ON THE HOME FROM
Gary Colley

As members of the Getwell congregation, members of the church of Christ, we all are continually challenged to diligently work in the Lord’s kingdom (1 Cor. 15:58). Faithfulness is commanded by the Lord and His apostles and cannot be ignored nor discounted without consequence. To walk in the steps of our Lord, we must desire to always please the Heavenly Father by serving to the best of our ability and opportunity (1 Pet. 2:24; Jn. 8:29).

A new Christian, or one who has recently placed membership with us, would welcome a visit, card, or phone call.

When our many visitors come to our services, we should make it a point to introduce ourselves, make them feel welcome, and invite them to return. Some may be new to our city and are looking for brethren in Christ to give them a warm smile and handshake. If we think a visit to their home would be helpful and encouraging, let us be sure to get their address and phone number.

We need to take the time when possible to visit the lonely in a nursing home, to shorten the long days and let them know they are not forgotten (Jas. 1:27).

Elderly members of the congregation would also welcome a phone call, card, and/or visit. Ill health and advanced age at times prohibit these from attending the worship services. Their past faithfulness should be complimented by our attention to them.

Those who are known to be in the hospital are generally announced in the bulletin and from the pulpit. We need to make a visit to them or give them a call when they return home.

When one misses one or more of the services, it is sometimes a sign of waning faith, which may lead to forsaking all of the assemblies (Heb. 10:25). We need to encourage them to make their path straight and repent.

Please read John 9:4.
Things God Has Joined Together
Gary Colley

Matthew 19:6 speaks particularly about the marriage relationship and says, “What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.” Only two things can dissolve a marriage in God’s sight—adultery (Mt. 19:9) and death (Rom. 7:1-5).

God Hath Joined—In Marriage

In Matthew 19:9, Jesus had just referred to God’s original law concerning marriage: “Therefore shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). He quotes Moses’ law in answering the Pharisees who came tempting Him but shows His law to be superior to that law which is now removed (Col. 2:14; Heb. 10:9-10). Several lessons are evident because God has joined a man and his wife together in marriage:
1. They begin a new home; both parties joined must be ready to leave the domain of father and mother.
2. They are to “cleave” (as if glued) to one another, letting no one or thing come between them.
3. They are to be “one” in purpose, design, and aim for life.
4. Warning is given that no one is to break this marriage asunder (divide it) since God hath joined it together.

God Hath Joined Faith and the Bible

One noted preacher said, “If all the time that I have spent praying for faith was put together, it would be months. I thought that some day faith was going to come down and strike me like lightning. But faith did not come. One day I read Romans 10:17: ‘So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.’ I had closed my Bible and prayed for faith. Now I opened my Bible and began to read God’s word, and faith has been growing ever since.” The truth of Romans 10:17 that faith comes by hearing God’s word is also emphasized in Acts 15:7: “... that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel and believe”; and Acts 18:8: “the Corinthians hearing believed and were baptized.” Faith and the word of God are inseparable. “What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.”

God Hath Joined Christ and the Church

Individuals are often heard to say, “I want Christ but not the church.” Or, “I believe one can go to heaven without being a member of the church.” If these thoughts are from the Bible, we should all receive and defend them. But, are they?

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised to build His church. Paul made the comparison of not putting asunder (dividing) the marriage to not putting asunder Christ and His church. God has joined them both. Notice Paul’s inspired words: “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph. 5:31-32). Paul further stated, “And [God] hath put all things under his [Christ’s] feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23). Since the church is the fulness of Christ, if one is in Christ, he must necessarily be in Christ’s church (Acts 2:41, 47). Therefore God hath joined together Christ and the church. “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

God Hath Joined the Blood of Christ and Baptism

In every age of the world, God has required the offering of blood as a sacrifice for sins: “And without shedding of blood is no remission” (Heb. 9:22). Jesus, the Lamb of God for the sin offering (Jn. 1:29), said He shed His blood “for many for the remission of sins” (Mt. 26:28). His blood was shed in His death on Calvary (Jn. 19:34). Therefore, for man to receive the benefits of Jesus’ blood, he must, in some way, come into contact with the death of Christ. Paul describes how man does this “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death” (Rom. 6:3-4). God hath joined together the blood and baptism. Have you been baptized? “What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”
Is Death "Precious" in the Lord's Sight?

PSALM 116:15 RE-EXAMINED

It is a passage quoted at nearly every funeral, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psalm 116:15). It sounds beautiful and poetic. It seems to suggest that death, in spite of how it feels, is not really such a bad thing. But is any death really

The Meaning of "Precious"

So we are left wondering, why would a person say his own death would be "precious" in God's sight in the context of saying how horrible death is and how thankful he is to have been saved from it?

Perhaps we need to look deeper into this word translated precious. It simply means something is expensive, rare, or costly. It does not mean something is loved or adored. The word means the thing in question isn't something to be ambivalent about or taken lightly.

Which, of course, is precisely what the psalmist is saying: God doesn't take the death of His saints lightly. God values His saints and their death is a costly thing in His sight. Which is why, in the case of this particular psalm, God preserved the life of His saint.

Applying the Psalm

After understanding the context of the psalm, a person might think twice before reading it at a funeral. But then again, it is an incredibly appropriate passage to read at the funeral of a Christian (as long as its meaning is explained).

The death of any of God's people is not something He takes lightly. In God's sight, the death of a ninety-year-old is just as "costly" as the death of a twenty-year-old. Human beings somehow think the death of a twenty-year-old is somehow more costly, but God doesn't seem to think so. He takes all death seriously. He takes death so seriously that He sent His son to earth to defeat death.

As Christians, our confident expectation is that God will save us all from death. Because of the atoning blood of Jesus, we are God's saints and all of His saints will once again "walk before the Lord in the land of the living." Our hope is in the Resurrection. Like Lazarus, Jesus may not save us from dying, but He will most certainly save us from staying dead. We will be raised never to die again.

Jesus is the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Him, though that person dies, he will live again (John 11:25). We no longer fear death, because death has been, is being, and will be defeated (see 1 Corinthians 15). We no longer fear death, because we will be saved from it. We will be saved because, "Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; our God is merciful" (Psalm 116:5)

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Wes McAdams
Think April 2019