



# Prayer/News Update

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## The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us

*There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*

**S**everal years ago I was invited to speak for two weeks in special meetings. My topic was to be the deity and the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was about to discover a peculiarity in the thinking of some of God's saints—a peculiarity that I believe diminishes our understanding and appreciation of the Gospel.

For the first week I emphasized the deity of Christ, that He was the Word made flesh. He was there at the creation. It is clear that God made all things by Jesus Christ. <sup>Ephesians 3:9</sup> The apostle John tells us that all things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made. <sup>John 1:3</sup> That was the Word. There could have been no mistake about my unqualified embrace of the deity of Christ.

The second week I emphasized the humanity of the Lord Jesus, a matter of incomparable importance to our appreciation of the Gospel. As we considered how absolutely human Jesus became at His birth, which was a blessing to most, it seemed that some folks wanted Him to be one hundred percent God, but they preferred Him to be only fifty percent man.

The fact is, however, that our salvation hinges on His humanity, the truth that there was a perfect man to pay the penalty for depraved humanity. If God could have justified the salvation of mankind without the death penalty being administered to man, there would have been no need for the birth of the Lord Jesus through human parentage, and His death on the cross as a man forsaken by God.

Sometime very shortly after the

beginning of human history, Adam made the decision to hearken to Eve's invitation to eat of the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil in an act of disobedience to God. The Bible says that by one man's disobedience many were made sinners. Now it would take the obedience of another man, his counterpart, for many to be made righteous.

At the very moment that Adam sinned, God was already prepared

*Man of sorrows! What a name  
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Hallelujah, What a Savior!*

with the solution that He had purposed from before the foundation of the world. It involved someone that He called "The Seed of the Woman." He would be called that because He would be an absolutely human being who would be born of a human mother, as all human beings are, but without a human father. God would be His Father. The apostle Paul describes Jesus as being made of a woman, made under the Law, that

He might redeem them that are under the Law. It seems that except for sin, He was to be of the same substance as the sinners that He was to redeem. Hebrews 2:16 tells us, "...verily He took not on him the nature of angels; but He took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to made like unto his brethren..." Romans 1:3 likewise tells us that "Jesus Christ was made of the seed of David ac-



By Dick York

In His human lineage, the Bible traces His genealogy from Adam through Seth, through Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Boaz, Jesse, David and finally through Mary, the woman whose seed He was, as prophesied in Genesis 3:15. In the creation, the Word of God acted quite exclusively of the humanity in which He would appear. And there would also be a time when that humanity would fulfill His purpose distinctly from the deity He had manifested to the world. That time would be at the cross where Jesus would cry out, "Eli, Eli, Lamasabachthani! My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken me?" There, as man, Jesus died for Adam's race. And, as Paul noted in II Corinthians 5:14, if one died for all, then were all dead. God did not die that day, man died. The whole human race was executed in the person of the Lord Jesus

Christ. That, according to the Scriptures, was the purpose of the incarnation. He came to die, something immortality cannot do.

When referring to the sacrifice that was made for sin at Calvary, Scripture makes much of the *body* of the Lord Jesus. It was His physical being that was put to death, the seed of the woman, Mary's Son. Because it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away

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## THE CALL OF GOD

### Walk Worthy!

In Ephesians 4:1, Paul says, “I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye *walk worthy* of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” Who is worthy? I shall never be worthy of this great call of God. Nevertheless, the way I walk is very important. Our walk should be as good or even better than our talk. When a young prince is growing up, he will always be reminded that some day he will be the king; therefore, he should live his life accordingly.

Our heavenly vocation is much greater than anyone could ever have in this world. This is why Paul goes on to say that we should walk with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love. The fact that I am not worthy of such a high calling humbles me when I remember the pit of sin from which the Lord Jesus has brought me. Knowing that Jesus, the Lamb of God, is the only One who is worthy <sup>Rev. 4:12</sup> helps us to treat our brothers with meekness, forbear any shortcomings they have, and enables us to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Just look at the rag tag motley crew that our Lord has saved and taken upon Himself to transform into His most precious image. We are much like David’s band of men who came out of all quarters looking for refuge. They, as we, were outcasts from society, lawbreakers, enemies of the rulers of the day. But like them, we all have the hope of a coming King that will rule righteously, and He has promised that we shall be fit to rule and reign with Him. David took these misfits and formed them into a fine army. His strength was the God of Israel. He was loyal to God and to his men. They, in return, became very loyal and loved David, their king, and were willing to risk their lives just to please him in anyway that they could. Even when he desired water from the well of Bethlehem, they hazarded their lives by breaking through the armies

of the Philistines and brought it to him. <sup>II Samuel 23:15,16</sup>

Jesus, of course, is also forming us into His valiant army. He has proven His love and loyalty to us far beyond what anyone could ever do. When we came to Him for refuge, He gave us all a great hope, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil. <sup>Hebrews 6:18,19</sup>

Job also had taken hold of this great hope through faith in the promises of God who cannot lie. <sup>Titus 1:2</sup> (These promises were given before the foundation of the world and have been there for all those who believe). This great hope that he had was the way he found grace to endure the many fiery trials that came upon him. Listen to the words of this true believer: “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” <sup>Job 19:24,25</sup>

In order to walk worthy of the Lord we must have **grace**. It seems that a lot of people who profess to be Christians are not finding much grace. When grace is present, there is the fruit of its presence in our lives. That is the life of Christ himself being lived out in the believer. Many Christians today are failing because they believe they should live better lives and are struggling to do so. They need to quit struggling and start resting in the promises. The branch cannot bear fruit unless it abides in the vine. The branch does not struggle to abide in the vine but is kept and nourished by the vine; it simply rests in the vine where it was developed. Faith is the means unto grace and victory. “For by grace are ye saved through faith ....” <sup>Ephesians 2:8</sup> “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” <sup>1 John 5:4</sup> Let us be confident of this very thing, that He who hath begun a good work in us will perform it until the day of Christ. I pray with Paul, that our love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment, that we may approve things that are excellent, that we may be sincere and without offence till the day of

Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness **which are by Jesus Christ**, unto the glory and praise of God. <sup>Philippians 1:6-11</sup>

When we fall from grace, we have no rest. We struggle in our own strength, boast of any slight victory that might come our way and complain of the many hardships we have to endure for His sake. Complaining and murmuring is the fruit of the flesh and a sure sign of the lack of grace. Whenever we become unthankful we are falling from grace.

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. <sup>Hebrews 4:9,11</sup> Don’t be afraid of or confused by the word *labour*. It simply means to press or to hasten. Chapter six continues with this thought: “And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” <sup>Heb. 6:11,12</sup>

Beloved, the promises of God are surer than anything, and the grace of God is here for each and every one of us to enjoy. The writer of the book of Hebrews says, “**Let us have grace**, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” <sup>Hebrews 12:28</sup> Only unbelief can keep us from living a life full of grace.

To walk worthy of our Lord Jesus is indeed very important. We can only do it by humbling ourselves and continuing in the way we started. “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” <sup>Colossians 2:8</sup>



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sin, Jesus said to the Father when He came into the world, “Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a *body* hast thou prepared for me.” <sup>Hebrews 10:4,5</sup> The Apostle Paul wrote that, “He who knew no sin was made sin for us....” The apostle Peter explains how “[Jesus] his own self bare our sins in His own *body* on the tree....” <sup>1 Peter 2:24</sup>

When Jesus went to the cross, it was so that the body that bore our sins—indeed that had literally been made sin—might be destroyed. Paul said, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. That body that went to the cross was the body of sin, made that way for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” <sup>2 Corinthians 5:21</sup>

It is understandable that the saints are sometimes defensive about the deity of Christ because there are many cultish attacks on the person of our Lord Jesus from those who would diminish Him and make Him to be nothing more than one of the prophets or a mere man. And who is able to understand perfectly or articulate adequately the one person in all history who is one hundred percent God and one hundred percent man. There can be no greater mystery than that. But to grasp the glorious truth of the Gospel, we must realize what He did *as a man*, and why. Is there a distinction made in Scripture between the deity and humanity of Christ? Can I adequately discuss it? Perhaps not, but I will try.

The paragraph that follows is not, as some might see it, a rebuttal of the deity of Christ, but rather an underscoring of the importance of His humanity in the accomplishing of our redemption.

The Body that God prepared for Jesus, unlike the eternal Word, had a beginning in the womb of Mary. It was to be identified as the incarnation of the Word, and was even called Emanuel, God with us. But, at the

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same time, it was to be distinctly human. In Romans 1:3,4 Paul said He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God according to the Holy Spirit. The writer of Hebrews describes Him as the seed of Abraham. Heb. 2:16

The Bible refers to “the Son of man” ninety-five times, and many of these are Jesus referring to Himself. Forty-seven times it speaks of the “Son of God,” most of those are other people referring to Jesus. The phrase, “God the Son” never appears in Scripture, but this is the title that seems to be the object of most defensiveness among those who struggle against an emphasis on Jesus’ humanity.

The apostle John identifies the Godhead in I John 5:7 as the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and in His incarnation is called the Son of God. The Bible declares that “In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” Colossians 2:9

Before His birth, the Bible tells us, He was in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no

reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

No reputation? Obedient? Death? None of these words describe God. They describe the man. He came into the world to be the last (terminal) Adam, and to die as a man (the perfect man) for all of Adam’s race. The reason He is called the *last Adam* is because, in God’s view, His death was the death of every member of Adam’s race. When He died we all died. If one died for all, then were all dead. <sup>2</sup>Corinthians 5:14

There is nothing that is more worthy of our emotional response than is the Gospel story. It is a love story of the greatest magnitude. To be moved to tears by the gifted preaching of the cross is a good thing. But it is more than a love story to be received with much emotion. It is facts upon which faith can repose. And the hardest fact is that at Calvary God put *man* to death. The righteous judgment of God was poured out upon Adam’s race, represented fully by the last Adam. The perfect man was made sin for us and, as sin personified, was executed to

satisfy the righteous sentence of God upon Adam’s guilty race. Sin was condemned in the flesh of the *man* Christ Jesus.

Although God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, it was not God who died at Calvary, it was the humanity in which God had revealed Himself. The man Jesus cried out, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and with the full tale of the sins of the human race upon him, the last Adam died under God’s extreme penalty for sin. What a marvelous mystery!

Man of sorrows, what a name for the Son of God who came, ruined sinners to reclaim. Hallelujah, what a Savior.

If the story had ended at Calvary, God’s justice would have been satisfied, but His plan to bring many sons into glory would not have been accomplished. The whole purpose for creation would have failed. It would have been a tragic end for Adam’s race because, when the last Adam died, Adam’s entire race died with Him. It would have been a hopeless end indeed.

But now the penalty was paid. Adam’s blemished race was put away. The one man who qualified to die for all had taken all men with Him

to the grave. Adam’s humanity was dead. When Jesus’ body was crucified, the veil was torn and the way into the holiest place was opened. But now that all were dead, who would enter in?

That is the Gospel, friend. That is why there was a resurrection. Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. In His resurrected body He is “The second man.” He is no longer identified with Adam. He is the head of a whole new race, the new creation. He is the first begotten from the dead <sup>Revelation 1:5</sup> and now, all who are in Christ by faith are made alive with Him. Our glorious hope is in that man who was dead, but is alive forever more. There is one God, and now there is one mediator between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all. <sup>1</sup>Timothy 2:5,6

It is essential that we recognize the significance of the humanity of Jesus Christ who died *as a man* by the righteous decree of a holy God. It is not just something that happened *for us*, but something that happened *to us*. By *man* came death, and by *man* came the resurrection from the dead. Through the death and the resurrection of the man Christ Jesus, God has brought many sons into glory. ❖

# GOD REALLY CARES

Tim Montgomery



God cares for His sheep; and He also cares for the lost. He sees where they are, He knows their misery without Christ, and He wants to save them because He is not willing that any should perish. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his way and live.

A verse in Matthew reminds us of that care: “But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath day.” Christ was concerned about those in Judea who

would flee for their lives. Perhaps He wanted them to have rested one more time before that trial would come. Our Lord is truly concerned with the smallest details of our lives.

## God’s Plan, to save Many

God has the same concern for the spiritual well being of those who don’t know Him yet. He doesn’t want them to perish and He has a plan to save many.

Listen to the Scriptures:

“By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many....” <sup>Isaiah 53:11b</sup>

“So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” <sup>Romans 5:19b</sup>

“For it became him—in bringing many sons to glory....” <sup>Hebrews 2:10</sup>

These are just a few of the many Scriptures that say God is going to save many. There are also passages that say only a few will enter in. So

will few be saved or many? Or, are both true?

Some would interpret ‘few’ to mean that in any society Christians will always be the minority. But think back to the revivals that took place in the United States. How many were saved then, few or many? From the accounts I’ve heard, there were many.

Consider Australia. Right now there are few saved there. But that

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Time has been flying by so quickly here. Yesterday as we drove to Church, I asked Cherry how many Sundays we have been here. Wow, four Sundays! If I am not careful, we will be planning on heading back to Ivory Coast before we have done all the things we have to do. We have been having a lot of company. I finally walked over to our neighbors yesterday for the first time. He said he has been wanting to come and visit us, but thought we had so much company that we could not accommodate his visit.

We already have had several people we knew from Ivory Coast visit us—MK's and a traveling missionary couple. Our daughter, Julie, is here on leave from Fort Drum, New York, which has been a joy to us.

Our daughter Andrea has started summer school, has about three more weeks of that and is looking for a teaching position here in this area. She hopes to be able to teach and continue taking a few classes for her Master's degree.

Our son Brisbin is looking for a job, I actually think he may have one. One of the men from our Church is the manager of a large seed warehouse and he has some job openings. They use a temporary job placement office, so we will be going there today. He also has an appointment for his college this morning.



I have been trying to get some materials organized for presentations of the ministry in Ivory Coast, but have been having trouble with getting computers to cooperate with me. The farm has a lot of work for me as well. Then, I have been visiting with people and helping my children with some of their problems. I realize how little I have trained them in some areas of life for Stateside living. They are not always wise in their decisions. In some ways it is just like Africa. People make bad choices sometimes because no one has showed them the good ones.

I am sure you have been praying for us as we have made the adjustment back into the States. The Lord has been good and faithful to meet our needs.

We have a house, transportation and plenty of provisions. Driving home yesterday, we were talking about the adjustments we have to make after

living years "on the field." One of my daughters said, "Yeah, we are 220 and people here are 110 (referring to the electrical power). I thought about that. Added to that is our tribal experience of 12-volt power, and you begin to

understand why things sometimes get out of whack. Like many things we buy today, we are adaptable. Plug us into 110 or 220, it doesn't matter too much.

We will be going up to Washington State this week. It will be our first time traveling far. Julie returns to her service as well. I keep believing that things are going to slow down a little so we can make some plans for visiting people. We will be seeking opportunities for ministry to fit into our itinerate ministry in the Loma and Loron tribes, which we feel will take about six months out of a year. Rejoicing in Him, Jerry & Cherry



The Tim Montgomery family



The Ball Family

Mike Ball and his family, as most of you know, after twelve years in Mexico, is being directed by the Lord to begin to minister the Word in Africa, specifically in Tanzania. This spring they returned to Wyoming and came to the annual SFMI Conference at Rockaway, Oregon, where Mike ministered a good word. About the time you read this, Mike will be enroute to Tanzania with a small team including Richard McDaniel and Jim Lucas. For Mike it will be a reconnaissance trip, after which his present plan is to return with his family for an

indefinite term of ministry.

To accomplish this, Mike has been willing to both minister the Word and work with his hands. We praise God for that attitude, and strongly encourage it. It has everything to do with a "missionary attitude." Following is a brief note from Mike.

I have been going to the jail here in Torrington on Wednesdays. They have about a dozen Mexicans in there. Due to a break-out at the jail, however, the ministry there has been put on hold for a while. We may have a Bible study to take its place with a young man in Torrington.

I've been teaching some of the material that we will be teaching in Africa in the adult Sunday school in our sending church. I believe that is going well. We are just starting a new Bible study next week on Fridays in Douglas, Wy., about 2 hours from here. That is where I have been working part time. We will be going over

the same material there.

Also there is plenty of work around the place here. The place we live on has 160 acres. The kids are in the midst of painting one of the out buildings. We bought some chickens and are looking to buy a cow or steer to pasture and then butcher later in the year. Well that will give you a little catch-up about us.

We have been quite busy this summer, speaking at camp, teaching Sunday School, and some Bible studies, as well as working part-time.

I am scheduled to fly out of Chicago Sept. 2 for Tanzania, and will be gone six weeks, returning Oct. 17, Lord willing. Faith will be home in Yoder with the kids most of that time, except for a short jaunt to Utah for a wedding.

Please keep us in your prayers as we will be deciding (after this trip) whether the family should go to Tanzania.

In Christ's name,  
Mike and Faith and family



The Schnakenberg family

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In our last letter we mentioned that we were to write a letter to our immigration officer after which he would try to get us the okay to get back to work in public ministry.

That permission was not granted. Instead, we were asked to go up to Canberra, the Australian capital, and make a formal application for a police check through the Russian Consulate there. So we have done that.

Upon arriving home, we received an e-mail from Kenya with some good news. Our friend there has managed to



get the police check from that end. It is in the mail and should be here any day!

With that good news, I called our immigration officer again. I told him that we had made the formal application with the Russian Consulate, and that the Kenyan check was on the way.

We have now been instructed as follows. As soon as we receive the papers from Kenya, we are to send them to him. He will then make request that an allowance be made and our visas be issued to us immediately since we will by then have gotten to him two of the three police checks that were needed. (The three were Russia, Kenya, and the US.) There's no guarantee yet, but he seems quite hopeful that we will get our visas at that point, even if the Russian check hasn't come through yet. Please pray....again!

Ken, the 78-year-old man you've been praying for passed away a few weeks ago. We are incredibly blessed that we can say that we believe he is with the Lord! Ken represented a large investment of time on our part. But it was time well spent. What kind of value can you put on a soul?

God bless! We'll keep you informed as our visa situation develops. We look forward to being able to get back out and minister to the lost here.

In His love,  
Tim and family

Atotonilco, the municipal seat of the county of the same name, sits in a valley on the very edge of the Highlands of Jalisco State and has a population of approximately 60,000. Known in time past as the Garden Spot of Jalisco, for its abundant production of oranges, lemon, and limes, it is better known today for its production of tequila, though the main occupation is ranching. The town has two high schools, three secondary schools, a dozen catholic churches, an historic cathedral, and a rich history as one of the oldest communities in post-Hispanic Jalisco.

Most evenings, and always on Friday and Saturday evening, the downtown plaza fills with young and old, who stroll around the kiosk or sit in the benches under the large lemon trees. Giddy teenagers go with friends for a pizza or visit the disco lounge off the plaza, while their parents discuss the harvest, business or town gossip. On Sundays, the streets of Atotonilco fill with visitors, as people pour in from the fifty- some communities that encircle the town. They come to buy, to visit the big city, to see friends and to attend mass at the massive cathedral on the town square. The town has no movie theater, no skating rink, no fast food chain and only one super market, though there are hundreds of corner stores.

Atotonilco does have other town in Jalisco – at port. While industrious- mark, drunkenness and al- Atotonilco El Alto has agave, the plant used for te- than any other municipality in home of Don Julio, 7 Leguas and national and internationally known drinking and drunkenness is a way of life.



more bars per capita than any least, according to one re- ness is the Highlands hall- colism is rampant. more acres sown in quila production, the state. As the several other na- tional and internationally known brands of tequila,

This is a deeply Catholic area, with an almost fanatic adherence to the teachings, myths and superstitions of the Roman church. The Highlands boasts of being the birthplace of the Cristero Revolution, a bloody episode in the history of Mexico when mobs fought the federal government in an effort to throw off the anti-cleric laws the government sought to impose. The revolution, though relatively short and somewhat regionally isolated, is one of the most horrific periods in the country's history, with massacres, looting, raping and carnage both on the side of the rebels and on the side of the government. Many Highlanders, nevertheless, look proudly at this time, believing they stepped forward to "defend the faith."

Considerably less than 1% of the population of this town identify themselves as evangelicals, and the vast majority of surrounding communities are without any congregation or witness to Christ. Recently, the Roman Catholic church announced it was recognizing 27 new "saints" from Mexico. Of the 27, 16 were religious leaders who practiced in Jalisco. Another was born in Jalisco. Many of these were from the Highlands region.

In the midst of this, the Bible message is going out, with evangelistic studies, literature distribution and discipleship training. Three families have moved to this town to work together in the extension of the Good News of Jesus Christ. Pray for them and for the new believers to whom they are ministering.

[Editor's note] Greg and Holly, as most subscribers to the *SFMI Prayer/News Update* know, have worked for many years in the country of Romania. For a variety of reasons they returned to the USA late last year, planning to return to the field in the spring of this year. However, because of circumstances and what seems to be the Lord's leading, their time in the States has been extended a

In the meantime, Holly has become pregnant and they are expecting their fourth before returning to Europe. Because ministry is not location specific, Greg and Holly have been fully occupied in Texas even as they

would have been in Romania. Here is a communication from Greg.

Praise the Lord for His faithful provision. I am listening to the radio, and they are singing "How Great Thou Art" in some African language, and it's bringing tears to my eyes. What a wonderful reminder that God is concerned about those at the ends of the earth, as well as us here in the US.

We are still working with the youth in our church. I have been teaching them through the thirteen-week

(discipleship) course. Several of them have gone out door-to-door in our area. There is a real hunger among many of them for obedience. It's refreshing to see American kids hunger for God.

I am working with the perspectives course for our area. I will be helping to coordinate the course for the spring session. Our plan is to go back at the end of May '03. In the meantime, this will keep us in the missionary "loop."

I don't hear from Gavi at all, but I do from Dani Gruian. He told me recently that the fellowship that we started (in Cluj,

Romania) has seen several people added to it, and recently they had a baptism.

The report from the (Romanian) Mission is that they are seeing many people dedicate themselves to service, either locally, or for cross-cultural work.

The brothers in the Mission have all been asked to speak at churches, training seminars, and Bible schools about missions. It's keeping them very busy.

Holly is feeling her pregnancy, and the Texas heat doesn't help much! The kids are doing great, and the oldest has a keen desire to serve the Lord and to know Him. In Christ, Greg



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wasn't always the case, as is evidenced by the myriad old church buildings now sitting empty, reminding us of better days when 'many' were saved there as well.

There are the stories of remote tribes being evangelized, resulting some times in as many as ninety percent of them receiving Christ. In places in Africa right now, multitudes are being saved. Certainly our Lord is about the business of saving souls. Multitudes accumulating in heaven in a gathering so great that no man could number them. Revelation 6:9

Few or many – perhaps both are true. There will be an incredible multitude saved. But hell might contain an even greater crowd. Isaiah 5:14 No matter how incredibly large that multitude in heaven will grow, compared with the vast numbers who are perishing, God says it is few. It reflects God's infinite concern for the perishing and His grief over the fate that they choose. However, His plan continues. He will save many, according to the vision given to John, more than we can imagine, certainly more than we could count.

### God Uses Us

God's plan has always been to use us to reach them. Consider Matthew 20:1-7.

*1 "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.*

*2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.*

*3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,*

*4 and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.*

*5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.*

*6 And about the eleventh hour*

*he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?*

*7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive."*

1 See in this story **God's passion for the lost**. The householder "went out early in the morning." From the earliest moment, it was urgent to get to work.

He went out "to hire laborers." He still works through human vessels. The apostle Paul asks, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Romans 10:14 Uncle Sam's slogan at one time was, "I Want You for the US Army!" That's what God is looking for as well—recruits for His efforts to reach the unsaved. Are you available? He wants to use you.

"He sent them into his vineyard." Two things are implied in verse two, **responsibility** and **testimony**. Because we are the ones God has sent, we are to accomplish His purpose. And if we are not salt and light the Scriptures say that men will trample us underfoot. They will see us for what we are and despise what they see, in which case we may earn their reproach. On the other hand, if men see our good works they will glorify our Father. Each of us are to possess and be light, then our message is believable. We are called to be salt and light.

If the message offends, we cannot be held at fault. But if we are the offense, we must consider how that affects our message. We are ambassadors of Christ. Proverbs tells us, "he that wins souls is wise." Have we learned how to win people to the Lord? Have we become effective in this work? There is a challenge for us in this phrase, "**He** sent them into **his** vineyard."

### Reward

The next theme is reward, "And

whatsoever is right I will give you." God has a reward in mind—first of all heaven, of course— but beside that, the incredible joy of seeing souls in heaven that you played a part in bringing to Christ! I'm reminded of a chorus we sing,

*"We ask not for riches, but look to the cross, You are the Lord!*

*And for our inheritance, give us the lost! You are the Lord!"*

Truly that is an inheritance—those once lost, but now redeemed and then glorified in heaven! What more could we ask for? Yes, we will be rewarded fully in every way when we reach that home above. And to bring some of the lost there with us, that will be great reward!

### The Call

Will we obey the call and get involved, or will we just stand idly about? Consider what is written in verse three: He went out at the third hour and found people just standing idle. Verse six mentions the same thing. But the good news is found in verse four, **they went**. And that can be us. We can go.

We must ask ourselves, how do I measure up? Am I in the group standing idle, or am I involved reaching those on God's heart? He wants to "hire" us, so to speak, to go into that field. There is a part for each of us there. Will God find us willing and available?

### The Duration of The Call.

When does it end? Should we be giving up, or should we be continuing to press ahead? This parable, I believe, answers that question. We labor on in faith to the very end.

In the parable the householder went out early in the morning seeking laborers. That may speak of the first apostles. But it doesn't end there. He continued to recruit workers. He went out at the third hour, the sixth hour and the ninth hour. That is what God has been doing from the early church until now. And even at the eleventh hour, when there was almost no time remaining, he still went out, looking for laborers. Why?

Because there was still work to be done, still fruit to be reaped. Neither the need nor the call changed even in the very latest hour. That addresses the time in which we live—the eleventh hour. It's where we are in history.

This story calls us to self-examination. How do I measure up? Am I standing idle? or am I working in the vineyard? Am I rendered useless because of the apparent lateness of the hour? May God instill the message of this story into our hearts, and may eternity reflect our labors as we see many added to His kingdom.

I'm not suggesting that all should be missionaries going to the farthest corners of the world. Some will be called there, but the rest of us are called to work right where we live. Right here at our doorsteps there are multitudes that need compassionate help. Will we just watch idly as they perish? They need ministers of the truth who can show them the way. Will God be able to "hire" you?

### What should be Our Response?

1 **Pray**. Ask God to save many nationwide and especially in your community. Commit yourself to however long it might take. Ask God to lead you specifically in how to pray.

2 **Make yourself available** to God. Ask Him what your part should be. Then do whatever He shows you.

3 **Ask God to give you skill** in this work of winning souls and make you effective.

Please don't underestimate what God might do if we will simply start praying long term for what is on His heart. We might actually see souls getting saved once again.

Consider in that context the following Scriptures:

"Seek and ye shall find..." Matthew 7:7

"Shall not your heavenly Father give good things to those who ask Him?" Matthew 7:11.

Sometimes we don't have simply because we don't ask. "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John 16:24 ❖

# Announcing the SFMI Website

The Internet has become probably the number one resource for information in our country today. Travel information, the purchase of airline tickets, information on rare or obscure diseases, new and used car sales, even real estate; it is all there on the internet.

Recent newspaper stories tell us of evil plots being hatched over the Internet and of contacts that have lured gullible teenagers into life-threatening liaisons. Every kind of religion can be found there, and every kind of "Christian" cult. It reflects a cross-section of the world's culture because all of it can be accessed from anywhere in the world.

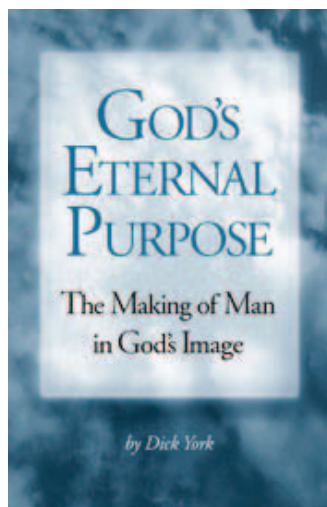
Perhaps, for that reason, it provides a good communication tool for those who are like-minded around the world. And with

that in mind, about three years ago we initiated a Shield of Faith website. Until now, it has not been meticulously maintained, so the information has not been upgraded on a regular basis, which has been an area of concern to some of us. However, a few weeks ago, a young man with experience in website maintenance came aboard to manage that area of the ministry. We are grateful to God for that provision.

**We invite you to visit the SFMI Website at [www.sfmiusa.org](http://www.sfmiusa.org)**

It is our plan to post the SFMI Prayer/News Update on the website as well as other information that will be of public concern, such as breaking news of the mission field, timely articles, and some selected communications from readers like you. We will welcome your contributions.

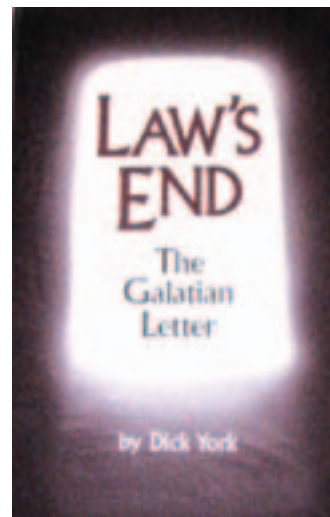
## These books are available for purchase



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What does the New Testament say about the Law of Moses? Paul deals with that in his epistle to the Galatians.  
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**The following is an excerpt from the book, *The Pilgrim Church*, by E.H. Broadbent, concerning the relationship of a second-century Christian to the society around him.**

Amidst the confusions of conflicting parties, there were true teachers, able and eloquent in directing souls in the way of salvation. One, whose name is unknown, writing in the second century to an inquirer named Diognetus, sets himself to answer the questions asked as to the mode of worshipping God among the Christians, the reason of their faith and

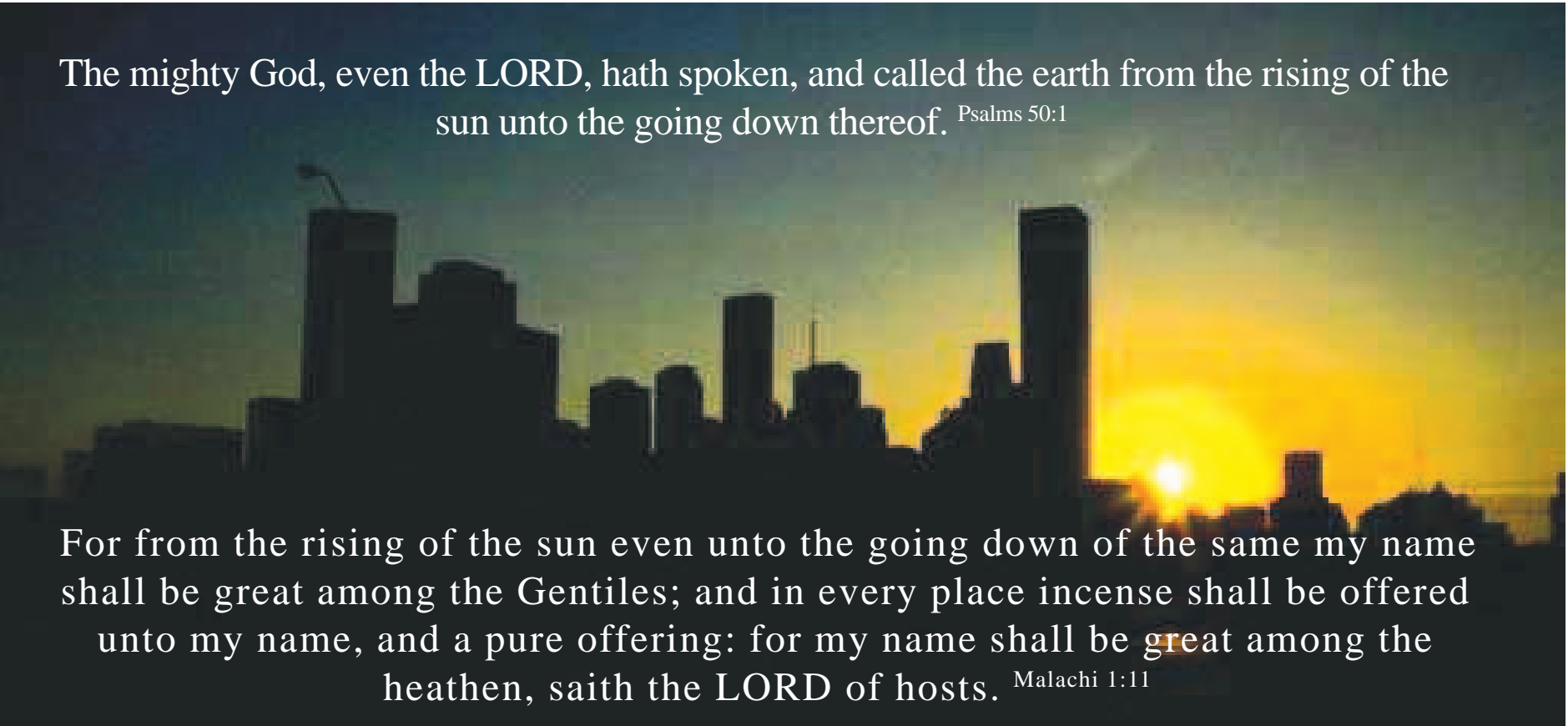
devotion towards God and love to one another, why they neither worshipped the gods of the Greeks nor followed the Jewish religion, and why this new practice of piety had only so late entered the world. He writes:

"Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, [living in such places] as the

lot of each of them has determined, and following the customs of the natives in respect to clothing, food, and the rest of their ordinary conduct, they display to us their wonderful and confessedly striking method of life. They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as

foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country and every land of their birth as a land of strangers.... They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time, surpass the laws by their lives.... They are reviled and bless."





The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Psalms 50:1

For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts. Malachi 1:11

The SFMI Prayer/News Update is published bi-monthly and is sent free of charge to God's people everywhere upon request. If you have friends to whom you would like a copy sent, please submit their address to this office. In response to inquiries about the cost of publication: \$6.00 per year per subscriber. Yes, contributions to offset this cost are accepted, but not solicited.