

So what man could not do for himself through the law, God did for him through His grace. He brought man into a state of righteousness wherein the original purpose of the law was made possible for him. And as Paul says in Romans 8:11, "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Thus we see that there is more to Christmas than tinsel trees, reciprocal gifts, and carols. It speaks not only of the Babe in a manger but of the Man on a cross, and of the empty tomb. It heralds Him who lived, was dead, and is alive forevermore. It means that Christmas speaks not only of a Babe's cry. It speaks of His Commission to lands where His name has never been heard. Christmas is more than an occidental holiday. It is

a universal message that God has entered the arena of history to redeem a lost world unto Himself.

But apart from your faith in Jesus He might just as well never to have been born. John 1:14 says, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The word "dwelt" renders a word "to tabernacle" or to pitch His tent among us. It refers to a temporary dwelling. In Ephesians 3:17 Paul prays, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith . . ." Here the word "dwell" means to be permanently at home in a place. Jesus pitched His tent temporarily in the flesh that He might be permanently at home in your heart. This latter He can do only through your faith in Him. So at this Christmas season as you commemorate Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, my prayer is that He shall be born into your heart as you through faith in Him are born again.

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## DO YOUR BOOKS BALANCE?

December 27, 1959

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us"—Romans 8:18.

We are coming to the end of another year. Soon we shall ring out the old and ring in the new. Now in the outer aspect one day or one year does not differ so much from another. The sun rises and sets. The seasons come and go. The difference is of an inner nature, and is largely what we make it. For that reason it is traditional at this time of year to take inventory. Has it been a profitable year? How can I make the new year better? Soon business men all over the world will be studying their ledgers to see if their books balance, if the profits offset or exceed the losses.

It is also well at this season to take an inventory of our lives. This seems to have been the thought in Paul's mind when in Romans 8:18 he said, "For I

reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." The word "reckon" translates a word used in bookkeeping meaning to compute or calculate and to enter into the ledger book. It is the same word used in Romans 4:3 of God entering into His ledger book Abraham's faith as having the value of righteousness.

So in 8:18 Paul is seen as a bookkeeper studying the entries in his ledger book of Christian experience. Do his books balance? Do the profits inherent in being a Christian offset the price which one must pay to follow Christ? We shall find the answer as we consider, first, the partnership; second, the transaction; third, the balance sheet.

First, note the partnership. It is quite evident that Paul is speaking to Christian people. In verses 15-16 he points them out as children of God. Then in verse 17

he says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ . . . ." To understand this partnership involved in our Christian lives we must distinguish between "heirs of God" and "joint-heirs with Christ." Not that they differ in the mind of God, but that most of us make them to differ in our own minds. The usual reading of this verse ends the thought with "heirs of God," regarding the added phrase "joint-heirs with Christ" as mere repetition. Thus we think of our heir-ship altogether as one of privilege. We think of all the riches and glory of God, saying that along with Christ we shall receive our just portion. Now this is true, but it is only a half-truth. For "joint-heirs with Christ" is not mere repetition. It is a phrase which qualifies the phrase "heirs of God." This is clear in the Greek text. To what then is Paul referring when he speaks of the Christian as a "joint-heir with Christ"?

The answer is clear when we read verse 17 in the Greek New Testament. ". . . joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Here are three kindred words which are rendered in the English translation as "joint-heirs," "suffer with him," and "glorified together." Each of these words is built out of a basic form with a prefix meaning "with." This is even evident in the English words if we render them "heirs with," "suffer with," and "glorified with." So in our partnership as children of God we receive the dual legacy of suffering and glory. Now

Second, note the transaction. In our partnership with Jesus we are, in the language of trade, constantly buying and selling, giving and receiving. Our two commodities are suffering and glory. We do not do violence to Paul's meaning when we say that we are selling or investing suffering and are reaping our returns in glory. Now this does not mean that we are saved by physical suffering. There is no support here for the practice of asceticism or the self-infliction of punishment upon our bodies. What Paul is talk-

ing about is the fact that if we as Christians expect to share with Christ in the glory of God, we must also expect to share with Christ in His sufferings for the glory of God.

What is involved in the heir-ship of Jesus Christ? In John 17 Jesus prayed on the night before the crucifixion that in His death God's name might be glorified. In verse 5 He prayed "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." We can best understand this prayer in the light of Philippians 2:6-11. Here Paul pictures Jesus as existing in the form of God, but considering it not as something to be grasped and held to. Instead He emptied Himself into the form of a slave in the likeness of man. Consequently He submitted to the death of the cross. Subsequently God highly exalted Him, giving Him a name above every name "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Here we see glory, suffering, and greater glory.

So if you are to be a joint-heir with Christ you must expect the same. The glory which is yours as being a child of God entails suffering by which you shall realize a greater glory. So many of us think of the Christian life as one of ease and plenty. If we are moving along a smooth path, we think of ourselves as being pleasing to God. When trouble assails us we immediately regard it as an expression of God's displeasure. Now this may be the case, but not necessarily so. Jesus suffered not because He was displeasing to God. Nor did He suffer for His own misdeeds. He suffered because of His relationship with sinful men as their Saviour. A mother may suffer because of her children's evil ways. A friend may be called upon to bear the pain of another's wrong-doing. Jesus never did promise to His followers immunity from suffering, but He did promise victory in and over suffering. In John 16:33 even as Jesus

## THE BAPTIST HOUR STATION CHANGES

(Sunday, Unless Specified)

### NEW STATIONS

Prescott, Ark.	KTPA	1370 kc	1:00 p.m.
Port Arthur, Tex.	KOLE	1340 kc	9:00 a.m.

### TIME CHANGES

Roxboro, N. C.	WRXO	1430 kc	1:00 p.m.
Martinsville, Va.	WMVA	1450 kc	7:30 a.m.

### CANCELLATIONS

Jonesville, La.	KLEC		
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spoke of His coming crucifixion, He said to His disciples, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The theme of Philippians is "joy." Although Paul wrote it while in a Roman prison he rejoices and calls upon his readers to rejoice. Yet in the midst of such rejoicing he prays, "That I make known him, and the power of his resurrection, . . . and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (3:10). The word "know" refers to knowledge gained by personal experience. It is an ingressive aorist infinitive meaning to come into a knowledge of Christ through experience. Not that he did not already know Christ as his Saviour. His major passion was to get more knowledge of Christ by personal experience. He wanted to know more fully the power bound up in Christ's resurrection for the saving of the soul and the body. To do this he must have a partnership with Christ in His sufferings.

If you come to such an experience with Christ you must have produced in you ever so faintly the agony of Gethsemane and Calvary. You can never know the infinite sufferings of an infinite God in Christ, but, like Paul, you can be constantly coming into a greater knowledge of Christ thereby.

Again in Colossians 1:24, also written

from a prison, Paul says of himself, "Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church." This does not mean that the sufferings of Christ left anything to be desired so far as your salvation is concerned. But it does mean that if the world is to know of Christ's death and resurrection for its salvation, it must be through the suffering of His followers. Paul's suffering had nothing whatever to do with his own salvation. But it was vitally necessary if others were to know Christ in salvation. In Colossians 1:24 quoted above the words "fill up" translate a double compound verb used only here in the New Testament. It means "to fill up in turn." In modern baseball parlance we would say that it was Paul's turn at bat. Christ had taken His turn, the grandest of all. Now it is Paul's turn and ours—if the world is ever to know of God's grace in Christ Jesus. Now

Third, note the balance sheet. When Paul made a trial balance of his books he found that while his suffering in the service of Christ was great, the rewards of glory in such service were greater. So he found that in the transaction of giving and receiving he had made a profit. Says he, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be

compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us."

This is the picture of a man weighing something on the scales and then entering the result in his ledger. The word "worthy" renders a word meaning "weighing as much as, of like value, worth as much." Now in the Greek New Testament the picture of scales is very clear. After mention of the ledger and comparative weights the Greek literally reads "The sufferings of the now time face to face with the about to be revealed glory toward us." On one side of the scales Paul places "the sufferings of the now time." Face to face or on the other side he places "the about to be revealed glory." Then he takes a reading. He finds that "the about to be revealed glory" outweighs "the sufferings of the now time." As he so enters it into his ledger as a trial balance.

But this is not the final balance. That is to come at the end of the way. This Paul tries to express in I Corinthians 2:9. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them

that love him." Even the eloquent and inspired Paul could not find words to express the glories of heaven that will be yours some day. He could only quote from Isaiah 64:4. But John in the Revelation (21:4) said that in Heaven for tears we shall have smiles; for sorrow, rejoicing; for crying, laughter; for pain, comfort; no more curse whereby we must endure toilsome labor, but we shall serve him with no need for nights for rest. We may endure hardships for Christ down here, but we shall reign with Him over there forever and forever (Rev. 22:5).

So as you face the New Year do so with the firm resolve that no task is too difficult, no way is too hard as you take your turn at bat in suffering and hardship to the end that men everywhere may know the love of God in Christ Jesus. Only thus can you prove to be a worthy Child of God, an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ.

"We talk a great deal of religion in this country, but we need to stop long enough to let our feet catch up with our mouths."—Billy Graham.

# "MasterControl"\*

## STATION ADDITIONS

(Sunday, Unless Noted)

### ARKANSAS

Prescott KTPA 1370 kc 3:00 p.m.

### FLORIDA

Fort Lauderdale WWIL 1580 kc 6:30 p.m.

### MISSISSIPPI

Jackson WSLI 930 kc 8:30 a.m.

### TEXAS

Midland KCPS 550 kc 9:30 a.m.

### TIME CHANGES

Little Rock, Ark. KTHS 1090 kc 5:00 p.m.

Charlotte, N. C. WBT 1110 kc 7:30 p.m. Sat.