ON THE HOME FRONT

Gary Colley

Christians at Getwell continue to rejoice in the worship and praise of our Heavenly Father and in the privileges and blessings He gives in His Son Jesus Christ. Paul exclaimed his joy in these matters in his letter to the Ephesian brethren. He writes, “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:1-3). The spiritual blessings spoken of are not found or possessed out of Christ, but IN Christ. To be in Christ is to be in His body the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). The majority of the world thinks they can have these blessings out of the church as well as by being in the body of Christ the church!

The majority in the world also believe that morality will save, or just being morally good. If this is true, then 10 things are also true:
1. Men can be saved without Christ coming into the world (Jn. 3:16-17).
3. Without Christ’s death (I Cor. 15:3).
4. Without Christ’s resurrection (Rom. 4:25).
5. Without Christ’s name (Acts 4:12).
8. Without being born again (Jn. 3:5).
10. Without being converted (Matt. 18:3).

NO THINKING PERSON CAN SO THINK AND BE RIGHT!
**“Then Sings My Soul . . . ”—II**

Gary Colley

Some find no reason to sing!

The atheist, humanist, and evolutionist deny the existence of God and His only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ, and live only for this world! These have no faith in God and therefore have no hope beyond the grave! God pronounces them fools (Psa. 14:1). Paul says the cause of their being fools was that they reject "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world," though they "are clearly seen being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in the imaginations (reasonings), and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (Rom. 1:20-22).

**No Reason To Sing**

The ones who reject the loving God of Heaven really have no reason to sing! While it is a fact that there are those who act the part of fools, denying there is a God in Heaven who created Heaven and earth (Psa. 14:1; 19:1-3), and others, such as the Humanists, who make themselves and this world their god, the Christian does accept the evidence and His existence and sings praises unto His name. The sadder part of this is that they also reject the grace and mercy of God through the Gospel and “judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life” (Acts 13:46). Because of their unbelief in God, they also reject His Son and therefore Jesus says they cannot go to Heaven (Jn. 8:21, 24). Rather, there is a place called Hell, designated by God in the Bible as being for the devil and his angels, to which these are going after the Judgement (Matt. 25:46).

**Heaven Makes Christians Sing**

When God is believed, and Christ is enthroned in our lives, we rest our weary souls in the riches of their love and promises. How enjoyable to sing with other Christians “What A Fellowship,” What A Friend WeHave In Jesus,” and “Here I labor and toil as I look for a home, just an humble abode among men; While in Heaven a mansion is waiting for me, and a gentle voice pleading, Come In!”
To Be Called the Children of God  
By Michael D. Greene

The crowds that gathered to hear the young rabbi from Nazareth grew larger by the day. They surrounded the house to listen to Him. In the crowd were His mother and brothers who wanted to speak with Him.

"Jesus, look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside and they want to speak to you," said one in the crowd. But Jesus replied to him: "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" He then motioned to the gathered crowd and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:46-50).

It is no accident that familial language is used in the Bible to describe the relationships sustained by those who are also called Christians. God is their Father. Jesus is their brother. Brother and sister are terms used by Christians of one another (Romans 14:10ff., 16:1, 16:23, Ephesians 6:21, James 2:15, et al.). Why is that the case? It goes back to creation. In Genesis 1 and 2 we read that all of God's creation was good with one exception, "it was not good that man should be alone" (Genesis 2:18). To fill this primary social need of man, to cure his aloneness, God gave man the woman and so created the family.

Jesus told Nicodemus that to see the kingdom of God, one must be born again of water and the Spirit John 3:1-8). Paul tells us, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Galatians 3:26-29). We then speak of being born again into the family of God through baptism.

Having been born again of water and the spirit, Christians have the blessing of being in God's family. He is our Father. Jesus is our brother. Christians are brothers and sisters; they are a family.

In that family three great needs of every person are met. In that family we have relationship. We belong to a community. As with Adam we have the need of relationship with others, even beyond our physical families. As members of God's family, we have that need met. It is no accident that God's people come together on a weekly basis as a community, as a family and as a church to celebrate their relationship with God and one another. We worship together, celebrating the relationships we have in that family. Worship has a vertical dimension as our worship is directed to God, our Father. But it also has a horizontal dimension as we commune with and seek to edify and encourage our brothers and sisters in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:16-17, Hebrews 10:24-25). What a blessing to find relationship, to find community in God's family (1 John 1:1-7).

In that family, we find identity. When Christians come together, we celebrate what distinguishes Christians from the world. What gives Christians their identity? It is the death of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 26:26-30, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). It is what defines us as a family, as a church and as individuals. It is what brings us into relationship with God and His family. It is what gives that family and each Christian his identity. Christians have been bought with a price, a precious price ... the blood of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:20, 7:23, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 Peter 1:8-19).

To wear that name signifies that we belong to Him, and we no longer belong to the world. We are the family, the children of the God of creation! As the children of God, we are fellow heirs in that one body to the promises of God (Romans 6:1-23, Ephesians 3:1-21). We are His brothers, mother and sister; we are His. Those who have obeyed God's will are Christians, the children of God (Acts 11:26). "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1).

In that family, we find purpose. Every person at some time in his life ponders the eternal, profound questions of life such as: "Why am I here? What is my purpose in life?" These profound questions demand answers. When one seeks the answers, he can see the answers are uniquely related to our place in God's family. Because I am a member of God's family, and because my identity is bound up in the cross of Jesus, my purpose becomes clear, It is to do the will of God, to glorify His awesome name and to trust His grace to get us to Heaven. Every other purpose, no matter how noble, becomes secondary. All that I do is tied up in that purpose, it becomes my one goal. My life's purpose is not the laying up of treasures on earth, but storing up the heavenly treasures. My life is not given in the service of the master of this world. No! My eye is good (Single, KJV). My purpose is not divided. I cannot serve two masters so I will serve God and not mammon. His children seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:19-34). The world does not understand this because the world does not know God. They do not have nor understand the hope that purifies with anticipation of what it will be like when He is revealed. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God" (I John 3:1-3).

But some would say that all three of these needs can be and are met for some in other ways. One might say my family is found in my work place, a civic club, a sports team, a class in school, in the fellowship with those who are committed to a cause and many other similar organizations. But here is the difference. Those are of the earth and of a temporal realm. God's family is spiritual, of the heavenly eternal realm. Temporal relationships will grow dim with time and will not endure beyond this life. To be in God's family is eternal and as such transcends the limitations of time and the physical realm. Finding these blessings in God's family is no accident. This all goes back to creation, to God's grand design. To meet these three basic needs of mankind in the church is all a part of the eternal plan of God from the foundation of the world (Ephesians 2:1-13:13). What an awesome God we serve who proves His love by filling these three great needs in His family. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God" (1 John 3:1)."

November 2017/THINK