

"We love the good old Bible, the glorious word of God.
A lamp for those who travel, through all life's dreary road.
The watchword in life's battle, the chart on life's dark sea. The beautiful dear Bible, it shall our solace be."

The Beautiful Dear Bible

The Bible is the Word of God and it is truly beautiful. It is the Masterpiece of all literature. What greater endorsement can there be for a book than to have been written by the Author of life.

God has provided His word to communicate to man. He has revealed His purpose for the earth. We learn from the Bible that God wants this earth to be inhabited by people who will glorify Him, so that the earth may be filled with God's glory as the waters cover the sea. (see Num. 14:21, Isa. 45:18)

The Bible is beautiful because it outlines a wonderful hope for us. We have the opportunity to live forever on this earth, when it is filled with God's glory.

Godliness

The Bible is filled with details for this great Kingdom that is coming on the earth. It provides us with instruction to teach us how to glorify God in our lives.

God wants us to learn to be like Him. He has revealed His characteristics throughout the written word for our education. He has also provided a living example, His own son Jesus, the Christ.

Jesus was the perfect visual aid. He demonstrated godliness throughout his life. He learned about godliness from the Old Testament scriptures, which could make one wise unto salvation.

(see 2 Tim 3:15-17)

THE BIBLE



"A lamp for those who travel"

Jesus and the Scriptures

There is a unique and wonderful thing about the Holy Scriptures. They are more than the words of God, they are a revelation of God.

Jesus learned about God from the scriptures. Throughout his ministry he referred to the words of God, which he had written on his heart.

The word of God provided him with strength during his temptation in the wilderness, and it was the hope that he found in the scriptures that helped him to endure the trials of the cross. (see Matthew 4: 4-10, Hebrews 12: 2)

Jesus learned about God from the word of God. He used that education from the scriptures to glorify his Father by demonstrating godliness in his words and deeds.

God acknowledged that Jesus had learned godliness. At his baptism, the Father said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt 3: 17)

Godliness and Us?

Now, it is our turn. We have the Bible, and the example of Jesus to help us to both learn and practice godliness to the glory of God.

Things Concerning

The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ

THIS IS LIFE ETERNAL, THAT THEY MIGHT KNOW THEE THE ONLY TRUE GOD

The words above are taken from the Gospel of John, chapter 17, verse 3. They are part of a final prayer by Jesus, spoken just before his trial and crucifixion. His prayer begins:

"Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. **And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.**" (John 17:1-3)

Hope for Eternal Life

There is something revealed in this prayer concerning eternal life that is contrary to popular opinions on the subject. The words of the Master demonstrate that:

Eternal life is not something that the natural man would normally experience. We are mortal creatures and there is nothing in our nature that lives forever.

Eternal life is only a hope. Jesus has been given the power to grant this wonderful gift to those who believe in him and who walk worthy of grace.

Eternal life is not a present possession of the natural man. It is something that will be granted when Jesus returns to this earth to establish his Kingdom. Life eternal is reserved for those who know the only true God, and His son Jesus, and who are judged faithful when he comes.

If we desire the gift of eternal life, it is only reasonable that we should know God, who is the Creator and sus-

tainer of life.

To Know God

To know God implies much more than just knowing that there is a God. To know God, as Jesus did, involves an intimate relationship with the Father.

To know God, we must learn about Him from the Bible. We can also learn by studying the example of Jesus, the son of God.

Jesus was a manifestation of God in the flesh. When people looked at him, listened to his words, and observed his actions, they saw a reflection of the Father working in him.

God manifested by Us?

Jesus displayed the character of God in word and deed. He knew God intimately, and he was therefore able to manifest God in his life.

Our hope for eternal life is dependent on how well we know God, and how well we have been able to manifest Him in our lives. We can demonstrate our knowledge of our Heavenly Father by displaying His characteristics through our own words and deeds.

This is Life Eternal

To know God and to know Jesus, is eternal life. There is no other way to become eligible for God's grace. There is "none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

If you would like to have a free monthly copy of "Things Concerning" sent to a friend please let us know. **VISIT THE ADVOCATE WEB SITE: www.sover.net/~advocate**

LOCAL CONTACT:

Send all Correspondence to:
"Things Concerning"
27 Delphian Rd
Springfield, VT 05156
e-mail jimillay@sover.net

“The living know that they shall die”

The Dead Know not Anything

The Bible teaches us that “the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Rom 6:23)

It also reminds us that this gift of life will only be granted after Christ returns and judges his people. Since this is the truth about eternal life as revealed in the Word of God, then what about death? What happens when a man dies?

Dust thou Art

After Adam and Eve had sinned, man was sentenced to death. Adam was told: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (Gen 3:19)

This sentence was passed on to all of Adam and Eve’s descendants. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom 5:12)

This condition of mortality is expressed very clearly in the words that head this article taken from Ecclesiastes 9: 5-6: “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

Without Hope?

The natural man is “without God and without hope in the world.” It is only in Christ Jesus that we have an opportunity for life beyond corruption in the grave. (see Ephesians 2:12-13)

Jesus died himself. He was buried, and after 3 days rose again. In like manner, our only hope for life after death is resurrection in Christ.

What about the soul?

We are led to believe that it is only the body that perishes at death and people talk about the resurrection “of the body”. The suggestion is that we have a soul that lives and flies away to Heaven when we die.

This idea is not scriptural. It is based on Greek philosophy. The Bible tells us plainly that “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” (Ezek 18:20)

The word “soul” actually means the whole person, and not the spirit of a man. There is not one single reference in the Bible that even suggests that man has an immortal soul or spirit.

What about Heaven?

“The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to human beings.” (Psalm 115:16 NRSV)

Heaven is not our dwelling place, dead or alive. We are plainly told that “**no man hath ascended up to heaven**, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” (John 3:13)

This truth is demonstrated further by these words about David, who was said to be a man after God’s own heart. “Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he **is both dead and buried**, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.....For **David is not ascended into the heavens:**” (Acts 2: 29, 34)

No Mystery

There is no great mystery about life and death. We are born, we live and then we die. **Our body** returns to dust in the ground, and **our mind** remains unconscious forever, unless we are eligible for a resurrection through Christ.

The Bible tells about our hopeless state of mortality, contrasted with our hope for eternal life **through Jesus, the way, the truth and the life.**

“ TO HIM THAT OVERCOMETH WILL I GIVE TO EAT OF THE TREE OF LIFE”

The **Tree of Life** stood in the middle of the Garden of Eden as a symbol of the reward that man would have if he remained obedient to his Creator.

There was another tree in the midst of the garden. It was the **Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil**. This tree represented the other choice for man.

Adam and Eve had been told that they could eat of any of the trees of the garden, except for the Tree of Knowledge. If they ate of that tree, they would surely die.

Choices

Two Trees, each representing a choice for man. God had set before them Life and Death, and had asked that they choose life. We all have the same choice in our lives.

We can obey the commandments and “by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality” Or we can be disobedient and contentious, not obeying the truth, and we will experience indignation and wrath. Disobedience will surely end in eternal death. (see Rom 2:6-8)

The choices are still the same. We have the hope of eternal life, or the punishment of death.

To Him That overcometh

The gift of Eternal Life is not an automatic thing. Christ died for sin, and he provided an opportunity for sinners, but not all sinners will be saved.

First of all, we must identify ourselves with Christ. We must believe in him and be obedient to the commandment to be baptized into his name, to receive the forgiveness of our sins. (see Acts 2:38)



After we have become a member of the family of God through baptism into Christ, we must allow God to work in our lives, so that we can demonstrate our faith through obedience.

The Tree of Life

The way to the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden was guarded after Adam and Eve had sinned and were expelled from the presence of God : “So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, **to keep the way of the tree of life.**” (Gen 3:24)

From that day forward, access to the Tree of Life has been restricted. There was only one way back, and that was through the sword.

Jesus passed through the sword figuratively when he died on the cross. (see Zech 13:7) The way to life eternal has been opened through his sacrifice, but it is still provisional.

In the last book of the Bible, we find a verse that explains the current status and hope for eternal life:

“**To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.**”

(Rev 2:7)