

THE EDIFIER

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The Apostle John opens with his epistle, *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God.* John 1:1-2

John places himself at the same starting point of time. *"In the beginning"*, the same understanding which is recorded in Genesis 1:1, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."*

Not the beginning of God, but the beginning of creation, the beginning of mankind.

I would like to make it clear that God is a title and there is only one true God, revealed as Father and the Word, (Logos) which is His only begotten Son.

Before time began God existed, outside of time and matter! God is eternal without a beginning or an end. God cannot die. God is self-existent and independent of all other things which relate to creation and mankind. You could say that God needs nothing, contrary to the dependent state of humans. The ultimate reality - all reality is according to His will.

It is sometimes hard for us to comprehend or grasp the concept that the Father and the Word (Son) has always existed, because our existence has a beginning and an end.

Jesus tells us that His Father's essence is Spirit. *'God is a Spirit'*, John 4:24a. He is Omnipresent,

meaning His presence is everywhere at the same time.

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in hell, (Sheol) behold, You are there. Psalm 139:7-8.

The omnipresence of God informs us of the greatness of God. It reminds us that we can never hide from God — nor should we desire to do so. It should be a source of comfort for His children, knowing that He cares for us and we are of great value to Him.

Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. Matthew 10:29-31

The Apostle John tells us in a few verses early in the chapter, that he was sent by God to bear witness of the Light and the Light (Word) became flesh and lived amongst us. In whom the world was made through Him.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him

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We're familiar with the powerful and compelling parable in Matthew 25:14-30 where the boss leaves his workers with levels of investment to increase until he returns.

It's a story that forces us to ask, *"Am I a good steward?"* What have I done with what the Lord has given me: the time, resources and opportunities I already have? In asking those questions, we then need to sincerely seek after and follow through with the answers that adequately weigh before God's will.

God calls us and we begin to *"grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."* It isn't long then that Jesus' vision and aspirations become ours, and we hear Jesus' compassionate observation, *"The harvest is plentiful, the labourers few. Pray, therefore, for the Lord to send labourers into the harvest..."*

So, we begin to pray. That's all Jesus asks of us. But in doing so, we begin to carry the burden Jesus has. He opens our eyes to see what He sees as important.

We then find ourselves further convicted and compelled by the Holy Spirit to somehow step forward. "Here I am," responded Isaiah to God's call, "Send me!"

In other words, "I'm available, God. I hear your call. While I don't know what this looks like and I'm not sure what my gifts are, or whether I'm particularly suited for this. But I trust in YOU! And because of that faith, I'll take that first tentative step."

We must be willing and proactive participants in the grace afforded to us. *"Ask, and you will receive. Seek, and you will find. Knock, and it will be opened to you"* – Jesus' words echo across the millennia!

In considering the calling God has given us within the Body of Christ and throughout the communities we live in, what is your personal ministry – something that you have a heart for and are inclined towards? What is it that you're most passionate about?

Jesus invites us into fellowship, grants us rest, and then shows us what he has in mind for us. He has something for us to do, which he describes as a yoke, a "light" burden that fits us perfectly.

Ever heard the song, *"He ain't heavy, he's my brother"*? If you're gifted or wired in a particular way, it's no burden then to assume stewardship in that area. It's actually quite natural and easy – whereas for another who might be gifted differently, your area of joy might be quite hard for them.

It is important to find a ministry (an area of Christian service) that is Christ's burden and will for you. Something that you're passionate about and that fits you exactly. After all, we've all been given "talents".

What we're discussing is gifts-based ministries. We've all been given time, talents, treasures and opportunities. Jesus' parable also seems to indicate that we are to use them, invest, and even take calculated risks, in His service.

The apostle Paul discussed the grace given to us in Romans 12:3-8 as he does in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

So, what does "service" look like for you. Most of us are no longer "on the milk of the Word." We're growing in maturity, and with a divine originated skill-set, are equipped in the Holy Spirit to "make a difference".



Some ideas for our personal ministry may be to:

Visit the sick or elderly.

Knit baby booties and hoodies for new-born babies.

Write an article for a Christian magazine.

Write to the needy, lonely and sick.

Ring and chat with others in the faith.

Give away free Bibles.

If you're musical, sing and play so you can uplift others.

Pray for one person, every day without ceasing.

Prepare a Bible Study or seminar.

Contribute regularly to worship music.

Maybe it's audio/video you're interested in.

Follow your passion of sharing children's church lessons.

Maybe its church venue setup and takedown.

Prepare a sermon or short edifying message.

In other words, **DO SOMETHING!** Don't bury your gift! God calls us as labourers in his field. We have a responsibility and divine mandate to prosper with what is given us.

Paul phrased it this way in 1 Corinthians 3:9 "For we are God's fellow workers..." Paul understood the need to step out in faith as good stewards of what God has entrusted to us.

It is God who endows us with the necessary and diverse gifts. He also provides the opportunities, the will, and the resources. Ours is to respond with a genuine willingness, creativity and gratitude. The net result will be that no longer will we just "attend church" and feed on the "milk of the word." Hebrews 5:12-14 indicates that we are becoming mature in the Word, people of faith who are actively engaged, and in constant practice.



What's your ministry in the context of the Body of Christ, the church? The spiritual sacrifices God requires are the tangible fruits of Christ-centred, Spirit-led service. All of us can become profitable servants of Jesus Christ. It's encouraging to also remember that Jesus brings a reward with him, "according to what we have done."

A few words of wisdom at this point may also be helpful: Don't try to fulfil an area of service that you're not particularly gifted for. That's vital to understand. For example, no matter how hard a non-musical person tries to, for example, sing or play an instrument, if they're not wired that way, their level of "expertise" will always be deficient.

God has called us to be stewards of what He has already given us. That in itself takes intentionality and dedication and work and practice. Note that it also seems

that there's more emphasis throughout Christianity on "being", and significantly less on "doing" – because it risks inviting criticism over being "legalistic". But Jesus says that we are "to do the will of our Father in heaven." Stewardship is central to our journey today.

Let's be the good stewards of what God has already entrusted to us, and to whom Jesus will one day say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter the joy of your LORD."

Written by Pastor John Klassek from the Perth church.

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And the Word became 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 1:8-10 & 14.

John tells us of the relationship Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, has with the Father. Before time began, before creation, He was in the bosom of the Father and only Jesus Christ has seen the Father.

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. John 1:18.

Jesus Christ and the Father are so intertwined, so united in love, in thought and deed, that their relationship is the greatest of all relationships.

We are so blessed just to have a glimpse into the existence of our Heavenly Father and His Son!

All scriptures taken from NKJV

Written by Pastor Phil Kordahi



In the fifty third chapter of the book of Isaiah, speaking of the Christ to come, we are told *“And by His stripes we are healed”* (v5). This chapter records everything that the Christ was to endure and suffer, and in that regard is essential reading for anyone wanting to comprehend the depth of His love toward us.

Many have taken this particular verse to mean that the Christ will heal us of our diseases. While Matthew 18: 17 does affirm that parts of Isaiah 53 do in fact relate to the healing of our physical bodies, this verse does not. Rather, this verse ties in to the context of other parts of Chapter 53 which give it a much deeper application. But before we look at that, here is a reminder that God can also do the opposite...to bring disease on.

In Exodus 15:26 God said to Israel *“I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the Lord, am your healer.”* This applies to individuals as well as nations. *“...He will lay them (diseases) on all who hate you”*. Deuteronomy 7:15

Equally, also on righteous people. In 2 Kings 20:1 we are told concerning King Hezekiah, *“In those days Hezekiah became ill and was at the point of death. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz went to him and said, “This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover.”*

God is the potter, we are the clay. On this point, when Peter, having been told how he would die, wanted to know about John. Jesus rebuked Him saying *“If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”*

Flesh and blood cannot inherit eternal life. The soul that sins shall die. We all have to die, which leads us back to where we started *“By His stripes*

we are healed”. This verse is not talking about our physical health. The healing this refers to can be found within the context of the first part of v.5 and those verses following,

Wounded for our *transgressions*;

“... For the transgressions of My people he was stricken;” (v.8b)

“... When you make His soul (life) an offering for sin;” (v.10a)

“... Because he has poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors and He bore the sin of many.” (v.12b)

The stripes (lashes, wounds) that Jesus suffered and endured unto death, despite Him being innocent, was that punishment pronounced on us as sinners. He was the sacrificial lamb, the lamb that took away the sins of the world. We are the scapegoat set free in the wilderness, we are the Barabbas set free before Pilate. We have been healed from the deadly wound of death. Although we are saved by the sacrificial blood of Jesus, we must still bear the consequence of our sin and face physical death. Yet we have obtained complete victory through Christ, so that we may say *“O death, where is your sting? O grave where is your victory?”* 1 Corinthians 15:55

The healing brought about from Jesus’ stripes culminate in the fulfilment of His purpose on Earth: overcoming the works of the devil, overcoming death and the power of sin, and in restoring us to a union with God. In this we can have complete confidence.

“Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed.” 1 Peter 2:24

NJKV Translation

Written by Richard Todd, from the Adelaide church.





Pass It On

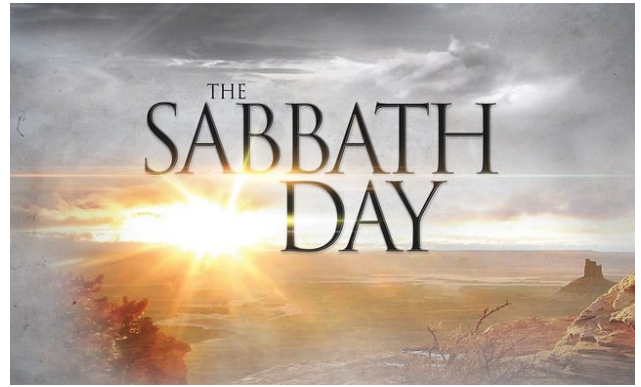
If you hear a kind word spoken
Of some worthy soul you know,
It may fill his heart with sunshine
If you'd only tell him so.

If a deed, however humble,
helps you on your way to go,
Seek the one whose hand has helped you.
Seek him out and tell him so.

If your heart is touched and tender
Towards sinner, lost and low,
It might help him to do better
If you could only tell him so.

Oh, my sisters, oh, my brothers,
As o'er life's rough path you go,
If God's love has saved and kept you,
Do not fail to tell men so.

Poet: Unknown



Top Ten

Reasons for Celebrating Sabbath

Many Christians around the world observe a day of rest and worship on Saturday, which is the Sabbath.

The Bible teaches that the seventh day of each week is the true Sabbath, the day God set aside and rested from His work.

"He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." Genesis 2:2-3

Please Send For The Free Booklet

"Top Ten Reasons for Celebrating Sabbath."



A Christian world view

The Christian world view is positive and exciting. In a nutshell, life has real purpose because a loving creator made humans special, instructed us how to live purpose-filled and blessed lives and planned an exciting eternal destiny for us. Faith will be eternally rewarded and the wicked ultimately will not get away with the harm they've caused.

By contrast, the negative world view fervently championed in our public schools, mainstream media and literature is we are just the product of unplanned evolutionary forces, we are no more than animals and death is the end of us all. There are also other associated sinister agendas harmful to us all being pushed hard through every available medium.

In light of this, it is essential today's parents (more than ever) do everything they can to steer their children in a positive direction. Christian schools or home schooling are important options well worth considering and sacrificing for.

It's also very important parents and grandparents are actively teaching their children their beliefs, giving children the evidence validating such beliefs and exposing the falsehoods and dangers of the negative world view and agendas targeting even small children. Just taking children to church may not be enough.

Instead of leaving children to be entertained/babysat by the world's television programmes and on-line materials with its worldview/agenda, there's a wonderful opportunity. It is teaching children God's word every day, using the abundance of godly children's programmes on-line, including entertaining and educational cartoons

All parents – please consider!

Article written by Pastor David Kidd, New Zealand





Bible Trivia For Youth

1. When Samuel picked David as king, God reminded us that while people look at the outward appearance, what does God look at?

Is it [our motives](#), [our attitude](#), [our work done on earth](#) or [our heart](#)?

2. Who was the first person to come upon the injured man in the parable of the Good Samaritan? Was it the [tax collector](#), [the innkeeper](#), [the priest](#) or [the judge](#)?

3. How much of his wealth did Zacchaeus give to the poor? Was it [10 percent](#), [all of it](#), [half of it](#) or [what he had collected in taxes](#)?

4. What animal does Moses compare the people of Israel to when speaking to the Lord? Is it [sheep](#), [goats](#), [lions](#) or [eagles](#)?

5. What will be the outcome of honoring your father and your mother? Is it that [you will live long in the land](#), [that you will prosper in all you do](#), [that you will be blessed to the seventh generation](#) or [you will have bountiful crops](#)?

Please answer the question before looking up the scripture!

1. [1 Samuel 16:7](#) 2. [Luke 10:30-34](#) 3. [Luke 19:8](#) 4. [Numbers 27:17](#) 5. [Exodus 20:12](#)

A Message From The Past

"Not Of This World"

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight . . . " John 18:36

Standing, unafraid before the haughty Roman governor, we find our Lord declaring one of the great truths of His kingdom. It is not of this world! His servants do not fight for His cause here. They are not of the world, even as He was not of the world.

The centuries have passed and still there are those who profess to follow Him, or who desire to be known as Christians, who have not yet learned this great lesson. They forgot that He has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation . . ." and forgetting, they seek to help with worldly schemes in an effort to take away the tribulation.

Never was there a time when the government was any worse than it was at the time of Christ. Utter poverty and obnoxious disease were to be found in the same city with haughty wealth. The rulers of the people cared nothing for good government and order, but sought only to extort more taxes.

Yet in the midst of such conditions we find the Christ leading out in no movement to reform or overthrow the government. He warned them of the great persecution which they would have, but He did not advise them to seek protection in laws.

Today we find a world of crime, war, political and social injustice. Various plans, systems parties and laws are advocated to relieve these conditions, and many of them seek the support of those who profess to follow Christ.

The true Christians recognizes only one cause of all the strife and trouble in this world, and that great, underlying cause is SIN. Likewise the Christian recognizes only remedy for this world's troubles, and that great, all-sufficient remedy is Christ in the lives of the people.

Ambassadors of the King, citizens of a "heavenly" country, strangers and sojourners here - how can we have a part in the strife of the world? Let us rather proclaim the message of the government soon to be set up, under which all will be righteousness and joy and peace. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" S.J.K.

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