a painful cleansing process. It hurts immensely to let go of fear & desire. It hurts immensely to let go of the arrogance & the intolerance that makes us feel special; it hurts immensely to set aside our certainty in our own personal salvation and adopt a stance of purposeful humility instead (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)). Indeed it “hurts like Hell” to do so – even though to do so is the only way to be



truly [Blessed](#) and enter Jesus’ [Kingdom of Heaven](#) (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [John 15:1-6](#)). Indeed, we can only know true Peace ourselves once we choose to make powerful Peace with others (see [John 5:28-29](#)).

Fourth, note that even Paul inadvertently “got it” in this regard when he wrote (in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15), “For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; and that foundation is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw – the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; though *the builder will still be saved, but only as **through fire**.*”

As such, let us all “**be salted with Fire**” – the great cleansing that comes from being deathly afraid and yet reaching out to Love the source of our fear – of being steeped in intense desire and yet reaching out to give to another that for which we ourselves most yearn.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Mark 11:24 ... Believing to Receive

(04/13/2017)

“Whatever you ask for in prayer,
believe you are receiving it & it will be yours.”

~ Jesus (Mark 11:24)

Most similar verses in the Gospels have the phrase “**in my name**” attached to them (see [John 14:13-14](#), [Matthew 18:20](#), [Matthew 21:22](#), [Luke 11:9](#) et al) – intimating that the prayer in question must be a selfless one to be “heard” and thereafter fulfilled; that the prayer must resonate with the all-Loving nature of the message of Jesus’ ministry and the name of Christ himself – “*Emmanuel*”, a name which means “**God is within us**” (see [Matthew 1:23](#)) ... That having been said, it is important to note that this particular phrase is missing here – and also that we are dealing with the [Gospel of Mark](#); the original Gospel – the Gospel that was penned first, and the Gospel from which [Matthew](#) & [Luke](#) took most of their subsequent inspiration. And so it is that we look to the [Gospel of Mark](#) itself to see how its author felt about prayer – seeing **first** & foremost the admonition of Jesus read in [Mark 11:25](#), and admonition which noted that “**whenever you stand praying, first forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.**” As such, we see that praying for Jesus is not a selfish tool at all, but rather a method of seeking atonement for past wrongs ...

The **second** telling mention of prayer in [Mark](#) comes near the end of that Gospel, when we see Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane just prior to his arrest and crucifixion. And here, in his time of greatest distress and greatest need, do we see him praying for himself? Do we see him begging God for pleasure or comfort or the avoidance of pain or the dismissal of his imminent suffering? **No** – Instead we see him acknowledge that God could indeed have given him these things (“**for you all things are possible**”) and we see him acknowledge that he was indeed sorely tempted to ask for the same (“**remove this cup from me**”), and yet immediately thereafter we see Jesus reaffirm his resolve to do God’s will, **not** to fulfill his own wishes (“**yet not my will, but thine be done**” – see [Mark 14:36](#)) ...

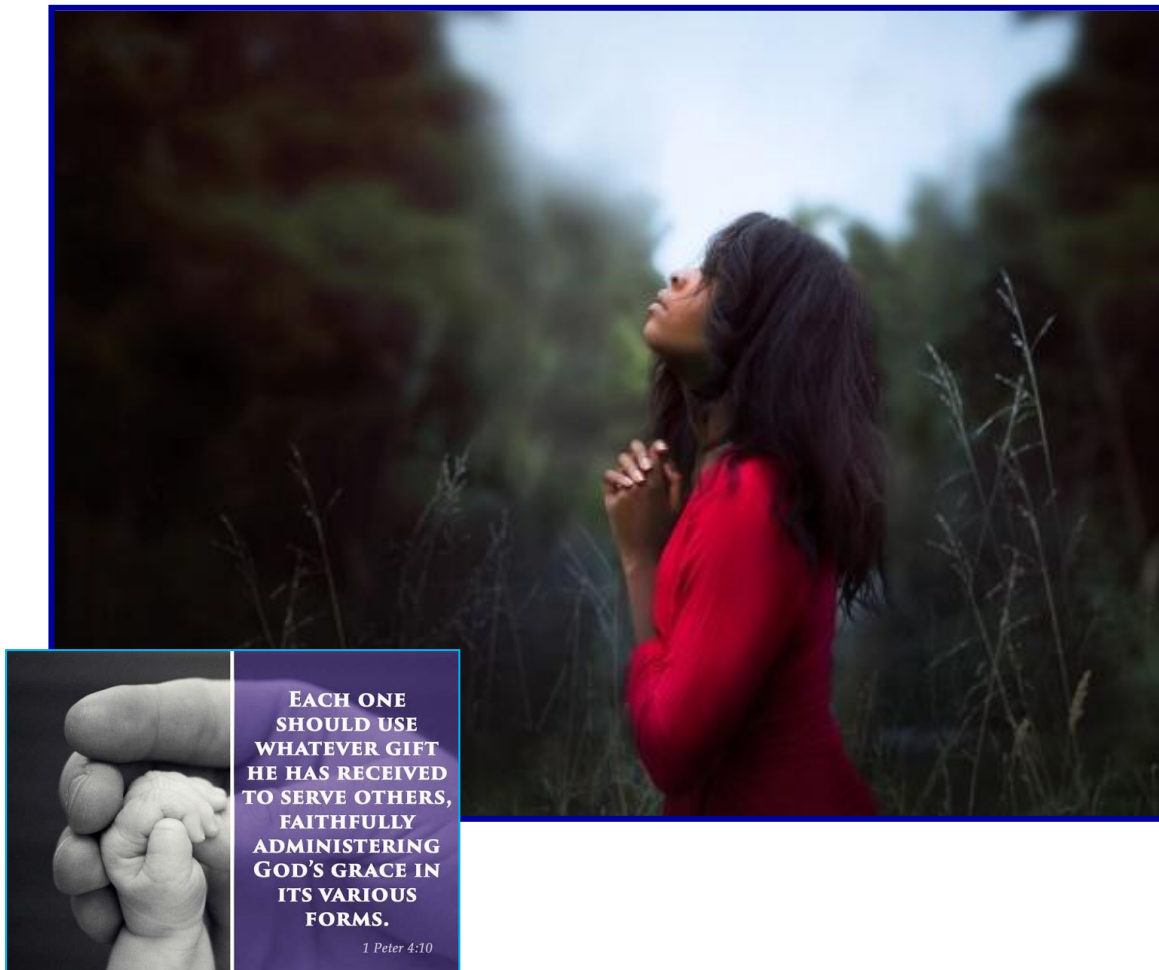


And this is how we are to pray as well; not to selfishly envision wealth or health or pleasure or ease and then ask for the same to be granted for ourselves, but rather to envision serving those in need and relieving the suffering of the downtrodden, and then to ask that these visions be fulfilled instead.

As such, all proponents of the “The Prosperity Gospel” or “The Law of Abundance” should beware when using this verse to selfishly manifest advantages of opulence or ease – first and foremost because doing so directly denies **The Way of Christ** (a Way that knows only service for God’s Will, never being served by the same – see **Mark 10:45** et al), but also because “beaming” want into the Universe is actually “beaming” a lack of what is desired – and the Universe will indeed respond accordingly; with either corresponding impoverishment &/or with the granting of what is desired; an attainment that is always coupled with the corresponding suffering that accrues once what has been attained is inevitably lost, is inevitably taken, or inevitably breaks, dissolves, and fades away.

In essence then, remember that life is about what you can **DO** for others – not about what you can receive from them, and that prayer is about yearning to **Serve** those around you – never about wishing to be served by them.

Amen ... Let it be so.



John 7:24 ... Judging the judging

(04/14/2017)

“Avoid judging by appearances.
Discern instead with Right Vision.”
~ Jesus (John 7:24)

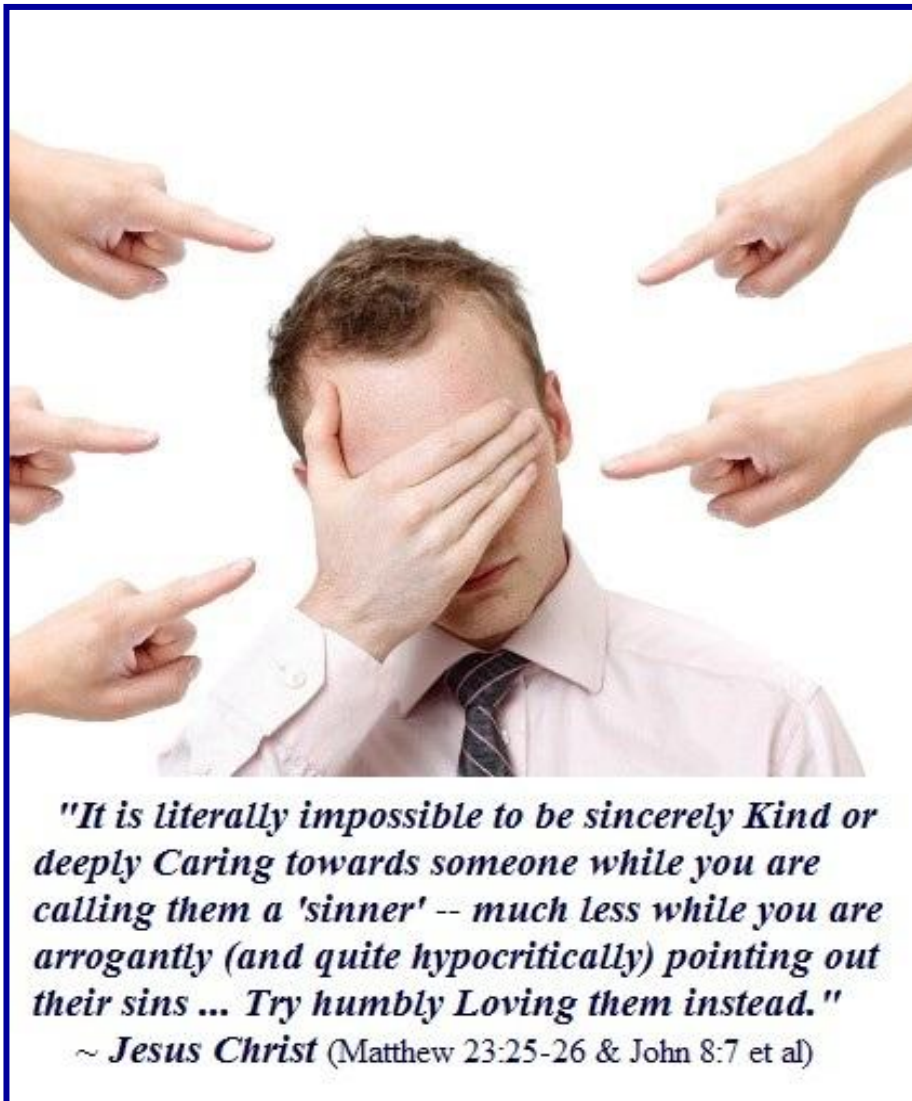
First & foremost, please note that I have Purpose-fully altered the wording of this verse – a verse which normally reads “**Do not judge by appearances, but judge with righteous judgment**”, and I have done so very good reason; namely, to make the verse more accurate, to make the verse more understandable, to make the verse more applicable to the everyday lives of its readers, and to make the verse more harmonious with The Way of Christ. Please allow me to explain ...

It has been my experience that this particular verse is frequently used by conservative Christians to justify their bigoted condemnations of others – be those others homosexuals, transgenders, “sinners,” non-Christians, or even non-evangelical Christians. This interpretation not only seems to specifically contradict the very clear wording of **Matthew 7:1-2** (“**Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get.**”) but it also seems to generally contradict the essence of Jesus’ entire ministry of humble Love as well (see **Matthew 18:3-4** & **Matthew 23:12** & **John 8:7** et al). Of course, when we take a step back and have the wherewithal to examine the ancient Greek of these two verses, a reconciliation becomes readily evident. For, as it turns out, the major misconception here has to do once with the difference between the “**judgments**” we make against who others **are** (i.e. the judgments prohibited by Jesus in **Matthew 7:1-5** – like what bigoted believers do to those who trigger their particular prejudices) and the “**righteous judgments**” we make against the deeds others **do** that cause third parties physical &/or emotional harm (i.e. the judgments encouraged by Jesus in **John 7:24** – like what animal rights activists do to get animal abusers to stop enslaving, abusing, & murdering innocent animals) ... Accordingly, the Hebrew word for “**judgment**” in the Old Testament is **mishpat** (Strong’s #4941) – a term which actually meant “**justice**”, *not* “condemnation” or “correction.”

Of course, far more important for the discussion at hand, **krisis** was the Greek word (Strong’s #2920) that has been translated in English versions of the New Testament as “**judgment.**” And this word (which does indeed imply the passing of a sentence upon another) and its derivatives are the ones used in both **Matthew 7:1-2** and **John 7:24** ... Most importantly of all, the latter “**judgment**” in **John 7:24** is modified by the Greek word **dikaio** – a term which means “**just**” or “**impartial**” or “**correct**” more than its more common translation of “**righteous**” ...

And *this* is where the distinction lives – for conservative Christians who use [John 7:24](#) to justify their bigoted beliefs are **not** passing “[correct judgment](#)” on others at all. Instead, they are hypocritically opening their mouths to publicly condemn states of being that are not even listed as sins. As such, their denigrations of others is actually an **unrighteous** judgment of others, and therefore a direct violation of both [Matthew 7:1-2](#) *and* [John 7:24](#) ... And this is why I altered the language of [John 7:24](#) above, for while we are most certainly not to condemn others for their beliefs or their cultural affiliations or their gender or their race or the sexual orientations ([Matthew 7:1-2](#) et al), we most certainly *are* to “[discern](#)” the actions of others “[with righteous judgment](#)” -- that we can thereby identify actions that are causing the innocent to suffer, so that we might interfere and prevent the same.

Amen ... Let it be so.

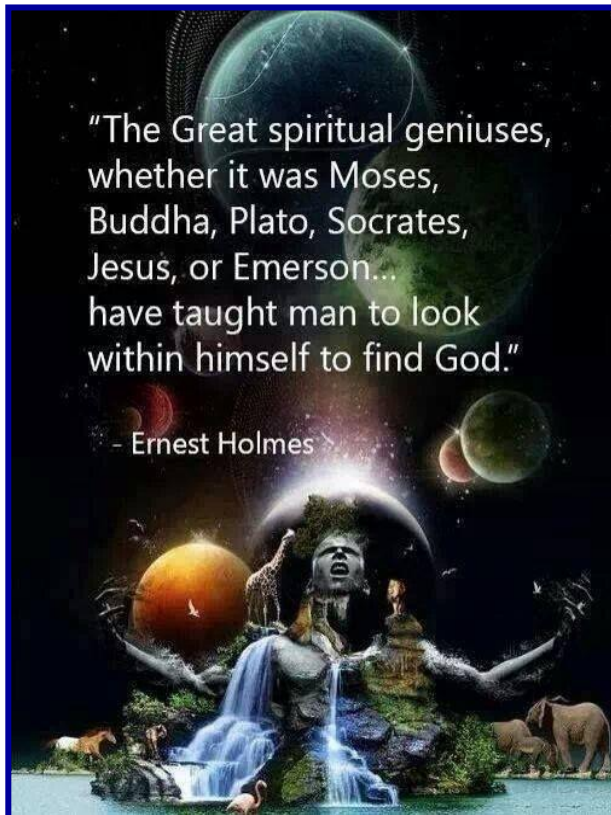


Acts 5:29 ... On obeying the Divine (04/15/2017)

“We must obey God rather than any human authority.”
~ Luke (Acts 5:29)

Whereas the author of **Luke** might indeed have been referring here to an external, independent, authoritative God who resides “above” us and “looks down” upon us, it is important to remember that this is *not* how Jesus viewed God at all – nor is it the way we should approach God in order to follow Jesus' Way, abide in his Truth, or emulate his Life ... Consider the following: **A)** For Jesus, God was an *internal* essence (see **John 14:20**) ... **B)** For Jesus, God was a gentle Father (see **Luke 6:36** + calling him *Abba*, the highly intimate “Daddy,” in **Mark 14:36**) ... **C)** For Jesus, God was an interdependent Essence composed of perfect, selfless, unconditional Love (see **Matthew 5:48**) ... **D)** For Jesus, God is not an entity to be worshiped in order to attain a post-mortem reward in Heaven, but rather *a Love* to be enlivened towards others (see **John 13:15-17**) in order to attain Salvation (via entrance into the state of being known as “the Kingdom of God”) in *this* lifetime (see **Luke 17:20-21**). And this divergence can be clearly seen in the very different Fruits that come from these very different trees -- When we “obey God” by bowing down in quivering subservience to an authoritarian

celestial tyrant (even a relatively benevolent tyrant like the one alluded to by **Luke** here) it always bears the Fruits of dissension and strife and conflict and war between differing factions of humankind, along with discord, fear, anger, and sadness within the Hearts of individuals as well ... On the other hand, when we “obey **GOD**” by revering the heavenly **Father** of Jesus Christ by reaching out humbly & courageously to **LOVE** those around us, doing so always bears the Good Fruit of Peace and Calm and Harmony and Unity in human relationships, along with Contentment and Calm and Joy and Bliss within the Hearts of individuals as well.



Amen ... Let the latter ever be so.

Matthew 17:20 ... The Faith of a Seed

(04/16/2017)

“If you have Faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain: 'Move!' – and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 17:20)

Fittingly, just as a tiny mustard seed contains a surprising amount of Power, this tiny verse contains a surprising amount of Truth. Feel free to consider the following deeper implications of what Jesus was probably alluding to here ...

First & foremost, it is important to note the context of this statement – important to note that Jesus was speaking to people of “**little faith**” and trying to awaken them to the fact that they too had immense Power at their fingertips (the Power of selfless Love – the Power innate to all acts of willing self-sacrifice – the Power inherent in all who choose to ***Love anyway***). And what better way to do so than to mention the mustard plant – a *ubiquitous weed* that grew readily throughout the Middle East at the time -- even in the most arid of conditions; a plant that came from a small seed and yet grew rapidly into a large bush (with some specimens reaching over ten feet tall near the Jordan River); a plant that germinated extremely quickly – that could be planted one day and be growing heartily the next ... All of these characteristics matched the message that Jesus was trying to convey to the doubtful – namely, that “**salvation**” ***was for everyone***, not just the religiously privileged or the pious few; that even the smallest of Loving deeds was worth it – that even the tiniest acts of Love could blossom and bring great Peace, and that the benefits of selfless Love did not arrive as a slow-moving process of awakening or enlightenment – but rather accrued immediately after they were given ...



Second, it is worthwhile to note that Jewish law at the time prohibited the growing of mustard in one's garden – and that Jesus lauding mustard was yet another alluded critique of the unnecessarily limiting and indeed spiritually counterproductive religious regulations of his day ... **Third**, Jesus doesn't stop there, but in all three of the Synoptic Gospels goes on to state that the mustard plant grows into “the greatest of shrubs” (Mark 4:30-32), with Matthew & Luke going on to state that it even thereafter “becomes a tree” (Matthew 13:31-32 & Luke 13:18-19). All three of these writings then go on to note that the mature mustard bush serves as shelter for the birds. And this latter addition is significant, for it shows Jesus equating the culturally prohibited & judged “unclean” mustard plant as being on equal symbolic footing to the glorious cedar trees famously mentioned in the Old Testament (see Psalms 92:12 -- “The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon”, and Daniel 4:10-22 -- “Upon my bed this is what I saw: there was a tree at the center of the earth, and its height was great ... and from it all living beings were fed ... and in whose branches the birds of the air had nests”, and Ezekiel 17:22-24 -- “I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar ... I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain ... in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar. Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest winged creatures of every kind.”, and Ezekiel 31:1-9 -- “Whom are you like in your greatness? Consider Assyria, a cedar of Lebanon ... All the birds of the air made their nests in its boughs”) ...

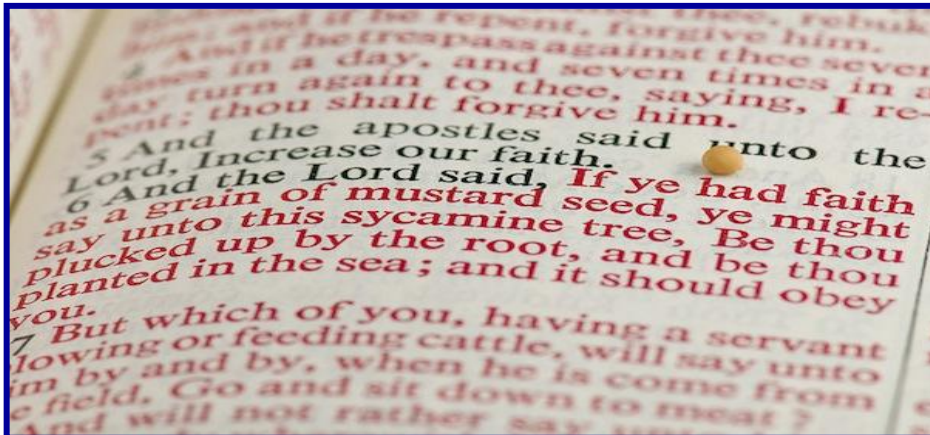
Fourth, while more than a few modern-day theologians assume that Jesus is speaking about the spread of Christianity in this parable (and that the birds represent either the presence of evil – an influx of false prophets & heretics into the church; or the Gentile nations that will soon be sheltered by the church's rapidly expanding penumbra), even the most cursory of glances at the teachings of Jesus shows that this cannot be the case. Indeed, Jesus went out of his way on many occasions during his ministry to point out **A**) that he was a dramatic reformer of Judaism, not a founder of any new religion (see Matthew 5:17-18 & Hebrews 8:8-13 et al) and **B**) that he most certainly did *not* want to be worshipped himself (see Mark 10:18, John 5:41, John 7:16, John 8:50-54, John 12:44 et al) but rather wanted his Way of Selfless Love to be “*followed*” (i.e. emulated – see Matthew



16:28, Matthew 25:35-40, John 12:24, John 13:15-17 et al) ... **Fifth**, remember that “**Faith**” for Jesus was not a mental certainty of belief or a verbal announcement of confidence, but rather was a *verb* – an action performed despite doubt and fear, not without the presence of the same (see John 14:12) ...

Sixth, this verse is most certainly not meant to support the “Law of Co-Creation” or “The Prosperity Gospel” or the “Manifestation of Abundance” that have all become so vogue of late. Indeed, if we look to the other places in the Gospels where Jesus makes similar claims, he almost always adds the phrase “*in his name*” to the manifestive language used – and a very important addition this becomes, for the only way anyone can truly “pray in Jesus’ name” is to pray in harmony with his Way, his Truth, & his Life – a manner of prayer that requires that we avoid asking for anything for ourselves, and pray instead solely for the opportunity to be of greater *service to others* (see [Matthew 18:20](#), [Luke 11:19](#), [John 14:13-14](#) et al). Indeed, this is the “[Faith of the mustard seed](#)” that reflects the “[perfect Love](#)” of his heavenly Father ([Matthew 5:48](#)). And as such, this is the only **Faith** that can hope to “[move mountains](#)” without causing great harm to self and others. Loving the unlovable and sincerely Caring for an enemy are the most difficult of all deeds. And yet as long as we have **Faith** – the potent **Faith** of the mustard seed that is as active as it is humble – then such a selfless Love can be given ([Mathew 5:43-48](#)), and our salvation can be thereby assured (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.

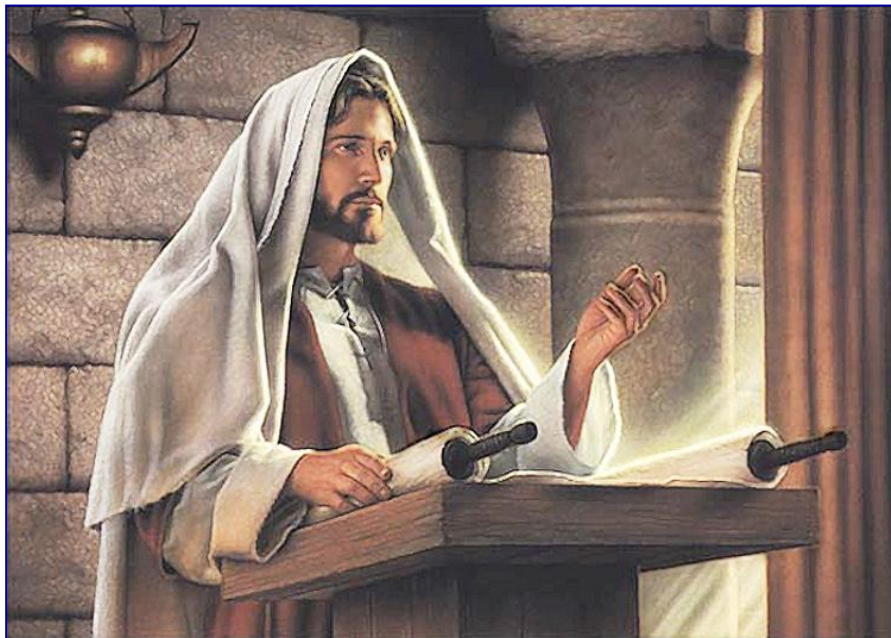


Luke 1:45 ... Blessed the Believers

(04/17/17)

“Blessed is she who Believed, for there will be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.” ~ Jesus (Luke 1:45)

This verse becomes Truth only in those moments when **Belief** becomes a *verb* – only when we set aside merely thinking faithfully about God’s love for us and start acting Faith-fully by extending that real & selfless Love to others (see [Matthew 7:21](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [John 14:12](#) et al) ... This means that the **Blessing** of Mary -- the woman referenced here -- was not guaranteed via her mental faith or her verbal allegiance, nor was it assured merely because of the child she carried or the song of praise she sang thereafter. No, the **Blessing** so promised accrued because Mary chose to **actively heed the Call** given to her – she chose to hear a Divine Summons and then **act** accordingly -- by raising Jesus with the requisite knowledge to enable him to Do what was needed to fulfill his subsequent ministry. Indeed, by all indications Mary fulfilled her requirement quite courageously, if for no other reason than we later see Jesus become a “**laborer’s**” son (the Greek word commonly translated as “**carpenter**” in [Matthew 13:55](#) was not specifically tied to wood-workers – see the Greek *tektonos*, Strong’s #5045) who was extremely well-versed in Hebrew Scriptures (see [Luke 2:43-47](#), and also [Matthew 4:4-10](#), [Luke 4:17-19](#), [Matthew 5:21-38](#), [Matthew 10:35-36](#), [Matthew 11:10](#), [Matthew 13:14-15](#), [Matthew 15:3-9](#), [Matthew 19:4-6](#), [Matthew 19:17-20](#), [Matthew 21:13-16](#), [Matthew 21:42](#), [Matthew 22:31-32](#), [Matthew 22:37-40](#), [Matthew 22:43-44](#), [Matthew 23: 38-39](#), [Matthew 24:15-16](#), [Matthew 26:31](#), [Matthew 27:46](#), [John 10:34](#), [John 13:18](#), [John 15:25](#) et al) – a highly unusual occurrence for any child from a working class family in Jesus’ day.



It is also worth noting that Jesus did not fulfill the prophecy desired by the angel who spoke to Mary in this chapter of [Luke](#). For the “[angel Gabriel](#)” told Mary that “[you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.](#)” ([Luke 1:31-32](#)). Yes, true to form Mary did name her son Jesus, and true to form, he was a Great Man who many errantly worshipped as “[the Son of the Most High](#).” *And yet* one thing he never was – one thing he openly & wholeheartedly & repeatedly *rejected* was “[the throne of his ancestor David](#).” Indeed, Jesus wanted no part whatsoever of being revered as a Savior of the people (see [Matthew 16:20](#), [Matthew 22:41-45](#), [Matthew 24:1-2](#), [Matthew 24:23-27](#), [Matthew 26:63-64](#) + [Matthew 16:28](#), [Mark 1:24-25](#), [Mark 3:12](#), [Mark 8:27-30](#), [Mark 10:17-18](#), [Mark 12:14-17](#), [Mark 12:35-37](#), [Luke 4:5-8](#), [Luke 4:41](#), [Luke 9:18-21](#), [Luke 18:18-19](#), [Luke 22:70](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 6:15](#), [John 7:16-18](#) + [John 14:20](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44-45](#), [John 12:49](#) & [John 13:13](#)) – instead coming to offer them a **Way** they could attain salvation for themselves by serving others (see [Luke 17:20-21](#), [Matthew 10:7](#), [Matthew 16:28](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... And this Way remains a Truth for us all to this very day. For we are all Blessed when we see to it that others have the tools & the knowledge required to blossom into a Life that serves others in harmony with their own unique gifts & talents – a Life that “[fulfills what is spoken \[within them\] by the Lord](#).”

Amen ... Let it be so.



Proverbs 4:18 ... The Path of the Just

(04/18/2017)

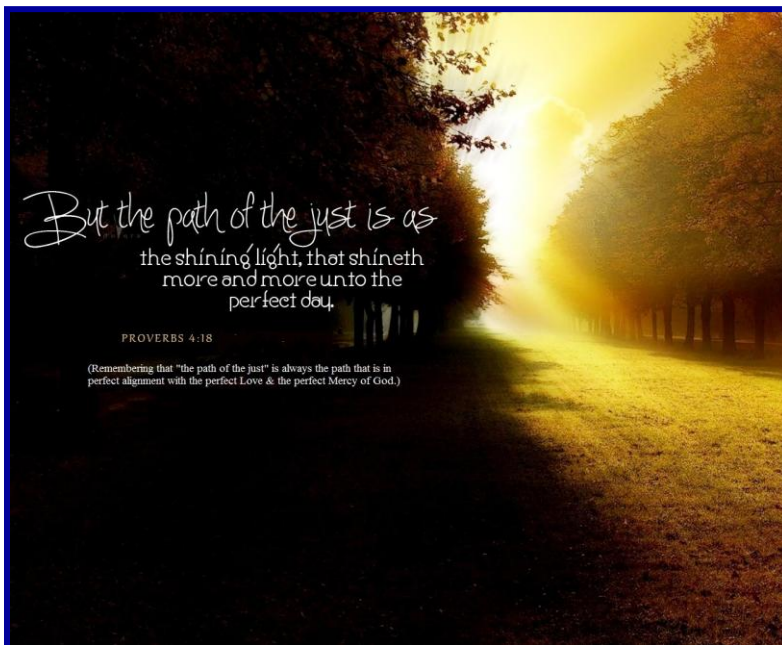
“The path of the Just is like the shining sun,
that shines ever brighter unto the Perfect Day.”

~ unknown (Proverbs 4:18)

First of all, it is important to remember that – seeing as how the lives of all sentient beings are innately shrouded in abject fear (via their constant subconscious evaluations of “friend or foe” &/or “fight or flight”) & varying degrees of self-loathing (via the omnipresent dysfunctional whisperings from the critical judgments received from parents, teachers, preachers etc during childhood), and seeing as how the societies we have created were founded in violence and are still promiscuous in their hovering, omnipresent oppressions of potential incarceration, poverty, ostracization &/or isolation – even the smallest candle of Love or Justice shines like a strobe into the darkness; even the faintest calls for Caring or Freedom boom like a thunderhead rolling over the valley ... **Second**, note as well the enhanced Meaning found in this verse when we read the Proverbs that precede & follow it – namely, “Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evildoers ... For they eat the bread of wickedness and drink the wine of violence” (Proverbs 4:14-17), and “The way of the wicked is like deep darkness; they do not know what they stumble over ... Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life” (Proverbs 4:19-23) ... **Third**, note that the Hebrew word translated here as “perfect” is *nekown*, a word that actually means “fully established” or “made complete” (see Strong’s #3559) – a meaning which harmonizes well with the humility-infused & fully active Way of Christ (see the “fulfilled” of Matthew 5:17-18

– from the Greek *pleroo*, meaning “to hone” or “to make whole or complete” Strong’s #4137) ...

Fourth, note in closing how well this Proverb flows with Jesus’ reading from the scroll of Isaiah in Luke 4:18-19; especially the fact that we have *all* been called to shine a similar light, and thereby make the way straight for all those struggling nearby (see Matthew 5:16, John 12:36, John 14:12 et al).



Colossians 3:14 ... Clothing ourselves with Love

(04/19/2017)

“Above all, clothe yourselves with Love,
which binds everything together in perfect Harmony.”

~ Paul (Colossians 3:14)

The majority of scholars agree that [2 Thessalonians](#), [1 Timothy](#), [2 Timothy](#), [Titus](#), [Hebrews](#) & [Ephesians](#) were almost certainly *not* written by Paul, and a portion of scholars cast their doubts on Paul’s authorship of [Colossians](#) as well. That having been said, the majority of scholars believe that [Colossians](#) is an authentic Pauline biblical epistle, in which case it would have been the last one he ever penned – probably written while he was imprisoned in Rome near the very end of his life ...

Taking this all into account, it should come as no surprise that he is seen here once again inadvertently “stumbling upon” The Way of Christ in this verse. For even though Paul never saw Jesus in the flesh, and even though Paul never once heard Jesus teach, and even though Paul was waylaid by a deceiving demon on the Road to Damascus (who *posed* as Christ and lambasted Paul with guilt & mind-numbing shame over his treatment of Jesus’ true followers – see [Acts 9](#) & [Luke 10:18](#) et al), and even though Paul developed a theology thereafter that directly *contradicted* the teachings of Jesus in almost every way, still Paul regularly happened upon the Truth of that glorious, selfless, all-Loving Way – still he regularly left his passive-aggressive dysfunctions and vile condemnations of others behind long enough to whisper of the Life of real & perfect LOVE (see also [Romans 2:1](#), [Romans 2:13-15](#), [Romans 8:5-6](#), [Romans 8:14-16](#), [Romans 12:10](#), [Romans 12:14-21](#), [Romans 13:8-10](#), [Romans 14:4](#), [Romans 14:13-14](#), [Romans 14:19](#), [Romans 14:22](#), [1 Corinthians 3:16](#), [1 Corinthians 6:17](#), [1 Corinthians 10:24](#), [1 Corinthians 13:2](#), [1 Corinthians 13:8](#), [1 Corinthians 16:14](#), [2 Corinthians 3:18](#), [Galatians 5:6b](#), [Galatians 5:14](#), [Philippians 2:4-5](#), [Philippians 4:5](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:15-18](#), & [Colossians 2:20](#)) ...

And that he regularly did so means that he, just like you & I, was privy to the greatest of Truths – that he, just like you & I, knew what Jesus knew and was offered its same wonders:

***He knew** that [Heaven](#) was Here&Now, not coming sometime in the future (see [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Luke 17:20-21](#)) ...

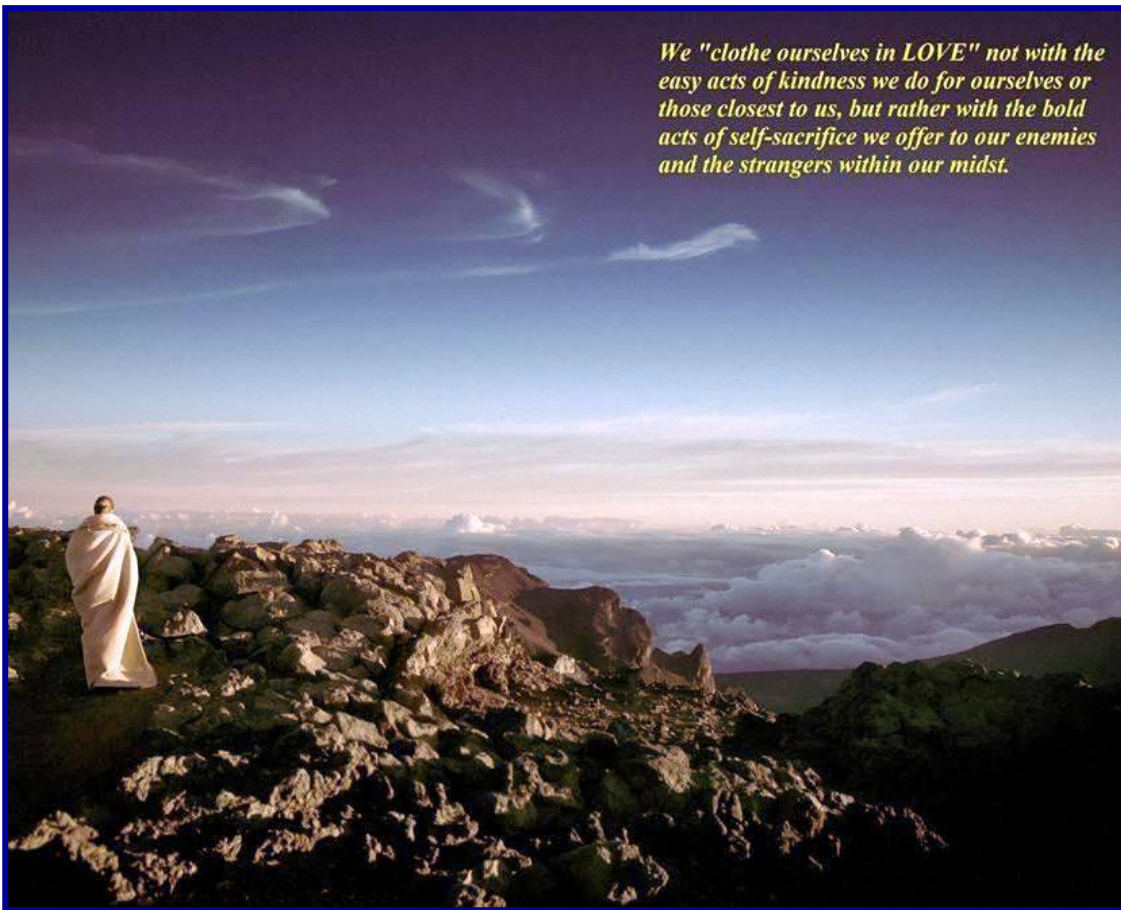
***He knew** that what many call [God](#) was an *internal* Essence (see [John 14:12](#) & [John 14:20-26](#)) composed of perfect, unconditional, non-condemnatory LOVE (see [Matthew 5:48](#), [1 John 4:8](#) & [1 John 4:18](#) et al) ...

***He knew** that the way to enter this radiant State of Being was via selfless acts of radical Kindness (see [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al) – especially those given to our enemies (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#)) &/or the downtrodden in our midst (see [Matthew 25:35-40](#)) ...

***He knew** that God was a God of Peace (see [Matthew 5:9](#) & [1 Corinthians 14:33](#)) and Mercy (see [Luke 6:36](#)) and Forgiveness (see [Matthew 18:21-22](#)) and Acceptance (see [John 5:22](#)) ...

*And **he knew** that we were all innately Children of God -- not sinners, as his ego errantly claimed (see [Matthew 9:2](#), [Matthew 9:22](#), [Matthew 19:14](#), [John 12:36](#) et al), and he knew that we could all *act accordingly* – by choosing to “[clothe ourselves in Love](#).”

Amen ... Let it be so.



Luke 21:2-4 ... To Give more than All

(04/20/2017)

“Jesus also saw a poor widow put in two small, copper coins and he said: Truly, I tell you, this woman has given more than all of them; for they have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has given all she had to live on.” ~ Luke 21:2-4

This passage brilliantly illustrates one of the primary principles of The Way of Christ – namely, that the more difficult a Gift is to Give, the more potent & worthy it is once Given ... This Truth goes for monetary gifts like those mentioned here (two *lepton* -- the smallest coins in circulation at the time), and it goes for gifts of Forgiveness like those mentioned in [Matthew 18:21-22](#) (i.e. “forgive 70 times 7 times” = forgive everyone endlessly & completely) and Gifts of Love like those mentioned in [Matthew 5:43-48](#) & [Luke 10:29-37](#) as well (i.e. “Love your enemies”).

In addition, note that the word for “treasury” found in [Luke 21:1](#) refers to the 13 tithing containers utilized by the Temple to receive offerings, as well as a specific room in the Temple itself (probably where Jesus was preaching in [John 8:20](#)). In both instances the Human Soul is alluded to – after all, “[where your Treasure is, there your Heart will be also](#)” (see [Matthew 6:21](#) & [Luke 12:34](#) – and also Jesus’ allusion to tithing with Love instead of money in [Matthew 23:23](#) et al) ... Note as well the relevant practical Truth here – namely, that Giving is fulfilled the moment the coins hit the coffer, irrespective of what the preacher does therewith thereafter. That having been said, we do intuitively know who actually needs our Gifts and who doesn’t – and preachers invariably don’t need them. In fact, gifts of money to “spiritual leaders” actually *hampers* their ability to share The Way with others, and thus does them no service (again, apply the wisdom of [Matthew 23:23](#) here). As such, it is far better for us to tithe to our communities instead – with things over money, time over things, and Love (our Selves) over time.



Acts 20:24 ... To finish our Course

(04/21/2017)

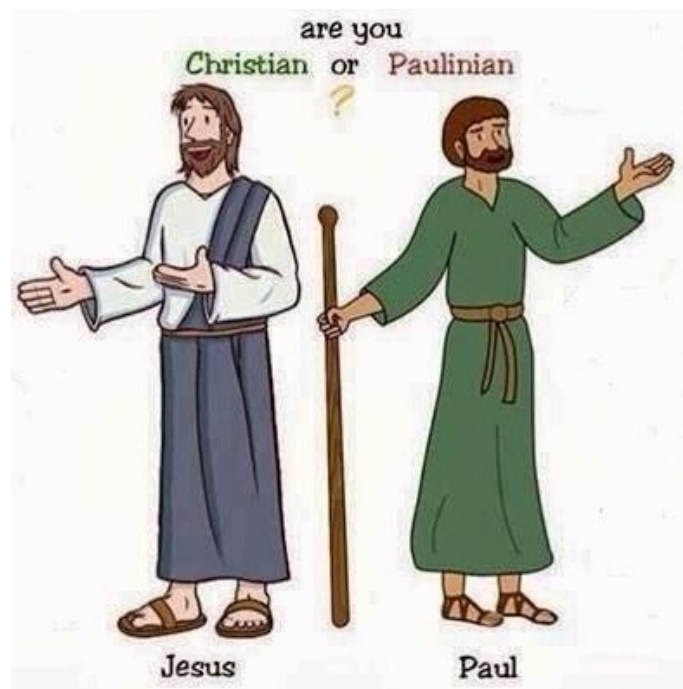
“I do not count my life of any value to myself; if only I may finish my course and the ministry I received: to testify to the Good News of God’s Grace.” ~ Luke (Acts 20:24)

First & foremost, it is important to consider the context of the passage from which this verse is taken – in this case a context that has Paul speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus in true Paulinic form: namely, building up his own accomplishments (Acts 20:19-20) while passive-aggressively guilt-tripping his listeners into both giving him homage (Acts 20:22-27) & adhering to *his* gospel about Jesus (*not* into actually following Jesus’ teachings or into abiding in Jesus’ given Gospel about The Way) ... Indeed, it is well worth remembering here that Paul had essentially no clue about the teachings of Jesus – that for him, “faith toward our Lord Jesus” (Acts 20:21) was an act of Jesus-based worship that Jesus himself frequently repudiated & vehemently rejected (see Mark 10:18, John 5:41, John 7:16, John 8:50-54, John 12:44 et al) ... In addition, for Paul “the Good News of God’s Grace” was that Jesus rose from the dead and that worshipping him as the only Son of God was enough to grant entrance into Heaven for eternity after one’s death (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 10:9 et al) -- whereas for Jesus himself, the “Good News” was something else entirely; namely **A**) that **Heaven** was already right Here & right Now, viable in every single moment of every single sentient life (see Matthew 10:7, along with Luke 17:20-21) -- and **B**) that entrance into this Bliss-full “Kingdom of God” was attained by persistently & humbly choosing to serve others ahead of one’s self (see Matthew 24:12-14, along with Matthew 18:3-4 & John 13:15-17).



And as if that wasn't enough, we find a most curious reference just a bit later in [Acts 20:35](#), where Paul openly quotes Jesus Christ, only does so citing a saying (“It is better to give than to receive”) *found nowhere else in the entire Bible* ... Also, it is fair to note that if Paul had kept his self-lauding silent (see [Matthew 6:5-6](#)) or whispered it in private to a confidant, then his first sentence here would have reflected the Truth of Jesus' Way of willing self-sacrifice. And yet motive is everything when it comes to that selfless Way, and Paul was a man whose actions boomed service to his own reputation over service to others (see [Matthew 23:3](#), also keeping in mind Paul's regular exhibitions of less than humble “self-worship” & less than forthright manipulation -- [Acts 20:19-21](#), [Romans 5:3](#), [Romans 11:13-14](#), [Romans 15:17](#), [1 Corinthians 4:9-13](#), [1 Corinthians 15:10+9:15](#), [2 Corinthians 1:8-9](#), [2 Corinthians 6:4-5](#), [2 Corinthians 6:6-10](#), [Galatians 1:24](#), [Philippians 2:17-18](#), [Colossians 1:24](#), & [1 Thessalonians 2:2+10](#)).

Finally, please note that there is only one way to truly “testify to the Good News”, and that is not with mere words of exhortation & persuasion, but rather by a Life led by and lived with unconditional LOVE.



"My Gospel is that you are all innately Children of God, and that you can therefore all experience the 'Kingdom of Heaven' right this instant by simply reaching out to selflessly Love your enemies &/or Care for the poor in your midst." ~ **Jesus** (John 12:44-47, Luke 17:20-21, Matthew 24:12-14 & John 13:15-17)

"My gospel is that you are all innately sinners, and that you will therefore only be allowed into Heaven after you die if you openly worship Jesus Christ in this lifetime as if he were the one and only Son of God." ~ **Paul** (1 Corinthians 15:1-4 & Romans 10:9 et al)

Matthew 10:12-13 ... The Peace that ever remains

(04/22/2017)

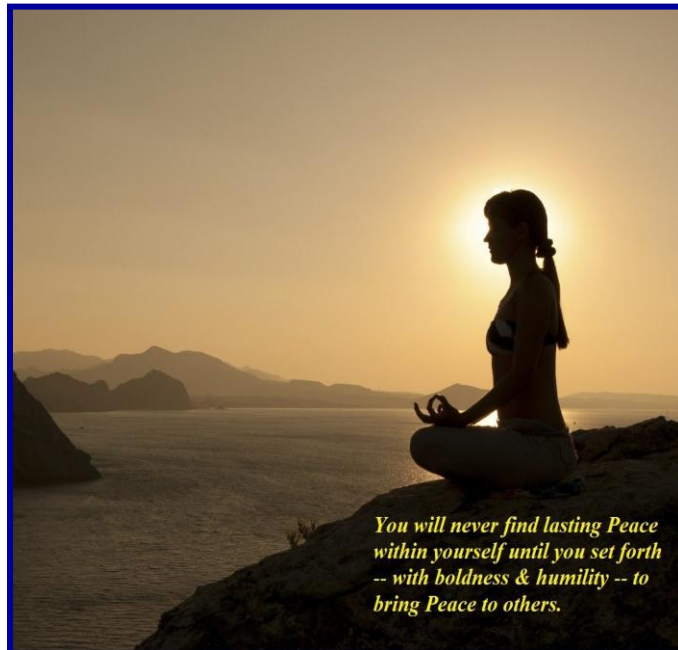
“As you enter the house, greet it. If a house is willing, let your Peace come upon it. And yet if it rejects you, allow your Peace to remain strong within you.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 10:12-13)

First of all, please note that the traditional translation of this passage (“As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you”) is often used by conservative Christians to justify their arrogant certainty in their own unique biblical interpretations &/or rationalize their condemnation of others for a lack of adherence to the same ... Of course, neither of these interpretations can have any real merit, if for no other reason than doing so would make Jesus a liar with regards to judging others (see [Matthew 7:1-2](#) & [John 8:7](#) et al) and a hypocrite with regards to demanding acceptance & condemning arrogance (see [Matthew 18:21-22](#) & [Matthew 18:3-4](#)) ... And this is why the wording I use above is more appropriate – because it harmonizes just as well with the ancient Greek manuscripts, and because it harmonizes much better with the Way, the Truth, & the Life of Jesus Christ.

Secondly, as far as how we can each apply this verse in our everyday lives, it is helpful to simply replace the word “house” with the word “interaction,” in essence encouraging us to shower those with Love who are open to our Love, and to smoothly & respectfully flow away from those who are not receptive to the same ...

Of course, it is important to remember as well the Truth that Love purely Given is always Received by the Soul to whom it is sent – that every single Gift of Love always reaches its destination and at the very least briefly awakens the Receiver thereof to his or her True Nature. As such, while we are to calmly retreat from any interaction that is clearly not desired, it is always Wise & Good to Give Love until such a rejection is definitively forthcoming.



*You will never find lasting Peace
within yourself until you set forth
-- with boldness & humility -- to
bring Peace to others.*

2 Corinthians 3:16 ... The removal of all Veils

(04/23/2017)

“When one turns to the Lord, all veils are removed.”
~ Paul (2 Corinthians 3:16)

First & foremost, realize that there are number of “veils” that keep us from witnessing the “Glory of the Lord” (i.e. cherishing the Life we have been given by choosing to serve those in need – see [Matthew 22:37-40](#)) ... There are veils of fear for personal safety, and there are veils of desire for personal pleasure; there are veils of political allegiance, and there are veils of religious subservience; there are veils of arrogant judgment, and there are veils of submission to tragedy & despair. Indeed Life is filled with “veils” that keep us from witnessing the wonders of living and that keep us from engaging the opportunities to Care. And thus how wonderful it is that The Way of Christ removes all of these mirages from our midst -- How wonderful it is that radical acts of selfless love are all we need to *See* clearly again! ... Of course, for some – like the “apostle” Paul – removing Life’s veils isn’t that simple. For Paul “turns to the Lord” by looking “up” to Jesus Christ, which becomes a veil in & of itself ... Indeed, Jesus himself does not want us to turn to him at all (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al), but would much rather have us “turn to the Lord” instead -- allowing the Christ Essence within us (see [John 14:20](#)) to imbue our deeds & choices with a Love that is pure and unconditional and willingly self-sacrificial.

For Paul, the Lord was a spiritual tyrant; a celestial judge & jury who condemned those who didn’t profess the proper subservience (see [Romans 2:16](#) + [Romans 9:27](#) + [Romans 12:19](#), [Romans 11:32](#), [Romans 11:21-22](#), [Romans 14:10-12](#), [1 Corinthians 4:4](#), [1 Corinthians 5:13a](#), [1 Corinthians 10:5](#), [1 Corinthians 11:32](#), [2 Corinthians 4:4](#), [1 Thessalonians 4:6](#) et al) -- and yet for Jesus, the Father was perfectly Loving ([Matthew 5:43-48](#)), perfectly Merciful ([Luke 6:36](#)) and perfectly Forgiving ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)); a Divine Essence who could by Its very nature never condemn any sentient being for any trespass whatsoever (see [John 5:22](#) + [Matthew 5:48](#) + [1 John 4:18](#) + [John 6:45](#) + [John 8:15](#) et al). Yes, it is indeed true that whenever we choose not to Love, we are in effect keeping ourselves from the presence of the Father – but this is not a punishment inflicted by the Divine, but rather a chosen consequence we have laded upon ourselves; a consequence that is just & fully proportionate: a consequence that never carries with it any negative effects in excess to the wrong we happen to commit. Otherwise God -- in whatever form or expression -- would have constructed a Life ruled by capriciousness & injustice, and would thus not be worth worshiping at all.



John 8:47 ... Hearing the Word of God

(04/24/2017)

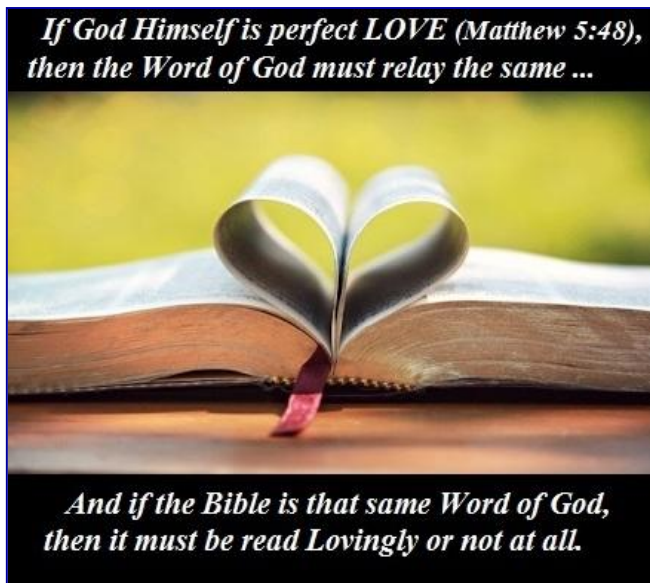
“Whoever is from God hears the words of God.”

~ Jesus (John 8:47)

First & foremost, it is important to realize that Jesus does not say that “Whoever is from God literally believes the words of the Bible,” but rather that **“Whoever is from God hears the words of God.”** And this is a critical distinction, for Jesus made it very clear that he came not to blindly champion the texts of the Old Testament, but rather came to **“fulfill”** them – with the Greek word for **“fulfill”** in **Matthew 5:17-18** being *pleroo*; a word that meant not **“to follow”** or **“to abide by”** but rather **“to hone”**, **“to perfect”** &/or **“to bring to completion.”**

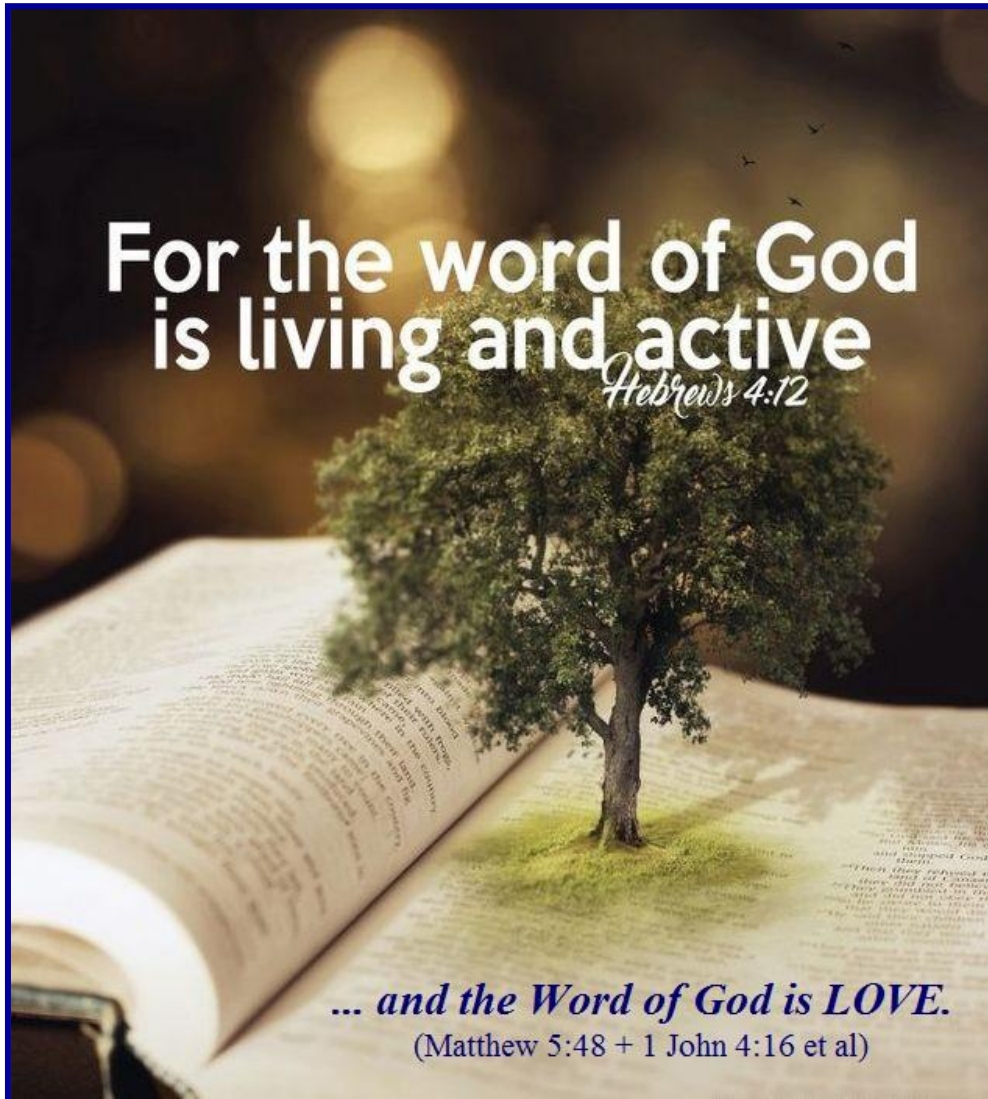
And this is exactly what Jesus did over the course of his three year ministry – radically expanding the Old Testament laws that were too weak, radically limiting the Old Testament laws that were too strict, and abolishing altogether the Old Testament laws that were immoral & outdated. As such, many were left to wonder just what **“the words of God”** actually were; many were left to wonder which interpretations of the Bible were to be followed and which were to be **“fulfilled”** or even dismissed.

And Jesus had an answer for those wondering the same – an answer he provided in **Matthew 7:15-20** when he said **“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits ... A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits”** ... As such, to know which



words of the Bible (&/or which preachers of the Scriptures) are **“of God”** we simply have to put their teachings into practice and see which ones **bear Good Fruit** – i.e. which ones create Peace & Harmony & Joy & Love, and which ones do not (see **Galatians 5:22-23** & **Matthew 21:43**). And this makes perfect sense, for if God is an essence of perfect, selfless, unconditional Love (**Matthew 5:48** & **1 John 4:8** et al) then the **“words of God”** must be equally so ...

Note as well that we can only truly *Hear God* not when we pray for ourselves but rather while we are serving others. We truly *Hear God* not while asking for peace for ourselves but rather while bringing Peace to the downtrodden. We truly *Hear God* not by begging for salvation for ourselves but rather by bringing Love to our enemies – those most in need of the same ... Note too that we are dealing here with whomever is "*of God*," not whomever is *from* God – those who are acting as agents of the Divine, not those who are verbally professing to be the same ...



And as a final aside, note that Paul was clearly *not* a man "*of God*" (seeing as how he was an open champion of division and passive-aggressive criticism, not Harmony or all-accepting Love) and thus he most certainly did not hear God on the Road to Damascus -- nor probably at any other time, for that matter.

Colossians 4:2 ... Alert in Thanksgiving

(04/25/2017)

“Devote yourselves to prayer;
keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.”

~ Paul (Colossians 4:2)

First & foremost, it is important to remember that Paul would have us devote our lives to religious worship of Jesus himself (much like the Christian church that was founded on his self-authored teachings) – which is exactly *the opposite* of what Jesus himself wanted us to do (namely, to pray in secret whenever we pray – see [Matthew 6:5-6](#), and to worship not himself but the [Father](#), via acts of selfless service for others – see [Mark 10:18](#), [Matthew 16:28](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) ... **Second**, note that Paul would have us pray for our own salvation, and somehow “keep alert” by giving thanks for our own blessings, while Jesus would have us pray only “in his name” – in essence only to be of ever-greater service to those around us (see [Matthew 1:23](#) + [Matthew 21:22](#), [John 14:13-14](#), [John 15:7](#), [John 16:23](#) et al). And the only way we can remain truly “alert” in such a spiritual paradigm is to return continually to Loving others selflessly (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [Matthew 23:12](#) et al) – and to giving thanks for the Grace that allows us to do this in every moment of our lives ... **Third**, note as well in closing that [Colossians](#), if it was written by Paul at all, would have been written by Paul while he languished away in a prison cell near the very end of his life; possibly the reason he would invite others to a similar form of passiveness (seeing as how the misery of all those steeped in self-centeredness tends to love the company of those in similarly meaningless misery).



Matthew 21:22 ... Asking with Faith

(04/26/2017)

“Whatever you ask for in prayer with Faith, you will receive.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 21:22)

Remember first & foremost that – at least as far as Jesus was concerned – we can only truly **receive** things that are in harmony with The Way of Christ; a Way that can only pray “**in his name**” (i.e. that can only pray for opportunities to serve others, never for any benefit to self -- see [Luke 11:9](#), [John 14:13-14](#), [John 15:7](#), [John 16:23-24](#) et al), and a Way which is based fully in serving, never in being served (see [Matthew 16:28](#), [Matthew 20:28](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... Indeed, this is an interpretation that resonates with the over-arching context of Jesus’ ministry in general, as well as the specific context of [Matthew 21](#) (where Jesus is seen preparing for his pre-planned triumphant entry into Jerusalem – the precursor event to his pre-planned crucifixion; the greatest embodiment of his teachings on willing self-sacrifice).

Remember as well here that for Jesus “**Faith**” was a *verb* that is steeped solely in Loving others self-sacrificially (see [John 14:12](#) & [Matthew 5:43-48](#) & [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) ... And finally, please remember that prayer for Jesus was not a vehicle used to ask for any self-benefit, but rather was a time of reflective solitude ([Matthew 6:5-6](#)) when one re-affirmed one’s intention to do *God’s* will (see [Matthew 6:10](#), [Matthew 7:21-26](#) & [Luke 9:23](#), along with the “**thy will not mine**” of [Matthew 26:39](#), [Mark 14:36](#) & [Luke 22:42](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 10:19-20 ... Speaking fluently

(04/27/2017)

“Do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given you at that time ... For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 10:19-20)

First & foremost, it is helpful to keep *the context* of these two verses in mind; to remember that these words were uttered by Jesus at a time when he was exhorting his disciples just prior to sending them out to “preach the Gospel” – to relay *his* “Good News” (not the gospel of Paul), which was the message **A**) that **Heaven** was a perpetually available Here&Now happening (Matthew 10:7) and **B**) that this present moment “Kingdom of God” (Luke 17:20-21) was only accessible (and always accessible) by emulating the perfect Love of his heavenly Father (Matthew 5:48) -- a Love that could only be emulated by persistently & willingly & actively sacrificing for others (Matthew 16:28, Matthew 24:12-14 & John 13:15-17), especially our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48) &/or the downtrodden in our midst (Matthew 25:35-40) ... And this is quite a difficult message to relay, which would explain why Jesus would be so enthusiastic in his support of his disciples’ imminent journey.



"From whomever Believes in me shall flow rivers of living water from his or her Heart ... Indeed whoever Believes in me will do the works I do ... If you Love me, you will keep my Commandments ... And this is my ultimate Commandment: That you Love one another just as purely as I have Loved you." ~ Jesus (John 7:38, John 14:12-15 & John 15:12)

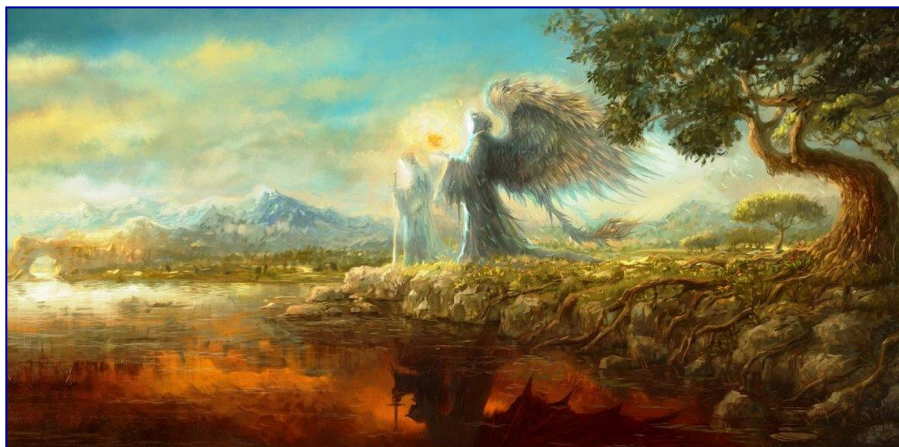
And the Truth he shared with them then remains just as valid for us all to this very day – namely, that we too need not worry about what to say when speaking of The Selfless Way; that we too have the same Truth residing within us (John 14:20-26) – a Truth which flows forth effortlessly whenever we are humble & calm while being consciously attentive to the needs of others. After all, worry is a subtle yet insidious form of fear; a form of fear which always blocks &/or distorts its opposite – namely, the Way of Christ; the Truth of perfect, willingly unconditional LOVE.

Mark 1:13 ... Waited upon by Angels

(04/28/2017)

“He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan ... And he was with the wild beasts – and the angels waited upon him.” ~ unknown (Mark 1:13)

First & foremost, note that it was “**the Spirit**” that drove Jesus into the wilderness after his baptism (Mark 1:12) – the **Spirit** that resided within him at the time; the same **Spirit** that resides within every sentient being (John 14:20-26); the same **Spirit** that repeatedly encourages *us* to go to “**the wilderness**” as well – to divest from our attachments to possessions & relationships; to release our dependence upon preparation & savings; to confront all personal fears while dismissing all perceived needs (a.k.a. “Satan’s temptations” – see Matthew 4:1-11) ; to be “**born anew**” once again (John 3:3-8); to allow our True Selves to burgeon forth into our conscious awareness; to become as a “**very young child**” once more (Matthew 18:3-4) ... **Second**, note that “**forty days**” probably did not mean literally forty days in most biblical texts, but rather was a commonly used phrase that meant “a very long time” ... **Third**, note that the “**wild beasts**” referenced here included Jesus’ own ego (the co-source of his visions of Satan and the temptations that followed). I have literally tested this verse by heading myself into a literal wilderness on more than one occasion, and can attest to the fact that the human ego does indeed respond insidiously (indeed, very much like a “**wild beast**”) when it is exposed to such a high degree of perceived danger to self ... **Fourth**, note that the 3 Great Temptations of both Matthew 4:1-11 & Luke 4:1-13 (temptations which most definitely count as fear-filled & fully self-centered “**wild beasts**” in any “**wilderness**”) were not present in Mark’s original relaying thereof. That having been said, it was Truth-full for Matthew & Luke to include them in their versions of the story, as any exposure to the elements & the primal fear that accompanies the same will indeed lead the human ego to long for bodily sustenance, to crave power over the elements & to desire immortality (or at the very least an avoidance of imminent death) ...



Fifth, note that the **angels** waited upon Jesus after he had transcended the three great temptations – that **angels** cannot by their nature wait upon anyone who succumbs to the same; that succumbing to temptation actually prevents **angels** from reaching the Hearts of those so afflicted ... *Sixth*, note that this dramatic & Faith-filled time of testing, purification, and strengthening of Self was sandwiched between Jesus’ baptism (when he first felt called to begin a public ministry) and the commencement of his preaching the “**Good News**” (see **Mark 1:14-15**) – and thereby note that if we are to truly “**follow him**” (**Matthew 16:28** et al) it would be wise to do something similar; to immerse ourselves in solitude, to divest ourselves from all physical addictions & emotional attachments, and to strengthen our resolve in thereafter setting forth to live as a servant of humanity instead of a slave to safety & self. Indeed, we all must “**go into the wilderness**” to transcend the ego (akin to Elijah’s journey in **1 Kings 9**) – maybe via an actual immersion into the outback, and yet more often than not by confronting fears and dismissing desires in any consciously radical (i.e. culturally unconventional & self-sacrificially courageous) fashion ... *Seventh*, note in closing that “**the wilderness**” was actually the Greek *eremo*, a word that simply meant “**a desert**” or “**a deserted place**” (Strong’s #2048) -- a reference not at all ominous to an Essene like Jesus, seeing as how the Essenes considered “**the wilderness**” *their Home*. Yes, Jesus chose extreme austerity while he was there, and yet by all indications he returned “**Home**” to engage the same.



John 4:14 ... To drink the Sacred Waters

(04/29/2017)

“Those who drink of the Water I give them will never thirst. The Water I give them will become in them a spring of Water gushing up to eternal Living.” ~ Jesus (John 4:14)

First & foremost, note that the traditional translation of this verse reads “But those who drink of the water that I will give them will never thirst, but the water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (NRSV) – a very small difference of one word (“life” instead of “living”), and yet a very small difference with quite a significant consequence. For the traditional translation implies that Jesus is somehow talking about a blessing of infinite life post-mortem that one would receive as a reward for worshiping him, and yet such a translation contradicts not only everything Jesus said about himself (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) and everything he said about [Heaven](#) (see [Matthew 10:7](#), [Luke 17:20-21](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) and everything he said about [God](#) (see [Matthew 5:48](#), [John 14:20-26](#), [John 15:26](#) et al), but also contradicts the meaning of the Greek text used in the ancient biblical manuscripts. Indeed, what this verse actually says is “those who drink of the water I give them will never thirst for the length of *the age*” (i.e. for their lifetime, or for the “*seeming eternity*” that such moments feel to be – see the greek *aiona*; Strong’s #165) and that “the water I give them will become a spring welling up into a life *seemingly eternal*” (or “age-long”, implying that the life in question has been stretched to its full potential – see the Greek *aionion*; Strong’s #166). And it is this latter textually accurate translation that harmonizes far more readily with the teachings and the recorded ministry of Jesus in the Gospels ... **Second**, note as well that “water” for Jesus was his preferred metaphor for the Holy Spirit (see [John 4:7-15](#) & [John 7:38-39](#) & [Thomas 108](#) -- just as “wine” was his symbolic reference of choice for the unconditional Love of his selfless Way -- see [John 2:1-11](#)) ... **Third**, note that Jesus does not say that those who drink once from his Wisdom will be forever quenched, but rather implies that those who drink will never *thirst* while they are repeatedly drinking thereof (see the Gospel of Thomas variant – “He who drinks from my mouth/from my words will become as I am, and I will become what he is, and all that is hidden will be revealed to him.” ~ [Thomas 1:108](#)) ... **Fourth**, note that the more one enlivens the “water” of the selfless Spirit, the more that **Water** washes away the sludge of sin & the tarnish of fear that coat the Soul, and thus the more readily one’s life does indeed become a life overflowing with Spirit – overflowing with acts of selfless Love & radical Kindness. And the more one’s life becomes such a tribute to The Way of Christ, the “longer” (i.e. the fuller) that life becomes and the more steadfastly its deeds ripple throughout the Universe ... Love only lives in the moment – a moment that is per se timeless; per se “eternal” – or “age long.”

As such, a life soaked in deeds of selfless Love is a life strewn with hundreds of such jewels of infinity. To the giver of that Love, life stretches towards eternity – and to those witnessing the same, their Wonderment thereof inspires a similar boldness of Loving -- and thereby a similar experience of the eternal.

Amen ... Let it be so.



"Thus says the Lord God: 'Ah, you shepherds who have been feeding yourselves! Should not you feed the sheep? ... You have not strengthened the weak, you have not healed the sick, you have not bound up the injured, you have not brought back the strayed, you have not sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled them ... Thus I am against such shepherds; and no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them ... And I myself will search for my sheep, and I myself will seek them out ... I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep ... I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak.'"

~ Ezekiel 34:03-16

Luke 1:46-52 ... To rejoice with God

(04/30/2017)

“My Soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God ... He has shown strength with his arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their Hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly”

~ Luke (Luke 1:46-52)

First & foremost, note that this passage reflects “Mary’s song of praise” (reminiscent of [1 Samuel 2:1-11](#)) sung by Mary (pregnant with Jesus at the time) while in the company of Elizabeth (also pregnant at the time, with John the Baptist) ... **Secondly**, note as well that the tone of this hymn is eerily similar to that of [Psalm 22](#), a “Thank you no matter what, God” Psalm -- the first verse of which Jesus recited from the cross (to indirectly inform those in attendance that he had pre-planned the entire event, as well as to let one of his assistants know that he was ready to take the drugged wine and voluntarily “[give up us Spirit](#)” – see [Matthew 27:46](#) & [Mark 15:34](#)) ... **Thirdly**, note too the undercurrent of social justice here – a theme that served as one of the foundations for Jesus’ entire three-year ministry (see [Matthew 21](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [Luke 4:18-19](#), [Matthew 16:28](#), [Mathew 19:21](#) et al) ...

Fourthly, note as well that the Greek manuscripts seem to show that it is not Mary’s Soul that magnifies the Lord here, but that it is actually the Lord who magnifies Mary’s Soul ... **Fifthly**, note in addition that it was God who the author claims to be Mary’s savior, not the still unborn Jesus Christ ... **Sixthly**, note as well that the “[mercy](#)” shown to those who “[fear](#)” God was actually the “[compassion](#)” (the Greek *eleos* – Strong’s #1656) given to those who “[revered](#)” Him (the Greek *phoboumenois* -- Strong’s #5399) ... And **finally**, note that the pro-humility theme of this passage is one that resonates perfectly with [The Way of Christ](#) (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [Matthew 18:21-22](#), [Matthew 23:12](#) et al), and one that directly opposes the hyper-conservative and ultra-judgmental “unway” of Paul (along with the similar “unway” of the modern-day Christian church, which has been founded upon Paul’s teachings). For we cannot “[rejoice in the Lord](#)” when we are worshipping Jesus Christ as God, a sentiment that Jesus himself shared quite definitively during his ministry (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al), and we cannot “[scatter the proud](#)” with our Love when we ourselves are soaked in a theological arrogance similar to Paul’s (see [Romans 1:32](#), [Romans 11:13-14](#), [1 Corinthians 3:2](#), [1 Corinthians 16:22](#), [Galatians 1:7](#) et al).



2 Corinthians 13:14 ... To Live in Peace

(05/01/2017)

“Live in peace, and the God of Love & Peace will be with you.” ~ Paul (2 Corinthians 13:14)

First of all, it is helpful to remember that for Paul, to “live in peace” meant to live in placidity and comfort and passive meekness (e.g. see his cowardly caving to the Romans when confronted by them – Acts 16:37-38 & Acts 22:22-29; unlike Jesus, who boldly stood before both the Sanhedrin, Pontius Pilate, & Herod without backing down one bit – Matthew 26:59-68, Matthew 27:11-14, Luke 23:6-9, John 18:19-23, John 19:8-11 et al) ... Indeed, such fear-based living is not really **Living** at all. No, we are actually all called to radically **Live** in Peace instead (see Matthew 5:9, John 13:15-17, Matthew 7:21-24 et al) – to Live in Peace by being an active, courageous, selfless source of Peace for others – to stand between perpetrators and their victims, to place ourselves between authoritarians and the oppressed, to liberate the imprisoned and the enslaved, to inspire the downtrodden to lives of fulfillment, to embrace the wicked and remind them of their True Selves (see Matthew 5:43-48, Matthew 25:35-40, John 8:1-12 et al) ... **Secondly**, it must be clear to most that a God of perfect Love (a la Matthew 5:48; containing the Greek *agape*, meaning a Love centered on selfless Caring – see Strong’s #26) cannot co-exist with those who are not



living a similar Love (see Matthew 5:48 in conjunction with 1 John 4:18 & John 13:15-17). As such, clearly the God of Peace (here the Greek *eirene*, meaning inner calm – see Strong’s #1515) cannot be with those who are inspiring division with words of criticism or condemnation &/or acts of persecution or punishment ... **Finally**, note that 2 Corinthians is actually a compilation of at least four letters from Paul (see 1 Corinthians 5:9, 2 Corinthians 2:3-4, 2 Corinthians 7:5-16, 2 Corinthians 10-13, 2 Corinthians 12:8) – the originals of which (or even copies of those originals) have either not yet been found or no longer exist. In addition, most scholars agree that several verses from 2 Corinthians were added by scribes long after Paul’s death (e.g. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35) – something worth keeping in mind when reading any verses from this particular tome.

Galatians 2:19-20 ... To be crucified with Christ

(05/02/2017)

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but the Spirit of Christ who lives through me.” ~ Paul (Galatians 2:19-20)

Oh, if only this were true – if only this were more than mere hollow words from one of Christianity’s very first false prophets. For if this verse were indeed true – if Paul had truly been a vessel for “**the Spirit of Christ**”, then the fruit of that tree would be a Christian church and a Christian priesthood and a Christian dogma verrrrrry different (far more accepting, far more humble, and far more compassionate) than the ones we see today ... And yet a “false prophet” is quite exactly what Paul is & was – indeed, he is of the same bent as the “false teacher” of whom Jesus himself warned us (see [Matthew 15:13-14](#), [Mark 7:6-8](#), [Luke 12:1](#) in conjunction with [Acts 23:6](#), [Acts 26:5](#), [Galatians 1:14](#) & [Philippians 3:4-5](#), see [John 5:43](#) in conjunction with [Acts 13:9](#), & see [Matthew 24:26](#) in conjunction with [Acts 9](#) & [Galatians 1:11-12](#)) ... Please consider the following biblical facts that support this contention:

*Where **Paul** thinks being “**crucified with Christ**” means to worship Jesus as a divine being (see [Romans 1:4](#), [Romans 3:21-24](#), [Romans 5:18](#), [Romans 10:9](#) et al), **Jesus** himself begged us all *not* to do so (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) and encouraged us to follow his Way of Love instead (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 16:28](#), [Matthew 19:21](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... *And where **Paul** claims to have sacrificed himself to “**the Spirit of Christ**”, his obvious arrogance and flagrant self-interest betrays the opposing reality (see [Acts 20:26](#), [Romans 11:13-14](#), [1 Corinthians 3:2](#), [1 Corinthians 12:2](#), [2 Corinthians 9:10-11](#), [2 Corinthians 10:17-18](#), [Galatians 1:7](#), [Galatians 6:10-17](#), [Philippians 2:15](#), [Philippians 3:17](#) et al)

... *And where **Paul** claims the “**the Spirit of Christ**” is living through him, his actions show that this is indeed not the case (see [Acts 16:37-39](#), [Acts 22:25-29](#), [Acts 23:1-10](#), [Acts 24:10-20](#), [Acts 25:8-12](#), [Romans 15:27](#), [1 Corinthians 9:4-14](#), [Galatians 6:6](#) et al) and his teachings reflect exactly the opposite (see [1 Corinthians 15:1-14](#) in contrast with [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) -- also [Romans 8:18](#) & [1 Corinthians 15:23-28](#) et al in contrast with [Matthew 22:32](#), [Luke 17:20-21](#) & [John 5:25](#) et al).



As such, when we read such self-laudatory verses from Paul, we are to think more on the [Elohim](#) (the fallen angel deceivers of [Genesis](#), whose teachings & admonitions we are to firmly *denounce*) than we are of anyone saintly or prophetic (indeed, read [Acts 26:12-15](#) with [Luke 10:18](#) in mind to get a more accurate reflection of Paul's true theological status) ...



On a brighter note, what *is* accurate about this verse is the fact that we all must do as Paul says herein – namely, that we indeed must all “[take up our cross](#)” of self-sacrifice for others (see [Matthew 16:28](#)) and follow The Way of Christ by giving others active expressions of selfless Love (see [John 13:15-17](#)) – especially our enemies (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), unlike Paul – see [Romans 1:32](#) & [1 Corinthians 5:4-5](#)) and the downtrodden in our communities (see [Matthew 25:35-40](#), also unlike Paul – see [Colossians 3:22](#) et al).

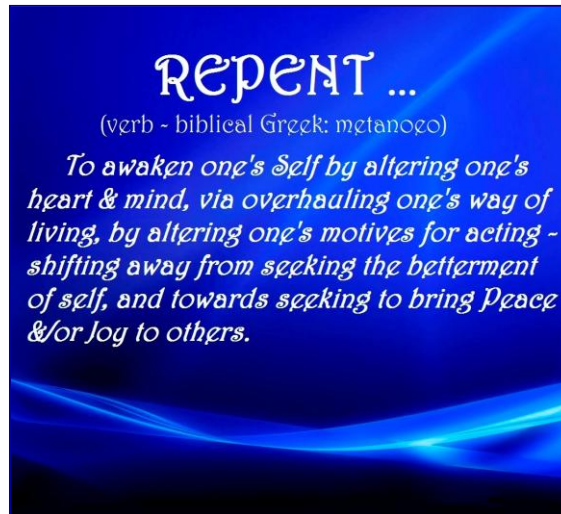
Amen ... Let it be so.

Mark 1:15 ... Believing the Good News (05/03/2017)

“The Time is fulfilled and the Kingdom of God is at hand;
Repent & Believe in the Good News.” ~ Jesus (Mark 1:15)

Initially, this verse (and all others like it – see [Matthew 3:2](#), [Matthew 4:17](#), [Matthew 10:7](#), [Mark 1:15](#), [Luke 10:9](#), [Luke 11:20](#), [John 3:3-9](#) et al) is an extremely important one, in that it makes it quite clear that when Jesus speaks of Salvation or Heaven, he is not speaking of a place that is elsewhere or a status that comes in the future, but rather is speaking of a state of being that is already “**at hand**” – a state of being that is already available; available to every sentient being in every moment of his or her life (see [Luke 17:20-21](#) – a passage which happens to be the only time in the entire Bible Jesus speaks directly to Heaven, which he also called “**the Kingdom of God**”; see also [Mark 21:28-34](#), [John 18:36](#) & the parables in [Matthew 13](#) et al) ...

Secondly, note as well that “**Repent**” was a life-encompassing verb for Jesus, with the Greek words **metanoia** (Strong’s #3341) and **metanoeo** (Strong’s #3340) both meaning not to self-condemn or self-criticize one’s past actions, but rather to completely alter one’s entire present life; in Jesus’ case to fully shift from a self-centered life of sin to a selfless life of service ...

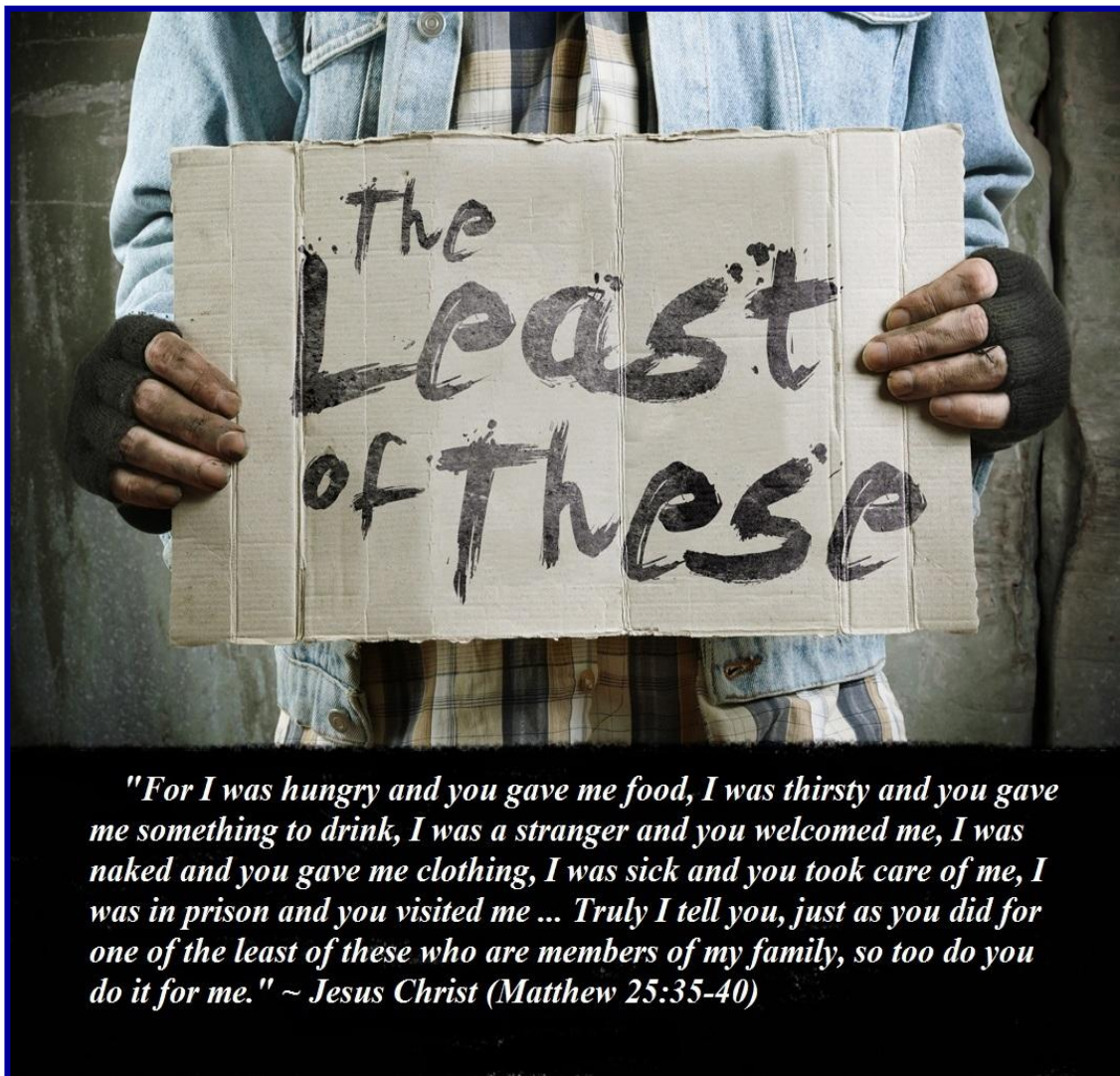


Thirdly, note too that “**Believe**” was an action for Jesus as well, with the Greek word **pisteuete** (Strong’s #4100) meaning not to mentally align with a creed or intellectually adhere to a concept, but rather “**to be entrusted with**”, “**to have faith in**” &/or “**to actualize**” ...

Fourthly, note that the other Greek words from this verse support the aforementioned as well, with the Greek for “**the Time**” being **kairos** (Strong’s #2540) -- meaning “**an opportunity**” or “**a fitting season**”, with the Greek for “**fulfilled**” being **peplerotai** or **pleroo** (Strong’s #4137 – the same “**fulfilled**” found in [Matthew 5:17-18](#)) -- meaning “**honed**”, “**perfected**” &/or “**brought to completion**”, and with the Greek for “**at hand**” being **engiken** (Strong’s #1448) -- meaning “**has been brought near**” (i.e. having an immediate imminence) ...

Finally, note that the “Good News” mentioned here was *not* Paul’s “gospel” (i.e. was *not* the belief that Jesus was the only Son of God, and was *not* the dogma that stated that Jesus must be worshipped as such -- see [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) + [Romans 10:9](#)), but rather was the two-pronged Truth of [The Gospel](#) of Christ; the two-pronged Truth that resonates perfectly with this very verse – namely, **A**) that the Kingdom of Heaven was already “at hand” ([Matthew 10:7](#) et al), and **B**) that the only way to access the same was through persistent acts of selfless Love shown to others (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) et al) – especially our enemies ([Matthew 5:43-48](#)) &/or the downtrodden in our communities ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



"For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me ... Truly I tell you, just as you did for one of the least of these who are members of my family, so too do you do it for me." ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:35-40)

Romans 1:19-20 ... Through all the things of God
(05/04/2017)

“What can be Known about God is plain, because He has shown it ... Ever since the Creation, His eternal power and Divine Nature have been understood through all the things He has made.” ~ Paul (Romans 1:19-20)

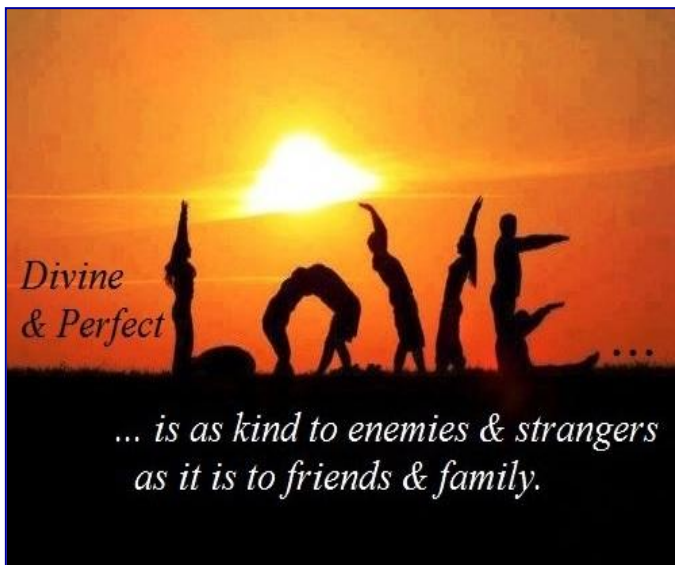
Even though this passage once again has Paul hollowly trying to “prove the unprovable” (i.e. exhort others to believe in his radically flawed faith in Jesus, the man, instead of encouraging them to emulate Jesus' teachings -- The Way), a deeper Truth is available herein nonetheless; namely, the Truth that even though we cannot ever objectively prove God’s existence from “**all that he has made**” (and thank heavens for that, as a proven God means the destruction of all doubt – which means the castration of all acts of faith – which means the renouncement of all true human potency; as only the deeds that are difficult carry any real measure of Power, and no deed is difficult for a “true believer” of an objectively provable God), we **can** tell what is in harmony with “God’s Will” by looking at how various deeds, beliefs, &/or interpretations of Scripture react to and interact with “**all that he has made.**” And this is why Jesus exhorted all of us to **test** the validity of all prophets, to **test** all interpretations of Scripture, and to **test** the Rightness of all deeds via witnessing the quality of their Fruits (see [Matthew 7:15-20](#)). And this is why he told his listeners that “**Wisdom is vindicated by all Her children**” (see [Luke 7:35](#)) ... To make matters even more plain, we can simply remember another Truth of which Paul seemed to be ignorant – namely, the Truth that God is an all-Loving Essence for Jesus (see [Matthew 5:48](#)), and as such only the things that resonate with unconditional Love can be “of God” &/or in harmony with “God’s Will.”



Matthew 7:1-2 ... With the judgment you make
(05/05/2017)

“Do not judge so that you may not be judged.
For with the judgment you make you will be judged,
and the measure you give will be the measure you get.”
~ Jesus (Matthew 7:1-2)

This is quite an important verse – probably more so in modern times than it was when Jesus presumably uttered it. For Jesus’ entire ministry hinged on what he called his “Gospel” (or “the Good News”) – a theology that stated **A**) that Heaven (or “the Kingdom of God”) was alive and well in every Here&Now moment (see [Matthew 10:7](#)) and **B**) that every sentient being could fully access the same by simply choosing to persistently, selflessly, and actively extend Love to those nearby (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#)) ... And the reason why this particular passage plays a significant role in understanding this Truth is because it is impossible to extend that level of pure Love to others while we are judging who they are in any way – that we can only do so when we “[humble ourselves as very young children](#)” ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)); when we refuse to criticize their being or their beliefs – especially when our own sins & misgivings have yet to be corrected ([John 8:7](#)) ... And this is indeed why “[all who exalt themselves will be humbled](#)” ([Matthew 23:12](#)) – because to exalt one’s self (which is a prerequisite to judging another critically) automatically precludes us from wholeheartedly Loving them. And because this “[perfect Love](#)” was necessary to attain entrance into “[the Kingdom of Heaven](#)” (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al), the only remaining alternative for those engaging in such arrogance is to fall from that potential Grace.



P.S. Yes, [John 7:24](#) *does* tell us that we are to condemn all **deeds** that are causing harm to the innocent, and yet we are not to condemn the doers of those deeds while we are defending their would-be victims. After all, while it is impossible to Love a sinner while non-compassionately condemning his sin, it is also impossible to Love Life without having the courage to denounce the actions of others that are intentionally bringing on injustice &/or causing pain.

Matthew 6:9-13 ... The Lord's Prayer

(05/06/2017)

“Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed is thy name ... Thy Kingdom comes, and thy Will is done on Earth as It is in Heaven ... Thanks to You in this moment for today's sustenance; for forgiving our trespasses even as we continue to forgive those who trespass against us; for leading us not into temptation but for continuing to lead us away from evil ... For thine is the Kingdom & the Power & the Glory in this eternal moment ... *Amen.*” ~ Jesus (Matthew 6:9-13)

As almost all Christians are already aware, this passage is known as “The Lord’s Prayer,” and as almost all Christians are already aware, it is normally read with a much different emphasis and it is normally translated with slightly different wording ... With regards to the latter, most Bibles transpose the Greek manuscripts in a way that emphasizes the future tense – which has the text reading more along the lines of: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our bread for tomorrow. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And bring us not to the time of trial, but rescue us from evil.” (compare with Luke 11:2-4) ... Note the emphasis here on worshiping an external God “above;” a godhead whose Divine Plan will come to fruition on Earth at some point in the future – seemingly regardless of whether or not humanity chooses to help or hinder the same. And note as well that the traditional prayer asks that sustenance be provided to the one doing the praying, begs for forgiveness as a sort of trade-off for choosing to forgive others in return, and closes by asking God to prevent difficulty from arriving in life at all. While all of these emphases harmonize splendidly with the teachings of Paul and the modern-day dogma of the Christian church (which was built on and has been sustained by those same teachings – see [Romans 3:21-25a](#) & [Romans 5:8-9](#); also [Acts 9:20-22](#)), they most certainly do *not* harmonize with the teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospels – teachings that emphasized a **Heaven** that resides *within* us ([Luke 17:20-21](#)), a heavenly **Father** that resides *within* us as well ([John 14:20](#) et al), and a Divine Will that wants us all to **become active agents of perfect Love** by Caring for our enemies (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#)) and the downtrodden in our midst ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)) in order to attain salvation in *this* lifetime (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... Not only that, but Jesus noted quite plainly that prayer was meant to be a *private* expression of gratitude ([Matthew 6:5-6](#)) and is definitely *not* meant to be a repetitive litany of droning dogma (like the Lord’s Prayer has ironically become today), much less a spiritual request for personal favors. Indeed, note that Jesus says as much directly in the two verses immediately preceding the Lord’s Prayer, when he states “**When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him**” ([Matthew 6:7-8](#)).

As such, especially in light of the verses just mentioned, it should be clear that Jesus was here *not* encouraging us to quote the Lord’s Prayer repetitively every week in church, but rather was giving us a general model of the basic contents that every spontaneous prayer should evince – namely the following characteristics: **A)** honoring the internal **Father** humbly (see [John 14:20-26](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#) & [Matthew 22:37-38](#)) ... **B)** noting the fact that **Heaven** is *already* potentially on Earth as it is in Heaven (see [Matthew 10:7](#) et al) ... **C)** stating that all necessary sustenance has *already* been provided (seeing as how “bread” for Jesus was the symbol of selfless service, and that selfless service was for him the greatest nourishment available – see [Matthew 4:4](#), [Matthew 16:5-12](#), [Matthew 26:26](#), [John 6:32-35](#) et al) ... **D)** reminding us that his **Father** has *already* forgiven our sins (see [Matthew 5:48](#) + [1 John 4:18](#), [Matthew 18:21-22](#), [John 5:22](#) et al) ... **E)** noting that each of us *already* has the power on earth to forgive others their sins (see [Matthew 9:6](#) + [Matthew 16:28](#)) ... **F)** re-emphasizing that the **Father** – as the essence of perfect Love – cannot lead anyone into temptation (see [Matthew 16:23](#), [James 1:13-17](#), [Mark 10:18](#) et al) and indeed always encourages us to turn away from evil and towards actively Caring for those perpetrating evil upon us ([Luke 6:27-36](#) et al) ... and **G)** exclaiming that we are to use prayer to remind ourselves that we are here to do God’s Will, not to have God do ours ([Matthew 26:39](#) et al).

And that is why the interpretation I have provided previously has been shifted to the present tense; to allow these verses to better harmonize with **The Way of Christ** by turning them into a series of Here&Now affirmations of fact, as opposed to a list of selfish requests – by making them an open recognition of what *is*, as opposed to a future based desiring for what could be. For true enough, we cannot

Love others while desiring for self, and we cannot Faith-fully serve those in need while pining for future rewards or benefits. Indeed, we should “**not worry about our life, what we will eat or what we will drink, or about our body, what we will wear,**” ([Matthew 6:25](#)) for we have all been provided for, and thus all should pray to “**be delivered from the wickedness**” (the Greek *ponerou* in [Matthew 6:13](#) – Strong’s #4190) of greed & fearful self-focus. We all have the ability to Live & Love, and we should all therefore focus on what we can do for others in our current moment of moments. For indeed, “**today’s trouble is enough for today**” ([Matthew 6:34](#)).



Amen ... Let it be so.

Mark 1:21-22 ... As one with Authority

(05/07/2017)

“He entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having Authority.” ~ unknown (Mark 1:21-22)

First & foremost, note that the author of **Mark** does not show Jesus teaching as the authority himself, but rather as one who **has** authority – i.e. as one who exudes the same air of authority (i.e. the limbic resonance we all feel in the presence of any person who is talking Big Talk and who has truly Walked the same) that always accompanies those who need not strive to exude their legitimacy ... **Secondly**, note that he “**entered the synagogue and taught**” – something that the son of a laborer (**Matthew 13:55** & **Mark 6:3** both contain the Greek word *tektonos* in describing Joseph, which meant “artisan” in general – see Strong’s #5045) would most certainly not have done in that day & time (providing an extra implication of his thorough knowledge of the Scriptures) ... **Thirdly**, note too that this passage implies not only that Jesus felt confident in his knowledge, but that he actually possessed the same – that Jesus actually knew the Scriptures to such a fine degree that it was acceptable for him to speak in a synagogue; meaning that he was indeed an Old Testament scholar – that he did indeed have the requisite knowledge to challenge its 613 laws and “fulfill” them (i.e. the Greek *pleroo* in **Matthew 5:17-18**, a word meaning not “to obey” or to “affirm” but rather “to hone”, “to perfect” &/or “to make complete” – see Strong’s #4137), which is indeed exactly what he did over the course of his three-year ministry; dramatically intensifying the application of the Law some 63 times, dramatically lessening the impact of the Law some 42 times, and dramatically dismissing the Law entirely some 35 times – all in the Gospel of **Matthew** alone!



John 13:17 ... Blessed while you DO

(05/08/2017)

“If you understand these things,
blessed are you while you Do them.”

~ Jesus (John 13:17)

This is one of the most important verses in the entire Bible, seeing as how these words form the very Core of Jesus’ entire ministry. Indeed, they are reflected in every single biblical sermon Jesus preached therein (*see Matthew 5:3 to Matthew 7:29, especially Matthew 7:21-24 ... see Matthew 11:7-19, especially Matthew 11:19 ... see Matthew 12:9-12 ... see Matthew 12:22-37, especially Matthew 12:33-35 ... see Matthew 18:1-22, especially Matthew 18:3-4 ... see Matthew 22:23-40, especially Matthew 22:37-40 ... see Matthew 23, especially Matthew 23:12 & Matthew 23:23 ... see Matthew 24 & 25, especially Matthew 24:12-14 ... see Luke 6, especially Luke 6:27-36 ... see Luke 11:17-36, especially Luke 11:33-36 ... see Luke 12:22-40, especially Luke 12:35-36 ... see Luke 14:25-35, especially Luke 14:27 ... see Luke 17:20-37, especially Luke 17:20-21 ... see Luke 21, especially Luke 21:1-4 ... see John 5:10-47, especially John 5:28-29 ... see John 8:12-20, especially John 8:15 ... see John 10, especially John 10:11 ... see John 13-17, especially John 14:12-26 et al*), and they are reflected in every single parable Jesus told as well (*see Matthew 7:24-27, Matthew 13, Matthew 21:28-46, Matthew 24:40-51, Matthew 25:1-46, Luke 10:29-37, Luke 14:16-32, Luke 15:8-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:3-10, Luke 18: 1-14 et al*).



Just as importantly (if not more so), these words are also reflected in every single biblical deed Jesus performed during his three-year ministry of “the Gospel” (*see Matthew 12:1-8, especially Matthew 12:7 ... see Matthew 26, especially Matthew 26:69 ... see Matthew 27:11-14 ... see Luke 7:36-50 ... see John 6:15 ... see John 17, especially John 17:13 et al*) – a Gospel he quite clearly defined as the Truth that **A**) his heavenly “Kingdom” was *already* “at hand” (*see Matthew 10:7*) and that **B**) the same could be only accessed by those who choose to willingly & self-sacrificially Love others (*see Matthew 24:12-14*).

Amen ... Let it be so.

2 Corinthians 6:8-10 ... To possess the Universe

(05/09/2017)

“Though treated like an imposter, remain true; though unnamed, be well known; though dying, live; though punished and persecuted, remain loving; though compassionate, continue to rejoice; though poor, make many wealthy; though having nothing, possess the Universe.” ~ Paul (2 Corinthians 6:8-10)

In each of the pairings mentioned herein, Paul seems to selflessly focus on the former while actually passive-aggressively emphasizing the self-lauding of the latter. Jesus, in direct contrast, focused his ministry solely on the former in order to use those same discomforts to empower the bringing of the latter to others in need of the same ... Still, this remains one of the handful of passages from Paul’s letters that relays some deeper Truths that he actually intended to imply – namely, the Truth that The Way wants its *deeds* to remain well known, *not* the doers thereof; along with the Truth that the only way to truly Live is to “die” in self-sacrificial service to a cause greater than one’s self (whether for another person or for a cause or for an organization makes no difference). Of course, there are many other Truths herein that Paul probably did not intend to relay and of which he probably was not at all aware – namely the following: **A)** the Truth that being treated as an *imposter* by members of a wicked establishment (be that establishment religious or political or financial in nature makes no difference) is a sign indeed that one has found Truth (see [Matthew 5:10-11](#)) ... **B)** the Truth that it is only possible to become truly Loving while we are being punished &/or persecuted (along with the Truth that said power comes from extending that love to the sources of the same – see [Matthew 5:43-48](#)) ... **C)** the Truth that the only way to know real Joy (or experience true *rejoicing*) is to choose to have compassionate empathy with the suffering of others, and then to do what one can to relieve them of the same (see [Matthew 25:35-40](#)) ... **D)** the Truth that we are not to know Wealth from being poor, but rather are to make others wealthy thereby – by giving them what little we have, and thereby reawakening them both to how much they actually have (life is enough) and how they too can choose to live a Life of Giving instead of a “life” of needing (see [Matthew 16:28](#)) ... **E)** the Truth that the only way to “*possess the Universe*” psychologically &/or spiritually (i.e. to feel one’s innate Interconnection with everything both within and all around) is to possess nothing physically &/or materially – no money, no objects, no relationships, no circumstances (see [Matthew 19:3-4](#)) -- to revel fully in those circumstances we do experience and those individuals we do encounter, and yet to do so selflessly; Loving them completely without attaching at all to the same.



"And when you get right down to it, that is the only purpose grand enough for a human life: not just to Love, but rather to persist in Loving." ~ via Sue Monk Kidd

Revelation 22:17 ... Letting everyone Drink
(05/10/2017)

“And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the Water of Life as a gift.” ~ unknown (Revelation 22:17)

Oddly enough, the only way to “take the Water of Life” – at least as far as the real Jesus in the Bible was concerned (the Jesus found in the Gospels, *not* the faux-Jesus spoken for in *Revelation**) – was to “drink from his mouth;” to *heed his teachings*, thereby to *emulate his Way*, and thereby end up doing exactly as he wished by giving “the Water of Living” (i.e. selfless LOVE) to others (see *Isaiah 41:17-18, Isaiah 55:1-2, John 2:1-11 + John 19:34, John 4:10-14, John 7:38 & Thomas 108* et al) ... Indeed, the “Water of Life” mentioned in *Revelation* cannot be imbibed at all if it is imbibed for one’s own salvation, seeing as how Salvation – at least according to the Jesus Christ of the Gospels – comes from Loving others (see *Matthew 7:21-24, John 13:15-17, Matthew 24:12-14* et al), *not* from being loved by God – from serving others, *not* from being served by the Divine (see *Matthew 16:28, Matthew 20:28* et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



"The Water of Life is LOVE ... Let go of your fears and dive deeply into this greatest of all oceans." ~ via Rumi

*Please **NOTE** the dramatic differences between *Jesus* in the Gospels and the “*Jesus*” mentioned by an “*angel of the Lord*” in *Revelation* – differences that cannot in any way be reconciled with one another – differences that are so stark that biblical enthusiasts & “devout believers” alike have no choice but to admit that one of the following three alternatives is Truth –

A) that we are speaking of two completely different men,

B) that the “*angel of the Lord*” was lying in *Revelation* (as such fallen angels were indeed wont to do), *or*

C) that Jesus of Nazareth had a full-blown schizophrenic episode after he ascended to Heaven – and as such none of what he has to say thereafter has any weight or bearing on the humble, moral, Loving Lives he called for us to live during his Gospel ministry. As evidence of this remarkable incongruity, I humbly offer the following:

**Revelation 1:6* contrasted with *John 15:11*,

**Revelation 1:8 & Revelation 1:17* contrasted with *Mark 10:18 & John 12:44*,

**Revelation 1:16 & Revelation 2:12* contrasted with *Matthew 10:34*,

**Revelation 1:18* contrasted with *Matthew 19:17 & Matthew 22:32*,

**Revelation 2:1+* contrasted with *John 3:17 & John 12:47*,

**Revelation 2:6* contrasted with *Matthew 5:48*,

**Revelation 2:7* contrasted with *John 5:30 & Luke 22:42*,

**Revelation 2:14 & Revelation 2:20* contrasted with *Matthew 15:17-18 & Mark 7:14-20*,

**Revelation 2:14 & Revelation 2:20* contrasted with *Matthew 19:11-12*,

**Revelation 2:16* contrasted with *Matthew 5:43-48*,

**Revelation 2:19* contrasted with *Matthew 19:30 & Mark 9:35*,

**Revelation 2:22* contrasted with *Mark 1:40-42*,

**Revelation 2:23* contrasted with *Mark 9:37 & Mark 10:14*,

**Revelation 2:27 & Revelation 19:15* contrasted with *Luke 6:35-36*,

**Revelation 3:7 & Revelation 22:16* contrasted with *Matthew 22:41-45*,

**Revelation 4:3* contrasted with *Luke 17:20-21*,

**Revelation 11:18* contrasted with *John 8:15 & John 12:47*,

**Revelation 14:7* contrasted with *Matthew 10:7 & Matthew 24:12-14*,

**Revelation 14:10* contrasted with *Matthew 5:48 & Luke 6:36 & John 5:22*,

**Revelation 19:7* contrasted with *Matthew 22:30*,

**Revelation 19:9* contrasted with *Matthew 22:2-9*,

**Revelation 19:11* contrasted with *Matthew 21:5-7*,

**Revelation 21:21* contrasted with *Matthew 13:45-46*,

**Revelation 21:27* contrasted with *Matthew 23:25-26 & Luke 11:39*

Matthew 11:28-30 ... The lightest of burdens

(05/11/2017)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in Heart, and you will find rest for your Souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” ~ Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30)

Note **first** of all that Jesus does *not* say that his presence is easy or light – that he does *not* imply that others will be saved by coming to him or by him directly. No, quite clearly – if one reads closely enough (and if one reads the rest of his Gospel teachings; and better still if one puts those teachings radically into everyday practice) – one will see that it by coming to him and lifting his yoke; by coming to him to **emulate his teachings**; by coming to him to do as he in-Courages us all to do, that Salvation becomes “**at hand**” (see [Matthew 10:7](#) + [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al) ... **Secondly**, note as well that Jesus is *not* actually promising typical understandings of ease or rest – but rather the deep-seated Inner Peace that comes from Joy-full self-sacrifice (see [Matthew 16:28](#), [Matthew 5:48](#) + [Matthew 19:21](#), et al). Indeed, his **Way** requires an embodiment of almost infantile humility ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)), a humility which requires detaching from -- and indeed wholeheartedly sacrificing -- everything comfortable and pleasurable in order to attain true Rest (not rest for the body, but rather Peace for the Soul) and true Ease (not ease for one’s actions or lifestyle, but rather Calm & Joy while performing them) ... **Thirdly**, note as well that Jesus makes it openly clear that he is “**humble in heart**” – meaning that he cannot be referring only to himself whenever he speaks of the “**Son of Man**” (see [Matthew 16:24](#)) or the “**Son of God**” (see [John 14:12](#)), but rather that he is speaking of those qualities of consciousness & free will & Divinity that reside fully in **all of us** – qualities that can be re-enlivened by following his **Way** (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [Matthew 7:21-14](#) et al).



Romans 10:8 ... The Word in your Heart

(05/12/2017)

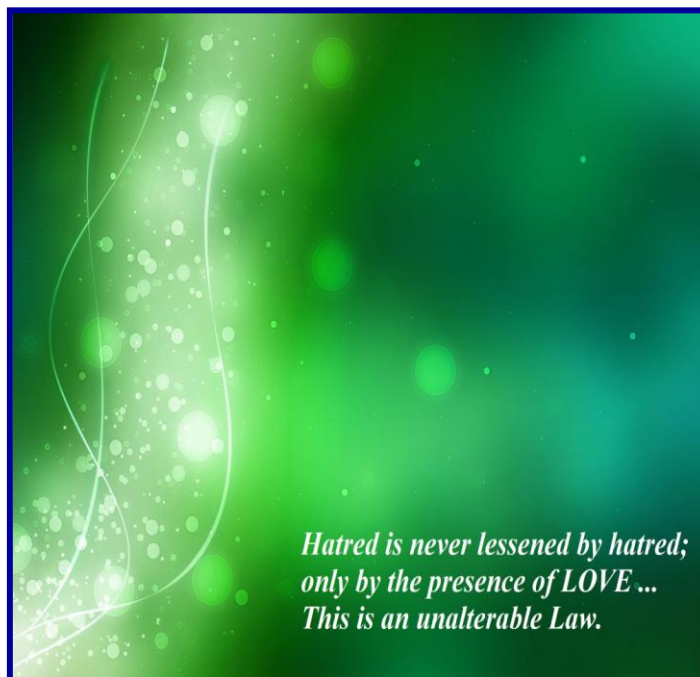
“The Word is near you;
on your lips and in your Heart.”

~ Paul (Romans 10:8)

As Paul rarely (if ever) knew, **The Word** of God is only on our lips when what flows from our lips comes from the Heart – untainted by need or fear, unblemished by want or manipulation, unmarred by passive-aggressive whining or aggressive critique, unstained by arrogance of belief or certainty of epiphany ... Indeed, far more often than not, words do not carry anything but the thinly veiled & thickly selfish pinings of the quivering ego. And indeed, far more often than not, it is deeds and deeds alone that most fully broadcast the Way of the Heart. And Jesus comes right out and says as much in **John 13** – comes right out and says that the only way to attain *his* version of Salvation is to put selfless Love into practice (see **John 13:15-17**, also **Matthew 7:21-24**, **Matthew 24:12-14**, along with almost every single one of his parables in the Gospels).

And even more evidence that Paul just “didn’t get it” is found in the very next verse (**Romans 10:9**), when he says “if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” – a theology that directly *contradicts* the “Good News” of Jesus Christ (see **Mark 10:18**, **John 5:41**, **John 12:44** et al); a “Gospel” that quite clearly noted **A**) that **Heaven** was not some post-mortem paradise, but was rather already right Here & right Now – already fully “at hand” in every moment of every sentient being’s life (see **Matthew 10:7**) -- and **B**) that attaining entrance into this glorious State of Being was possible only by persistently & actively & humbly giving selfless Love to others (see **Matthew 24:12-14**) -- especially our enemies (see **Matthew 5:43-48**) &/or the downtrodden in our communities (see **Matthew 25:35-40**).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Romans 14:4 ... To help them Stand

(05/13/2017)

“Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own Lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for God is able to help them stand.” ~ Paul (Romans 14:4)

Paul’s flagrant hypocrisy here (he was an avid fan of condemning all who didn’t believe as he did – see [1 Corinthians 5:4-5](#), [1 Corinthians 10:20](#), [1 Corinthians 16:22](#), [Galatians 5:12](#) et al) is reflective of his over-arching malleability (see [1 Corinthians 9:19-23](#), especially “I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some” ~ [1 Corinthians 9:22b](#)) **and** is in stark contrast (once again) to Jesus unwavering professions about The **Way** and the Law (see [Matthew 5:17-18](#), [Matthew 5:40-48](#), [Matthew 19:3-4](#), [Matthew 19:21](#), [Matthew 23](#), [Matthew 24:12.14](#) et al) ... Paul also believed that God was an external entity able to “help them stand” from above, whereas Jesus knew that his Father resided **within** ([John 14:20](#)), and thus “helped them stand” every single morning – in every single moment when a difficult deed was done or a challenging sacrifice was made for others ([John 13:15-17](#)).

Paul also assumes that there is a divine judgment of sorts – one that will be rectified by God-inspired proper behavior (in his case, agreeing with his self-made Doctrine of Atonement – see [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) & [Romans 10:9](#) et al) – and yet one involving celestial judgment nonetheless (see [Romans 2:16](#), [Romans 12:19](#), [Romans 14:10-12](#) et al) ...

Jesus, in marked contrast, quite openly stated that God would not judge *anyone* ([John 5:22](#)); that God was a Divine Essence of a perfect Love fully beyond punishment of any kid ([Matthew 5:48](#) + [1 John 4:18](#)); that God’s mercy was absolute ([Luke 6:36](#)), and that the Grace of his Forgiveness was equally so ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)).

In addition, Paul diverged from Jesus in his acceptance of other gods whenever it served his manipulative purpose (an offshoot of his insanely low level of self-esteem – see [Romans 3:23](#), [Romans 7:18](#), [Romans 8:21-23](#) et al), while Jesus openly noted the only divinity that anyone should focus upon was the One God who resided **within** every single sentient Soul (see [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 7:16](#), [John 8:50-54](#), [John 12:44](#) et al) – and we should all show that Divine Essence honor by acting as a courageously Loving agent thereof for all those nearby in need (see [Matthew 22:37-40](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



There are many thousands of different paths leading up the Mountain -- some of them might be a bit rockier than others and some might follow a more circuitous route, and yet they all essentially head in the same direction and they all ultimately arrive at the same End ... As such, the only person who is truly wasting their time is the one running around the base of the mountain telling everyone else that his or her chosen path is the wrong one.

P.S. One of the quickest ways up the Mountain is to find one of those same judgmental naysayers and give them a heartfelt hug.

John 13:1 ... Loved until the End

(05/14/2017)

“Having loved his own who were in the world,
He loved them to the end.” ~ unknown (John 13:1)

Note that “his own” – at least as far as Jesus himself was concerned – were not his disciples and not those who worshiped him (see [Mark 10:18](#), [Luke 18:19](#), [John 5:41](#), [John 12:44](#) et al), but rather were those who *followed* him – those who emulated his selfless Way of Living (see [John 14:21-23](#) – “They who have my commandments and abide by them are those who Love me; and those who so Love me will be Loved by my Father ... Those who love me will keep my Word, and my Father will Love them, and we will come to them and make our home within them.”) ... Note as well here that Jesus is once again focused on *this world* – a world that contains his *followers*, devotees who happen to embody both his *Father* ([John 14:20](#)) and enliven his *Kingdom* ([Luke 17:20-21](#)) ...

And note as well that for Jesus, Loving others “until the end” meant **A**) Loving others persistently (“[But the one who endures \[in Love\] to the end will be saved](#)” ~ [Matthew 24:13](#)), ... **B**) Loving others no matter what they had done or what they were doing (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#) & [Luke 27:36](#) et al), ... and **C**) Loving others until “the end” of his own life (the Greek *telos* here meant not “the end of time” but rather “to the end of the current age” or “to the end of one’s life” or “to the conclusion of one’s primary purpose” -- see Strong’s #5056).

And how did Jesus Love them – by being merely tactful or friendly or nice or polite? **No**, he Loved others by showing them *The Way* of willing self-sacrifice in a manner that was as firm as it was uncompromising (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 10:37](#), [Matthew 16:23-28](#), [Matthew 19:21](#) et al) – and he indeed did so all the way until his pre-arranged crucifixion; all the way until his purpose was indeed fulfilled (see [John 19:28-30](#)) – all the way “to the end.”



Hebrews 4:12 ... The living Word of God

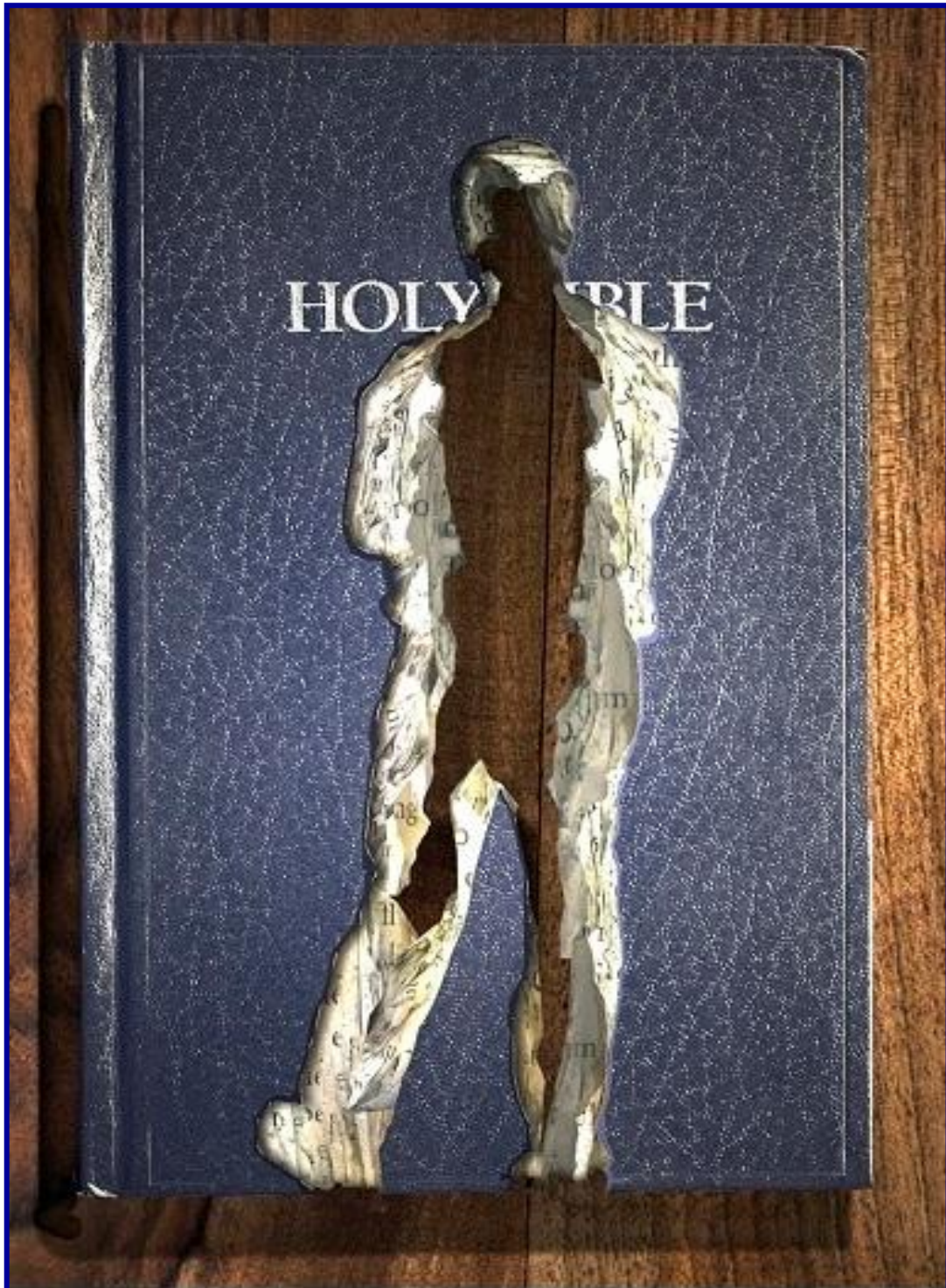
(05/15/2017)

“Indeed, the Word of God is living and active; sharper than any two-edged sword; piercing until It divides Soul from Spirit, joints from marrow. It is able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the Heart.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 4:12)

If the book of **Hebrews** is read “mystically” (i.e. both metaphysically & metaphorically), it rivals the **Gospel of John** as the best representation of **The Way** of Christ in the entire New Testament (outside of the words of Jesus himself, of course). Of course, if it is not, then it doesn’t ... Indeed, this particular verse claims that “**the Word of God is living and active**” – a sentiment in harmony with Jesus’ belief that the Word of God is essentially perfect, selfless, unconditional Love (**Matthew 5:48**), and a sentiment also in harmony with **Hebrews'** own view -- namely, that the Gospel provided in the New Testament fully trumps the Law provided in the Old Testament (see **Hebrews 8:8-13**).

It is worthwhile to note as well that Jesus fully agreed with this particular take on the “**living and active**” nature of the Scriptures (see **Matthew 5:17-18** – where “fulfilled” is actually the Greek *pleroo*, a word which meant not “to follow blindly” or “to support”, but rather “to hone” or “to make complete” ... see also **Matthew 7:15-20** – where Jesus explained that the validity of Scripture &/or the prophets spouting the same was to be determined by “**their Fruits**,” and see also **Matthew 22:37-40** – where Jesus essentially takes the ten “do not” Commandments of the Old Testament based in fear & judgment and transforms them into his lone two “**Do**” Commandments founded in Grace & Love) ... Note as well that it is the Word of God that is analogized with the “**sword**” here – just as Jesus made the same analogy when he mentioned a “**sword**” in the Gospels; not a sword of violence but a **Sword of Truth** (see **Matthew 10:34** – also **Matthew 26:52-55**, **Luke 22:36-38** & **Isaiah 49:2**) ... Also, the phrase “**dividing Soul from Spirit**” (the Greek *psyches*, meaning “**the breath of Life of the individual**” – Strong’s #5590, and the Greek *pneumatos*, meaning “**the all-encompassing Spirit**” – see Strong’s #4151) is quite unusual, and seems to be a reference to the difference Jesus denotes between “**the Son of Man**” (the ego-founded ability we all have to choose between fear & Love – see **Matthew 16:24-28**) and “**the Son of God**” (the innately Divine conscience residing within each & every sentient Heart – see **John 14:20**) within each & every human being ... Finally, please note in closing that “**the intentions of the Heart**” are mentioned, alluding to the fact that it is not what we do that is salvational, but rather *why* (i.e. both the “for whom” – namely, for others -- and the why of the “for whom” – namely, for their benefit) we do what we do that is the deciding factor (see **Matthew 10:8**, **Luke 6:35-36**, **John 13:15-17** et al).





*God is Love, and Love is a verb ... As such,
God's Word can only be deeply understood
while it is being Love-fully enlivened.*

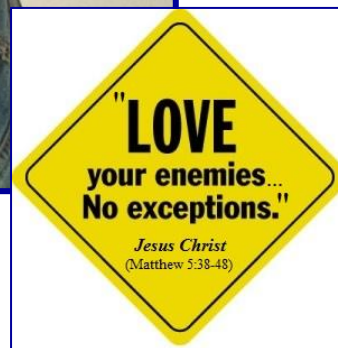
1 John 4:18 ... No fear in LOVE

(05/16/2017)

“There is no fear in Love –
and perfect Love casts our fear”
~ unknown (1 John 4:18)

I think if I were forced to pick just a handful of verses from the entire Bible to share with folks (Christian & non-Christian alike), this verse would undoubtedly make that very short list ... Indeed, for anyone sincerely interested in coming to a fuller comprehension of the deeper meanings of the Scriptures (and certainly for all of those wishing to properly & fully worship the same) **1 John 4:18** is truly a crucial verse to know & understand ... And this is so for the following reasons: **First**, it is so because **1 John 4:18** (like the over-arching Way of Christ taught & lived by Jesus himself in the Gospels) essentially mandates not only that we love others with our thoughts (i.e. our gratitude & our prayers for others' Peace & Joy), our words (i.e. our apologies for self & our encouragements of others), and our emotions (i.e. our empathy for those in pain and our revelry for those in celebration), but that we first & foremost have the courage to dramatically & courageously **LOVE** others fully (i.e. humbly & earnestly) with our **actions** (a la **Matthew 18:3-4** & **John 13:15-17** & **Matthew 7:21-14** & **Matthew 24:12-14** et al) ... **Second**, remember as well that God is composed of “perfect Love” (the Greek *agape* here – meaning unconditional regard & affection, and the same Greek *agape* we find in **Matthew 5:43-48**), and that such Love knows no fear whatsoever. As such, we cannot be called to ever “fear God” (as many traditional worshippers & preachers incorrectly advocate) but rather are to humbly “**revere**” Him – as the actual Old Testament Hebrew often advocates we do (a la the Hebrew *yare* in **Exodus 34:30**, **Leviticus 19:14**, **Leviticus 19:32**, **Leviticus 25:17**, **Leviticus 25:36**, **Psalm 33:8**, **Ecclesiastes 3:14**, **Ecclesiastes 8:12-13** et al – Strong's #3372) ... **Third**, the latter half of this verse is crucial as well (the half that states “for fear has to do with punishment, and thus whomever fears [and thus whomever punishes] has not reached perfection in Love”) – specifically because it strongly implies that there is no Hell in the Universe of a God of perfect Love; seeing as how Hell is quite clearly a punishment, and that a God of perfect Love can express neither fear nor the punishment that ensues therefrom ... Yes, it is true that conservative Christians tend to respond by saying that it is the willing sinner who somehow chooses to burn in Hell for eternity – that it is not God's fault that sinners decide to suffer forever, and yet this argument is obviously ludicrous; if for no other reason than **A**) it presumes that sinners are objectively & fairly aware of that eternal consequence (which they are most certainly not), and **B**) that sinners thereby purposefully choose to burn forever rather than kiss the celestial bottom of their Divine Despot (which only the very few clinically diagnosed masochists – and the even fewer unassailable Saints -- in human history would ever do).

No, there is no easy out here for the non-Loving, conservative (a.k.a. evangelical) Christian. Their God either directly condemns the billions of “unworthy Souls” to an eternity of suffering (which Jesus very clearly notes He does *not* do – see [John 5:22](#) et al) *or* at the very least He is guilty by implication; having first & foremost Himself created this unjustly warped system, and at the very least thereafter passively allowed billions of mostly innocent Souls to burn forever as a patently unjust consequence thereof ... This latter conundrum should make conservative Christians (especially those who consider themselves to be “biblical literalists”) extremely thankful for [1 John 4:18](#), seeing as how it alone provides them a scriptural “out” for their now suddenly not nearly so wicked God.



Ephesians 2:8-10 ... By Grace ever Saved

(05/17/2017)

“For by Grace you have been saved through Faith, and this [Grace] is not of your own doing; It is the Gift of God ... For we are what He has made us; created in Christ for good works.” ~ unknown (Ephesians 2:8-10)

First & foremost, the book of [Ephesians](#) was almost certainly not written by Paul. Many important terms in [Ephesians](#) (e.g. “heavenly places”, a “dividing wall”, & “fellow citizen”) are not used by Paul at all in his authentic letters, and some of Paul's more characteristic terms are either given new meanings in [Ephesians](#) (e.g. “mystery” & “church”) or are completely absent (e.g. “the Jews” & “justification”). In addition, the verbose Greek of [Ephesians](#) is not characteristic of Paul's earlier writings, and there are significant theological divergences therein as well – especially [Ephesians'](#) emphasis on a believer's Here&Now salvation (see [Ephesians 1:3-12](#) & [Ephesians 2:4-10](#)). While it is possible that this work was simply written at the very end of Paul's life and that these theological discrepancies reflect an evolution in his spiritual understanding (though suddenly choosing to believe in a Christ-harmonized, Here&Now salvation would be a most radical departure indeed), it is far more likely that the author of [Ephesians](#) simply copied and amended [Colossians](#) sometime after Paul's death ... That having been said, [Ephesians 2:8-10](#) remains a prominent passage for those worshipping the unway of Paul – i.e. those who believe that mere mental faith and mere verbal professing of subservience to Jesus “as Lord” are all that is required for one to be saved (see [Acts 16:31](#) & [Romans 10:9](#) et al); and this, contrary both to at least one statement from Paul in his earlier letter to the [Galatians](#) (see [Galatians 5:6](#)) and to the teachings of Jesus himself (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al).

Indeed, as far as “Grace” is concerned, note that it (at least according to Jesus Christ) is actually a trinity of gifts given unconditionally to all humans by an all-Loving God (note that [John 1:1-9+16](#) = [John 5:22](#) + [Matthew 5:48](#) & [1 John 4:18](#) + [Luke 6:36](#)); not a hollow conditional reward given only to the few by a celestial tyrant (as Paul would have us believe -- see [Romans 2:16](#), [Romans 3:24](#), [Romans 5:21](#), [Romans 9:27](#), [Romans 14:10-12](#) et al) ... No, Grace is conscious awareness (see [Matthew 25:1-13](#), [Luke 21:36](#) et al), plus an internal moral compass (see [John 14:20-26](#) & [John 15:26](#)) plus the ability to use that guidance to choose to *Love anyway* (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al).

Also note that this passage indirectly references Paul's gospel – a gospel that happens to directly *contradict* the [Gospel](#) offered by Jesus Christ (compare [Ephesians 2:8-10](#) with [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#), and contrast them both with [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#)).

Penultimately, please note that Paul (or in this case, the later adherent of Paulinism who actually wrote [Ephesians](#)) believed that good works were a consequence of (and evidence for) being previously saved through faith, whereas for Jesus, good works were *the means* to a very different and far more potent form of salvation (see [John 13:15-17](#) + every single parable uttered during his ministry + [John 14:12](#) + [Matthew 7:15-20](#) + [John 10:37-38](#) + [Matthew 16:28](#) etc etc etc).

Finally, please note that for Paul, being “in Christ” meant “able to accept Jesus as God”, while for Jesus being “in Christ” meant actively enlivening his Way of Selfless Love (see [John 12:47-48](#) & [John 14:13-14](#) et al) – quite the critical distinction, all things considered.



James 3:13 ... Works done with Gentleness

(05/18/2017)

“Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of Wisdom.” ~ James (James 3:13)

First & foremost, realize that the writings of James – at least according to Jesus Christ – should take precedence over the beliefs & expositions of all the other disciples (“And the disciples said to Jesus, ‘We are aware that you will depart from us. So who will be our leader [once you are gone]?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘No matter where you come it is to James the Just that you shall go, for whose sake heaven and earth have come to exist.’” ~ Gospel of Thomas 12) ... And note as well that the teachings of James should especially take precedence over the competing theological delusions of the self-appointed “apostle” Paul (who Jesus clearly forewarned us all **not** to follow – see [Matthew 15:13-14](#), [Mark 7:6-8](#) & [Luke 12:1 vs Acts 23:6](#), [Acts 26:5](#), [Galatians 1:14](#) & [Philippians 3:4-5](#) ... see [John 5:43 vs Acts 13:9](#) ... see [Matthew 24:26 vs Acts 9](#) & [Galatians 1:11-12](#) .. and see [2 Corinthians 11:13-15](#) in conjunction with [2 Corinthians 11:16-33](#), [Romans 1:1](#) & [1 Corinthians 3:19](#) et al).

Indeed, the entire **Way** of Christ is predicated not on mere mental thought or emotional belief or verbal worship, but rather upon radical, selfless, Caring **actions**. Jesus’ teachings say so (see [Matthew 5:3 to Matthew 7:27](#), especially [Matthew 7:21-24](#) et al), Jesus’ parables essentially say so (see [Matthew 13](#), especially [Matthew 13:18-23](#)), and even Jesus’ actions consistently said so (see [Matthew 9:36](#), [Luke 17:11-19](#) & [John 8:1-11](#) et al).

Finally, note that it is not mere “good works” that qualify, but rather “**gentle**” (i.e. humbly Kind – see [Matthew 18:3-4](#)) deeds “**born of Wisdom**” (the Greek *sophias*, a word that meant “**Divine Intelligence**” – or perfect **LOVE**; see [Matthew 5:48](#) et al) that do so.



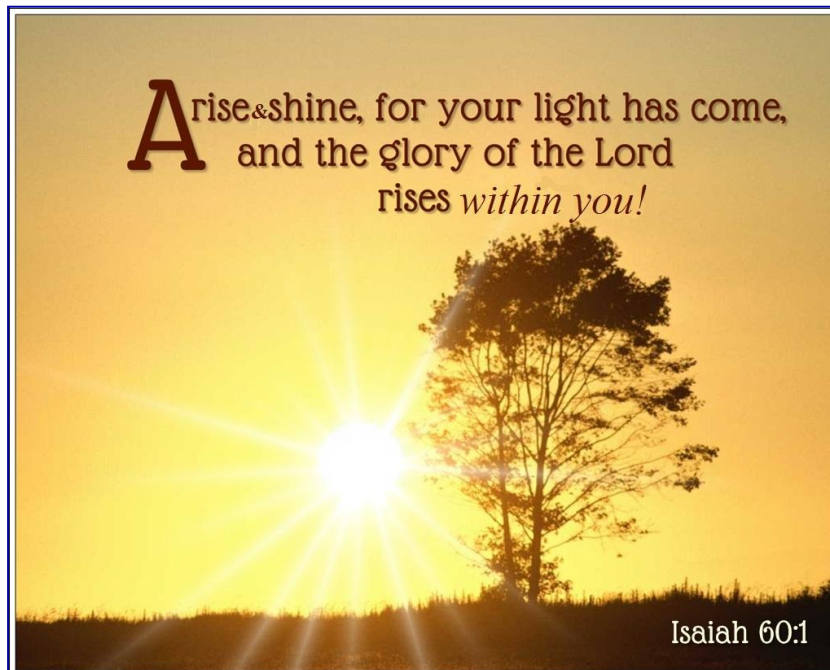
Ephesians 5:9 ... The Fruit of the Light

(05/19/2017)

“Live as Children of Light – for the fruit of the Light is found in all that is good and right and true.” ~ unknown (Ephesians 5:9)

Even though [Ephesians](#) was in all probability not written by Paul (but instead was likely copied and amended from [Colossians](#) by a Paulinist follower shortly after Paul’s death), this verse still reflects a deep set of Truths, all of them hinging on its very first word: “**Live**.” For even though it was indeed good enough for Paul for his followers to think “good” thoughts and have “right” beliefs and speak “true” words, this was **not** enough for anyone desiring to follow The Way of Christ ... For to enter Jesus’ “**Kingdom of God**” in this lifetime ([Luke 17:20-21](#)) requires bold, selfless action (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 13:18-23](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [Luke 10:29-37](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al). It requires becoming “humble as a toddler” ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)), and the only way to do that was to “Live as Children of Light” – by Forgiving our trespassers without end ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)), by Loving our enemies without exception ([Matthew 5:43-48](#)), and by Serving the downtrodden without excuses ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)). For these are the deeds that bear the Spiritual Fruit (see [Matthew 21:43](#) & [Galatians 5:22-23](#)) that allow our Light to shine, and allow us to truly represent the Divine (“While you have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light ... The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works [of Love] than these” ~ Jesus in [John 12:36](#) & [John 14:12](#)).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Hebrews 6:7 ... To drink UP the Rain

(05/20/2017)

“Ground that drinks up the rain falling on it repeatedly and that produces a crop useful to those for whom it is cultivated receives a blessing from the Lord.”

~ unknown (Hebrews 6:7)

First and foremost please note the obvious – namely, that it is those who “produce a crop useful to [others]” who receive the **blessing from the Lord**. Indeed, this is in completely harmony with all of the teachings spoken (and almost all of the actions taken) by Jesus in the Gospels – this is indeed an embodiment of his **Way**, his **Truth**, and his **Life** (i.e. the enlivenment of **John 14:6** per his request in **John 14:12**) ...

That having been said, note as well that there is another prerequisite for this **blessing** – namely, to “**drink up the rain that falls on it repeatedly**.” For the soil in Nature, this metaphor is obvious, but how does it translate to us? How can we “**drink up the rain**” that continually falls upon us? Well, this is a pretty obvious reference to the Grace of God’s **perfect Love** (see **Matthew 5:45-48**, **Luke 6:36-37**, **John 5:22** & **1 John 4:8+18** et al), and yet we are left to wonder what this means for us in practical terms. It seems to be a riddle beyond solving, but not really. For Jesus provides several clues to the same in the Gospels ...

* He provided us a clue when he told us that “**the Advocate within**” will come upon us and live **within** us – continually “**raining**” the Wisdom of Love down upon our Hearts (see **John 14:20-26** & **John 15:26**, along with **John 14:4** – “**You know the way to the place I am going**”) ...

*He provided us a clue when he mentioned that our sole Purpose here was to **Love our enemies** (**Luke 6:27:36**) and serve the downtrodden (**Matthew 25:35-40**) ...

*And he provided us a clue when he told his followers repeatedly “**if you pray for anything in my name, it will be done for you**” (see **John 14:13-14**, **John 15:7**, **John 15:16**, **John 16:23-24**, **Matthew 21:22**, **Luke 11:9** et al). For to pray “**in his name**” is to pray for the opportunity to powerfully serve others – an opportunity that is indeed ever present; that is indeed “**falling upon us repeatedly**” ... And indeed the greatest Treasure available to us is to recognize such opportunities and Love courageously in the moments when we recognize them (“**For where your Treasure is, there your Heart is also**” ~ **Matthew 6:21** & **Luke 12:34** – see also **Matthew 24:42**’s “**Keep awake therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming**”).



And what is the “**Blessing**” that will be received? Will it be a reward of eternal life in “heaven above” as Paul believed and preached? **No**, of course not ... For Jesus made it repeatedly clear that his “**blessing**” was an experience of pure Bliss – the perfect mixture of Joy & Peace; the Here&Now state of being he called “**the Kingdom of God**” (Luke 17:20-21); the state of being available to each & every one of us who honor the “**rains that repeatedly fall**” by Loving others with humility and with courage (see **Matthew 18:3-4** & **John 13:15-17** et al).

Amen ... Let it be so!



Luke 10:36-37 ... Going & Doing likewise

(05/21/2017)

“Said Jesus: Which of these three, do you think, was a Neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers? ... He answered: The one who showed him kindness ... Jesus said to him: Go and do likewise.” ~ Luke (Luke 10:36-37)

The Parable of the Good Samaritan (in which these two verses are found) is one of the most important parables in the entire New Testament, if for no other reason than it of all the parables best illustrates Jesus’ Truth that we are to Love our enemies by showing them humble acts Compassion & Kindness.

“But how is this so?” many might ask “This is merely a story about being kind to strangers in need, not about Loving our enemies.”

Not so, my Friends -- Not so at all ...

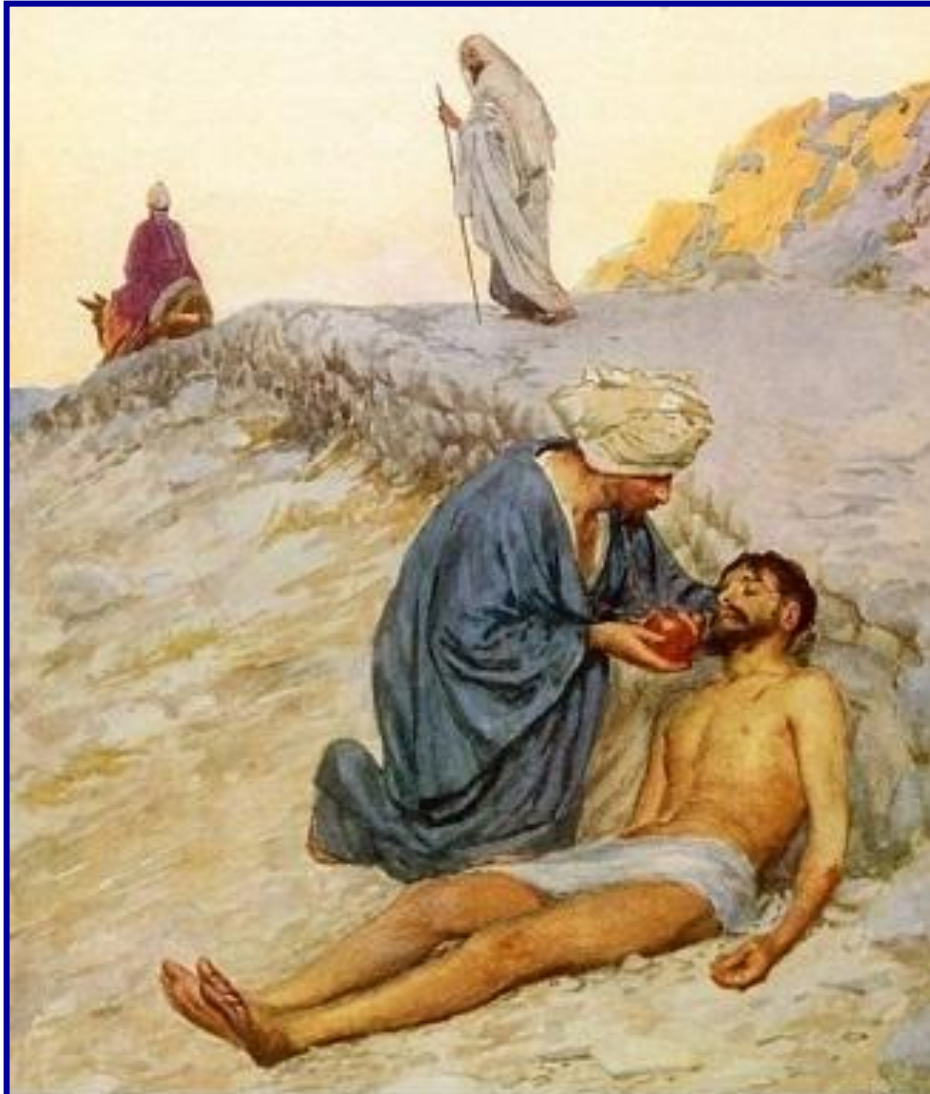
First & foremost, realize that the “neighbor” in this tale was not a normal neighbor, but rather was a *Samaritan*; a member of the primary cultural enemies of the Jews in Jesus’ day (see [Luke 10:33-34](#), in light of [Matthew 10:5](#), [John 4:4](#), [Luke 9:52-56](#), [Luke 17:11-19](#) et al) ...

Second, consider as well that the word here translated as “kindness” is more often – and more accurately – translated as “*mercy*”; a translation that happens to harmonize with the passage’s corresponding text in the ancient manuscripts (where the Greek *eleos* is used, a word that indeed meant “mercy” first & foremost – see Strong’s #1656). And to whom do you we show mercy in our lives? That’s right – those who have wronged us – we show mercy to our enemies ...

Third, considering that this is the only place in the entire Bible where Jesus defines “neighbor”, and considering he does so here at the bequest of a “lawyer” who had directly asked him for that definition, this parable has profound implications for Jesus’ primary commandment for us all – namely, the Commandment to “Love your neighbor as yourself”(see [Matthew 22:39](#)); a Commandment which – after Jesus’ own definition has been inserted – now quite clearly reads “Love your *enemy* as yourself” ...

Fourth, and most important of all, the end of this tale has Jesus not only commending the lawyer for discerning that the Samaritan was the hero of the tale – that the Samaritan was the “neighbor” therein, but that he, like the rest of us, was then to “go and do likewise”; that he – like the rest of us, was to go forth and actively & humbly Care for his enemies as well!

P.S. As an important aside – note the obvious anti-religious undertone to this parable; with the “**Priest**” & the “**Levite**” playing the role of tale’s villains – no accident in all likelihood, remembering that Jesus spent a great deal of time during his ministry openly denouncing, amending, &/or outright rejecting the majority of the 613 Old Testament laws still in effect in his day.



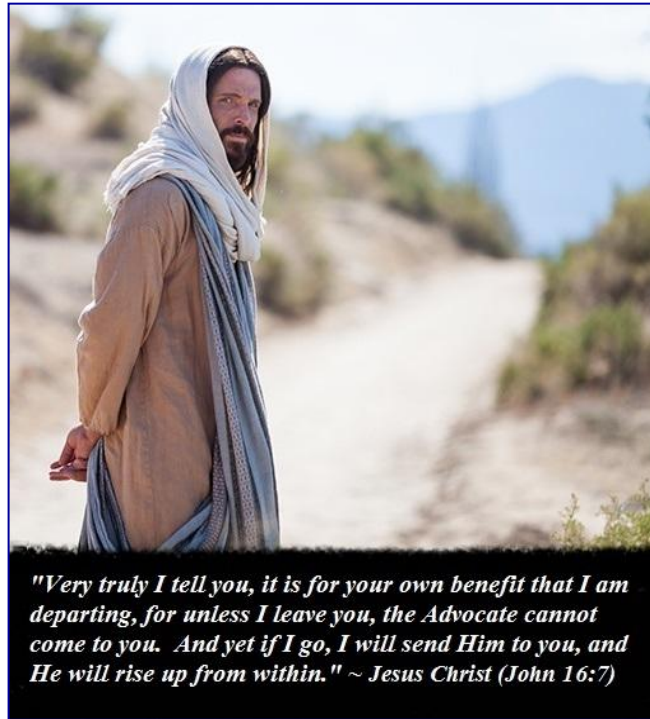
*"And who was the Neighbor?" asked Jesus ...
"The one who showed Mercy." answered the
scribe ... "Go and **Do Likewise.**" said Jesus.*

John 16:7 ... The arrival of the Advocate (05/22/2017)

“If I do not go away, the Advocate cannot come to you;
but if I go, I will send It to you.” ~ Jesus (John 16:7)

First of all, it is important to realize here that both the Spirit that Jesus calls “**the Advocate**” (or “the Soul” -- what secular folks call “the conscience”) and the essence that he refers to as himself are both energetic, “spiritual” entities that reside within the Hearts of each & every one of us (see [John 14:20-26](#)). In this sense, “**the Advocate**” doesn’t come to us from elsewhere or “from above”, but rather wells up into our Awareness when summoned from **within** – specifically in every moment we choose to set aside our “sins” of fear-inspired cowardice or greed-instilled selfishness and choose to Love another anyway (see [John 15:26](#) & [John 3:1-8](#) et al) ... Similarly, Jesus is not saying here that he personally will come to us from elsewhere or even that his personal spirit will “come into our Hearts” from some external location, but rather he is saying that the same Christ Essence that is *already within us* all will simply rise up – that our Divine Essence, which is the same Divine Essence as his own – will blossom and become viable in every moment we choose to act accordingly (see [John 13:15-17](#) & [John 12:47-48](#)) ...

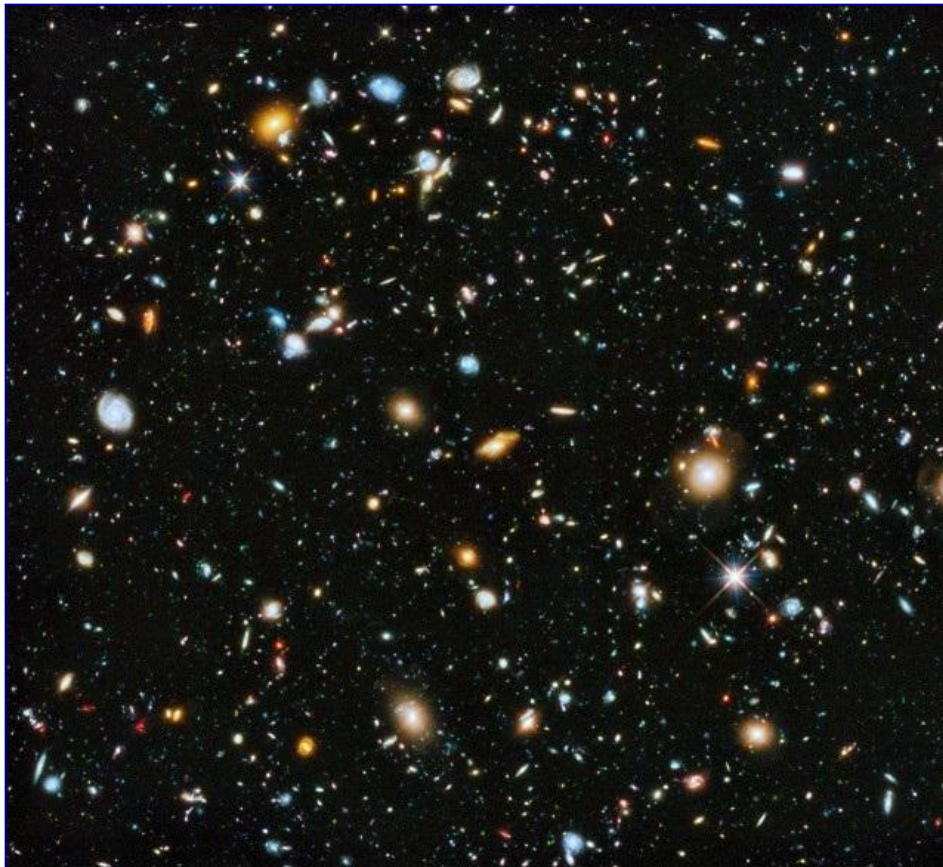
Second, note that it is equally true that we cannot ever come to the aforementioned realizations until we let all of the “masters”, teachers, gurus, &/or “spiritual leaders” in our lives depart – until we are free of their direct supervision &/or guidance – and are thereby free to make our own choices unshackled by subconscious hopes of receiving their approval &/or subconscious fears of reaping their reprimands. In essence we must set forth ourselves onto our own strange journey in order to reap the Good Fruits therefrom ... Indeed, real Love is only purely reaped when it is purely effectuated, and it is only purely effectuated when it is effectuated despite great fear, great uncertainty, &/or great disease – none of which can be truly known while sheltering under the protective wings of any spiritual icon or religious lordship.



As such it is true indeed that we must send all such men & women away from us as soon as we have even partially comprehended what they are teaching – that we must then set forth alone and put their teachings courageously into motion before we can hope to truly understand them, much less fully reap what they have to offer. For it is thereby and thereby alone that we come to realize that our own inner "[Advocate](#)" has known the same Truths all along -- that we were actually never in need of a leader or a guru or a teacher; that we were only in need of the profound understanding that our conscience has been in possession of all the same Truths & Wisdoms as all the greatest men & women throughout history ...

In essence, we must simply remember that *we* have been our own Master all along -- and then commence acting accordingly.

Amen ... Let it be so.



"We are stars wrapped in skin ... The Light you are seeking has always been shining within your Heart, and the Truth you wish to know has always been softly whispering to you from deep within your Soul." ~ unknown

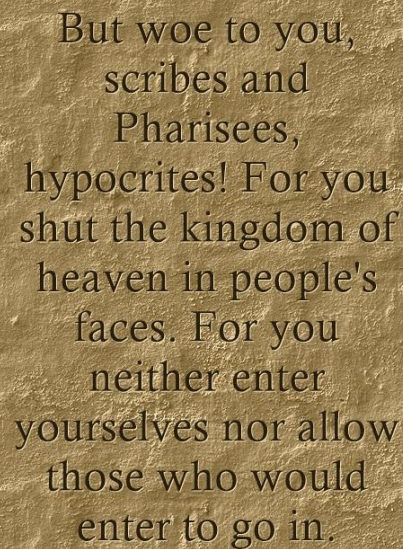
Acts 10:28 ... Neither profane nor unclean
(05/23/2017)

“God has shown me that I should not call anyone profane or unclean.”
~ Paul (Acts 10:28)

First of all, before we start looking at this verse itself, let’s remember a few things about the “apostle” Paul ... Consider the following biblical Truths: **A)** Paul himself had passive-aggressively manipulative (and therefore “unclean”) motives behind his ministry (see 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, 2 Corinthians 2:9, 2 Corinthians 7:2-4, 2 Corinthians 8:2-8, 2 Corinthians 8:24, 2 Corinthians 11:7, 2 Corinthians 12:19-21 et al) ... **B)** Paul believed that God showed him truth authoritatively “from above” as opposed to Lovingly from *within* (see Romans 7:4, 1 Corinthians 2:11, 2 Corinthians 1:10, 1 Corinthians 15:23-25, 2 Corinthians 9:10-11, Philippians 4:6 & Philippians 4:19 et al) ... and **C)** Paul believed that only he had been shown “the Truth,” and that it was therefore necessary for him to aggressively condemn & then convert all those of unlike mind (see Acts 13:10, Romans 16:17-18, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Corinthians 10:21, 1 Corinthians 11:19, 2 Corinthians 11:4-5, Galatians 1:9, Philippians 1:28 & Philippians 3:2).

Secondly, note that Jesus Christ disagreed with Paul on all three of these fronts, even though Jesus did agree in principle on not calling anyone else “profane or unclean” (see Luke 10:27 & John 14:20). Indeed Paul was a full blown hypocrite in this regard, as we often see him insulting or berating or belittling others in his letters (see 1 Corinthians 16:22, 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 1 Corinthians 10:20, 2 Corinthians 10:6, Galatians 2:11, Galatians 3:1, Galatians 5:12, Philippians 3:18-19 & 1 Thessalonians 2:15-16). And indeed & in truth, Jesus really couldn’t stand hypocrites of any sort (see Matthew 6:5, Matthew 7:1-5, Matthew 7:15, Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 23, Luke 6:46, Luke 12:2, Luke 16:15, Luke 20:46-47, John 8:4-9 et al) – which is probably why he warned us quite clearly of preachers like Paul ahead of time (see Matthew 15:13-14, Mark 7:6-8 & Luke 12:1 vs Acts 23:6, Acts 26:5, Galatians 1:14 & Philippians 3:4-5 ... see John 5:43 vs Acts 13:9 ... and see Matthew 24:26 vs Acts 9 & Galatians 1:11-12).

As such, in closing, when judging the quality of your “prophet,” always do so **facta non verba** (always looking to his or her actions, never his or her words – a la Jesus’ “Fruit of the Tree” test in Matthew 7:15-20).



But woe to you,
scribes and
Pharisees,
hypocrites! For you
shut the kingdom of
heaven in people's
faces. For you
neither enter
yourselves nor allow
those who would
enter to go in.

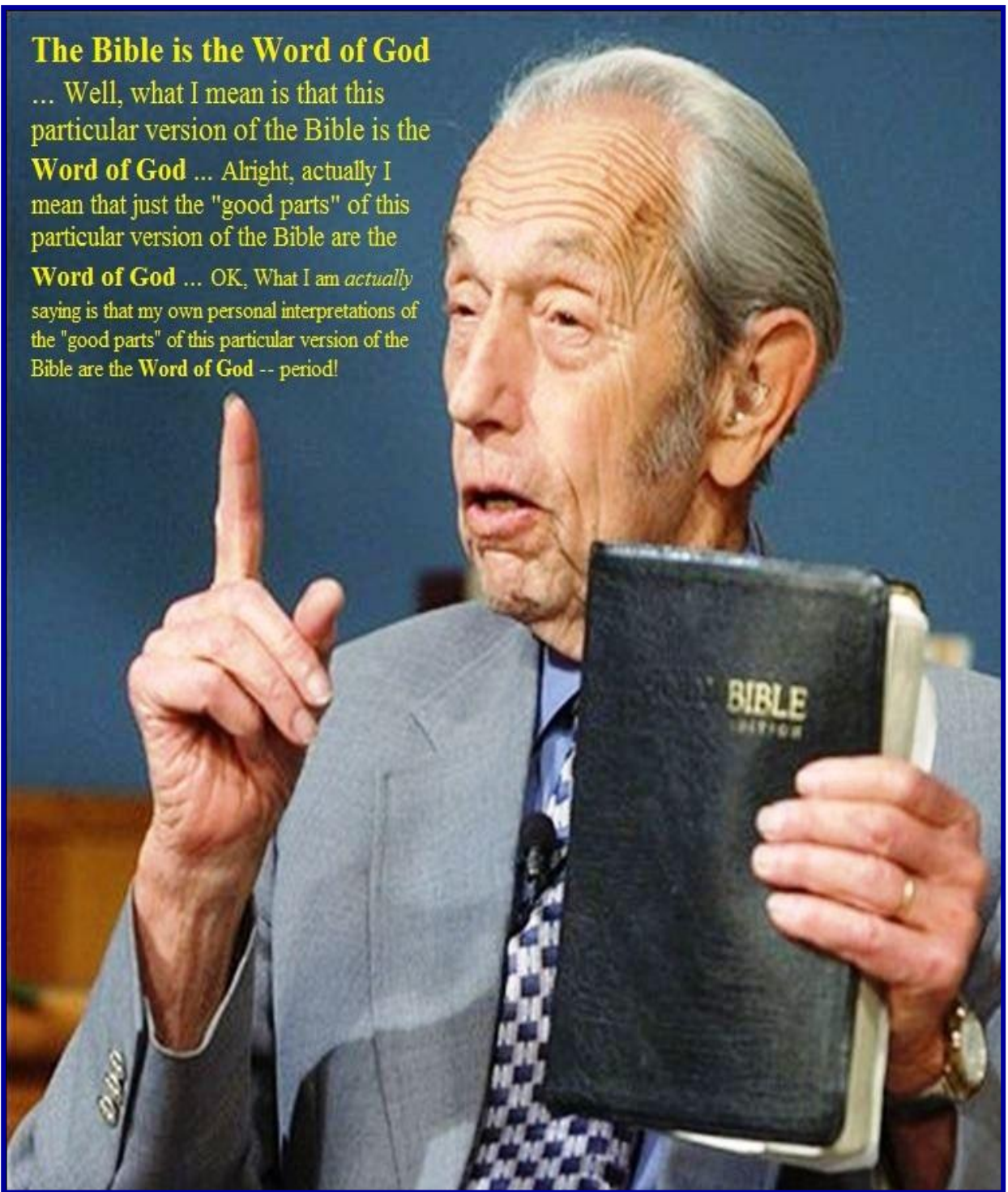
Matt 23:13

The Bible is the Word of God

... Well, what I mean is that this particular version of the Bible is the

Word of God ... Alright, actually I mean that just the "good parts" of this particular version of the Bible are the

Word of God ... OK, What I am *actually* saying is that my own personal interpretations of the "good parts" of this particular version of the Bible are the **Word of God** -- period!

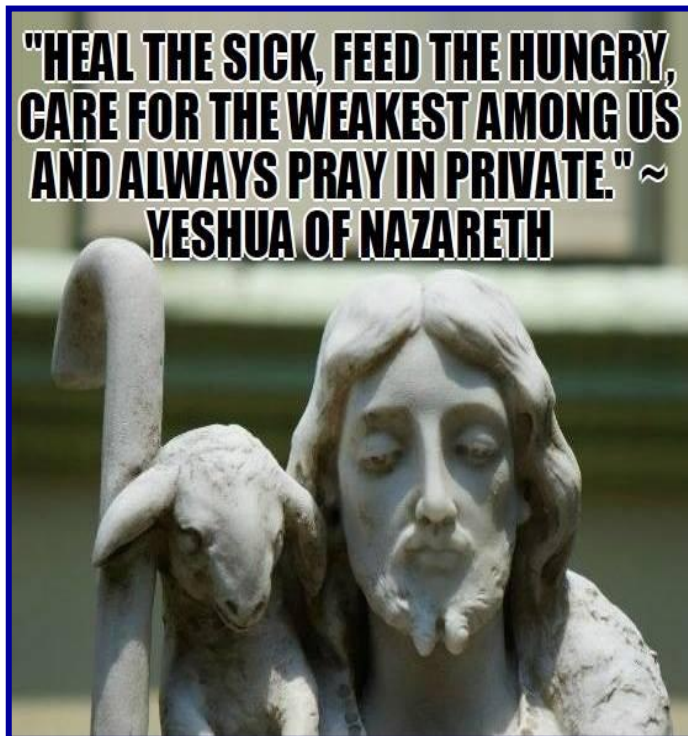


James 2:9 ... Knowing partiality as Sin
(05/24/2017)

“If you show partiality, you commit sin”
~ James (James 2:9)

First & foremost, we cannot fully understand this verse unless we fully understand its two primary terms – with “to show partiality” actually being the Greek *prosopolemphteite*, (a word that is just as appropriately translated as “to show unjust preference for one over another” -- see Strong’s #4380), and “sin” actually being the Greek *hamartian*, (a word that actually meant “to miss the mark” or “to fail to reflect one’s True Self” -- see Strong’s #266). As such, what this verse actually has James saying is the profound Truth that “If one shows an unjust preference for some over others, he or she neglects to reflect the deeper Loving Essence of their own Soul” (see Matthew 5:43-48 – the logic of “Loving the enemy”, and John 14:20 – the Truth that “the Christ”, or the conscient Soul that Loves without limit, resides within us all).

And so, keeping this all in mind, how is it that we “show partiality”? How is it that we “commit sin” in this manner? Well, judging others based on their race or their gender or their sexual preference or their creed “shows partiality” (see Matthew 7:1-2) ... and refusing to forgive those who trespass against us “shows partiality” (see Matthew 18:21-22) ... and refusing to Care for our enemies “shows partiality” (see Matthew 5:43-48) ... and believing that our personal interpretations of theology &/or preferred beliefs of the Scriptures are the only ones that are correct “shows partiality” (see Matthew 18:3-4) ... and avoiding strangers (especially the downtrodden) because it could prove to be uncomfortable or because they could be dangerous “shows partiality” (see Matthew 25:35-40) ... and harboring an attachment to our own possessions instead of sharing them with those in greater need “shows partiality” (see Matthew 16:28 & Matthew 19:21).



Romans 5:16 ... The free Gift bringing Freedom

(05/25/2017)

“For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation; and yet the free gift following many trespasses brings [true] Freedom.” ~ Paul (Romans 5:16)

First of all, it is helpful to note that the over-arching context of **Romans 5** has Paul effusively reminding his listeners of *his* gospel – namely, the anti-Christian belief that worshiping Jesus Christ is necessary for human redemption, and that Jesus himself will inevitably rescue the Souls of those who do so with the appropriate subservience (see **Romans 5:1-11** – in comparison with **Romans 10:9**, and in stark contrast with the Gospel of Christ as presented in **Matthew 10:7** & **Matthew 24:12-14**) ... Thereafter, Paul goes on at some length about the innate sinfulness of humankind (**Romans 5:12-14**) before exclaiming that there is no need for worry, as Jesus would provide salvation for all those who chose to “**receive the abundance of [his] grace**” (**Romans 5:15-17**).

Second, within this context, it is incredibly important to realize that this chapter perfectly harmonizes with Paul’s patently dysfunctional belief that the “**free gift**” of the ascended spirit of Jesus Christ must be accepted by humans in order to count as being received by them – when in actuality (as Jesus’ ministry clearly showed) the Divine Gift of Grace is **constantly given to all** sentient beings in every moment of our lives – from the first moment of Awakening in the womb all the way through our last conscious breath. Indeed this is the “**grace upon grace**” of “**the Word**” mentioned in the very beginning of the **Gospel of John** (see **John 1:1-8+16**, also **John 14:20-26** & **John 15:26** et al) and this is the **Grace** that becomes full-fledged and real the moment any Follower of The Way of Christ extends selfless Love to another – and this, regardless of what happens immediately thereafter (see **Matthew 10:13-14** – “**If the house is harmonious [to your message – see the Greek *axia*, Strong’s #514], then let your peace come upon it; but if it is not accepting [of your message – also *axia*], then let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome you or attend [the Greek *akouse*, meaning “to comprehend by respectfully listening” – see Strong’s #191] to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town**”).

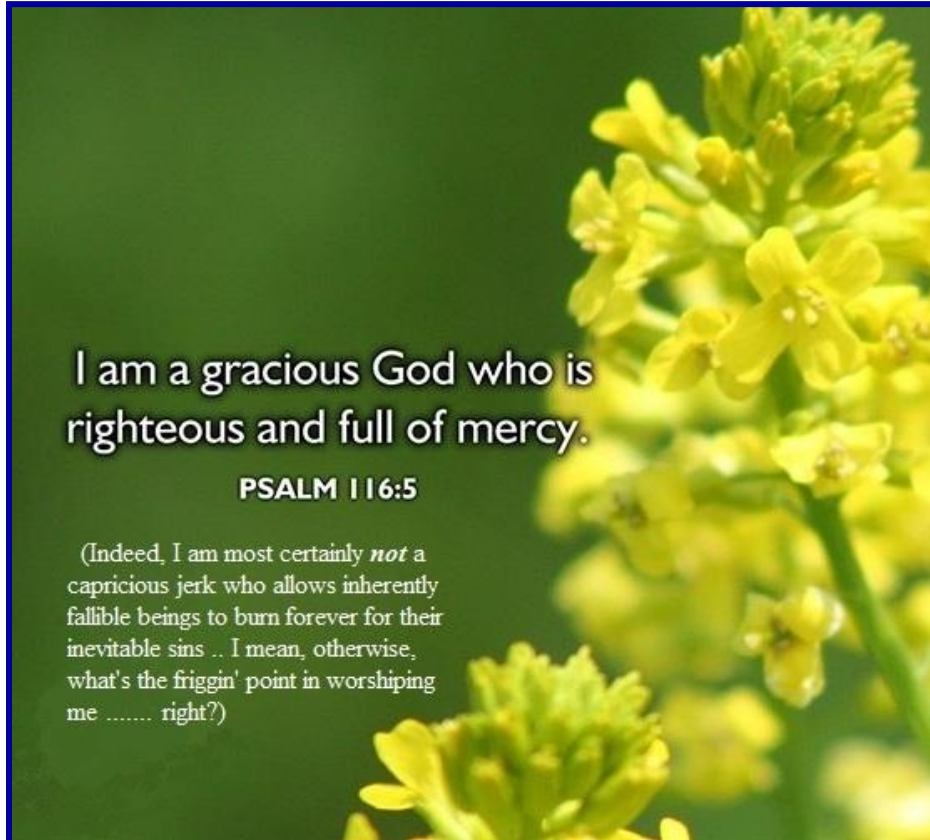


Third, note as well that Paul believed in Divine “condemnation” for unrepentant sins and that freedom therefrom must be obtained “on one’s knees” as an “undeserved gift from above” (see **Romans 7:4**, **1 Corinthians 2:11**, **2 Corinthians 1:10**, **1 Corinthians 15:23-25**, **2 Corinthians 9:10-11**, **Philippians 4:6** & **Philippians 4:19** et al), whereas Jesus expressed a diametrically opposed view – noting quite clearly & quite vehemently that neither God (**John 5:22**) nor himself (**John 8:15** & **John 12:47**) would ever judge *anyone*; and that neither are we to do so (**Matthew 7:1-2**).

Fourth, note that Paul speaks here quite arrogantly about his supposed knowledge (“I thank you, Father, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them instead to infants. Yes, Father, for such was your gracious will” ~ Jesus in Luke 10:21) – an arrogance he actually exhibited quite frequently (see Acts 13:10, Romans 16:17-18, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, 1 Corinthians 9:24, 1 Corinthians 10:21, 1 Corinthians 11:19, 2 Corinthians 11:4-5, Galatians 1:9, Philippians 1:28 & Philippians 3:2), and an arrogance that actually kept him out of Jesus’ “Kingdom of Heaven” for as long as he remained determined to cherish the same (see Matthew 18:3-4 & Matthew 23:12 et al).

Fifth, feel free to contrast this verse with Jesus’ belief that every sin was its own condemnation in the moment it was committed (i.e. a lost moment when Love could have otherwise been enlivened), and that every act of selfless Love was its own rebirth (John 3:3-8) into his “Kingdom of God” (Luke 17:20-21) – namely, that every act of selfless Love was a renewed freeing of the Soul from the confines of dogmatic arrogance & instinctual selfishness – that every act of Love was indeed itself a “free gift” that did indeed “bring true Freedom” (see John 13:15-17, along with Matthew 13:18:23, Matthew 24:12-14, and – quite ironically – Galatians 5:1 – “For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and submit never again to any yoke of slavery”).

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 5:44-48 ... To LOVE the enemy

(05/26/2017)

“And I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ... For if you love only those who love you, what reward do you have? ... Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”~ Jesus (Matthew 5:44-48)

First & foremost, it is absolutely critical for those desiring to truly understand this all-important passage that “**Love**” for Jesus was not an amenable thought or a warm emotion or even friendly words. No, Jesus Christ was incredibly consistent throughout his entire Gospel ministry – and one of the things he was most consistent about was professing the Truth that real LOVE – the **perfect LOVE** of his heavenly **Father** (Matthew 5:48) – is a **verb** ... He makes LOVE a verb when he defines “**neighbor**” as the enemy (i.e. the Samaritan) who actively showed “**mercy**” to the Jew lying in the gutter in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37) ... He makes LOVE a verb when he replaces the ten “do not” Commandments of the Old Testament with his two-in-one “Do Love” Commandment (see Matthew 22:37-40) ... He makes LOVE a verb in his “Parable of Parables” (the Parable of the Sower – see Matthew 13:18-23), where he notes that “**But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who not only hears the word and understands it, but who indeed bears fruit and yields**” ... And he makes LOVE a verb when he states quite succinctly that the only ones who will ever be truly **Blessed** are those who do not only comprehend the perfectly selfless LOVE he was preaching, but those who put that LOVE into practice (see Matthew 7:21-24, Matthew 16:28 & John 13:15-17 et al) – especially by actively Caring for the downtrodden in their communities (Matthew 25:35-40), and especially – as the passage above quite clearly attests – by actively Caring for their enemies as well ... **Secondly**, please note that the phrase “**pray for those who persecute you**” means that we are to **A**) openly & unconditionally forgive them (*not* that we are to arrogantly “pray for their salvation”), and **B**) cherish the empowerment that they have provided us – by activating the same; by choosing to **Love them anyway** (see Matthew 5:10-11) ... Indeed, LOVE must be



difficult to give to become potent once given, and this is why “**perfect LOVE**” – the LOVE that would willingly give our lives for our greatest enemy – is the most potent LOVE of all; a LOVE that awakens that enemy and transforms him or her into an ally; a LOVE that re-unifies the Soul of the Giver with “**the Father**” within (John 14:20); a LOVE that awakens all who witness it being given; a LOVE that grants both the Lover & the Beloved an instantaneous entrance into the “**Kingdom of Heaven**” (see Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 18:3-4, Mark 8:35, Luke 23:43, John 10:10 et al).

Luke 5:24 ... The authority to Forgive (05/27/2017)

“The Son of Man has authority on Earth to forgive sins”
~ Jesus (Luke 5:24)

First & foremost, it is extremely important for all earnest students of the Scriptures to realize that Jesus was almost never referring to himself alone whenever he mentioned “**the Son of Man.**” In other words, he is certainly not telling his listeners here that he alone “**has the authority on Earth to forgive sins.**” Indeed, to do so would not only have dramatically diminished the ultimate authority he openly & vehemently vested in his heavenly **Father** (see **Mark 10:18 & John 8:50-54** et al), but it would have also been the epitome of arrogance (see also **Matthew 26:64, Mark 14:62, Luke 22:69**) -- and this when humility was for Jesus the most staunchly encouraged of all virtues (see **Matthew 8:20, Matthew 18:3-4, Matthew 23:12** et al); which would have made him a blatant hypocrite – when hypocrisy he clearly abhorred over all other human failings (see **Matthew 6:5, Matthew 7:1-5, Matthew 7:15, Matthew 7:21-23, Matthew 23, Luke 6:46, Luke 12:2, Luke 16:15, Luke 20:46-47, John 8:4-9** et al). No, when Jesus used the term “**the Son of Man**” he was almost always referring to all of his listeners – and indeed, to **all of us** as well. In truth, how else could he be taken seriously when he said “**Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom**” (**Matthew 16:28**), for if Jesus was speaking of himself as “**the Son of Man**” at this time, then he quite obviously misspoke (something a true Messiah would never do). And yet that is **not** who he spoke of when using this term, and he even came right out and said as much to his disciples a few verses prior (“**Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” And so he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” And Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”**” at which point Jesus seemed to congratulate Peter for noting that Jesus was indeed *an* embodiment of “**the living God**” a la **John 14:20-26**, and yet immediately thereafter he “**sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah**” ~ **Matthew 16:13-20**).

Just as importantly, this interpretation (namely, reading “**the Son of Man**” as relating to all of humanity, not only to Jesus Christ) happens to reconcile dozens of other seeming contradictions and apparent theological inconsistencies in the Scriptures as well – for one, how Jesus could tell us all to forgive everyone (the “**seventy**” of **Matthew 18:21-22**, referencing the **70 nations** of humanity found in **Genesis 10**) without limit and without exception (the “**times seven**” of that same passage, referencing the “**completeness**” with which we are to forgive them all) while seemingly claiming in **Luke 5** that he alone had the ability to do the same.

And this same interpretation also explains his claim that we all have the power to forgive the sins of others, and thereby rectify the sins of ourselves (see “if you forgive others their trespasses, your Heavenly Father [who resides within you – see John 14:20] will also forgive you yours” ~ Matthew 6:14) ... And it also harmonizes him telling others that “the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve” (Matthew 20:28), a phrase that resonates in perfect harmony with the primary message of his entire ministry – namely, his Gospel; that the Kingdom of Heaven was *already* “at hand” (Matthew 10:7), and that anyone could enter the same by persistently & selflessly serving others (Matthew 24:12-14) – especially one’s enemies (i.e. those who obviously needed forgiveness more than most; see Matthew 5:43-49 & Luke 10:29-37).



Anyone can hold a grudge, and it's easy (tempting, even) to persist in hating or feeling ill will towards the one who has wronged us ... On the other hand, it takes a real sense of humility and a profound solidity of character to forgive ... Indeed it's downright difficult to do so -- and that is why it's so *powerful*.

And it is important to realize that when we forgive it doesn't mean that what happened has become OK or that we are encouraging the other to repeat their mistake. It simply means that we can pause long enough to See beyond the other person's behaviors -- that we can still See the innate Goodness residing within them -- that we can See that they too have suffered (and are probably still suffering) from their misdeed -- and that we remember that they are (& always will be) our Brother or our Sister; and as such that we will always wish them **Peace**.

Yes, it seems true that Jesus *did* want to be followed (i.e. for us all to emulate his teachings and enliven his Way of selfless LOVE – see Matthew 7:21-24, Matthew 16:24 & John 13:15-17 et al), and yet he also made it extremely clear that he did *not* want to be worshipped in any way, shape, or form (see Luke 18:19, John 5:41, John 7:16, John 12:44 et al). And this all actually makes perfect sense ... After all, if neither Jesus nor his heavenly Father would ever condemn sinners (see John 5:22, John 8:15 & John 12:47-48), why would they be the only ones with the ability to forgive the same?

Hebrews 8:10-13 ... Written on our Hearts

(05/28/2017)

“I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their Hearts ... For they shall all Know Me ... and I will remember their sins no more.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 8:10-13)

This is actually an Old Testament reference (see [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#)) evidencing the Truth that we are not to abandon the older Wisdoms & Laws found therein, but rather – as Jesus noted – we are to “*fulfill*” them; to *hone* them, to *perfect* them, to *amplify* their essence to such a degree that we *bring them to completion* (see [Matthew 5:17-18](#)’s “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to *fulfill*. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter will pass from the Law until *all* has been accomplished”, noting that “*fulfill*” here is actually the Greek *plerosai*, a word which means just that: “to bring to absolute completion” – see Strong’s #4137, and noting as well that “accomplished” here is actually the Greek *genetai*, a word which means just that: “to come into full being” – see Strong’s #1096) ... As such, this verse – a verse that directly references the Old Testament – not only speaks to what is specifically stated, but also generally speaks to the fact that we are neither to blandly accept traditional interpretations of Scripture, nor are we to reject them outright as being outdated, but rather are to *test them*, and only thereafter adopt the versions thereof that bear the *Fruit of the Spirit* (see [Matthew 7:15-20](#) & [Matthew 21:43](#), along with [Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

As far as the specific wording of this passage is concerned, there are several important Truths hereby illuminated – namely the following: **A**) that God is indeed the essence of perfect, unconditional Love (see [Matthew 5:48](#) & [1 John 4:8](#) et al) ... **B**) that God “*the Father*” does indeed have a perfect, unconditionally limitless expression of both Mercy & Forgiveness (see [Luke 6:36](#), [Matthew 18:21-22](#), [John 5:22](#) et al) ... **C**) that all sins and all sinners will indeed be ultimately forgiven (see [Isaiah 25:6-8](#), [Zephaniah 3:9](#), [Mark 9:49](#), [Luke 3:6](#), [Luke 14:15-24](#), [John 6:45](#), [John 12:32](#) et al) ... **D**) that we are not to try and convert or inform or instruct or cajole others into adopting our own unique beliefs about God or Jesus or Scripture or Salvation – that we are only to do as Jesus told us to do; namely to actively *Love those around us* (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) – especially our enemies (a la [Matthew 5:43-48](#)) &/or the downtrodden in our communities (a la [Matthew 25:35-40](#)) – and that we are to humbly share with others only what he taught us to share; namely, pure unadulterated, selfless LOVE (see [Matthew 28:16-20](#) + [Matthew 18:3-4](#) et al) ... **E**) that *all* will ultimately know Salvation – that *all* will ultimately reunify with The One and know perfect Peace thereby (see [Matthew 5:48](#) in conjunction with [1 John 4:18](#), along with [John 5:22](#), [John 8:15](#) & [John 12:47-48](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.

The Consistent Characteristics of God From Old to New Testament

OLD TESTAMENT

NEW TESTAMENT

PEACE-LOVING

Numbers 6:26; Psalm 91:1-2;
119:165; Proverbs 16:7;
Isaiah 26:3; 32:17

Luke 24:36; John 14:27
Romans 15:13; Philippians 4:7; 2
Corinthians 13:11

MERCIFUL AND FORGIVING

Exodus 34:7; Nehemiah 9:17;
Psalm 89:14; 119:132; 145:9;
Isaiah 54:8; Micah 6:8

Matthew 6:14; John 8:11;
Romans 2:4; 5:8; Ephesians 1:7;
2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 1:9

LOVING

Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy
6:5; 7:7-9; 10:12-15; 33:3; Psalm
92:2; Proverbs 3:12; 15:9; Isaiah
43:4; Ezekiel 16:8

Matthew 5:43-44; 19:19; 22:37-
39; John 3:16; 11:5; 13:1, 34; 15:9;
17; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians
13:4-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:16; 2
Timothy 1:7; 1 John 2:5; 4:8, 10

KIND AND GENTLE

Deuteronomy 10:18; 1
Chronicles 16:34; Psalm 86:5;
117:2; 146:7-9; Isaiah 40:11

Mark 1:40-42; 10:13-16; 2
Corinthians 1:3-4; Ephesians
2:7; Titus 3:4; James 3:17

James 2:13 ... on Mercy & Judgment

(05/29/2017)

“Mercy triumphs over judgment.”

~ James (James 2:13)

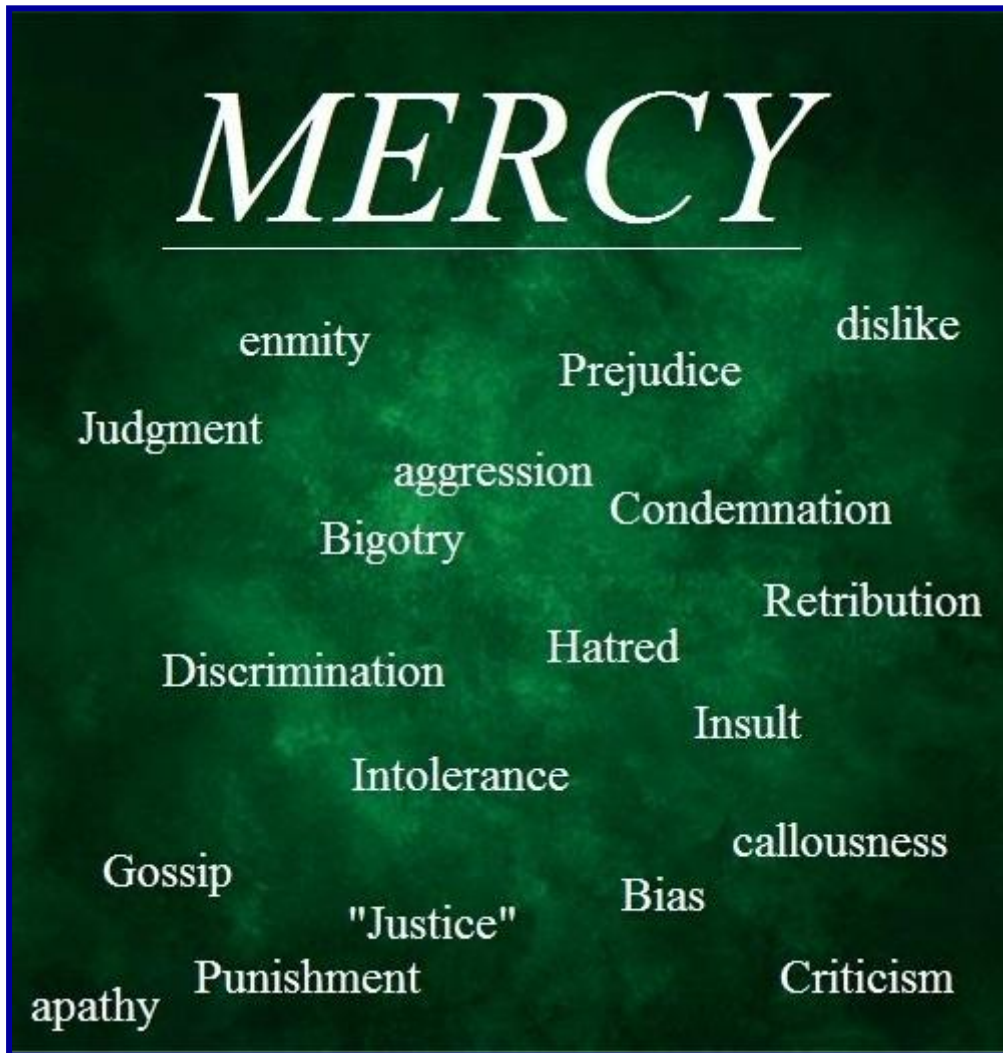
This verse is – especially as far as conservative Christians are concerned – one of the more important verses in the entire Bible; for it reminds us that we have *all* been called by Jesus to attain our Salvation **not** by criticizing or condemning the beliefs of others (or via trying to convert them to our own beliefs – see [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#) & [Hebrews 8:8-13](#)), but rather by actively & selflessly Loving them (see [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al) – especially one’s enemies ([Matthew 5:43-48](#)) &/or the downtrodden in one’s neighborhood ([Matthew 25:35-40](#)). Indeed, it is impossible to truly Love others from a place of pride; it is impossible to truly Love others without first becoming “**humble as a very young child**” (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#), also [Matthew 23:12](#)) – a sacred state of being that we cannot enliven while judging others or criticizing their chosen spiritual beliefs in any way (see [Matthew 7:1-2](#) & [John 8:7](#)) ...

And indeed, although it is important to condemn actions that are unjust or directly harmful to others (a la [John 7:24](#)), when we condemn those who are perpetrating the same we are actually indirectly-yet-powerfully encouraging them to re-commit those same sins in the future. On the other hand, when we have the compassionate humility needed to truly **Love them anyway** – especially while we are condemning their selfish, pain-inducing choices (while standing between them and their victims with forgiveness for them on our lips and compassion for them in our Hearts), we free them to recant & atone – we enable them to “**repent**” (the Greek *metanoeo* in [Matthew 4:17](#)’s “**Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is already at hand**”, a word meaning not “to self-criticize” or “to admit fault”, but rather “**to completely alter one’s behaviors**” – see Strong’s #3340) and thereby find their Salvation (a la [Matthew 9:6](#) – “**the Son of Man has the authority on Earth to forgive sins**” -- also [John 20:23](#)) ...

Better stated, we all have the power during our conscious lives to be Kind to trespassers, and thereby inspire them to do similarly – and thereby allow them to work out their own forgiveness – and thereby free themselves to attain their own Salvation (a la [Matthew 6:14-15](#) “**For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; and yet if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses**”).

And interestingly enough, it comes as no surprise that the ancient Greek of this very verse supports the aforementioned contentions. For “**mercy**” here is actually the Greek word *eleos*, a word that indeed means “**mercy**” (or alternatively, “**compassion**”); especially shown towards one who has wronged us (see Strong’s #1656) ... Also, “**triumphs**” here is actually the Greek word *katakauchatai*, a word that means “**to exult over**”; especially the exultation shown by a victor over the one he has soundly defeated (see Strong’s #2620) ... Finally, “**judgment**” here is actually the Greek word *krisis*, a word that means “**to give a negative verdict**” or “**to criticize**” (see Strong’s #2920) ... So we can see that what this verse is actually saying is the following: “***Showing compassion to the enemy who is criticizing or condemning us or others is the way to completely & fully defeats them.***”

Amen ... Let it be so.



Matthew 8:13 ... Done according to Faith

(05/30/2017)

“Go; let it be done for you according to your Faith.”

~ Jesus (Matthew 8:13)

While most readers (and almost all theologians) focus on the last word of this verse, the most important word therein is actually its first – “**Go**.” For Jesus did not say that all would be done according to the centurion’s mere mental “faith” (or his intellectual beliefs, or even his verbal exclamations) in this scene from the Gospel of Matthew, but rather that he must “**Go**” and thereby manifest the same – that he must *act* in order to be truly **Faith**-full – that he must (as the Quakers are so fond of saying) “pray with moving feet.”

Indeed, there can be no doubt that “**Go**” is a command that requires action; and when we look closely & humbly upon the teachings & the ministry of Jesus Christ, there can be no doubt that both “**Faith**” & “**Belief**” for Jesus were active verbs much more than they were passive states of being ... Indeed (in Deed!), when we look to the many “healings” & “miracles” that Jesus performed throughout the Gospels, we can see a pattern steadily developing – a pattern that had him proclaiming over & over & over again that mere mental “faith” was not enough; that *action is required* in order to bring real **Faith** to life (and bring any subsequent healings to bear – see [Matthew 8:10-13](#), [Matthew 9:2](#), [Matthew 9:22](#), [Matthew 9:28-30](#), [Matthew 13:58](#), [Matthew 14:31](#), [Matthew 15:28](#), [Matthew 17:20](#), [Matthew 21:21](#), [Mark 2:5](#), [Mark 5:34](#), [Mark 9:23](#), [Mark 10:52](#), [Mark 11:22](#), [Luke 5:20](#), [Luke 7:9](#), [Luke 7:50](#), [Luke 8:48](#), [Luke 17:6](#), [Luke 17:18-19](#), & [Luke 18:42](#) et al) and that “**Belief**” for Jesus was an act as well (see [John 14:12](#) & [John 14:23-26](#) in direct conjunction [Mark 10:18](#), [John 5:41](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [John 3:36](#), [John 3:18](#), [John 6:29](#), [John 7:38](#), [Mark 16:16](#) & [John 13:15-17](#) et al).

And when we apply this Truth to this particular verse, several extremely important implications come to light – namely the following: **A**) that Jesus did not heal or save anyone – indeed that we are all capable of healing ourselves by actively & humbly bringing Peace &/or Joy to others (see [Matthew 20:28](#) + [John 13:15-17](#) et al) ... **B**) that we all carry both **God & Heaven** *within* us, and as such are the source of our own salvation (see [John 14:20](#) & [Luke 17:20-21](#) et al) ... **C**) that we can all Love just as purely & just as courageously as Jesus did (see [Matthew 22:37-40](#) & [John 14:12](#) et al) ... and **D**) that Loving perfectly (i.e. Loving the shunned, Loving the downtrodden, Loving the stranger, and Loving the enemy -- all as though they were members of one’s own Family) heals completely & manifests fully.

Amen ... Let it be so.

BONUS Note: Due to Emperor Augustus' ban on heterosexual marriage for his centurions (a ban that lasted until 197 A.D.), it was probably not at all uncommon for homosexual partnerships to develop among Roman soldiers. And indeed, in this very passage ([Matthew 8:5-13](#), and also in [Luke 7:1-10](#)), we see Jesus actually being openly & non-judgmentally Kind to a Roman centurion while co-healing his *pais*, a Greek term (see Strong's #3816) commonly understood in Jesus' day to mean not "servant" but rather "younger, same-sex lover." Indeed, the "servant" in question must have been more than the mere attendant that many conservative &/or homophobic Christians believe him to be, otherwise the far more prevalent Greek terms for that status (*diakoneo*, *diakonos* or *doulos* – Strong's #1401 ... a la [Matthew 8:9](#)) would have been used to describe him herein ... And it was just this type of Faith-full Kindness that Jesus was preaching throughout his three year ministry – a Kindness that was more done than said, a Kindness that was done openly & courageously, and a Kindness that was bold enough to challenge even the unjust religious conventions (in this case the staunch anti-homosexual Old Testament laws) of the day in order to Love anyway.

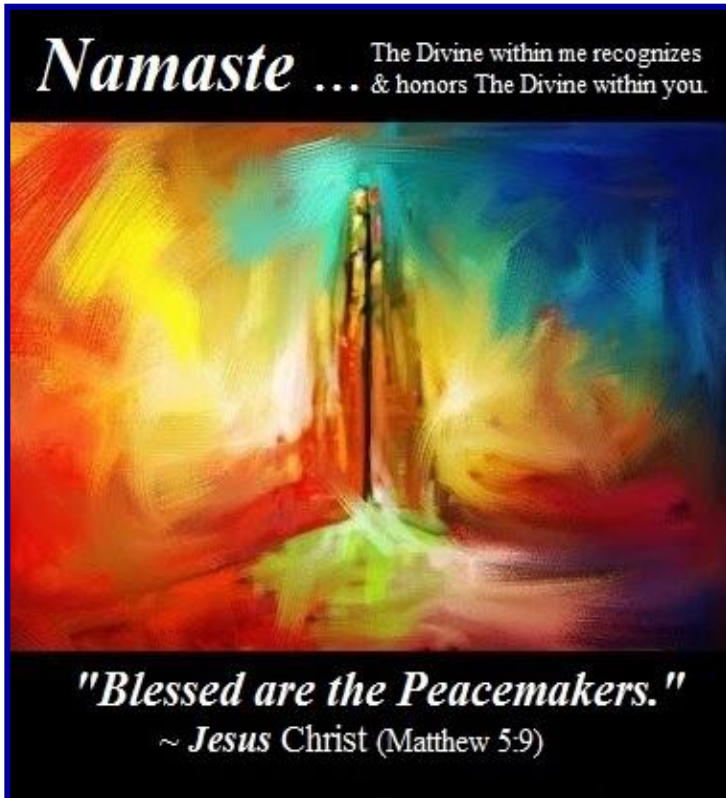


James 3:18 ... A Harvest of Righteousness (05/31/2017)

“A Harvest of Righteousness is sown in peace
for those who make Peace.” ~ James (James 3:18)

Essentially – and most importantly – this verse **first** & foremost reminds us all of the Truth that peaceful ends require Peace-full means; that we cannot ever attain Peace using force or violence, and that we cannot ever attain Harmony using conflict or condemnation ... **Second**, in full alignment with the overarching theology of its author, **James 3:18** reminds us that Peace – like Love & Faith & Belief – is a **verb**; that it must be actively & courageously effectuated in order to **be** at all ... **Third**, the phrase “for those who make Peace” implies another important Truth – namely, the Truth that while Peace cannot come from using violence means, Peace can only profoundly arrive when manifested during times of violence or conflict ... **Fourth**, the Greek language of the ancient manuscripts provide a measure of intrigue as well – with “peace” actually being the Greek word *eirene*, a word which means “peace of mind” or “contentment of being” (**not** an absence of war or strife – see Strong’s #1515), “righteousness” actually being the Greek word *dikaioynes*, a word which means “justice” (**not** piousness or holiness – see Strong’s #1343), and “harvest” actually being the Greek word *karpos*, a word which actually means “fruit” (see Strong’s #2590) ... As such, what this verse is actually telling us is that “**those whose gentle actions bring contentment to their enemies will bear the fruit of Justice and reap the fruit of Peace**” For in Truth, the making of Peace is the sowing of Peace, and the sowing of Peace is the harvesting thereof -- all of them are One & all come to fruition in the moment of their making.

Amen ... Let it be so.



Psalm 23 ... Through the Valley of the Shadow

(06/01/2017)

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside still waters (of rest); He restores my life. He leads me in Paths of Righteousness (for His name’s sake). Even though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I fear no evil -- for He is with me ... His rod and staff – they comfort me. He prepares a table before me in the presence of my enemies; He anoints my head with oil ... My cup [of service] overflows. Only goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the House of the Lord forever.”

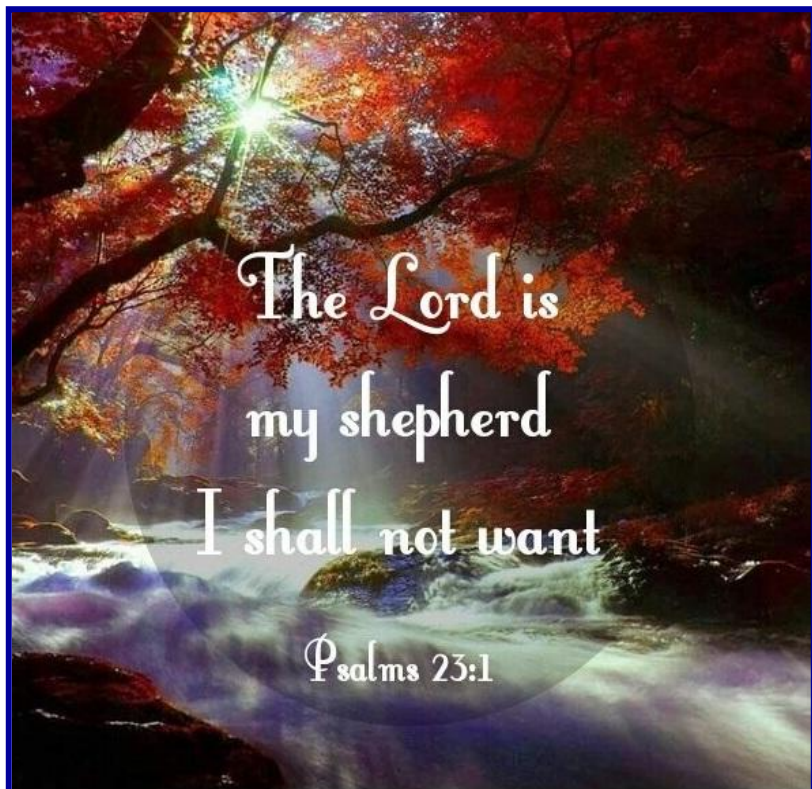
~ unknown (Psalm 23)

First & foremost, realize that there are two primary perspectives from which to choose whenever reading Old Testament scripture – the first being the “unway” of the Pharisees (the traditional, conservative, highly judgmental lens used by the hyper-critical and ostensibly arrogant religious leaders of Jesus’ day, and the way still used by the vast majority of Christians to this very day) and the second being **The Way of Jesus Christ** (the blatantly heretical, highly revolutionary lens applied to the Scriptures by Jesus himself during his ministry – and the Way devoutly followed by all those abiding in his teachings today) ... Using the former lens, this Psalm speaks of a personal godhead who resides somewhere “up above;” one who “looks down” upon our failings with an air of condescension & upon our frustrations with an air of capriciousness. Even though this particular Psalm speaks kindly of this “Divine Despot”, a celestial tyrant He remains – guiding us and controlling us and judging us while He does so ... He is an arrogant God who demands subservience, and He is a petty God who demands worshipful reverence; not in any way like the “**heavenly Father**” of Jesus Christ – a **Father** who as the reflection of perfect Love (**Matthew 5:48**), the purveyor of limitless Grace (**Luke 6:36**), and a **Father** who knows nothing of either judgment (**John 5:22**) or condemnation (**Matthew 18:21-22 + 1 John 4:18**).

Note as well that Jesus agreed that his Father was a “**shepherd**” of sorts – and yet the moral guidance provided by His essence came **from within** us (**John 14:20-26**) ... Note too that Jesus knew that we need “**not want**” for anything, but not because God would provide for our petty needs, but rather because those who chose to embody the Truth of his Life no longer needed or even desired such things. The Way is a Life lived for others – a life of intentional self-sacrifice – a life that only desires for others to have *their* burdens lessened and *their* Joys magnified. And this is why those who “**follow**” Jesus (i.e. those who **emulate** his Way of selfless Love – see **John 14:12**) want for nothing – and this is why they receive everything they desire when praying “**in his name**” (**John 14:13-14** et al); for the simple reason that to pray in Jesus’ name means to pray for opportunities to serve others, and such opportunities are always available to those seeking the same.

In addition, please note that – for Jesus at least – God leads us to “green pastures” not that we might rest there, but rather that we might *feed others* therewith; leads us “beside still waters” not to refresh ourselves, but rather to *give sustenance to others* thirsting nearby (Matthew 25:35-40). For this is the only way to walk a “path of righteousness” – this is the only way to earnestly live “for His name’s sake” – this is why there is no more fear, even though we might “walk through the valley of the shadow of death” (Hebrews 2:14-15 + John 14:1-6). For the life lived for others is the life lived from Love, and there can be no fear in Love’s presence. For where Love is enlivened with purpose, fear has no choice but to recede (1 John 4:18) ... Indeed, this is why “He prepares a table for me *in the presence of my enemies*” – for the simple reason that we are the ones setting that table; for the simple reason that we are the ones who have been called to *feed our enemies* therewith (Matthew 5:43-48). And this is why He “anoints our heads with oil” – not to be rewarded in the Hereafter (John 6:15 + Matthew 4:1:10 + Matthew 20:23), but rather to call us to a life of self-sacrifice; to call us to “die daily” for others (Matthew 16:24) and thereby have a “cup that overflows” with the wine of unconditional Love (John 2:3-10). This is why “Goodness and kindness follow us all the days of our lives” – because our lives consist of bringing goodness and kindness to everyone we encounter.

Amen ... Let it be so.



For those following *The Way of Christ*, the Lord is known as perfect **LOVE** ... And for those enlivening that **LOVE**, there can be no want or desire ... And for those without want or desire, Kindness rules each moment ... And when Kindness rules the moment, the shadow of death flees & fades, and it becomes impossible to stray into fear or darkness.

2 Corinthians 6:16 ... The Temple of the Living God

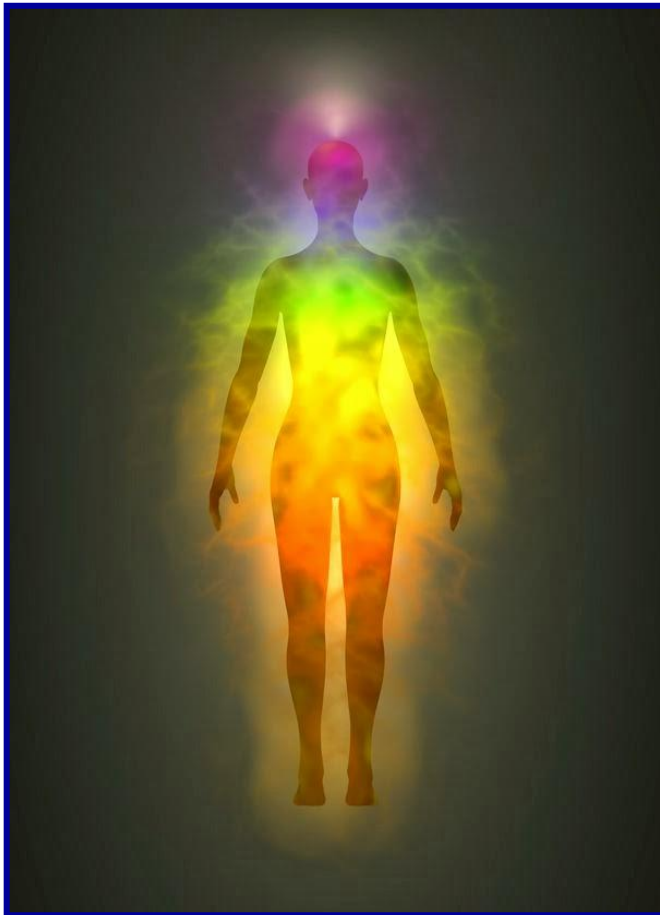
(06/02/2017)

“You are the Temple of the Living God.”

~ Paul (2 Corinthians 6:16)

This verse is short in word and yet long in Meaning, for Paul did indeed believe that we were but the vessels that carried the Divine Essence – vessels that were & remain inherently sinful (see [Romans 3:23](#), [Romans 8:8](#), [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#), [1 Corinthians 15:56](#) et al), and bodily vessels that are so impure they need liberation from an external, celestial source (see [Romans 7:4](#), [1 Corinthians 2:11](#), [2 Corinthians 1:10](#), [1 Corinthians 15:23-25](#), [2 Corinthians 9:10-11](#), [Philippians 4:6](#) & [Philippians 4:19](#) et al) ...

Jesus, of course, had a very different take on humans & humanity – an *opposing* take, no less. For Jesus believed that our True Selves were not the crude vessels that carried us (our bodies) or the crude identities that keep us shackled by lust &/or fear, but rather that we are all ***innately Children of God*** – that our



selflessly Loving Souls are who we truly are (see [John 14:20-26](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [John 15:26](#), [John 14:12](#) et al) and that our mission in this lifetime is to re-enliven the same (see [Matthew 22:37-40](#), [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#), [John 13:15-17](#) et al).

As such Jesus would read this verse from Paul and say not that we are the Temple of God, but rather that our “Temples” encapsulate who we truly are – namely, ***CHILDREN of God*** – directly interconnected facets of the Divine – embodied agents of The One – actual Sons & Daughters of the heavenly Father who resides simultaneously within and all around us ([Luke 17:20-21](#)).

Amen ... Let us reflect the same.

Matthew 4:16 ... To See a Great Light

(06/03/2017)

“The people who sat in darkness have Seen a great Light. And for those who sat in the region of death, Light has also dawned.”~ Jesus (Matthew 4:16)

First of all, as is so often the case with the Gospel of **Matthew**, this verse is a direct allusion to (and almost a direct quote from) the Old Testament Scriptures – in this case **Isaiah 9:2** (“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who lived in a land of deep darkness -- on them light has shined.”) And this is important for the simple reason that the Gospels – and especially the Gospel of **Matthew** – show Jesus repeatedly and flagrantly amending (and in many cases actually abolishing) the Old Testament laws that were still in effect in his day ... And this Truth is made even more clear when we look to the very next verse; a verse which reads “From that time Jesus began to proclaim, ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is already at hand’” (**Matthew 4:17**) – a verse which laid the groundwork for his entire ministry, with “repent” actually being the Greek word *metanoeo*; a word that meant not “self-criticize” or “admit fault” but rather “completely alter one’s lifestyle” (see Strong’s #3340), in this case moving away from self-centered behaviors (behaviors easily justified by strict applications of an outdated & hyper-critical religious law) and fully towards a selfless Way of Being that chose to humbly seek out and actively Care for everyone – especially enemies & outcasts (see **Matthew 5:17-18** -- where “fulfill” was actually the Hebrew word *pleroo*, a word that meant not “blindly support” but rather “to make complete”, and also **Matthew 7:21-24**, **Matthew 18:3-4**, **John 13:15-17**, **Matthew 5:43-48**, **Matthew 215:35-40** et al) ... Note as well that “Light” for Jesus was actually a symbolic reference to a mental awakening to the correctness of his Way, coupled with a spiritual awakening to the practical Truth of selfless Love (see **Matthew 5:16**, **Luke 11:34-35**, **John 1:4-5**, **John 12:35-37**, **John 14:12**, **John 8:12** + **John 14:20-26** et al). And “Light” is also the liberation from darkness; the darkness that was composed of lust inspired by fear – especially the fear of death (see **Hebrews 2:14-15**).

True, the Christian church (founded upon the theological inanities of Paul) tried to combat this fear by combating death – by inventing an eternal Heaven in the Hereafter for those who proved themselves worthy of the same (see **Romans 5:21**, **Romans 11:21-22**, **Romans 14:10-12**, **1 Corinthians 4:4**, **1 Corinthians 5:13**, **1 Corinthians 11:32**, **2 Corinthians 4:4**, **1 Thessalonians 1:10** et al); a theology that forever will bear the Bad Fruit of sadness, division, oppression, condemnation, despair, and – worst of all – an intensification of the very fear that caused such trouble in the first place ... And all of this exists to this day in direct opposition to **The Way of Christ** (see **Mark 10:18**, **John 5:22**, **Luke 17:20-21**, **John 14:20** et al); a **Way of Living** that combats fear in this lifetime, by usurping that fear via radical acts of selfless Love (see **Matthew 5:48** + **1 John 4:18** + **John 13:15-17** et al).

And this is why those “[who sat in the region of death](#)” are specifically mentioned, for it is these people (those who are in great pain, or great fear, or great despair, or very near their actual demise) who are most susceptible to awakening to the Truth of [The Way](#). And this is why we have been Called to “[repent](#)” – to turn from our arrogance & our selfishness in order that we might Love others fully, and thereby “[give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide their feet into the Way of Peace.](#)” (Luke 1:79)

Amen ... Let it be so.



James 5:11 ... The Purpose of the Lord (06/04/2017)

“You have seen the Purpose of the Lord;
how He is compassionate and merciful.”
~ James (James 5:11)

“James the Just” (one of Jesus’ most trusted disciples – see Gospel of [Thomas 12](#)) knew what Jesus knew and preached what Jesus preached – namely, that it was **works** steeped in courage that formed the essence of any **Faith**; that we were not to engage Good Deeds because we were certain of receiving any reward therefrom, but rather were to Care for others solely because they were suffering and needed their burdens eased. And James knew as well that it was this same selflessness of intention that gave Love both its purity and its Power – healing those to whom it was given, inspiring those who were blessed to witness it being giving, and granting access to “[the Kingdom of Heaven](#)” to all those humble enough to do that self-sacrificial Giving (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 16:24](#) et al).

As such, those who wish to fully comprehend [The Way of Christ](#) would do well to remember that God is the perfect enlivenment of a perfect Love ([Matthew 5:48](#)) – a Love that knows neither fear nor punishment ([1 John 4:18](#)) – a God of limitless Mercy ([Luke 6:36](#)), endless Grace ([John 5:22](#)), and perpetual Forgiveness ([Matthew 18:21-22](#)) ... And as such it is not that God’s mercy is his primary Purpose, but rather that Compassion & Mercy are His innate characteristics – that they are in essence His only Purpose; to bless others with them “from above” (actually “from *within*” – see [John 14:20-26](#)) and to inspire us all from within to go forth and act accordingly (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) & [Matthew 28:20](#) et al).

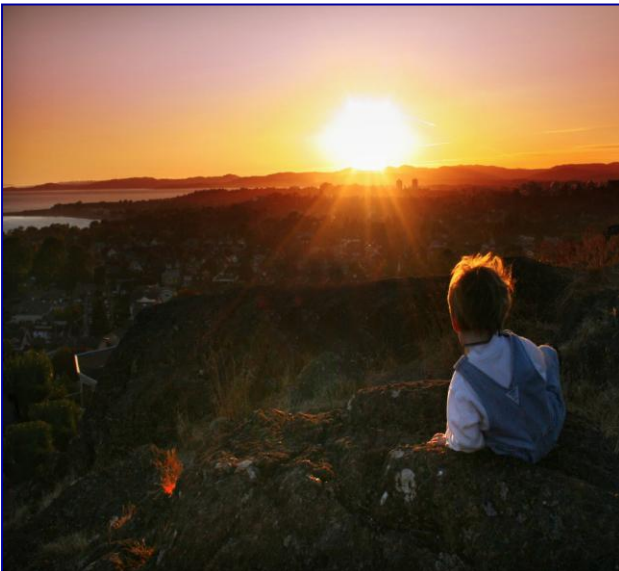


Proverbs 3:34 ... Grace to the Humble

(06/05/2017)

“God opposes the proud and gives Grace to the humble.”
~ unknown (Proverbs 3:34)

First & foremost, it is important to remember that God – or at least the essence of the energy that many call “**God**” (at least as far as Jesus himself is concerned) – resides **within** each & every sentient being (see [John 14:20-26](#)), and that this is the only place where any judgment ever does or ever will take place (a Truth that reconciles the otherwise problematic juxtaposition of [John 5:22](#) + [John 8:15](#) + [John 12:47-48](#)) ... **Second**, note as well that **Grace** is not a gift given only to those who choose humility, but rather is *a given* (see [John 1:1-8+16](#)) – a consistently constant giving that only those choosing to be humble can recognize & appreciate (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#) & [Matthew 23:12](#) et al) ... And so how does God “oppose the proud” – how does God humble those who exalt themselves? Well, He (or better stated – “It”) starts such a process with the inevitable destruction or loss of all to which those people cling (see [Matthew 24:2](#) – “Truly I tell you, not one stone will be left here upon another; all will be thrown down”), which then inspires an entrenchment of all yearning therefor and thus the entrenchment of the suffering that comes therefrom (see [Matthew 10:39](#), [Matthew 16:24](#) et al) -- a pain which then morphs into the abject loss of all ability for selfish sinners to Love & thereby know the Bliss that comes from enlivening **The Way of Christ** (see [Matthew 19:11](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al), and which then ends with the “**wrath of God**” that will indeed visit all those self-centered & superficial minds on their deathbeds (see [Matthew 24:36-44](#), [Matthew 25:1-13](#), [Luke 21:34-3](#), & [John 3:36](#) + [John 14:12](#) et al) ... **Finally**, how can we set such pure Humility in motion? How do we preclude the internal **Father** from ensuring that we reap the painful consequences



of our arrogance & our greed? Simply enough, by actively and boldly and repeatedly “**becoming again as a very young child**” (the Greek *paidion* in [Matthew 18:3-4](#), a word that means not “adolescent” or even “child” but rather means “**very young child**” – namely, the “**infant**” who appreciates the miracle of everything he see as though seeing it for the first time, and the “**toddler**” who cherishes everyone she encounters as though they were her long-lost Soulmates – se Strong’s #3813).

Amen ... Let it be so.

Romans 7:15-17 ... Succumbing to sin

(06/06/2017)

“That’s impossible!” ~ Paul of Tarsus

(said to the Followers of Jesus)

“I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.” ~ Paul (Romans 7:15-16)

Paul never saw Jesus in the flesh, he never heard Jesus preach, and as such he never even faintly comprehended Jesus’ **Way** or his **Truth** or his **Life** (contrast Paul’s highly erroneous self-made “gospel” about Jesus in [1 Corinthians 15:1-4](#) & [Romans 10:9](#) et al with Jesus’ own **Gospel** about **The Way** of selfless Love in [Matthew 10:7](#) & [Matthew 24:12-14](#) – see also [Matthew 7:21-24](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [Mark 10:18](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#) et al) ... And that is why Paul is the embodiment of our ego, looking at acts of self-sacrificial Love and calling them “irresponsible” (when they are actually the only real Responsibility we have), looking at acts of self-sacrificial Love and calling them “dangerous” (when they are actually our only hope for anything resembling real Security of Self), and looking at acts of self-sacrificial Love and calling them “masochistic” (when they are actually the only way to Care, and thus the only way to honor and enliven one’s True Self). And yet like the ego, Paul simply didn’t understand – he didn’t understand **The Way of Christ** because he refused to embolden the courage required to leap onto its willingly self-sacrificial Path -- and what is never experienced cannot ever be truly understood ... And as long as we too choose self over other, and as long as we too choose safety over service, and as long as we too choose selfishness over self-sacrifice, then we too will go through life falsely believing that true **LOVE** is impossible – and it is we too who will never know the sheer Bliss of Jesus’ “**Kingdom of God**” ([Luke 17:20-21](#)) or the sheer Joy of his “**Kingdom of Heaven**” ([Matthew 18:3-4](#)).

In this vein, please understand the following stark contrasts between the “unway” of Paul and **The Way of Christ**: ***Paul** tells us to be prudent and “give what we can” to those who have earned it, while **Jesus** tells us to Give even our last two pennies to those in need (see [Luke 21:1-4](#)) to those “least deserving” of the same (see [Luke 10:29-37](#)) ... ***Paul** tells us to respect governmental authorities and obey the ruling elite, while **Jesus** tells us to subject ourselves only to the Will of God (see [Matthew 5:17-18](#) – where the Greek *pleroo* did not encourage us to obey the law but rather told us to transcend the same, a la [Matthew 8:22](#), [Matthew 12:8](#), [Matthew 15:11](#), [Matthew 17:27](#), [Matthew 22:21](#) et al) ... ***Paul** tells us to “love” those who love us and to be kind to those who treat us with respect, whereas **Jesus** tells us to “**Love the enemy**”, to “**turn the other cheek**”, and to “**pray for those who persecute**” us (see [Matthew 5:38-48](#) et al).

1 Peter 2:20-21 ... For this we have been Called

(06/07/2017)

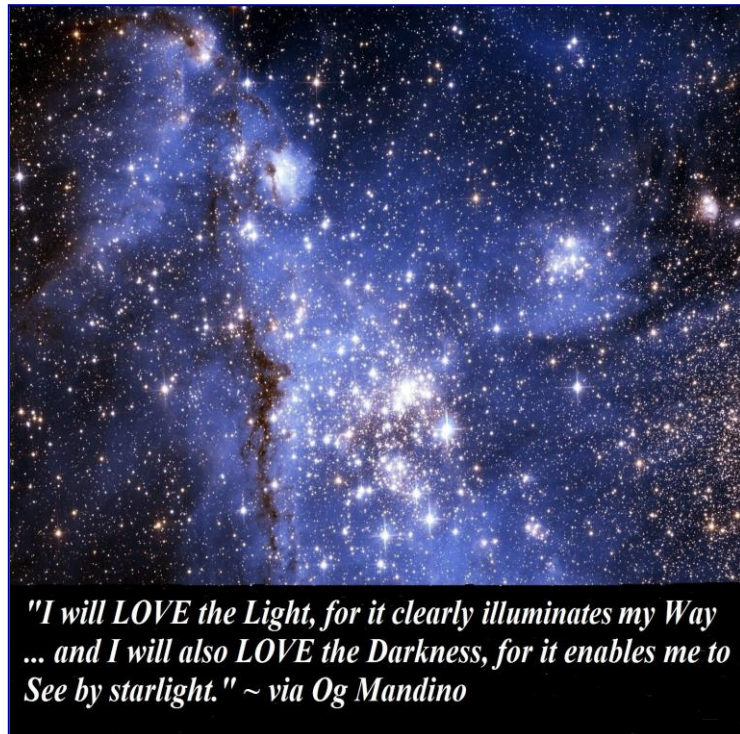
“Endure when you do Right and yet suffer for it ...
For to this you have been Called.”

~ unknown (1 Peter 2:20-21)

There are at least two important points to consider related to this verse:

First, while it is indeed important to persist in **Doing Right** (i.e. Caring for others – especially when we feel least able to do so – see [Matthew 24:12-14](#); and especially for those “least deserving” of the same – see [Matthew 5:38-48](#)), the selfless nature of Kindness means that we never need to emotionally “endure” while doing so. Indeed, “enduring” something traditionally implies that there is a degree of suffering involved – and suffering, as we now, can only exist when one is focusing on one’s own discomfort as opposed to the trials &/or hardships of the other ... **Second**, the Greek word for “endure” here is *hypomeneite*, a word that does not imply suffering at all, but rather simply means “to remain” or “to persist” (see Strong’s #5278). Accordingly, seeing as how truly Right Action is 100% focused on the other and 0% focused on the self, it is literally impossible to suffer while “**Doing Right**.” We can experience pain while doing so, of course, and yet we cannot *suffer* from the same. Indeed whatever pain or discomfort is felt during acts **Rightness** (i.e. selfless Caring &/or self-sacrificial Love) are actually seen as allies to the one engaged in the same; knowing as he or she does that acts of Kindness extended while in pain are exponentially more powerful (and therefore exponentially more Peace-enlivening) than acts of Love given in times of ease or pleasure.

And it is indeed precisely to such bold acts of selfless Love that we have all been Called (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#) + [John 13:15-17](#) et al), for what Power is there in merely Caring for others who are being Kind to us? What transformation comes from being merely nice or friendly or polite to strangers? What transcendence is available while ignoring our enemies or defending ourselves from their advances?



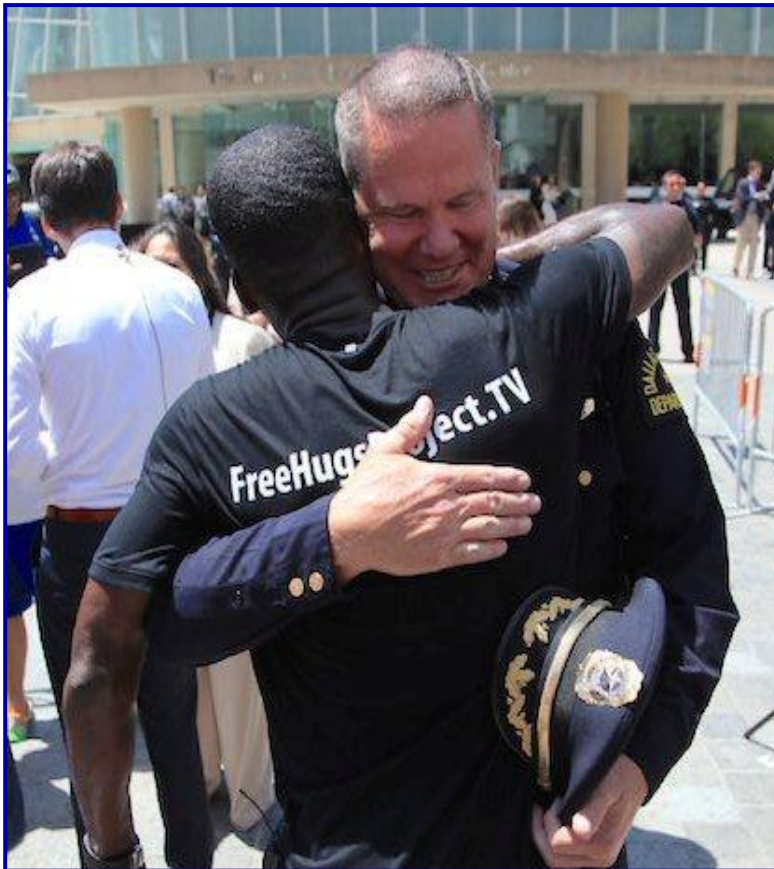
Hebrews 13:2 ... Kindness to the Angels

(06/08/2017)

“Show kindness to all strangers, for by doing so many have entertained angels unawares.”

~ unknown (Hebrews 13:2)

While this verse does illuminate the Truth that there is an innate Divinity within every sentient being -- and that there is Divinity at the Heart of every human interaction as well (even encounters as innocuous as passing stranger on the street, and even those as harsh as being attacked by a supposed “**enemy**”), such an emphasis actually hinders this verse's potency ... For we are not to treat strangers with Kindness because they are angels in disguise (a focus which implies that we are to treat them lovingly because **A**) they might do something Kind for us in return, or **B**) they are innately Good and thereby worthy of being conditionally “loved” as a result). No, in truth we are actually Called to treat strangers as if they were angels while they are behaving otherwise and as if they are anything but (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#)) ... Indeed, our Kindness is most potent in those moments we are convinced that strangers are “dangerous” or “mean” or “dishonest” or even “evil”, and yet reach out to them with **Kindness anyway** (see [Luke 6:27-36](#)) – not because they are



potentially “**angels in disguise**”, but because they are probably *not* angels in drag; because they are simply human beings in obvious pain; because they are others just like us – albeit possibly more confused by greed and probably more befuddled by fear ... In essence, we are to be Kind to them not because of their innate Divinity – but simply because they have obviously lost touch with the same, and we are the only ones in that moment who can bring them back thereto.

Amen ... Let it be so.

Acts 7:48 ... To dwell in Holier Houses

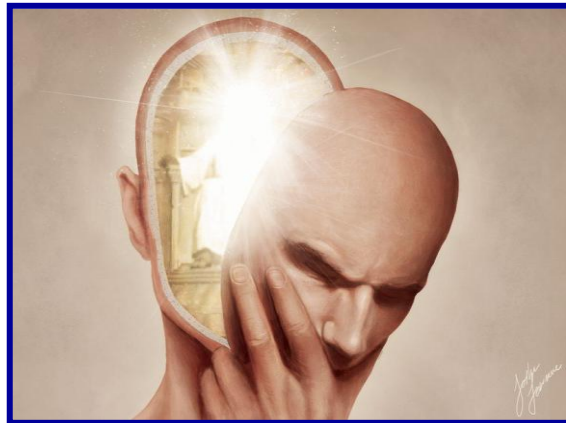
(06/09/2017)

“Yet the Most High does not dwell
in houses made with human hands.”

~ Paul (Acts 7:48)

Actually, this verse receives both a “Yes” and a “No” from me – a “No” in the sense that “**the Most High**” is the seemingly celestial Essence of Oneness that permeates everything around us; including everything that happens to be found within any holy houses made by human hands ... And yet this verse also gets a smiling “Yes” in the sense that the one “house” where **the Most High** actually does dwell is **the body** of every sentient being (see [John 14:20-26](#) & [John 15:26](#) & [Luke 17:20-21](#) & [Hebrews 3:16](#) & [1 Corinthians 3:16](#) et al), a “house” most certainly not “made by human hands” (at least not in the sense that Paul is implying here) ... Of course, far more importantly than where we might find this Holy Essence – this “**Most High**” – is the fact that Paul fully misunderstood what it was; that for him God was a celestial overlord who looked down upon us all from “on high” (see [Romans 7:4](#), [1 Corinthians 2:11](#), [2 Corinthians 1:10](#), [1 Corinthians 15:23-25](#), [2 Corinthians 9:10-11](#), [Philippians 4:6](#) & [Philippians 4:19](#) et al), while Jesus continually reminded us of a very differently godhead – a **heavenly Father** composed of **perfect Love** (see [Matthew 5:48](#) & [1 John 4:8](#) et al), a **heavenly Father** who embodied the essence of the **Holy Spirit** *within* us (see [Matthew 12:31-33](#), [John 3:3-8](#), [John 14:20-26](#) et al), a **heavenly Father** who never judged from “on high” (see [Matthew 18:21-22](#), [John 5:22](#), [John 8:15](#) & [John 12:47](#) et al) but who rather perpetually extended “**grace upon grace**” to all of us **from within** (see [Luke 6:36](#) & [John 1:1-8+16](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



P.S. Note as well Paul is being hypocritical here – seemingly denigrating Jewish religious authorities, even though he almost exclusively preached to devout Jews during his missions (see [Acts 9:20](#), [Acts 13](#), [Acts 15:21](#), [Acts 17:2](#), [Acts 19:8](#) et al) – and this despite the fact that he had apparently been Called to preach to the Gentiles (see [Acts 9:15](#) & [Acts 22:21](#) et al), and this even though he openly outed himself as a Pharisee on more than one occasion (see [Acts 23:6](#) & [Philippians 3:5](#)).

Thomas 1:77 ... The Light within it All

(06/10/2017)

“I am the Light that is within everything ... I am All; All came from me and All has returned to me. Split a piece of wood and I Am there. Lift up a stone and you will find me there as well.” ~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 77)

First & foremost, it can be quite enlightening to juxtapose this verse from **Thomas** with the opening passage of **John***; realizing that “**the Word**” in the latter passage is not a reference to Jesus Christ specifically, but rather the Greek *Logos* – a term used at the time to refer to the Inner Divinity (or the Life Essence or “the Soul”, or “**the Holy Spirit**”, or “**the Spirit of Truth**”, or “**the Advocate Within**” etc) that resides within all sentient beings. And when we keep this Truth in mind, the other statements that Jesus makes about “**the Light**” become far less arrogant-sounding (see **Matthew 18:3-4** & **Matthew 23:12**) and far more profound (see **Matthew 4:16**, **Matthew 5:16**, **Luke 11:34-35**, **John 8:12** + **John 14:12**, **John 12:35-37** et al) ... **Second**, note as well that “**the Light is *within* everything**” – the same way as “**the Kingdom of God**” is *within* each of us (see **Luke 17:20-21**), the same way God Himself resides *within* us (see **John 14:20-26**), and the same way that the ability to choose Love – the ultimate key to any & all Salvation – rests ever *within* us as well (see **Matthew 7:21-24**, **Matthew 18:3-4**, **Matthew 24:12-14**, **John 13:15-17** et al) ... **Third**, it is also interesting to juxtapose the phrase “**split a piece of wood and I Am there; lift up a stone and I Am there as well**” with **Luke 17:20-21**, where the translation of the Greek can very well be rendered as “**The Kingdom of God is not coming [in the future] with things that can be observed; nor will they be able to say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘Look, there it is!’** For, in fact, the Kingdom of God is already both *within and all around* [the Greek *entos*, often translated errantly as “among” or less errantly as “within” – see Strong’s #1787] **you**” ... Indeed, while **the Light** might indeed be within everything, this Truth means nothing until our own Light is set in motion with Love – a Love that then releases the Light within all things and all beings nearby.



*see **John 1:1-16** – “In the beginning was the *Logos*, and the *Logos* was with God, and the *Logos* was God. It was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through the *Logos*, and without it not one thing came into being. What has come into being through the *Logos* was life, and the life was the light of all people ... This true light, which lights up everyone, was coming into the world ... Indeed, from the *Logos*’ fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

1 Peter 3:4 ... The Spirit's lasting Beauty

(06/11/2017)

“Let your adornment be the Inner Self;
the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet Spirit.”

~ unknown (1 Peter 3:4)

First & foremost, even though most scholars agree that this letter was probably written by one of Peter's disciples well after his death (due to its sophisticated use of the Greek language, due to it being addressed primarily to Gentile Christians who would have been religiously established after Peter's life had passed, and due to its lack of references to the life and teachings of Jesus), this remains a verse that resonates well with **The Way of Christ** as shared in the Gospels – a “Gospel” (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#) et al) that did indeed call for us all to “adorn” our bodies & minds with “**the Inner Self**” (what Jesus called “**the Advocate Within**”, and what non-Christians might call “the Spirit” or “the conscience” – see [John 3:3-8](#), [John 14:20-26](#), [John 16:13](#) et al) ...

Secondly, it is intriguing to see how the following Greek words used in the ancient texts support this contention:

*Especially of interest is the apparent fact that the word “**adornment**” is not found in this verse at all – meaning that this particular translation is either referring to the Greek word *kosmos* (of [1 Peter 3:3](#) -- a word which means “adornment” or “of the entire world”, a la Strong's #2889) **or** the Greek word *ekosmoun* (of [1 Peter 3:5](#) -- a word which means “outer appearance” or “to decorate”, a la Strong's #2885) ...

*In addition, “**Inner Self**” here is actually a Greek phrase that reads *kryptos tes kardias anthropos* in the ancient manuscripts, a phrase which essentially means “the hidden Heart of the Human” or “the True Self” (see Strong's #2927, #3588, #2588 & #444) ...

*Next, “**lasting beauty**” is represented by the Greek word *aphtharto*, a word which means “imperishable” or “incorruptible” (and does not necessarily relate only to beauty, which is not specifically mentioned in this verse at all – see Strong's #682) ...

*“**Gentle & quiet**” come from the Greek words *praeos* & *hesychiou* respectively, words which mean “mild” & “peaceful” respectively (see Strong's #4239 & #2272) ...

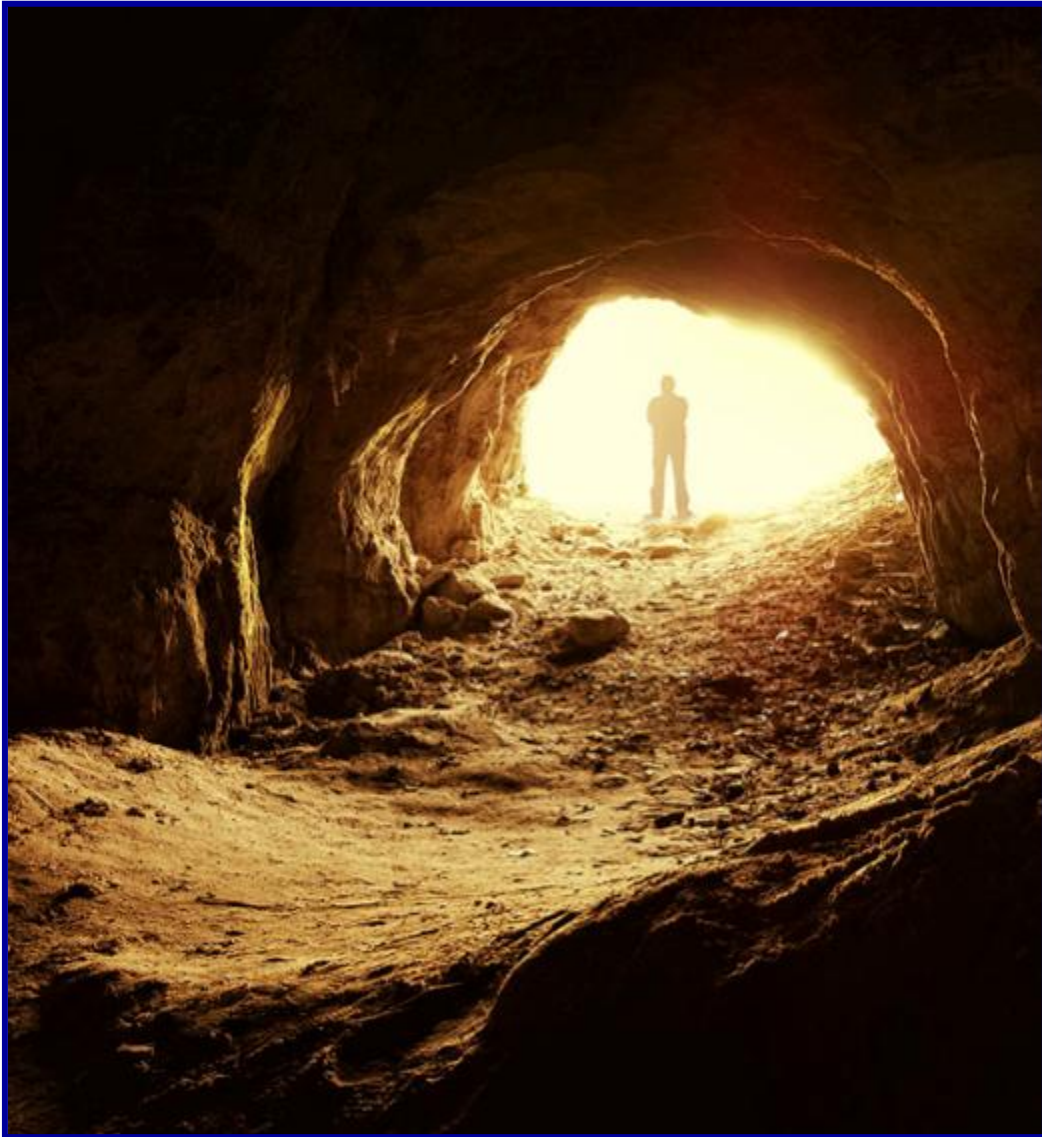
*And finally, “**Spirit**” is actually the Greek word *pneumatos*, a word which means “breath” or “life essence” (see Strong's #4151).

As such, when these more accurate meanings are plugged back into our initial English translation, we get the following:

“Let your outer appearance (i.e. that which is visible to the world) harmonize with the True Self that resides in your Heart -- the True Self that is eternal and completely incorruptible; ever exuding a mild and peaceful essence (to others).”

Of most important note -- this new translation not only melds seamlessly with the ancient Greek, but harmonizes just as well with the teachings and indeed the entire ministry of Jesus Christ as read in the Gospels (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 18:3-4](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [John 14:20-26](#), [John 15:26](#) et al).

Amen ... Let it be so.



1 John 4:12 ... Love perfected within
(06/12/2017)

“If we Love one another, God lives in us,
and His Love is perfected in us.”
~ unknown (1 John 4:12)

Actually, God (or “the Divine”, or “the Source”, or “the Prime Mover”, or “the Logos” -- a la John 1:1-8+16) lives in us whether we choose to Love others or not (see John 10:34, John 14:20-26, John 15:26, Acts 17:28, 1 Corinthians 3:16, Ephesians 2:22, Hebrews 3:6, 2 Timothy 1:4 et al) ...

And **actually**, God’s Love (which is actually *our* Love) is only perfected in us when we exude that perfect Love perfectly to others (see Matthew 7:21-24, Matthew 13:1-23, Matthew 16:24, Luke 10:29-37, John 13:15-17, 1 John 3:18 et al) ...

And **actually**, truly “perfect Love” is always the Love most difficult to give – the Love that gives when we are poor (see Luke 21:1-4) and the Love that detaches from all possessions & all ease & all comfort when we are wealthy (see Matthew 19:11). It is the Love that gives to others even when sad or persecuted or lonely (see Matthew 5:3-11), and it is the Love that gives to our direst enemies (see Matthew 5:43-48) as freely as to the downtrodden in our midst (see Matthew 25:35-40).

Amen ... Let it be so, **actually**.



1 John 5:6 ... A most Truth-full testimony

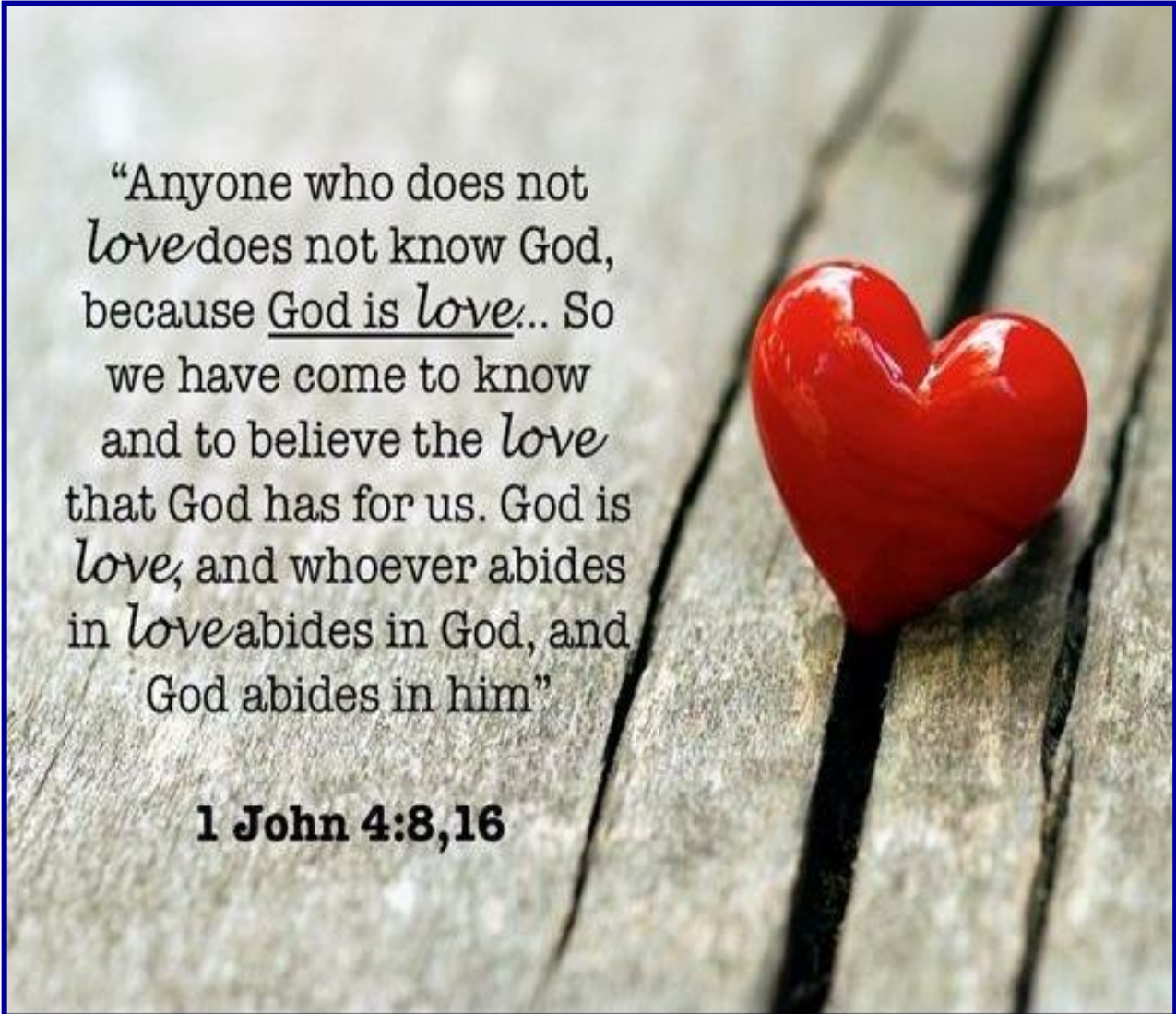
(06/13/2017)

“And the Spirit is the one who testifies,
for the Spirit is the Truth.”
~ unknown (1 John 5:6)

First of all, it is crucial to remember that “the Spirit” referenced here is not an external entity, but rather an *internal* Essence (what some call “the Holy Spirit” or “the Spirit of Truth”, what others call “the Soul” or “the True Self” or “the conscience”, and what Jesus called “the Advocate” – see [John 14:20-26](#) & [John 15:26](#) et al) ... Of course, the question remains as to how we can know whether the “voice” (or “feeling” or “intuition” or “hunch”) that is speaking to us is actually from this Spirit – whether we are receiving internal guidance from a Divine source that resides in the Heart (see [Matthew 21:43](#)) or an ego-based source that resides in the more primitive regions of the human brain. Fortunately, there is an easy test that we can use to make this determination – the “Fruit of the Tree” (see [Matthew 7:15-20](#) et al); essentially engaging in Caring deeds that are earnestly intended to bring Peace &/or Joy to others, and then “listening” within to see what feelings arise as a result.

Quite simply, if we focus on the other(s) to whom we are extending said acts of Love and feel Peace-full while giving them, then they are “of the Spirit” – if we do not, then they are not ... And note that the only deeds that can engender such Peace-full experiences are those sincerely engendered in humble Love and those earnestly designed to bring Love to others (see [Galatians 5:22-23](#)). And note as well that the consequences that come from such a selfless act are not necessarily a determinant as to whether or not the deed was “right” or “spiritual” or “holy” ... Yes, if we engage an action that inadvertently causes pain and inadvertently leads to another’s suffering, we logically choose to abandon that method of Loving with them in the future, and yet that does not mean that it was “wrong” to have Loved in that way, or even that the Love given did not come from “the Spirit” ... Indeed there will be those who use our acts of Goodness to further their own feelings of annoyance or frustration or fear or even anger – to entrench their own choice to suffer. And yet them doing so does not make our Love “wrong action.” Their suffering is their choice, and has no bearing on whether or not our Love truly came from “the Spirit.” We honor their choice if they decide to respond to our Love with aggression or callousness or ridicule or fear, and we choose to Love them differently thereafter (or even turn to give our Love to another if they persist in using our Love as an enhancer of internal discord), **and yet** Love given purely & selflessly & earnestly is *always* Right Action – is always “of the Spirit” – at least in the moment it is being given.

Amen ... Let it be so.

A close-up photograph of a bright red, glossy heart-shaped object resting on a weathered wooden plank. The heart is positioned on the right side of the image, with its stem-like base extending downwards. The background is a blurred, light-colored wooden surface with visible grain and cracks.

“Anyone who does not
love does not know God,
because God is *love*... So
we have come to know
and to believe the *love*
that God has for us. God is
love, and whoever abides
in *love* abides in God, and
God abides in him”

1 John 4:8,16

The Spirit of God is LOVE, and that perfect LOVE is always a verb. As such, the only way to truly know God is to truly know His Love, and the only way to truly know that perfect Love is to LOVE others perfectly -- without exception, without condition, without agenda, and without limit.

1 Peter 4:10 ... With whatever Gifts

(06/14/2017)

“Serve one another with whatever Gift each of you has Received.”

~ unknown (1 Peter 4:10)

While we each have scintillatingly unique Gifts that only we can use to serve others, this verse communicates the general Truth that we are simply to Give whatever we have to Give -- wherever we already are, for whom is already nearest by ... Indeed, we are never to “wait for a better time” to Give, nor are we ever to “learn more” before Giving or “search for true Purpose” before Giving either. We never have anything “more important to do” than to reach out boldly into the lives of those around us – to bring them Kindness; to bring them Peace: to bring them Joy; to bring them Love.

And indeed, in a society as screwed up (i.e. as founded on – and sadly, as appreciative of – fear) as ours currently is, even the smallest deed of self-sacrificial Goodness is perceived as something amazing – and thus has an amazing effect on others; both on the one to whom it is given, as well as to all those blessed to witness the same.

Amen ... Let it be so.

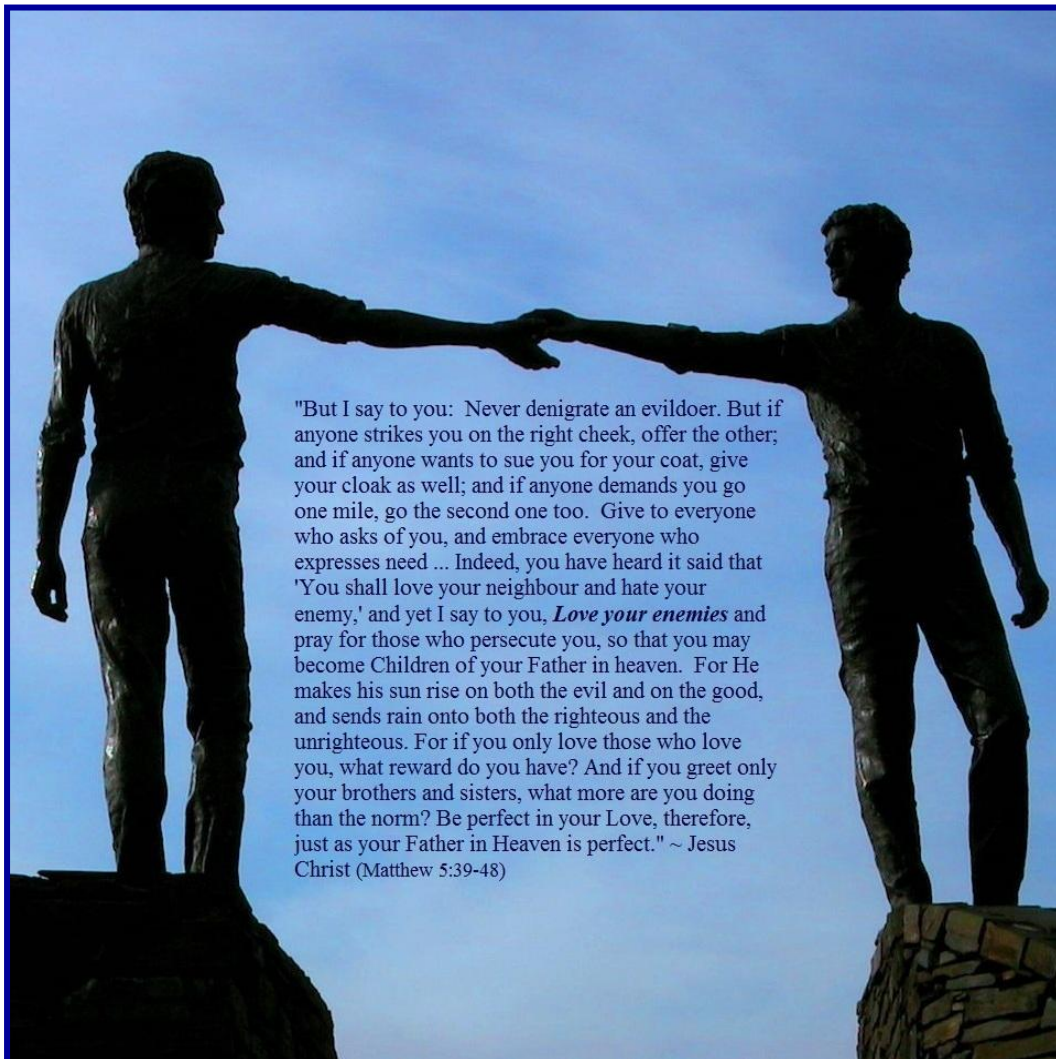


Jude 1:2 ... Yours in Abundance

(06/15/2017)

“May Mercy, Peace and Love be yours in abundance.”
~ unknown (Jude 1:2)

Even though the author of this biblical epistle was obviously quite worried about his theological opponents (i.e. others who “pervert the grace of our God”, something which is actually impossible to accomplish – see [Jude 1:3-4](#)), the Wisdom of this particular verse still shines brightly through that emotional, ego-tainted haze ... For deep-seated **Mercy**, profound **Peace**, and unconditional **Love** are *always* ours in abundance – for real **Peace** comes from giving true Love, true **Love** comes from showing pure **Mercy**, and pure **Mercy** is always nothing more than a choice we can all always make; the choice to bravely **Love** those nearest by who seem “least deserving” of the same ([Matthew 5:43-48](#) et al).



"But I say to you: Never denigrate an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, offer the other; and if anyone wants to sue you for your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone demands you go one mile, go the second one too. Give to everyone who asks of you, and embrace everyone who expresses need ... Indeed, you have heard it said that 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy,' and yet I say to you, **Love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become Children of your Father in heaven. For He makes his sun rise on both the evil and on the good, and sends rain onto both the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you only love those who love you, what reward do you have? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than the norm? Be perfect in your Love, therefore, just as your Father in Heaven is perfect." ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:39-48)

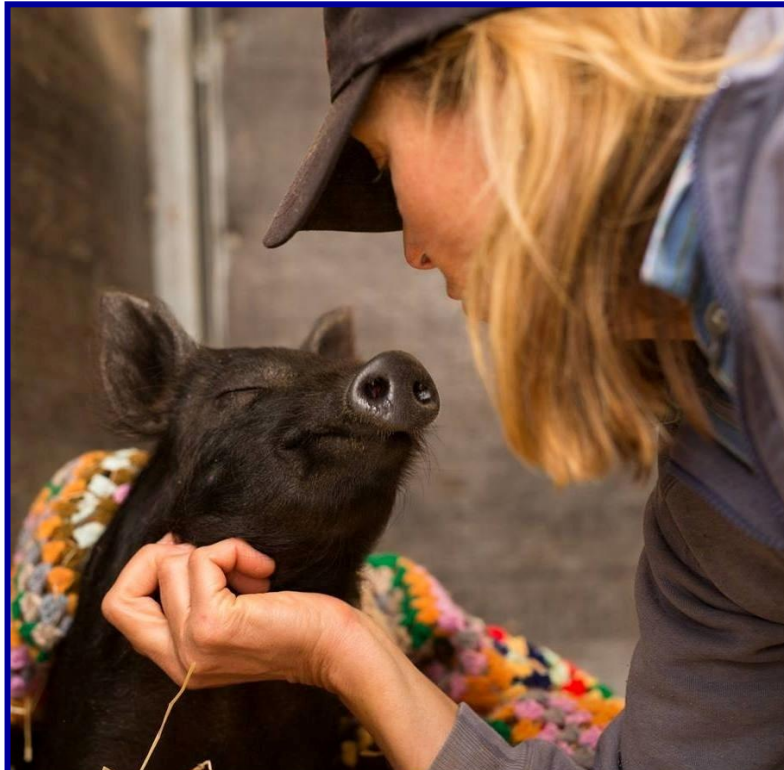
2 John 1:6 ... Walking the LAW

(06/16/2017)

“And this is Love ... You must walk in It.”

~ unknown (2 John 1:6)

This statement is a patent and absolute Truth – indeed, one of the most important Truths in existence; and indeed the very same Truth that formed the primary foundation for Jesus’ entire ministry (see [Matthew 5:43-48](#), [Matthew 7:21-23](#), [Matthew 25:35-40](#), [John 1:1-8+16](#), [John 3:3-8](#), [John 3:21](#), [John 5:29](#), [John 13:15-17](#), [John 14:12](#), [John 14:20-26](#) et al) ... It was a Truth that formed the essential basis for his entire Gospel (see [Matthew 24:12-14](#) – also [Matthew 22:37-40](#) & [Luke 10:29-37](#)), and it was a Truth that is consistently (though often subtly) reflected throughout the rest of the New Testament as well (see [Acts 10:34-35](#), [Acts 17:28](#), [1 Corinthians 4:20](#), [Galatians 5:6](#), [Galatians 6:2](#), [Ephesians 2:10](#), [James 1:22-25](#), [1 John 2:6](#), [1 John 2:29](#), [1 John 3:7](#), [1 John 3:18](#) et al) ... Essentially, Jesus came to remind us all that ***Love is either a verb or it is nothing***, and that Love can only become transcendent (and thereby transformational) in those times when it is difficult to give -- when it is shared in those moments we least wish to do so, especially for those deemed least deserving of the same.



Amor est mors mortis ...

(Love is the death of death)

1 John 4:16 ... To abide in GOD

(06/17/2017)

“God is Love, and those who abide in Love abide in God,
and God abides in them.” ~ unknown (1 John 4:16)

First & foremost, note that “Love” in this verse is the Greek *agape*, a word that means neither emotional need nor philosophical romance nor sexual desire nor psychological partnership, but rather a word that meant **active Caring** (see Strong’s #26); the kind of **Love** that Jesus considered to be “perfect” (Matthew 5:48) – the kind of **Love** that was more thought than emotion & more word than thought & more deed than word – the kind of **Love** that is only reborn into Being during acts of courageously humble self-sacrifice (Matthew 16:24) – the kind of **Love** that comes alive when caring for downtrodden strangers (Matthew 25:35-40) – and the kind of **Love** that treats enemies (Matthew 5:43-48) as if they were long-lost Friends ... Just as importantly, note that “abide(s)” in this verse is the Greek word *menei*, a word that means “to consistently remain” or “to persistently fulfill” (see Strong’s #3306) ... And finally, please note that God is always *within* us (John 14:20) – and yet that He only abides in us fully when we act accordingly; only when we act as direct agents of his unconditional **Love** (John 14:23) ... **Love** that is courageous -- and **Love** that is humble -- and **Love** that is a verb. Indeed, perfect **Love** is either all of these things ... or **LOVE** is nothing at all.



***"What is done in LOVE
is done well."*** ~ Vincent van Gogh

Hebrews 12:28 ... The unshakable Kingdom

(06/18/2017)

“Since we are receiving a Kingdom that cannot be shaken,
let us give thanks.” ~ unknown (Hebrews 12:28)

First & foremost, it is important to understand that we cannot give appropriate thanks while receiving anything or while hoping to receive anything in return for the same. Indeed, true & heartfelt gratitude is actually given *before* gifts are possibly offered, and without any hope for the same (see [Matthew 26:26](#), [Mark 14:23](#), & [Luke 22:19](#) – also [Colossians 4:2](#) & [1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)) ...

And this is especially true of “the Kingdom” here mentioned – a Kingdom that is always an innate facet of every sentient life; a Kingdom that is always a *given* and never a mere gift; a Kingdom always residing *within* us; from our very first moment of Awakening in the womb to the very last breath we are blessed to inhale (see [John 1:1-8+16](#), [John 3:3-8](#), [Luke 17:20-21](#) et al) ...



"Truly I tell you, unless you change and become again like young children, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. For only those who become humble like this very young child will be considered great in the Kingdom." ~ Jesus Christ (Matthew 18:3-4)

It is a Kingdom that we can only enter & appreciate while humbling ourselves in service to others (see [Matthew 18:3-4](#) & [John 13:15-17](#)), and yet it is a Kingdom that is ever by our sides – ever leading our Way – and ever guiding our Hearts & Souls nonetheless. It is our Birthright of birthrights – it is what makes us Human and it is what gives our lives potential Meaning and ever-possible Great Purpose ...

As such, all that remains is for us to go forth and *act accordingly* – all that remains (in each & every moment of our lives) is for us to go forth to set our Gratitude in motion.

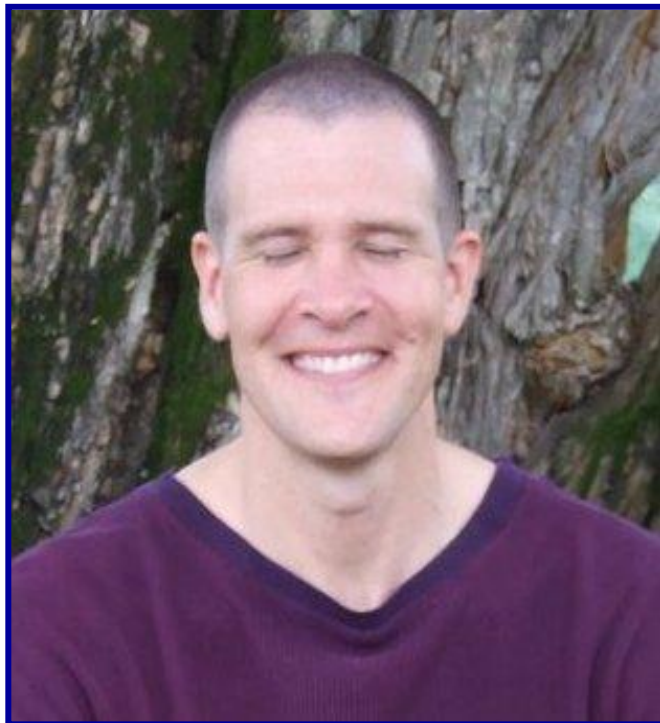
Amen ... Let it be so.

Acts 18:21 ... Returning to Re-turn
(06/19/2017)

“I will return to you, if God wills.”
~ Paul (Acts 18:21)

Whereas Paul obviously made this and similar statements to emotionally manipulate his listeners (see Acts 20:20-21, Romans 11:13-14 + Romans 15:17, 1 Corinthians 15:10 + 1 Corinthians 9:15, 2 Corinthians 2:9, 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, 2 Corinthians 6:6-10, 2 Corinthians 7:2-10, 2 Corinthians 8:2-8, 2 Corinthians 8:24, 2 Corinthians 9:5, 2 Corinthians 11:7, 2 Corinthians 12:19-21, Galatians 1:24 & 1 Thessalonians 2:2+10 et al), Jesus made such statements in full sincerity – saying “*Thy will, not mine, Lord*” not to cajole God into showering him with enhanced ease or subsequent reward, but as a simple statement of fact – a simple reminder to self & others that he had already chosen; that he had chosen to live for others; that he had chosen **The Way** of Joy-full sacrifice; that he had chosen **The Way** of Love (see Matthew 20:22, Matthew 26:39, Mark 14:36 & Luke 22:42 – also Matthew 5:43-48, Matthew 19:11, Matthew 16:24, Mathew 24:12-14, Matthew 25:35-40).

Similarly, neither are we to melodramatically tell others that we might one day return (implying, of course, that we very well might not), but rather are to offer our farewells filled with Gratitude for having been able to share time & space with the other at all – while leaving the door completely & consciously open for a Joy-full reunion in the future, should such a meeting in any way serve the Life’s Greater Good ... And this is the ***Farewell*** I offer you all at this time -- a ***Farewell*** overflowing with Gratitude for the times we have spent together (both online &/or in person), as well as a ***Farewell*** overflowing with Humility; not knowing whether we will ever see each other again, and yet being completely open to Joy-fully doing so should I ever be so blessed.



Amen ... Live well in **LOVE**, and know that it is so.



*“And I will take one from a thousand
and two from ten thousand,
and they shall Become a single One.”
~ Jesus (Gospel of Thomas 23)*