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THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

JULY 20, 2005

Doubting Faith

Through nearly five decades of schooling on how to shepherd the sheep of the LORD Jesus [John 21:15-17; 2 Peter 5:1-4] committed to my care, I am beginning to develop a general concept of what those sheep need in the way of attention. I know, for instance, that many of those in His flock wrestle, sometimes for years, with the issue of grasping a personal assurance of salvation. They do not doubt that others have assurance; they never question that those who are in Christ are safe and secure in the Father's hand and in the hand of the LORD Jesus [John 10:28-29]. They struggle, however, with whether or not they have personally exercised *sufficient* faith to receive eternal life. They are tormented in the mind over the fear that they might not have *really* believed and they battle with their failure to attain what they perceive as the *sufficient level* of fruit that would be evidence of their new birth. This malady is so prevalent and so commonplace among believers that I can confidently assume that among my readers are a vast number who [1] suffer the affliction even as they read this, [2] they have struggled with the matter in the past but have a victory now, or [3] they have someone

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this and that

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The Fear of Insecurity

The curiously blended infiltration of Calvinist and Armenian introspection into Baptist preaching has produced numbers of professing believers who are tormented with the fear of not having "really believed" sufficiently to be saved. Sincerely doubting the sincerity of their heart's motivation, multiplied Baptists are as unstable as water in their assurance of salvation. Therefore, their Christian life is a procession of continued doubt of the sufficiency of their faith and the seemingly perpetual inability to convince themselves that they genuinely exercised faith. While there certainly must be self-examination, the race is to be run "looking unto Jesus, Who is the Author and the Finisher of our faith." Our eyes are to be on Him, not on ourselves. It is not strange that Calvinists and Armenians both produce the curse of insecurity, because neither can provide assurance of personal salvation to any individual. The one cannot know who is elected until eternity and the other cannot know who survived the final test until eternity. Neither deserve the title of Pauline; both are fraudulent, just reformation counterfeits. The Biblical doctrine is that our salvation is "in Christ" and not in us or in ours. "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." We are not to believe in ourselves or in our faith, but in HIM.

—Pastor Manley

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THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

(428-290)

is published monthly by
THE HERITAGE BAPTIST CHURCH
of PENSACOLA,
2200 West Michigan Avenue,
Pensacola, Florida 32526-2379.
PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID
AT PENSACOLA, FLORIDA.

THE BAPTIST HERITAGE is sent without charge to members of the church and, by request, to interested friends of this church. There are no subscription charges and no paid advertisements are accepted.

VOLUME XXIX ISSUE NUMBER 7
JULY 20, 2005.

DOUBTING FAITH

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self. They continue to base their "belief" upon how much confidence they feel in what they understand. He continues to base their security upon Himself.

No one is saved because she or he feels that he or she is saved. No one is unsaved because he or she feels unsaved. Feeling has nothing to do with security—not even in the physical realm. Feelings never caused a car to start or prevented brakes from failing. You are not healthy because you feel healthy. You could be perfectly healthy and feel unhealthy. You may receive a perfect bill of health from the doctor and, as a man in Oak Lawn, Illinois, walk out of the office and die in the parking lot of a heart attack. You are not wealthy because you feel wealthy. You could be broke and feel wealthy or you could be wealthy and die of starvation. Health, wealth, and security are not based upon feelings in the temporal realm and they are not established by feelings in the realm of the eternal.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

This is where my security and where my assurance are to be found—not in my faithfulness, not in my faith, BUT IN CHRIST.

—Pastor Manley

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peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. 8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. 11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

Move to John Chapter 16

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

These are the same disciples that He said would deny Him and forsake Him. Yet, the LORD Jesus *HIMSELF* sets His seal to their belief.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. 29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. 30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? 32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. 33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

Once more, He turns them from themselves to Him-

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in mind that is engaged in the battle at this hour. This perplexity of heart and mind is, I am convinced, the primary struggle that most often prevents believers from living what they would term a successful Christian life.

This issue is the root cause of a depressive spirit in multiplied believers. They desire desperately to say with the apostle and to sing with Whittle and McGranahan, "I know Whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day," and to do so with a whole heart. Fear and doubt are torments that destroy effectiveness and disrupt consistency. I propose to submit some passages of Scripture that I believe are helpful to understand the measure of faith required for salvation. The first passage occurs during the Seder service where the LORD Jesus transformed a portion of the traditional Jewish service and made it to become the Communion Service, which we often call the LORD's Table.

John 13

1 Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; 3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; 4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. . . . 12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done

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to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. 18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. 19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*. 20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. 22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. 23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. 24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. 25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? 26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son of Simon*. 27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. 28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. 29 For some of *them* thought, because Ju-

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may be also. 4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. 5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? 6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

And, so precious, in *this* context, is the following verse.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The peace given by the LORD Jesus is not given as the world gives peace. Rome offered peace as long as the conquered nations surrendered and conformed to every law of Rome. The Jews could enjoy peace—they would know no oppression, face no punishment, and possess a limited range of movement just so long as they obeyed every law to the full extent of that law. As long as they pleased Rome in every detail, they had peace. That is not the way Jesus Christ gives peace.

Romans 5

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. 6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet

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FAIL, EVEN DOUBTING WHETHER YOU BELIEVE IN ME; BUT I DO NOT AND WILL NOT FAIL YOU OR DOUBT YOU OR DENY YOU. I AM GOING TO PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU AND I AM COMING AGAIN FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING YOU UNTO MYSELF. THOUGH YOU FAIL ME, EVEN DENY ME, I WILL NEVER FAIL YOU.]

Those are among the most powerful words of comfort in all of Scripture. The word picture of "receive you unto myself" reminds us of the father giving the prodigal the hug. It is as though we say, "But, LORD I deny you. I fail you. I even wonder if I believe in you," only to hear the LORD Jesus say, "I have accepted you and saved you as you are. I did not save you because of your goodness. I did not save you because of your faithfulness. I did not save you because you had enough faith. I died for you because I loved you and I saved you because you accepted Me as I am. Your security does not depend upon you—all depends upon Me."

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

You believe that God created the world, delivered Noah through the Flood, called Abraham from Ur to the land of promise, brought Israel out of Egypt, and promised a Messiah—now just believe in Me the same way. Just take Me at My word.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye

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das had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. 30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. 31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. 32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

I desire to focus our attention upon verse 33. "Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you."

The LORD Jesus knew that when He departed from the world, He was going to the Father. Make no mistake; death is a departing from this world. Disembodied spirits and souls do not wander the earth in search of some ethereal esoteric destination. The dead leave the world; they do not haunt or frequent the place of their demise; they do not remain in the grave. The dead are neither walking the earth nor sleeping in the tomb; the dead have departed this world. The apostle provided an excellent definition of life and death: [1 Timothy 6:7] "For we brought nothing into *this* world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Paul was echoing Solomon: [Ecclesiastes 5:15-16] "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. And this also is a sore evil, that in all points as he came, so shall he go:" The Psalmist simply wrote,

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[Psalms 49:17] "For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away." We leave in death as we came in birth as Job acknowledged, naked and empty-handed.

We receive life (body and soul) in our mother's womb and we enter the world from our mother's womb to take our first breath of air. The evidence of life is our breathing; death arrives when we stop breathing. When we release our last breath, we [the soul] depart the world, even though our physical remains [the body] remain. When we leave from the realm of the physical and the temporal, we arrive in the realm of the spiritual and the eternal. For the believer, the relocation is, in one sense, temporary. As believers, we shall return to this earth with the LORD to rule and to reign with Him for a complete millennium, but we return *with* Him. For the unbelievers, their first destination is also temporary—they find themselves in a place of torment called Hell. There they will reside until they are summoned before the Great White Throne of Judgment. Then, they are cast into the Lake of Fire to remain forever and forever. Past the day of death, there is no doorway of return to this earth for the dead—saved or lost—to utilize as they might please. When one dies, he or she leaves the world and the eternal destiny of each is sealed; it was determined and irrevocably settled before the departure.

I cannot pass this text without calling your attention to the great peace that comes to believers from the settled knowledge as to where we are going when we depart from the world. None can deny that we shall die and the Bible declares that we depart from the world when we die. Thus, the only question is, "Whence go we?"

The Bible reveals only two possible destinies—not

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Notice exactly what He does do. He offers them comfort and what a comfort it is.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

The LORD Jesus offers them, first of all, assurance of their salvation. These men would fail. These men would even deny that they knew Him. Yet, He tells them that He abides faithful. Their only basis of assurance is in His faithfulness. They have no faithfulness of which to boast. Listen again to the words of this great passage.

14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: [EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE GOING TO DENY KNOWING ME, I KNOW THAT] ye believe in God, [SO LISTEN TO WHAT I AM TELLING YOU AND] believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. [THE CROSS IS FOR YOU. I PERSONALLY AM GOING TO THE CROSS FOR YOU—YOU WILL DENY EVEN KNOWING ME, BUT I AM GOING TO DIE FOR YOU KNOWING THAT YOU WILL DENY EVEN KNOWING ME AS I DO SO] 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. [I WILL NOT FORSAKE YOU EVEN THOUGH YOU FORSAKE ME AND FLEE. I AM FAITHFUL EVEN THOUGH YOU WILL BE UNFAITHFUL. I KNOW YOUR FRAME THAT YOU ARE BUT DUST. YOU ARE ONLY A HUMAN AND YOU WILL

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me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. 38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Peter, beginning to understand that the LORD is speaking of dying, professes his willingness to die to defend his Lord, yet the LORD Jesus, knowing all things—John 18:4—and needing not that any man should testify to him of what was in man—John 2:25—told Peter that he would deny even knowing the LORD Jesus. This must have brought a sorrowful concern to the heart of Peter and to the others—if Peter were going to fail the LORD, how would they be able to stand. Stubbornly, Peter refuses to admit that he will deny the LORD—but in his heart of hearts, the possibility of that failure and the settling in of the statement of the LORD Jesus that He was going to die caused his heart, as it did the hearts of the other disciples, to be troubled. In the context of the approaching death of Jesus Christ and the declaration that Peter and the other disciples would forsake Him at His dying hour, the LORD Jesus says some unexpected words.

He does not rebuke Peter or the other disciples here in John; and Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all record that all the disciples joined in proclaiming their willingness to die and their determination never to fail the LORD. Consider that! The LORD Jesus knowing that they would waver and fail does not condemn them—He does not chastise them—He does not fuss with them—He does not ridicule them. He does not even challenge their belief.

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three or seven—just two. Consider the passage found in Luke 16. I recognize that some teachers label this passage as a parable and others insist it is a true happening. Let me clarify something for you. It really matters not which it is. Concerning the parables that the LORD Jesus used in His teachings the following are indisputable facts that all genuine believers affirm:

First—none of His parables has an error, a half-truth, or a lie in it. Each individually and all together stand true as given.

Second—every parable that He used is a legitimate earthly story that has a heavenly or spiritual teaching at its core; a parable may be a representation of selected events that are possible or it may be an actual and specific incident from which the application is drawn.

Third—no parable of His exaggerates. Every symbolic representation in a parable is, by definition, something that is less than the reality it is picturing.

Fourth—all of the parables the He gave are actually possible to have transpired exactly as He related them.

Therefore, calling this story a parable instead of a literal happening does nothing to reduce the force of the truths that are revealed here. Personally, I believe this is the actual account of literal happenings that only the LORD Jesus could have known and, I believe, that He related them in the fashion of a story to convey this truth to His hearers for their personal benefit—thus this is both a parable and a real life occasion. We have more than a news story here—we have spiritual truth pre-

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sented for us to understand and to apply.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom:

For the believer to die is to be carried by the angels into the very presence of the LORD.

2 Corinthians 5

1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in *this* tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

It is not because believers, after death, would wander perplexed and lost, alone and afraid on the earth, not

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The unbelievers could not go where the LORD Jesus was going because they had rejected the message of salvation. They did not receive the word of God.

John 8

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins:

whither I go, ye cannot come. 22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. . . . 37. . . because my word hath no place in you. . . . 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

But, the disciples had believed—yet they could not go where the LORD Jesus was going. The difference in the reason is found in one little word—NOW.

The difference in where you will exist for all eternity is in the acceptance or rejection of the word of God. The battle for the Bible is a battle that is worth the fighting.

John 13

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow

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will undoubtedly wonder if you will open them on earth or in eternity and in Hell. Without Christ as your Saviour, you will open your eyes, as did this man, in Hell. That is unnecessary; you have an invitation to Heaven. If you will receive the LORD Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you may have eternal life as the gift of God. You are not destined for Hell by an eternal decree of God, but you will open your eyes there unless you choose to receive Christ.

24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.

We could consider his prayer life—in the wrong place, at the wrong time, to the wrong person, and for the wrong reasons—but our purpose is elsewhere.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

I must take notice that the closest the rich man ever came to Heaven was in his life on earth. He lived his entire life only a few miles from Hell and he never came within sight of Heaven. That is a sad line to include in an obituary. According to the Bible, Hell is in the center of the earth. I realize that those who worship at the shrine of science scoff at this and declare that this is an impossibility. While these *science-ites* affirm that the center of the earth is hot with a fire unlike any on earth, state with astounding guarantees that the crust of the earth is far less than a hundred [more like 12 to 20] miles thick, and affirm that no one on earth has the

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front door and you determine to break in through a window. I assure you, there will be no welcome mat awaiting the person coming through my window. It is unworthy of intellectual discussion to assume that one may cast aside the invitation of God and try to enter His Heaven according to one's own concepts.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning. 26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. 27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. 28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. 30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

Many believed—but, the question is “What is it that they believed?” Consider the next words. Genuine belief does not equate to a claim of belief and a life of “doing my own thing.” Belief in Christ is a belief with a commitment to follow Him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; 32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. 33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? 34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto

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you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. "Well then, this must mean that you have to keep on trying to be perfect and to stay away from sin." Such a thought misses the entire point that these individuals to whom the LORD Jesus is speaking do not even recognize that they are the servants of sin. They considered themselves to be right with God because of family connections. They have missed the message entirely.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. 36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. 37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

Now, it is obvious, surely, that these individuals have rejected the words of the word of God. For the person that chooses to refuse the words of the word of God, there is no salvation.

Then, down to verse 47.

He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

Evidence of salvation is found in hearing [listening to and following after] the words of the word of God.

In John 13, the statement was addressed to the disciples of the LORD Jesus and in John 7 and 8 the statement is spoken regarding those who have rejected the LORD Jesus. Understand therefore that the same statement can apply to two entirely different people for two entirely different reasons.

Back to John 13.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

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knowing how to get to Heaven that *requires* the angels to be sent. To the contrary, the angels come—not one, but more than one—as a committee of escort. Why is it that the President of the United States is always escorted to the Congress for the State of the Union address? Who ever the President is, he certainly knows how to get there. One lowly page could open the door as a courtesy—but this man is the President of the United States; therefore, he is escorted and announced because of the office that he holds. The believer receives the title son or daughter of God [2 Corinthians 6:18] and receives the escort of angels Home because of the wondrous and glorious position conferred.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

This lost man went from earth to Hell in an eye blink. Whether he thought he was going to have a night of sleep, knew that he was dying at that time, or was in the midst of an active day is not revealed—his eyes were focused on earth; but in a blink, they were opened in the place called Hell. He may have choked to death at his scrumptious meal; he might have been counting his money; he could have been planning his retirement; he could have been in a synagogue service, or walking past the dead beggar at his gate—all we know is that in the twinkling of an eye, he lost sight of earth and lifted up his eyes in Hell.

If you are without Christ, then, you are only one eye blink from Hell. The next time you close your eyes, you

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judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. 17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. 18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me. 19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. 20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. 22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? Because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. 23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

The difference between being carried by the angels to Heaven and in lifting up one's eyes in Hell is found in the difference between believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Messiah of Israel. If a person dies in the sin of unbelief, then that person dies in his or her sins and steps into eternity to meet God as a rejecter of Christ. If one decides to ignore the provision of the atoning sacrifice of the LORD Jesus and to reject the offer of forgiveness through the blood of Christ, why would that person expect God to receive him or her into His presence? The very thought is silliness. It is as though I invite you to come to my home through the

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first element of proof as to what is actually in the center of the earth, these same *science-ites* confidently assure all who will listen that Hell cannot be there. Scoffing at simple faith in Biblical revelation, they demand compound faith in human conjecture. Since God created this place of our residency, I believe it to be safe to accept His revelation over humanity's proposals.

May I emphasize at the same time that the closest Lazarus came to Hell was when he walked on the surface of the earth. For the child of God, that is comfort, pure and sweet. Life is not always an easy journey; but the end of the journey for the believer is Heaven. With that in mind, the child of God may endure whatever the world, the flesh, and the devil distribute.

26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

That Moses answered rightly is easily seen in that the LORD Jesus did rise from the dead and most of humanity still are not persuaded—and you may be one of them—and those who do not believe are destined to

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wake up in Hell.

Yet, our attention is focused on verse 33 of John 13: "Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you." Our primary concern must be to discover where, when, and why the LORD Jesus said this to the Jews.

Chapter 7 of John

1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him . . . 14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. 15 And the Jews 16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. 17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

This is a marvelous promise. Dr. Bob Jones SR would often refer to this text in his messages. We do not need to be in doubt as to the validity of the teachings of Christ. If we have the will to do His will—that is, if we desire to do what God wants us to do—we shall [how Dr. Bob loved that word. It is the word of promise.], not might or could, but shall know whether or not the LORD Jesus is teaching the truth. Many a person claims to desire to know what God would will for them to do—but they really have no inclination to do what His will is. That person is double-minded and should not expect to receive anything from the LORD.

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. 29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. 30 Then they sought

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to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. 31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done? 32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. 33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. 34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come. 35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? 36 What *manner of saying* is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, *thither ye cannot come*?

This is the first of the two occasions when the LORD Jesus makes this statement to a certain group of Jewish religious leaders. The promise of condemnation is not explained in this passage, but it will be in the next.

John 8

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. 14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. 15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. 16 And yet if I judge, my

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