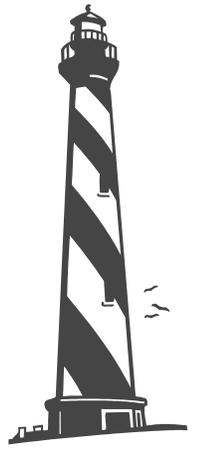


THE BEACON BEAM



June 2021

TRUTH TO LIVE BY

EXPECT TROUBLE

by Alistair Begg

In the world you will have tribulation.

John 16:33

Are you asking why this should be, believer? Look upward to your heavenly Father, and behold Him pure and holy. Do you know that you are one day to be like Him? Will you easily be conformed to His image? Will you not require much refining in the furnace of affliction to purify you? Will it be an easy thing to get rid of your corruptions and make you perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect?

Next, Christian, turn your eye downward. Do you know what foes you have beneath your feet? You were once a servant of Satan, and no king will willingly lose his subjects. Do you think that Satan will leave you alone? No, he will always be at you, for he "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."¹ Expect trouble, then, Christian, when you look beneath you. Then look around you. Where are you? You are in enemy country, a

stranger and an alien. The world is not your friend. If it is, then you are not God's friend, for whoever is the friend of the world is the enemy of God. Be certain that you will find enemies everywhere. When you sleep, remember that you are resting on the battlefield; when you travel, suspect an ambush in every hedge. As mosquitoes are said to bite strangers more than natives, so the trials of earth will be sharpest to you.

Lastly, look within you, into your own heart, and observe what is there. Sin and self are still within. If you had no devil to tempt you, no enemies to fight you, and no world to ensnare you, you would still find in yourself enough evil to be a sore trial to you, for "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick."² Expect trouble then, but do not despair on account of it, for God is with you to help and to strengthen you. He has said, "call upon me in the

day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."³

¹) 1 Peter 5:8

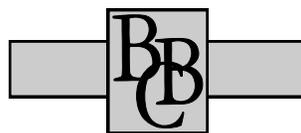
²) Jeremiah 17:9

³) Psalm 50:15

Alistair Begg is the senior pastor of Cleveland's Parkside Church, Geauga County, Ohio, a position he has held since 1983. He is the voice behind the *Truth For Life Christian* radio preaching and teaching ministry, which broadcasts his sermons daily to stations across North America. He is also the author of several books.

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Gregory N. Barkman, *Senior Pastor*
Michael R. Karns, *Minister of Christian Education*
Robert F. LaTour, *Minister of Families*
Gregory L. Phillips, *Minister of Music*

Sunday

Morning Worship...9:30 AM
Sunday School.....11:10 AM
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

Wednesday

Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

Is Eternity An Eternity Away?

by Paul Tripp

When was the last time you thought about your place in heaven?

For some of us, eternity might seem like an eternity away. For others, depending on our age or any current health complications, heaven might feel closer and more real.

Either way, for sinners living in a broken world with fickle hearts, getting an accurate perception of Forever will be difficult. In one way or another, today will appear big and significant, and the hereafter distant and ethereal.

It will be a constant struggle to look at our present life through the lens of eternity and not give it more weight than it actually has.

That's why I love and need the reminding words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:16–18:

“So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” (ESV)

Notice that Paul does not deny the existence or minimize the importance of today. But he does so with proper perception in light of heaven. Compared to the eternal glory of living with God in a fully restored world, the troubles, tasks, pleasures, and celebrations of the here and now are light and momentary.

Psalm 73:20 characterizes this present life as “a dream when one awakes.” In the moment, a dream can seem more real than your actual life. But when you wake up, it disappears like steam. The dramatic moment of the dream can't be compared to the many, many years that make up your real life.

Heaven tells us that our existence in the here and now will only be a minute part of our total existence. Since we will live forever, when we add our years in this broken world to the sum total of our existence, they will

*Eternity tells every child
of God that the bulk of
our existence will be lived
in a place of eternal
peace, rest, and joy.*

only make up a microscopic fraction of our lives.

Don't allow your heart and mind to be dominated by the struggles and pleasures of today because Scripture reminds us that everything that makes up your physical existence in the here and now is passing away.

When you see things around you as permanent, they take on too much importance and increase your sense of loss when they are taken away. If you mistakenly think that this life is only about who has the most gigantic pile of possessions and pleasures in the here and now, then your priorities will become unbiblical. Simultane-

ously, the loss of those possessions and pleasures become all the more painful and seem all the more unfair.

If you are God's child, today is not your final destination but a preparation for your final destination.

Sadly, many of us cause our own trouble with eternity amnesia. We forget who we are and what we have been given for today—and perhaps most importantly, what is promised tomorrow.

Don't look at this moment as if it is all there is and all you have.

Heaven guarantees that all of this is temporary. Eternity tells every child of God that the bulk of our existence will be lived in a place of eternal peace, rest, and joy.

Eternity not only provides us with future hope but with living hope in the here and now.

Dr. Paul David Tripp is a pastor, event speaker, and a best-selling and award-winning author. With more than 30 books and video series on Christian living, Paul's driving passion is to connect the transforming power of Jesus Christ to everyday life.

KNOWING YOUR ELECTION BY GOD

by Greg Barkman

The Bible doctrine of election is, to put it mildly, controversial. Some who reject it, are exceedingly militant in their opposition. Some who embrace it are likewise militant in promoting it. Who's right? We don't establish Bible doctrine by majority vote but by study of Scripture. There are scores of texts we could examine, but I want to look at one in First Thessalonians chapter one, which states, "knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God" (verse 4). The Apostle Paul not only declares the fact of election, but claims to know who the elect are. That's astonishing! Can we know the identity of the elect? Paul is identifying the elect who are already saved, not those who are yet to be saved. No man can identify the elect who are presently unconverted.

THE FIRST THESSALONIAN EPISTLE. Paul's opening salutation follows the standard format found in virtually all his epistles and contains nothing unusual. Paul identifies himself as the author, the Thessalonian church as the recipients, and includes a customary greeting as well as a declaration of thanksgiving to God. But then the epistle takes a surprising turn when Paul indicates that one of the things he is thankful for is the Thessalonians' election by God. What? How could Paul possibly see into the mind of God to be able to identify the elect?

SOMETHING THAT IS KNOWN. Paul's words are unmistakable. "Knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God." Evidently, election is something that it is possible for men to know. Paul says he knows several things about these saints. They were recipients of the new birth, which is why he calls them "brethren." They were objects of

God's love, indicated by the word, "beloved." But it's the fact that they were chosen by God in eternity past that gives us pause. But there it is, as plain as can be. "Knowing your election by God."

HIS CHOICE OF YOU. Election means "choice." In a political election, voters select their favored candidates, and make their choices known by marking a ballot. Nobody ques-

Nobody questions the meaning of a voter's choice. It's the voter who chooses the candidate, not the candidate choosing the voter. And so it is with God. "Your election by God" does not mean your choice of God, but God's choice of you.

tions the meaning of a voter's choice. It's the voter who chooses the candidate, not the candidate choosing the voter. And so it is with God. "Your election by God" does not mean your choice of God, but God's choice of you. The text says that God chose the saints at Thessalonica. Furthermore, it is not God choosing on the basis of what He knows their choice would be if given the opportunity to choose, and then ratifying their choice. It is not, "Knowing your ratification by God, but knowing your election by God." God's choice comes first and the Thessalonians choice followed as a result of God's choice. That is the

plain meaning of this text when nothing foreign is imported into it.

SOMETHING THAT IS MANIFESTED. Now we get to the "knowing" part of this statement. How did Paul know these people were chosen by God? We are not left to guess because Paul plainly tells us. There were several evidences that made their election known to Paul. What are they?

GOSPEL RECEPTION. Verse five says, "For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance." The opening word, "for" is significant. It could be rendered "because." What follows is how Paul knows their election by God. It is for the following reasons, which start in verse five and continue to the end of the chapter. A second reason flows out of the first, and a third out of the second and so on, until we have a list of reasons. The first is gospel reception. The gospel preached to these people did not come to them "in word only." It was not merely proclaimed by Paul, but the proclamation was attended with believing faith. Others in Thessalonica heard the same proclamation but did not receive it. It came to them "in word only." It was simply a speech by another traveling orator, a common practice in that day. They had heard plenty of public orators and to them, Paul was no different. But to others, the gospel came not only by the words of Paul, but with a special Holy Spirit energized power that caused them to believe. How can I know that I am among the elect? If I believe the gospel, I am. The non-elect hear the gospel without inward effect. The elect hear it with life-giving power. If you are a believer, the only explanation is that you are

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

one who was chosen by God in eternity past, and therefore, God's Spirit caused the gospel to come to you with saving power. The natural man neither desires nor truly understands the gospel. He won't believe it because it is foolishness to him. But the ones chosen of God hear the gospel differently. It comes to them with life imparting power. That is the first evidence of election.

CHANGED LIVES. As a result of genuine faith, these believers became followers of Christ in spite of much affliction. Amazingly, they suffered persecution with joy (verse 6). How does one explain this? This is not natural. It is supernatural. The explanation is that God changed their hearts, resulting in changed behavior. Beloved, if you have had a similar change of heart resulting in a changed life, it must be traced back to your election by God.

EXAMPLES TO OTHERS. The Thessalonians demonstrated exemplary Christian behavior that extended far beyond their own city to the whole province of Macedonia, northern Greece, and even to Achaia in southern Greece (verse 7). Widespread reports of their changed lives evidenced their election. Election is known by its results in the lives of the elect. Sometimes we call this the fruit of salvation. Paul calls it the fruit of election.

FERVENT WITNESSES. Furthermore, these believers became gospel proclaimers. The word of the Lord

sounded forth from their church to Macedonia, Achaia, and even beyond, perhaps to Asia, Galatia, Italy, and elsewhere. Thessalonica's strategic location on the Egnatian Way, along with its excellent harbor, made it a thriving trade center. Hundreds of people passed daily through its streets, and the believers proclaimed the gospel to as many as possible, some of whom took it to other locales. Their enthusiastic gospel witness evidenced their election by God (verse 8).

REJECTION OF FALSE RELIGION. Most of the Thessalonians were saved out of paganism. They were steeped in idol worship with all its immoral practices. But they "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (verse 9). This remarkable transformation is the result of the new birth wrought by the Spirit of God. The cause of this regenerating work is traced by Paul back to their election by God. True believers are committed to Jesus Christ alone, renouncing their former false religions which are practiced by family and friends. The price for rejecting traditional community religions is ridicule, rejection, and persecution. Superficial decisions will not endure the fires of persecution. But those who are truly born again will joyfully pay the price, and in so doing, manifest their election by God.

LOOKING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN. Finally, these Christians were "waiting for His Son from heaven... even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come" (verse 10). An eager

expectation for the second coming of Christ is absent from the unregenerate for whom the thought of Christ's return is either a matter of indifference or dread. Where you find people longing for the return of Christ, you also find those who are chosen by God. That, my friend, is how election is known. It is known by the evident and manifold results of God's regenerating power. Do you see evidences of divine election in your life? If not, go humbly to Christ, acknowledge your need, and plead for His mercy. In so doing, you will manifest the first evidence of divine election.



The sovereignty of God is not a secondary doctrine that is relegated to an obscure corner in the Bible. Rather, this truth is the very bedrock doctrine of all Scripture. This is the Mount Everest of biblical teaching, the towering truth that transcends all theology. From its opening verse, the Bible asserts in no uncertain terms that God is and that God reigns. In other words, He is *God*—not merely in name, but in full reality. God does as He pleases, when He pleases, where He pleases, how He pleases, and with whom He pleases in saving undeserving sinners. All other doctrines of the Christian faith must be brought into alignment with this keystone truth.

—Steven J. Lawson, *Pillars of Grace*

Sing Unto the Lord a New Song

by Greg Phillips

PSALM 96

1. Sing un - to the Lord a new song, sing to Him, O all the earth!
2. Oth - er gods fade as a va - por; there is none be - side the Lord.
3. Wor-ship God in ho - ly beau - ty; bow be - fore His throne in fear.
4. Let the heav - ens shout, re - joic - ing, and the earth in joy a - flame;

Bless the name of God for - ev - er; sing sal - va-tion's won-drous worth.
In His dwell-ing, strength, and splen - dor, God ex - alt - ed and a - dored.
Now pro-claim a - mong the na - tions His do - min - ion, ev - er near.
let the sea in thun - der praise Him, field and for - est now ac - claim.

Tell His glo - ry to the na - tions; of His won - ders, an-thems raise.
Give Him glo - ry, all ye peo - ple; give Him glo - ry due His name.
By His word the earth was found - ed, that it nev - er may be moved;
For the Lord, the Lord is com - ing; let the earth re-sound a - gain!

He is Lord of all cre - a - tion, great, and great - ly to be praised.
In His tem - ple, as an of - f'ring, all His pow'r and might pro - claim.
in His word is jus-tice ground-ed, that He right-eous may be proved.
To His peo - ple, He is com - ing in His right-eous-ness to reign!

Words: David P. Regier

Music: J. Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

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NETTLETON

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The day arrived for the ark to be placed into its tent prepared at the order of David, the King. Reading an account of the event in 1 Chronicles 16, we find a commemoration of thanks and praise to the LORD God of Israel with music prepared for the occasion written by David. Parts of many psalms can be identified in this celebration, and in vv. 23-34 the entirety of Psalm 96 is sung. The call to praise and worship God as great and glorious is prominent, but the psalm looks beyond the events of the day to eternal and universal reign and judgment. Just as in all the Psalms, Christ is not mentioned specifically yet He appears prominently as the one to whom every knee shall bow.

David gives us two significant reasons for praise. First, we sing because God is worthy of praise. He alone is great and deserves our praise (4). He is the only true God (5). He is majestic, full of honor, strength, and beauty (6). He is worthy of glory and our offerings (8). He is righteous and faithful (13). He does the marvelous works of salvation (2) and creation (5). He is worthy of all our praise because of who he is and what he has done.

Second, we sing to be heard among the nations. This great God has redeemed a people by his grace, and singing of redemption serves as a powerful witness to the unbelieving people of the world. God will judge righteously with truth all the people of the earth (10, 13). God-centered worship in which we bless his

name, magnify his glory, and speak of his wonderful work *is* evangelistic. It is the witness of the gathered church when it comes together for worship. In Psalm 96, we learn that we sing in worship because it helps us express appropriate heart affection toward God in response to the worthiness of His character and works, which both glorifies Him and is a powerful witness to the unbelieving world.

Oh, sing to the Lord a new song!
Sing to the Lord, all the earth.

² Sing to the Lord, bless His name;
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.

³ Declare His glory among the nations,
His wonders among all peoples.

On The Feminine Side

Marti Barkman

When June arrives, Coffee n' Courage has officially ended another season. In spite of the myriad changes and challenges of the past year, we finished the 2020/21 session just a few weeks later than our original calendar had planned. Over the last ten months we worked through the book "From Garden to Glory" by Courtney Doctor. The subtitle is "A Bible study on the Bible's Story" and the goal of the study is to see the Bible as ONE story, rather than a collection of somewhat related writings. It involved weekly homework...and our students were pretty diligent in keeping pace with the assignments...and each chapter included a 30-minute DVD, featuring the author as the speaker. If the point of the study was to see the Bible as one continuous story, the point of the story was to see that God has been, since the Garden of Eden, conducting a rescue of the people he loves. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is a story of redemption. And even when you get to Revelation, the story is not over, for we are current players in this drama! A. W. Tozer said one of the most significant truths about God is that He came to dwell with man, and this fact was a highlight of the book. We agreed at the end that the author's desire for the reader to begin to see the depth of God's love for his children had been realized. Each chapter's homework included many questions to be answered and some of the questions from the last chapter have been assigned as summer homework for the coming days. I hope these questions will prompt us to think over the core truths of our study, helping to clarify and cement them in our minds. I will attempt to answer one of them on this page, hoping very much to state simply and clearly, and accurately, the answer to this question: **Why do I need Jesus?**

If you are of a certain age, you might have grown up watching "The Lone Ranger" on black and white television. As the hero of the show rides off on his horse 'Silver', we hear a puzzled voice ask, "Who was that masked man?" The question, why do I need Jesus, must be answered by asking two similar questions: **Who is this Jesus and why did he come?** What makes him the hero in this Bible story?

"When you realize who He is, you will understand why He came. Thousands of years ago, at the blocked gate to his sin-wrecked garden, God promised he would send a rescuer. He has come!! And He has opened wide the gate to glory! Rejoice!!"

Who is Jesus? From the very beginning in the Garden of Eden, man, having inherited Adam's sinful nature, demonstrated his inability to live according to God's law. Because of this sin nature, we are all born in trouble with God. Man is in a state

From Genesis to
Revelation,
the Bible is a story
of redemption.
And even when you
get to Revelation,
the story is not over,
for we are current
players in this drama!

of complete desperation, a fact that he himself may not realize. What is he to do? He has no way to pay the penalty for his sins, God can't allow sin in his presence, and to live outside God's presence is death. Is there any hope? Yes! God sent his Son to earth in the body of a baby, God living in human flesh. That is WHO Jesus is.

Why did Jesus come? What did he do? He came to earth where he lived a life free of sin, and 'ended it all' by dying to pay for the sins of desperate sinners. But the end was not an ending, but the beginning for us! Jesus rose from the dead, is in heaven with God the Father who accepted Jesus death as payment for our sins! By trusting in the death of Jesus we are reconciled with God, at peace with God. Adopted into God's family, we are given a new life here on earth and eternal life with God in the glory of Heaven. Jesus is the Rescuer promised by God, the One who would redeem those expelled from God's presence. The Rescuer DID come, the gate IS open! What a reason to rejoice!!!

So, to answer that question, 'why do I need Jesus' we need to know two important things: **Who is Jesus, and who am I?** I am a sinner in need of a rescue, and Jesus is the only one whose death is accepted by God as payment for my sins! He is the one who can give me a new heart, a new life, and dress me in his robes of righteousness so I can be allowed in the presence of God, his Father, and now mine.

The fellowship between God and his creation was broken when sin entered the picture and the beauty and perfec-

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

tion of life in the Garden was exchanged for a life of toil and sweat and tears, bitterness, sorrow, and death. The longings of the human heart are really the longing to return to what God created, and created us for in the first place. And that is what peace with God will bring—restoration of fellowship with Him now, and in the Glory to come, life on a redeemed earth, restored beyond its original beauty. On page 187, Courtney concludes, “And so the story ends, but what a story it is! From the garden to glory, God has a plan. ‘At the end of all things, God is once again with his people.’ Access to the Presence is restored. Adam

has returned to the garden. Redemption has been accomplished” (quoting Sandra Richter).

I said I hoped to answer the question ‘Who is Jesus?’ accurately. Does it really matter what you think you know about Jesus? Yes, more than any question you’ll ever consider for the answer is a matter of life or death. Eternally. The beautiful news is that Jesus has done the work necessary for redemption to take place. Your part is to listen to the truth and plead for God to extend his mercy to you. He is a ‘great God of wonders (and) all his ways are matchless, God-like, and divine.’

And a god who delights to show mercy to his children.



What does it look like to serve Christ in the secular workplace? One of my favorite illustrations answering that question is from a retired automobile salesman. He had sold cars most of his adult life. At some point in that career he had trusted Christ as Savior. He said to me, “Before I became a Christian, I sold cars. After I became a Christian, I helped people buy cars.”

This man was telling me that, before becoming a Christian he was not concerned about the desires and needs of the potential buyer, but only about the commission he would receive if he sold the car. Likely he would try to sell more expensive cars because of the larger commission. But after he became a Christian, his primary interest was to help the potential customer find the best car for his needs and his budget. His motivation changed from serving himself to serving his customer. He had learned to serve Christ by serving people.

—Jerry Bridges, *Who Am I?*



THE BEACON BROADCAST

Monday thru Friday

WITA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WKBA 1550 AM (Roanoke, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WKPA 1390 AM (Lynchburg, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WBAG 105.9 FM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.
WDZY 1290 AM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WDZY 103.3 FM (Richmond, VA)	6:15 a.m.
	10:00 a.m.
WSKY 1230 AM (Asheville, NC)	7:15 a.m.
WYYC 1250 AM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.
WYYC 98.1 FM (York, PA)	5:00 p.m.

Sunday

WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WLES 590 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.
Harbour Light of the Windwards	9:30 p.m.
1400 AM/94.5 FM (Caribbean)	
WGNQ mixlr.com/wgng-radio (M-F)	
	8:45-9 a.m. & 4:45-5:00 p.m.
(Internet station based in Greenville/Washington, NC)	

Monday thru Sunday

WXTH-LP 101.7 FM (Richwood, WV)	10:05 a.m.
	10:05 p.m.

BEACON HIGHLIGHTS FOR JUNE

CALENDAR

- 06** Sunday School Promotion
Elective Studies
10 Elders/Deacons Meeting
14 Tri-State Particular Baptist
Fellowship
20 Father's Day
Baby Day

MEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 01** Rachel Knierim Phillips
03 Mary Beth Harper
Ron Massey
Melanie Moody
05 Cheryl Ingold
07 Jeff Barnt
15 Linda Spencer
17 Suzann Lynch
Christen Verroi
20 Nellie Hunter
21 Shirley Watkins
22 Robin Allred
23 Christie Carpenter
24 Dorothy Campbell
Gail Ellis
25 Gary Allred
26 Ryan Brigman
29 Kevin Kooy
30 Sue Elliott
Manuel Pitman

MISSIONARY BIRTHDAYS

- 01** Isaiah Jensen*
05 Micaiah Bixby*
Alethea Johnson*
21 Tammy Honeycutt
30 Larrie Bunyan

*Children of Missionaries

*Due to COVID-19 restrictions,
our calendar is subject to change.
We encourage you to follow our
announcements on our Beacon
website: www.beaconbaptist.com*

*We express our heartfelt
sympathy to the families of:*

Missionary Benny Aldridge
Evelyn Butler
Gloria Lail
George & Michelle Ligon
Robin Robinson

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