



2 Cor. 5:18

Open Face

One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness

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The Complete Gospel Verse

David Clayton



In this article I would like to examine a verse that I consider the most complete Gospel verse in the Bible. Strangely enough this verse is found in the Old Testament. The verse I have in mind is Isaiah 9:6. Interestingly Isaiah 9:6 mentions seven attributes of Christ, whether this is by coincidence or design you may decide for yourself, but the number seven indicates completeness or perfection and I don't believe there are too many coincidences in the word of God. Here is what the verse says:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6)

The seven attributes mentioned are as follows:

1. Unto us a child is born
2. Unto us a son is given
3. The government shall be upon his

shoulder

4. His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor
5. Mighty God
6. Everlasting Father
7. Prince of Peace

In his article we will look at these seven characteristics of Christ more closely and see what understanding we can gain from each of them. Every one of these attributes speak of some great element in the life and ministry of Christ and the truth is, if one of these things was missing then the ministry of Christ would have been incomplete, he would have been inadequate to accomplish our salvation.

A CHILD IS BORN

The first point mentioned is, "unto us a child is born." What are the implications of this? What are the elements involved in the birth of Jesus which make this attribute so important? Jesus could have been given to us in several different ways; God could have created him from the dust of the ground as he did with Adam, he could have re-created him as the second Adam in the same way that he created the first Adam. But because Jesus is our Savior, God could not have sent him in that way. He had to become fully and truly a member of our race, of our flesh and our bones and our genetics. In order to be our Savior he had to be a member of the fallen race of Adam. Paul tells us in Galatians 4:4,5,

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son,

made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal 4:4-5)

This Son of God, the promised child that was to be born had to be a descendent of the race of Adam. He could not just to be a warrior from a different world, a champion from a different place, no, he had to be one of us. The race that came under Satan's power and dominion was the human race, this was the race that the devil had conquered when he defeated Adam. Nobody from outside of humanity could fight the battle on our behalf: it was a human being who had given Satan dominion over us and only another human being could destroy that dominion on our behalf. We were legally the property of Satan, he had defeated Adam and consequently, everybody who was born into the human race was legally under this dominion of the devil. Jesus referred to Satan as "the prince of this world," meaning that he was the ruler of this planet. So for somebody to come to save humanity, it had to be somebody from the human race, it had to be somebody who was limited by the conditions under which Adam had placed us all. In spite of these limitations, our redeemer had to find a way to defeat Satan. It was humanity that had been defeated

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Open Face is dedicated to the promotion and the restoration of apostolic Christianity. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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and brought under Satan's dominion. It had to be a human being who won the battle where humanity had failed.

So in that first statement, "unto us a child is born," there is wrapped up the great truth that Jesus Christ is truly our brother. My brother is sitting at the right hand of the throne of God, at the place of almighty power, my flesh and blood brother! As it says in the book of Hebrews,

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; (Heb 2:14)

He knows what we feel, he can empathize. In Jesus, God gave us somebody who went through our experiences, who was born with our weaknesses, who experienced our struggles. All of these are embraced in that statement that, "unto us a child is born." It was for us,

for our sakes.

A SON IS GIVEN

At one time I had the idea that God lent us his son for 33 years. During that time he was a man, he suffered as a man for a while and then it was over. It was hard for him and he suffered a lot but he knew that it was only for a time. When I began to understand what really happened then my heart was broken because I saw that God had made the greatest possible sacrifice. If you would like to have a better understanding as to what really happened when Jesus became a man, I would recommend watching the video on our Youtube channel entitled, "Thrice Begotten."

When Jesus came to earth as a foetus to be born as a human baby, in a sense that person who had existed with God for all eternity – God's begotten son, was gone forever! It was he, and yet in a sense it was not him. It was him because it was the same spirit inside the human body. But it was the spirit without the memories, without the intelligence, without a personality. The awareness of that former life was gone, God gave up his son with all that the fellowship had meant to him from the years of eternity. Yes, when Jesus became a man he became the son of God again in a new sense, but this was a new son, the old identity was gone forever! God got a new son but he lost the old one.

The best way I can explain what happened to Jesus is to use the concept of reincarnation. Reincarnation happened only once in history and it was when Jesus was born again as a human being. Satan is extremely cunning and he has popularized the idea of reincarnation and applied it in heathen religions to men and in fact all living things. But no living thing is ever reincarnated, it happened only to the son of God. In the concept of reincarnation somebody dies and then he is born again in another form. When he is born again he has no recollection of the former life. In fact in most of these human concepts of reincarnation the person might even be born again in a different life form such

as an insect or a lower form of animal life. However the same inner spirit which was the identity of this person is transferred to the new life form so it's the same person but in a completely different identity where he starts life over entirely. As I said this has happened only one time in history and that was in the case of the incarnation of the son of God. It never happened before and it will never happen again.

Of course when Jesus became a human being God taught him through dreams and visions and the study of the Scriptures, and he gradually came to an understanding of who he was. He developed a special relationship with God, but it was not on the basis of remembering a former life, it was on the basis of the interaction which he had with God in this new identity. The wonderful thing is that this new son of God was to be forever a part of the human race. This was not a borrowed identity, it was the new reality of who the son of God was and so through him, the human race is forever bound up with divinity. Through Jesus Christ our human family has become a part of the family of God. Jesus is truly in the fullest possible sense the son of God and the son of man, so in him the divine race and that the human race have become one! What an amazing reality! Now we can begin to understand the meaning of this verse:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

GOVERNMENT ON HIS SHOULDER

Since the beginning of the world we have never seen a government of which we can be truly proud, one which has been completely just and fair, only concerned about the interest of the citizens. God refers to the future government of Jesus Christ as the kingdom of David. I suppose one of the reasons for this is the fact that in the history of Israel the kingdom of David came closest to what God really wanted. King David did try to be just and fair and had the interest

of the people at heart, but there were times when he messed up badly and his own weaknesses left a bad mark upon history.

But this statement tells us that in this child, God is giving us a permanent solution to this problem of bad government. Humanity is finally getting a government that we could safely vote for. This government will not be left up to other people, there will be no corrupt sub-administrators, but he is the one who will produce equity and justice.

And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan 7:14)

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. (Isa 9:7)

HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED

What does a name signify in the Bible? The fact is, Jesus was never called by these names, nobody ever called him, “Wonderful Counselor.” He was called “Master,” he was called, “Savior,” Thomas referred to him as “my Lord and my God,” but there is nowhere that he was ever referred to as “Everlasting Father.” When he was born, the angels sang, “peace on earth, good will towards men,” but he was never called by the name, “Prince of Peace.” This reinforces the fact that these “names” are not referring to the titles that Jesus was given, or to the way people referred to him. The Bible says, “his name shall be called,” but it does not give a name in the way we normally understand a name. It does not identify the sound that we make when we refer to the person, instead it focuses on some attributes and characteristics of the person. In the Bible a name was often chosen to emphasize characteristics of a person

and in fact, this is probably how all names originated; they were simply descriptions of characteristics of a person expressed in a single word. Because of this we often seek to understand the meaning of biblical names because they can sometimes give us deep insight into the attributes of the person referred to.

So when the Bible says, “his name shall be called,” God is not saying, this is the title by which you must refer to this child, no, he is saying, “these are the characteristics that you will find in this person, this child that is to be born, the person that I am giving to the human race, these are the characteristics which you will find in him.” So we are not to look for these names associated with Jesus, but rather, these qualities and attributes associated with him.

WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

The first of these attributes is that he is the, “wonderful counselor.” Who is a



counselor and what is his work? Whatever he is, Jesus does this work wonderfully, therefore he is the “wonderful” counselor. It is amazing that this king, this brother who has been given to us is identified as somebody who gives advice, somebody who teaches us because this is what a counselor does. A counselor is somebody who takes you under his wing and gives you guidance, a wise person who gives you direction in how you are to live. In Isaiah 30:21 we find another passage which refers to the work of Christ in the new covenant and it says,

And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. (Isa 30:21)

This passage refers to close and intimate guidance of an extraordinary nature; it tells us that no matter where we are, no matter under what circumstances, we will have personal guidance, a personal counselor, a voice directing us as to how to go, which direction to take.

There has never been anybody who was able to counsel, guide and direct us in such an intimate manner, not even our parents who were constantly around us when we were children. When my children were small I always held their hands whenever we were walking in town or in an area where there was traffic or any kind of potential danger. I was always trying to guide and protect them, but even so, it was impossible for me to be with them every moment of the day. It would take a really WONDERFUL Counselor to be able to be able to guide and direct you every single moment of your life. But God is telling us that one of the characteristics of this son that is to be given, this child that is to be born, is that he will be a wonderful counselor! He is not to be like the guidance counselors, marriage counselors or any of the various advisors that we are able to visit from time to time on our human plane, he is to be the wonderful counselor. Not only is he able to give perfect advice, but he is to be with us constantly, a never absent guide to direct us in the way that we should take every single moment of every single day!

How is this possible? How can this child be with us literally, continually every moment of the day? How can he be such a wonderful counselor? This is possible because this child is to come to us as the holy spirit. After the resurrection of Jesus Christ he was to return to heaven, be glorified with his father’s spirit and come back to be with each one of us personally as the Comforter, a new manifestation of the holy spirit which contained his presence in a very real way. John described this experience clearly in the following verse:

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth

you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1John 2:27)

We see here the truth that Jesus, present in his spiritual form, teaches us all things and we do not need to depend on human beings to be our guides. Yes, God has put teachers in the church, but even though he uses these teachers as a means of opening up our minds to spiritual truth, all that they teach is subject to the approval of the one who is dwelling within us, who is a part of our very existence. He is the final word, the one who approves or disapproves whatever we might hear. We listen to human teachers, but ultimately, we know whether or not they are telling us the truth because we have this wonderful counselor with us telling us, “this is the way, walk in it,” or else warning us, “this is error, have nothing to do with it.” This is the same truth expressed by the gospel prophet Isaiah:

And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children. (Isa 54:13)

Jesus is the “wonderful counselor,” it is he who through his spirit, is able to guide us into all truth and to direct us in the way that we should walk, in a way that nobody else ever could. This is a key aspect of this wonderful system of government that God is giving us through this son. This is another Scripture that cements the truth that in the Comforter, God is not giving us another, third God-being, but rather that it is Jesus himself who comes to us as our personal guide and teacher.

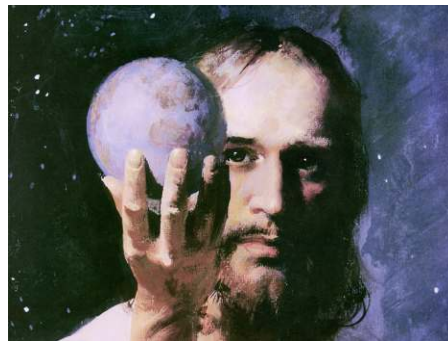
MIGHTY GOD

His name is also the “mighty God.” Of course the Trinitarian reads this phrase and he finds here support for his belief that Jesus Christ is God himself, the almighty God. But let us remember that the NAME does not necessarily signify the title by which a person is referred to, but that rather it expresses the characteristics of the person. Was Jesus God? From one perspective the answer is “no,” and from another perspective the answer is “yes.” It really depends

on what a person means when he asks the question. If the question is, “is Jesus God the almighty, the supreme being in the universe, the originator and source of all things?” then the answer is no, absolutely not. The Bible is full of the teaching that the supreme being in the universe is God the Father, that he is the source and originator of all life and existence. The ONE GOD of the universe is not Jesus Christ, it is God the Father. Jesus is the SON of this God he is not God in this sense.

But if the question is, “is Jesus God in his nature?” Then the answer is absolutely “yes!” Jesus is the begotten Son of God, he originated directly from the very divine life of God the Father so his nature is the same divine, God-nature as God the Father. A son and his father always possess the same nature, one is not inferior in nature to the other. Jesus belongs to the supreme category of beings in the universe, that it, the God category.

We might say that there are three categories of intelligent beings. First there



is the divine level on which only God and Jesus exist, then there is the level of angels and thirdly, there is the level of humanity. Jesus belongs in the first level, the God level, the God category. He is God’s begotten Son, superior to men and angels so in this sense, he is God – “the mighty God.” He is mighty and he is God by nature, he is a divine being, this is the characteristic of this son who is given to us, he is one of the God-family, somebody who is from the highest category of being in the universe and by giving him to the human race, God has joined the human race to the divine race for all eternity!

When Jesus was about to leave this earth, he declared to his disciples, “all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Matt 28:18).” God has put all things under his feet and he is indeed the “mighty God,” he has been given all might and power. What we should remember however, is that this “name” of Jesus, these characteristics described in this verse are in the context of the son that has been given to the human race. These descriptions are not focused on Christ before he became a man, they are expressions of the characteristics of the one who has been given to us. So this description as the “mighty God,” and the “everlasting father,” have to do with his experience and status as a human being – as the son of man. These are expressions of the height to which a human being has been exalted.

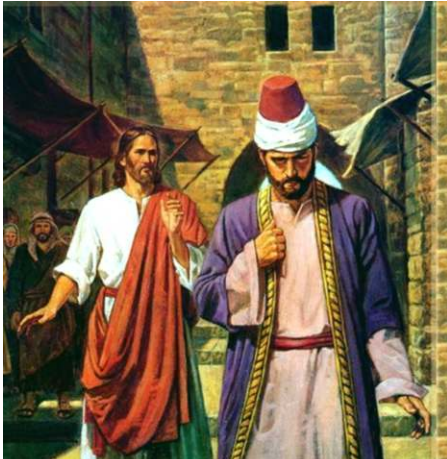
Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil 2:9-11)

Why was it that this child who would redeem us had to be a divine being, one who was God by nature? Why was it that only the begotten son of God could save mankind? When he, the son of man was put under the dominion of Satan, when he was put in the place where Adam had taken the human race, when he was left alone on the cross, abandoned by God with no one to sustain him, he would have failed if he was not divine by nature. The only being who could be put in a place where he was completely abandoned by God and yet still do what was selfless, what was inherently good, was one who was good in himself, who did not depend on God for his goodness. This applies ONLY to Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, the one who is God by nature.

When God left Jesus alone on the cross, when he took his spirit from him, if it had been anybody else in the universe,

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The Missing |Disciple



What is the greatest privilege that a human being can have in this life? The Cambridge Dictionary defines the word “privilege” in the following way: “An advantage that only one person or group of people has, usually because of their position or because they are rich.” Most of us will be familiar with the term, “the privileged few.” Usually it refers to people who are very rich, very influential, or are in positions where they enjoy luxuries which are not available to most people. These are the people who are admired in this world and the great majority of us tend to envy these people and to desire to be in their position. The Psalmist Asaph aptly expressed this human tendency when he wrote the following words:

For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. (Ps 73:3,7)

It is true that many, even among Christians long to be like the rich and famous, the movie stars, the millionaires, the politicians, but really, what is the greatest privilege that a person can have in this life?

Two thousand years ago, the most amazing moment in the history of the universe occurred when the Son of God became a member of the human family. For 33 years he walked among men as one of us and opened the door to the

greatest privilege ever available to any human being. This was the privilege of interacting with divinity face to face on a personal level, of seeing and experiencing the greatest light that had ever come to the human race. All who came in contact with him went away blessed, even the crude, worldly soldiers who were sent to arrest him on one occasion, returned empty-handed with the wonder-struck words, “never man spake like this man!”

What an amazing opportunity was open to Jesus’ brothers, his mother, his stepfather Joseph, the people of Nazareth among whom he grew up! Yet it seemed that many of these people were oblivious to the incredible privilege which was theirs and failed to comprehend the light which was shining among them with such brilliance. The Bible tells us that Jesus’ brothers did not believe in him (John 7:5) and the people of Nazareth among whom he grew up also had no faith in him (Mark 13:58).

There was a time however, at the end of thirty years, when Jesus stepped out on the most important era of his life on earth and it was when he began his public ministry. It was at this time that Jesus carefully selected a group of men who were to be intimately associated with him for the next three years. They were to learn his message, observe his behavior, his work, to be specially taught concerning his identity and his mission, and to be trained to be his special representatives in the world. I consider that these men were granted the greatest privilege which was ever afforded any human being since the creation of the world. When John wrote concerning this immense privilege, this is what he said:

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness,

and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) (1John 1:1-2)

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

This was the supreme privilege, the greatest opportunity, the highest purpose that was ever afforded any human being! It must have been great to be Moses and to see the awesome power of God demonstrated time and time again, it must have been an amazing thing to be Elijah and to see the fire come down upon Mount Carmel, but none of these men were as privileged as the twelve disciples who saw, touched, ate with the divine Son of God who showed God to them in living color! It is all the more amazing then, when we read the tragedy of what happened to a certain man who was offered this great privilege. No, I am not referring to Judas, but this man’s case is just as sad in its own way.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions. (Mark 10:17-22)

There are a few things which stand out in this story. First of all is the touching

statement, “Jesus beholding him loved him.” Jesus saw the desire in his eyes, saw the potential in him, saw the effort he had put in to obtain life and the heart of Jesus was moved, he felt himself drawn towards this needy soul. Secondly this was Jesus’ personal invitation to this man to become his disciple. He called him as surely as he had called Peter or James or John, his words were clear, “come, take up the cross and follow me.” Thirdly, Jesus not only called the man to be his disciple, but he made him a clear, uncompromising promise, “thou shalt have treasure in heaven,” a promise of eternal life with all that goes along with it. Surely, no opportunity so great had ever been presented to any human being, surely this was the greatest privilege that had ever been offered to any person in such clear, simply stated words. The offer was crystal clear and the benefits plainly outlined. He was to have the privilege of intimate fellowship with the Son of God, and at the end, the assurance of eternal life! Yet we are left saddened, deflated, disappointed with the tragedy of it all when we read, “he went away grieved.” He turned his back on the privilege that many of us would have given everything in life to have placed before us.

This is pretty amazing when we think of it; if this man had accepted Jesus’ invitation there would have been 13 disciples instead of 12! Jesus’ invitation to this man was just as clear and to the point as when he told Peter and John to “follow me and I will make you fishers of men.” It was just as compelling as when he called Matthew from his job as a tax collector and instructed him to “follow me.” The difference is in the way each person responded to the invitation for while Peter, John, Matthew dropped all and immediately followed Christ, this rich man “went away sorrowful.” He rejected his place among Jesus’ disciples and turned his back on the greatest privilege ever afforded any human being. He is the missing disciple, the one who turned his back on Jesus’ offer.

What we need to consider most carefully is the reason for this man’s rejection

of Christ’s invitation. What was the real reason why a man with intelligence and a deep desire for eternal life would turn his back on Christ’s offer of discipleship? It is interesting that this man claimed to have kept all the commandments, all his life – from the time that he was a youth. Obviously he was a person who was morally upright and no doubt he had a good reputation in his community, yet something in his spirit told this man that he was lacking something, that all his commandment-keeping had not qualified him for eternal life. When we examine his initial question to Jesus, we begin to get an understanding of why he rejected Christ’s offer. In the book of Matthew, the man’s question is stated a little differently than in Mark:

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (Matt 19:16)

Notice his question: “What good thing shall I do ...” He was not focused on obtaining eternal life by any means possible, his aim was to obtain life by DOING some good deed. In other words, he was interested in obtaining salvation by his works. He had been a commandment-keeper all his life but his sense of emptiness, his sense of need led him to conclude that he needed to do something even better than that, but his focus was still on his need to perform, to do some deed which was even better than commandment keeping.

Jesus did not tell him that he was a legalist, he did not explain righteousness by faith to him or instruct him in the futility of trying to obtain salvation by works. He simply got straight to the heart of the matter by giving the man the “one good thing,” that he should do. The man had asked for a task, something to do, so Jesus gave him something to do, but it was something which did not depend on what he did, but on the condition of his heart. Jesus’ instruction to sell all his goods, to give it all to the poor and then to come follow Jesus in a life of poverty and hardship was the closest thing to death that the man could have experienced and in a

sense, this is what Jesus was calling him to. His great need was to abandon his own life, to give up depending on himself and his resources and to make Jesus his all in all. This was the one thing missing in the life of this man and it was everything. It is also the one thing missing in the lives of all those who have not fully committed themselves to Christ. The conditions which Jesus gave to this man were not unique to him, they are the same instructions which he gives to all who sincerely desire to be his disciples today, and in all ages.

If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:33)

The one thing missing, the great lack, the thing which created this unsatisfied hunger in this man’s soul was that he was not completely surrendered and dedicated to God and his will. The true problem was not his riches, but his devotion to them, his dedication to them his dependence on them, the fact that they were greater to him than a life of following Christ. This was the problem and it always is the problem; the fact that God is not everything to us.

It is worth mentioning again that this man was a keeper of the commandments. Evidently he had made strong efforts to live in conformity to them all his life. However, all of this profited him nothing, he was just as lost as the man who had kept none of them! This demonstrates the fallacy of seeking to approach God and to obtain his favor by means of obedience to the commandments or any other works that we can produce. We absolutely must understand that keeping the commandments are the fruit of a relationship with God, the natural consequence of a life that is surrendered to him, but they are not the means by which we come to God or enter into a relationship with them.

Commandment-keeping is the fruit, the consequence of union with God, it is not the root of that union.

Of course there was nothing wrong in the efforts of this man to keep the commandments from the time he was a youth; this effort demonstrated that he had a desire to please God, he had a desire to obtain life. What was wrong was his DEPENDENCE on his commandment-keeping, this had become the basis of his relationship with God. He brought his good record of commandment-keeping to God with the expectation that he should be accepted because he had done well. His works were an offering that he brought to God expecting to be justified on the basis of his performance. This was the real problem, not his works, but his attitude to those works.

May God help us all to learn the critical lesson from the experience of this rich young man: No works that we do, or can do, can ever qualify us for God's favor. The only thing we can contribute to the process of obtaining salvation is to surrender our lives completely to God, to abandon our will, our way, our works, our commandment-keeping and accept the gift of salvation, freely given in Christ Jesus. When we have given ourselves completely in this way, then our riches will mean nothing, our commandment-keeping will mean nothing, our record of good or bad will mean nothing, all that will matter is that we belong to God one hundred percent and that he has complete control of our lives. This is the way, the only way to obtain eternal life. It is choosing to die, that Christ may live. The prophet David showed great insight and understanding when he expressed it in this way:

What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD. (Ps 116:12-13)



The Complete Gospel Verse

Continued from page 4

including the strongest angel, he would have turned to the way of self-preservation because nobody is good without God! "There is none good but one, that is God (Mark 10:18)." It is interesting that the one thing which enabled Jesus to save humanity is the one thing that made him more than human, that is, his divine nature.

EVERLASTING FATHER

Here we come upon another title that is badly misunderstood by Trinitarians. They don't really know what to do with this phrase, but they just conclude that it must mean that Jesus is the same as God the Father! This is not only completely irrational, but it also contradicts the very theory of the Trinity. According to the teaching of the Trinity, God the Father is a different person than Jesus Christ. One is the Father and the other is the Son, even though they are a part of the same one God. However, even in the Trinity, Jesus is NOT God the Father, so this interpretation of this title, "everlasting father" does not make sense, even in the Trinitarian concept.

In the family of God, Jesus is not God the Father, but in his relationship to the family of those who are redeemed, Jesus is our divine father! Jesus is the source of a new life, he is the father of a new race of humans, the new creation. A father is a man who has passed on his life to his children and this is what Jesus has done for all who are born again. It is his life that we have received and thus, we are the second human race, the new humanity with Jesus Christ as our Father. As Adam was the father of the old, fallen humanity, so Jesus is the "everlasting father" of the new, victorious humanity which has conquered sin, the devil and the world. In our first birth from the old Adam, we received his life, it was passed on to us through the means of physical procreation, through sexual union. But in this second

birth, the new birth the life of the second Adam is passed on to us through the means of faith.

PRINCE OF PEACE

Finally, Jesus is the prince of peace. A king, in the Bible, is often referred to as a "prince." The word "prince," in this sense refers to him being the ruler, but it also implies that he is the source of peace. The world has suffered six thousand years of torment and injustice and evil dictatorial rule, but finally somebody is coming who will bring what this planet has yearned and hungered for. We will see everlasting peace and he is the king, the prince who will bring this peace.

So these are the seven elements which we find in Isaiah 9:6. Normally, when we are looking for a verse which expresses the gospel most completely, we would probably go to a verse like John



3:16, but if we are looking for a verse which covers all the different elements of the gospel and all the things which are involved in our salvation, I would recommend that we go to Isaiah 9:6. God has outlined us in this one verse all the elements which make Jesus our perfect Savior.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa 9:6)



My Conversion

David Clayton

I was converted when I was 22 years old. The full impact of my conversion can only be appreciated if I give a little background of the years which immediately preceded my conversion. I came from a Christian home and grew up in religious circumstances. But my personal experience emphasizes the truth that nobody can be a child of God in a second hand way and that God has only children, no grandchildren.

When I was 17 years old, I left high school and immediately obtained a job as a pre-trained teacher at a primary school in the backwoods of Trelawny parish, in a village called "Sherwood Content." I was not fit to be a teacher, but at that time teachers were in short supply and the schools which were in deep country areas especially, suffered from a shortage of teachers, so many of these schools accepted graduates from high school to work as, what was called, "pre-trained teachers." So there I was.

As soon as I started to earn my own money, I broke the restraints which had been placed on me by my parents. I still lived at home, but now, my job gave me a measure of independence and I set about using my freedom to indulge in many of the fantasies which had only been in my mind up to that point. At that time we were living in a seaside village and the decadence and immorality which existed there was appalling. However, in my state of mind, I settled down quite happily to fit in to the lifestyle of the community. My parents were deeply concerned for me and my younger brother Don as we were the ones who adapted most readily to the lifestyle of the village, but I was not willing to listen to their appeals.

With my new lifestyle, I began to realize that I was heading for destruction. I could not silence or escape my conscience, but neither was I willing to change my ways and I realized that I

was heading for hell. At this time, I came upon a book sitting on the bookshelf at home, which was just what my carnal mind was craving. It was entitled, "Chariots of the Gods." I suppose that my father had placed it there in some careless moment, but now, here it was, just what I wanted. This book was written by a man named Erich Von Daniken and it proposed that the God described in the Bible and in most religions, was nothing more than a visitor from outer space. He presented evidence which he claimed indicated that the ancient people had encountered beings from a higher civilization outside of this planet, and whom they had regarded as gods, because they were too primitive to understand who they really were.

This was exactly what I wanted, a way



to get away from God. I embraced this foolish idea wholeheartedly and from that time I began to claim that I did not believe in God. Naturally, my parents were horrified, but I had a question which it seemed they could not answer and I used it to silence them whenever they got on my case. I would ask, "Daddy, does God know whether or not I will be lost or saved?" Of course he had

to answer, "yes," so then, I would say, "well, if God knows I will be lost, I cannot be saved, and if God knows I will be saved, I cannot be lost, so don't bother me about it." My father tried to get me to understand the truth, but to my perverse mind, my reasoning seemed to be beyond argument.

For five years I lived this lifestyle with my professing atheism. I did not speak of it so openly at home, but secretly I held to it and it soothed my conscience whenever it began to trouble me about my ungodly state. During that time I completely abandoned church and for about five years I don't remember that I attended worship at all. My mother realized that I would not listen to anybody so she settled down to pray for me and she petitioned God for me continually.

At long last, after living like this for five years, I got myself into a problem which I could not deal with. My loose, careless living landed me into a difficulty which I had no idea how to get out of. This problem was of such a nature that it led me to contemplate killing myself. No matter how I racked my brain I could not think of any way out of it, but I did not find the courage to take my own life. For three long days and nights I was tormented by this problem, trying to think of a way to escape, but no solution offered itself to me.

By the fourth day, I had exhausted all my resources and I had come to the end of my rope. During the past three days I had looked back over my life and everything appeared to me in a vivid new light. It seemed to me that my life was just a progression from one failure to another with no direction and no purpose to it. I was twenty-two years old and I had no idea of what I wanted to do with the rest of my life. It seemed to me that I just drifted from one place to another, from one thing to another and that my life was just a series of

disappointments. A great desire came over me to have something better. The thought came that surely, I was designed for something better than this and I was filled with a longing that the potential which was in me might be fulfilled, that my life might have some worthwhile purpose.

Finally, my thoughts began to turn to God and I realized to my amazement that I really believed in God, in spite of my denials for the past five years. It dawned on me that I had really been deceiving myself. Out of the darkness which enshrouded me, I remembered two texts from the Bible which I had learned in better days. One of them was Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (Rom 8:28)

This was what I badly needed, some way for this problem to work out for my good. I saw no possibility of this, but the verse seemed to present a hope. After all, wasn't it true that "with God all things are possible?" But then I thought, "this verse is not for me. First of all, I don't love God. I have been His enemy for five years and I can't come crawling to Him now, asking for His help when I have been throwing abuse into His face for all this time." I had nowhere else to turn, but my pride presented itself as a barrier and I resisted the idea of asking for help from Someone whom I had rejected for so long, now that I was in trouble.

The other verse that came to my mind was Proverbs 3:5.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. (Pro 3:6)

This verse appealed to me more. I felt that I not only needed deliverance from my problem, but that I also badly needed somebody to take control of my life who knew what he was doing, somebody who would take the mess that I had created and make sense out of it as well as give me some direction which was worthwhile and of lasting value.

Somebody who could make my existence a thing of value in the universe. The verse promised that God would direct the path of the one who would "acknowledge" him in ALL his ways. It seemed to me that I could do this.

It is strange how my mind worked. I thought to myself, "I cannot ask God to take away my problem because I cannot come to beg Him for a favor when I have abused Him for so long. But if I choose to acknowledge Him in all my ways from now on, I can ask Him to take care of the future, so no matter what has happened in the past, I will have to live with it, but the future will be better if I will acknowledge Him in all my ways."

A revolution was taking place in my mind. An excitement began to build inside of me. One of the reasons why I had so completely abandoned the church and religion was that it had all seemed so boring and meaningless to me. My recollections of church were not at all enticing. I remembered noisy, but tedious sermons, repetitious ceremonies, sitting through rituals and formalities which seemed to have no purpose or meaning. Somehow, in it all, the reality of God had never come home to me. Now, suddenly, the thought of God, as a Person, independent of all those ceremonies and formalities presented itself to my mind. For the first time I thought of God as a real Person and the thought filled me with awe and excitement.

As my mind went back over the things I had learned from the Bible, I recognized that the outstanding men of the Bible had developed a relationship with God which was far more appealing than what I had experienced in church. I saw that people like Abraham, Elijah, Moses, had not known God through a church-based religion, but that they had simply known Him as a Person with whom they had developed a close friendship. How that appealed to me! I began to question, "is such a thing still possible? Can it be that there is the possibility that I could have a relationship like that with God?" It was an

awesome thought and I hardly dared to think it, but then, I remembered another Bible verse from Malachi (thank God for all the times I had studied the "morning watch.") The verse said,

"I am the Lord and I change not ..."
(Mal. 3:6).

Was this true? If this was true, I thought, how was it that I had never met a single person who had experienced the same kind of relationship with God as these Bible characters had experienced? How was it that in all my years in church I had never encountered such an individual. The answer presented itself to my mind; if God had not changed, then it must be that *people* had changed! It must be that Christians today did not seek the same kind of relationship with God as these Bible characters had done and this was why nobody had it.

This was my cue and it was the turning point for me. When I saw the possibility of something different, something meaningful, something which I had never seen before, but which was possible, I decided that I would give my life to God. But I determined that I was not going to be simply a church member. I detested the formal religion which I had previously experienced and if there had been nothing else available, I probably would never have become a Christian. But now, excited at the prospect which God had presented to me, the opportunity of becoming a friend of the living God, I was filled with excitement and I made up my mind that I would spend the rest of my life as the friend of God. Words cannot express the way this thought excited me. It gave me hope, purpose and filled my life with sudden new meaning. Now there was somebody who would take this dreary, failure of a life and give it eternal purpose. It was a joy to think that with my life in the hands of God, it was impossible for me to be anything but a great success in life. Not successful as men measure success, but as measured in the line of eternity.

That day of my decision is indelibly etched in my mind, I will never forget

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Building Healthy Bones

Lenworth Frankson



Our bones create the internal framework of the human body and collectively they make up what is called the skeletal system. Bones support our bodies and allow us to move. They protect our brain, heart, and other organs from injury. The skeletal system is living, growing tissue. It is made mostly of two materials: collagen, a protein that provides a soft framework, and calcium, a mineral that adds strength and hardness. This combination makes bone strong and flexible enough to hold up under stress. Bone releases calcium and other minerals into the body when you need them for other uses. You could say that our bones are like a bank where we deposit and withdraw bone tissue.

During our childhood and teenage years, new bone material is added to the skeleton faster than old bone is removed. As a result, our bones become larger, heavier, and denser. For most people, bone formation continues at a faster pace than removal until sometime after age 20. However, after age 30, bone withdrawals can begin to go faster than deposits. If your bone deposits don't keep up with withdrawals, you can end up with osteoporosis as you get older. Osteoporosis is a disease in which the bones become weak and more likely to fracture or break. People with osteoporosis most often break bones in the hip, spine, and wrist. The good news however is that there are some things that we can do to help build, prevent and maintain strong healthy bones. Here are some suggestions that can be helpful:

EAT LOTS OF VEGETABLES

Dark green leafy and yellow vegetables are great for your bones. Vegetables are one of the best sources of vitamin C, which stimulates the production of bone cells. Some studies suggest that vitamin C's antioxidant effects may protect bone cells from damage. Vegetables also seem to increase bone density. Bone density is a measurement of the amount of calcium and other minerals found in your bones. A high intake of these vegetables has been linked to increased bone mineralization during childhood and the maintenance of bone mass in young adults. Eating lots of vegetables has also been found to benefit older women. Onions are also great for bone health. A study involving women over 50 found those who consumed onions most frequently had a 20% lower risk of osteoporosis, compared to women who rarely ate them. One major risk factor for osteoporosis in older adults is increased bone turnover, or the process of breaking down and forming new bone. In a three-month study, women who consumed more than nine servings of broccoli, cabbage, parsley or other plants high in bone-protective antioxidants had a decrease in bone turnover

STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

Exercising regularly can reduce the rate of bone loss. Most bone fractures occur because of a fall. You can reduce your chances of falling by exercising to build your muscle strength and improve balance. Exercise can also slow the rate of bone loss, which reduces the risk of fractures from osteoporosis. Types of exercise that can help to build and maintain strong bones are weight bearing or high-impact exercise, which also promote the formation of new bone. Studies in children, including those having type one diabetes, have found that weight bearing or high-impact exercise increases the amount of bone created during

the years of peak bone growth. These exercises can be extremely beneficial for preventing bone loss in older adults too. Studies in older men and women who performed weight-bearing exercise showed increases in bone mineral density, bone strength and bone size, as well as reductions in bone turnover and inflammation.

Strength-training exercise is known to increase muscle mass and may also help protect against bone loss in younger and older women, including those with osteoporosis, osteopenia (low bone mass or low bone density) and breast cancer. One study in men with low bone mass found that although both resistance training and weight-bearing exercise increased bone density in several areas of the body, only resistance training had this effect in the hip.

CONSUME ENOUGH PROTEIN

When it comes to your bones, protein is especially important. Why? Because protein makes up roughly one third of your bone mass (that's the amount of protein your bones contain) and half of your bone volume (the amount of space protein takes up). The protein in your bones is continuously broken down and built back up, as part of your bone remodeling process. The protein that is broken down is not reabsorbed and re-used. That is why we need a daily supply of protein to maintain our bone density. Protein also works closely with calcium, which happens to be a key mineral for bone health.

Some researchers suggest that low protein intake decreases calcium absorption and may also affect rates of bone formation and breakdown. However, concerns have also been raised that high-protein diets leach calcium from bones in order to counteract increased acidity in the blood. Nevertheless, studies have found that this doesn't occur in people who consume up to 100 grams

of protein daily, as long as this is balanced with plenty of plant foods and adequate calcium intake. It seems that women, in particular, appear to have better bone density when they consume higher amounts of protein

In a large, six-year observational study of over 144,000 postmenopausal women, higher protein intake was linked to a lower risk of forearm fractures and significantly higher bone density in the hip, spine and total body. Some studies support the idea that diets containing a greater percentage of calories from protein may help preserve bone mass during weight loss. A low protein intake can lead to bone loss, while a high protein intake can help protect bone health during aging and weight loss.

EAT CALCIUM RICH FOODS

Calcium is a key nutrient that many of us overlook in our diets. Almost every cell in the body uses calcium in some way, including the nervous system, muscles, and heart. Our body uses calcium to build healthy bones and teeth, keep them strong as we age, send messages through the nervous system, help our blood clot, our muscles contract, and regulate the heart's rhythm.

If we don't get enough calcium in our diet, our body will take it from our bones to ensure normal cell function, which can lead to weakened bones or osteoporosis. Calcium deficiency can contribute to mood problems such as irritability, anxiety, depression, and difficulty sleeping.

Many of us are uninformed about calcium and how to best protect our bones and overall health. We have questions like; how much calcium should we get? Where should we get it? How does vitamin D, magnesium, and other nutrients help calcium do its job? The fact is that a lot of people are not getting the recommended daily amount of calcium and approximately one in two women and about one in four men, over the age of 50, is likely to break a bone due to osteoporosis. Getting enough calcium in one's diet is not just important for older people. It's also vital for

children, teens, and young adults since we continue building bone mass into our mid-20s. Whatever your age or gender, it's vital to include calcium-rich foods in your diet, limit those that deplete calcium, and get enough magnesium and vitamins D and K to help calcium do its job.

Good sources of calcium include dark leafy green vegetables (not spinach its high in oxalates) certain fish, oatmeal and other grains, tofu, cabbage, summer squash, green beans, garlic, sea vegetables, broccoli and calcium-fortified foods such as whole grain cereals.

Because our bone cells are constantly breaking down and replaced by new ones it is important for us to consume calcium daily to protect bone structure and strength. The daily recommendation for calcium is 1,000 mg per day for most people, although teens need 1,300 mg and older women require 1,200 mg. The amount of calcium our body actually absorbs can vary greatly.

If you eat a meal containing more than 500 mg of calcium, your body will absorb much less of it than if you consume a lower amount. It is best to spread your calcium intake throughout the day by including one high-calcium food from this list at each meal. Also it is better to get calcium from foods rather than supplements. One recent 10-year study of 1,567 people found that although high calcium intake from foods decreased the risk of heart disease overall, those who took calcium supplements had a 22% greater risk of heart disease.

PLENTY VITAMIN D AND VITAMIN K

Vitamin D and vitamin K are extremely important for building strong bones. Vitamin D plays several roles in bone health, including helping your body absorb calcium. Studies have shown that children and adults with low vitamin D levels tend to have lower bone density and are more at risk for bone loss than people who get enough. Vitamin D deficiency is very common, affecting about one billion people worldwide. Getting vitamin D through sun exposure and food sources such as

fatty fish (salmon, tuna and mackerel) are some suggested ways. However, many people need to supplement with up to 2,000 IU of vitamin D daily to maintain optimal levels.

Vitamin K activates proteins that play a role in blood clotting, calcium-metabolism and heart health. One of its most important functions is to regulate the depositing of calcium. In other words, it promotes the calcification of bones as well as prevents the calcification of blood vessels and kidneys.

Vitamin K2 supports bone health by modifying osteocalcin, a protein involved in bone formation. This modification enables osteocalcin to bind to minerals in bones and helps prevent the loss of calcium from bones.

In a study of women 50–65 years of age, those who took vitamin K2 maintained bone density, whereas the group that received a placebo showed a significant decrease in bone density after 12 months. It appears then that getting adequate amounts of vitamins D and K from food or supplements may help protect bone health.

A STABLE, HEALTHY WEIGHT

Maintaining a healthy weight can help support bone health. When a person is underweight they increase the risk of osteopenia and osteoporosis. This is especially the case in postmenopausal women who have lost the bone-protective effects of estrogen. In fact, low body weight is the main factor contributing to reduced bone density and bone loss in this age group. Other studies suggest that being obese can weaken bone quality and increase the risk of fractures due to the stress of excess weight. While weight loss typically results in some bone loss, it is usually less pronounced in obese individuals than normal-weight individuals. Repeatedly losing and regaining weight appears particularly detrimental to bone health, as well as losing a large amount of weight in a short time. One recent study found that bone loss during weight loss was not reversed when weight was regained, which suggests that repeated

cycles of losing and gaining weight may lead to significant bone loss over a person's lifetime. Maintaining a stable normal or slightly higher than normal weight is your better choice when it comes to protecting your bone health. Being too thin or too heavy can negatively affect bone health. Furthermore, maintaining a stable weight, rather than repeatedly losing and regaining it, can help preserve bone density.

Bone health is important at all stages of life. Having strong bones is something people tend to take for granted, as symptoms often don't appear until bone loss is at an advanced stage. Fortunately, there are many nutrition and lifestyle habits that can help build and maintain strong bones.



My Conversion

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the date and I count it as my true birthday. It was May 5, 1975.

I don't remember whether I knelt, or stood, or sat down, as I really prayed that day for the first time in my life. I don't remember what I said, but I remember that when I began to pray the world was sitting on my head. When I had finished, I was as light as a feather! I looked out the window and was amazed at the color of the sky and the grass and trees. I had never seen such living green and blue, everything seemed to be pulsing with new life and happiness.

So I became a Christian that day and I have never regretted or turned back from this decision. I am not saying that I never again fell into sin or that I never again disappointed God. I wish I could say this, but I can't. I still had many, many things to learn. However, for the past 45 years, ever since that day, God has been my best Friend and I have always had a driving desire to be His best friend in return. I have known since that day that He loves me with a love which cannot be expressed in words. I have always had this comforting assurance through all the experiences, good and bad which I have passed through since that day.



Open Face

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