

Editor's Introduction

Thanks for joining us again and reading 'YPS'. If we are still in 'Lockdown' when this insert reaches you, I hope that you have more time to read. If you are like me, you will probably be as strapped for time as ever so 'take and make time' to read. It is not a luxury but a necessity to read and reflect on the truth of scripture.

Until the next issue,
every blessing,
Stephen Baker



The young believer and career choices - medicine

BY DR GRAHAM BARTON,
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In a study carried out by the British Medical Association in 2016, the top three reasons given for studying medicine were: helping other people (52%), interest/apptitude for sciences (45%) and doing work valued by society/others (30%). Other reasons or influences in making the choice include family members or friends who are doctors, intellectual challenge, and to a lesser extent status and earnings. In my case, although unaware of it at the time, I believe that the desire was of the Lord. Having had the privilege of being brought up in a Christian home, I professed simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ before the age of seven years and subsequently, whenever I was asked what did I want to do when I grew up, I said that my heart was set on becoming a doctor. Whenever doubts arose as to whether the entrance requirements or the rigours of the training could be achieved, the Lord's grace always proved to be more than sufficient.¹



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STEPHEN BAKER

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YOUNG PRECIOUS SEED
is a supplement of *Precious Seed*, designed for those young in the faith. Its purpose is to restate timeless truths from the word of God for a new generation of Christians and to kindle a biblical approach to current issues in the world in which we live. YPS is published by *Precious Seed*, 34 Metcalfe Avenue, Killamarsh, Sheffield, S21 1HW, UK, and is available separately from the main magazine.

Medicine is a popular career choice and competition for places at medical school is high. The entry requirements for UK medical schools for 2020 is detailed in the hyperlink² below. All candidates are required to submit a personal statement and if considered suitable will have an interview. This will not only look at the skills and suitability to study medicine but also at personal characteristics such as motivation, honesty, conscientiousness, respect for others and the ability to empathise, as well as having insight into one's own strengths and weaknesses and the ability to reflect on one's own work.

There are over thirty different medical schools in the UK and their courses divide in their format and teaching style into three different types: problem-based learning (PBL), traditional (conventional) teaching and an integrated style. It is important that the choice of course is in keeping with your learning style but equally important, if not more so for the Christian, is the proximity to a Bible-based assembly. I studied at the University of Liverpool and will always be grateful for the warmth of fellowship and edification through Bible teaching and hospitality that helped sustain me through my student and early postgraduate years.

All medical graduates must complete a two-year foundation programme (FY1 and FY2) of general training and then continue training in either a specialist area of medicine or in general practice. There are around sixty different specialties to choose from and the length of training required before becoming a fully qualified doctor can last from approximately three years for general practice to five to seven years in other specialties. All qualified doctors are required to have a review or appraisal each year and revalidation with the General Medical Council every five years. Most doctors are involved in some form of teaching, for which training is required and some complete an MSc in Medical Education. Many doctors are involved in research, to a greater or lesser extent, and others take on a leadership role at various levels within the NHS, in which they address issues regarding employment, help to plan, use and manage resources/services or oversee matters of safety.

A commitment to medicine is a commitment to life-long learning; there is always new knowledge to

assimilate and there are always new skills to learn. This is not just in relation to the diagnosis and treatment of disease but includes improving communication skills, the ability to problem-solve and deal with uncertainty, managing difficult situations such as giving 'bad news', and answering complaints or facing angry relatives when an error has occurred. It is important to have a grasp of ethical issues, e.g., withholding or withdrawing treatment, and topical issues, e.g., physician-assisted suicide from a biblical point of view. It is also essential for today's doctor to develop the resilience to deal with stressful situations, in order to maintain his/her own health. A vital part of this process for the believer is the comfort found only in the Lord Himself,³ and the support given by work colleagues, family and friends.

As a Consultant on call I was involved in the acute care of adults of all ages for nearly thirty years, but my chosen specialty was Geriatric Medicine and I counted it a privilege to be involved in the assessment, disease management and rehabilitation of people over the age of 65 years, both in hospital and in the community. Whilst it is impressive to see a paralyzed limb regain its power and function⁴ following thrombolysis (clot-busting treatment), it is equally satisfying to see an older person, with multiple pathology, regain mobility and return home through sheer hard work with the input of the multi-disciplinary team. As a doctor, I quickly learned that it would never be possible to bring about the degree of healing, in the time frame, that the Lord did when He was here on earth,⁵ but just to be involved in the process of healing was, for me, a great honour and was done as to the Lord.⁶

¹ 2 Cor. 12. 9.

² www.medschools.ac.uk.

³ 1 Pet. 5. 7.

⁴ Mark 2. 12.

⁵ Luke 4. 40.

⁶ Col. 3. 23.

Paul's I am Series

SAVED BY GRACE

BY ANDREW DUTTON, NORWICH, ENGLAND

I am what I am - 1 Cor. 15. 10

'But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain', 1 Cor. 15. 10.

Saul of Tarsus was vehemently opposed to all who owned Christ Jesus as Lord and 'he made havock of the church', Acts 8. 3. It was this violent persecutor of Christians who had a most dramatic conversion experience as a result of an encounter with the risen Christ. Looking back on his past, his conversion, and subsequent service for the Lord, Paul states 'I am what I am', 1 Cor. 15. 10. He was settled in what God, through grace, had made him.

We shall look first at the wider context of the chapter in which this statement occurs and at what leads up to Paul exclaiming, 'I am what I am'. Then we will look at what this statement meant for Paul before applying some lessons to ourselves.

The context in 1 Corinthians

Chapter 15 deals with the resurrection. In the verses leading up to the statement we are looking at, the proof of the Lord's resurrection is outlined. Many people had testified to the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The risen Christ was seen by His friends, v. 5, the faithful, v. 6, His family, as in 'James', v. 7, His followers, v. 7b, and finally, by His foe, Paul himself v. 8. Or, as he put it, 'And last of all he was seen of me also', v. 8.

Paul's testimony is unique. Most, if not all, of the others who saw the resurrected Lord were already disciples, believers in the Lord Jesus. Paul, who was called Saul at the time, was still actively opposed to the Lord and to all who followed Him. When the Lord

spoke to him, he was on his way to Damascus to bring disciples of the Lord 'bound unto Jerusalem', Acts 9. 2. Also, he was the only apostle who was not part of the group of disciples that followed the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry. Paul describes himself as 'one born out of due time', v. 8, which may suggest that he considered his second birth, his salvation, to have been 'out of due time' – too late to have been one of the twelve.

In verse 9, Paul concludes that he is 'the least of the apostles', and 'not meet to be called an apostle'. Although this is a statement of humility, Paul was also thinking about the fact that he 'persecuted the church of God' before he was saved and saw his apostleship as a wonder of God's grace. JOHN HEADING wrote, 'The church was precious to Paul's heart during his years of service. He also realised it had been precious to Christ during the time when he had been persecuting it'.¹

I am what I am

'But by the grace of God I am what I am', v. 10. Paul could not change his past. He remembered what he had been but was happy that, although undeserving of it, God had bestowed His grace on him. All that Paul was, he owed to God's grace.

Paul accepted the fact of his past and the time of his conversion as being 'out of due time', v. 8. He did not express a desire to change anything; he simply was what he was, by God's grace.

He goes on to say that the grace of God 'which was bestowed upon me was not in vain', v. 9. It was not a waste, but rather resulted in service. Paul's service took him through many experiences, including beating and imprisonment, Acts 16. 23, shipwreck, 27. 41 and even disagreements with other believers, 15. 39.

Yet, this is all part of who Paul was and he could say, 'the grace of God . . . was with me', v. 10, in all his labours. The fruitful outcome of this service was that the Corinthians 'believed', v. 11.

Lessons from Paul

The past: Like Paul, we were opposed to the Lord Jesus before our conversion. We should not remain feeling guilty. The Hebrew writer applies words written by Jeremiah to the believer, 'their sins and iniquities will I remember no more', Heb. 10. 17. God, in His grace has dealt with our sin. We should, therefore, live in a spirit of continual thankfulness for the grace that we have received.

Conversion: We cannot change the timing or circumstances of our conversion. But neither should we want to! We may listen to dramatic stories of conversion or think of friends who were saved when

they were young. The time and circumstances differ for each believer. The lesson we can take from Paul is to be absolutely settled that the will of God has unfolded in our own conversion experience and to appreciate the grace of God in it.

The present: Just as Paul experienced the grace of God with him in his service, so we can too. In fact, we can see the grace of God with us in every experience. Let us not fall into desiring gifts that others have, or somehow want circumstances to be different; how often do we say, 'if only'? Rather, we should be like Paul and be able to say that in our own circumstances of life and service 'the grace of God . . . was with me', v. 10.

1. JOHN HEADING, *First and Second Corinthians*, published by Ritchie.

Principles for Progress

BY ERIC M. BAIJAL, WICK, SCOTLAND

Worshipping

In John chapter 4, the Lord Jesus explained to the Samaritan woman that the day was coming when the Father would seek worshippers 'in spirit and in truth'. But what is worship? If we look across 21st-century Christendom, worship often equates to music. Worship can certainly be expressed in appropriate hymns and spiritual songs that proclaim the greatness of God. However, worship is more than music that stirs emotional feelings. Bear in mind that, sadly, many worship songs are not actually grounded in scripture and may promote a distorted view of God and His word.

The dictionary definition of worship is usually

something along the lines of the *Oxford Dictionary*, 'the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity'.

Heaven will be marked eternally by the united worship of the Lord Jesus; it is the expected reaction of the redeemed heart, Rev. 5. 14. Worship is not seen in the New Testament as a gift. Instead, it is the reaction of the heart to the character and work of God and His Son that ought to mark every Christian.

Of course, we are called to show our worship now. In the widest sense, this involves presenting ourselves

on the altar of God's service and accepting and proving His will for us, Rom. 12. 1. Most often, though, when scripture has the idea of worship in mind it involves sacrifices being given to God to express adoration and to magnify His greatness. In the Old Testament this usually entailed the sacrificial killing of an animal that, depending on the type of offering involved, pointed forward by way of picture to various aspects of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

However, the once-for-all sacrifice of the Lord Jesus means that we do not need to make animal offerings anymore. Instead, Hebrews chapter 13 verse 15 exhorts believers, 'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to [or perhaps better "confessing"] his name'.

Worship for the believer, therefore, involves us bringing to God what we appreciate of His Son. It involves us presenting by our lips the fruit of our thoughts about Christ. The scriptures speak of Christ. So, to be able to worship God acceptably, we need to know the scriptures, and spend time thinking about His greatness.

In the Old Testament, worshippers did not have the privilege of entering the divine presence. Only the High Priest could do this, and then only once a year. On the annual Day of Atonement he would enter into the Holiest of all, where God's glory was, with the blood of a sacrifice which pointed forward to the death of Christ. The Lord Jesus has, however, opened up a new and living way so that we have the privilege of entering straight into the presence of God through Him. How is your worship? Do you spend time meditating upon the Lord Jesus in the scriptures? If so, your heart should be overflowing in worship to God for Him.

Just as there were priests in the Old Testament, there are priests in the New. 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 5 describes the people of God as being 'an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ'. So, every believer is a priest with the opportunity, and responsibility, to worship.

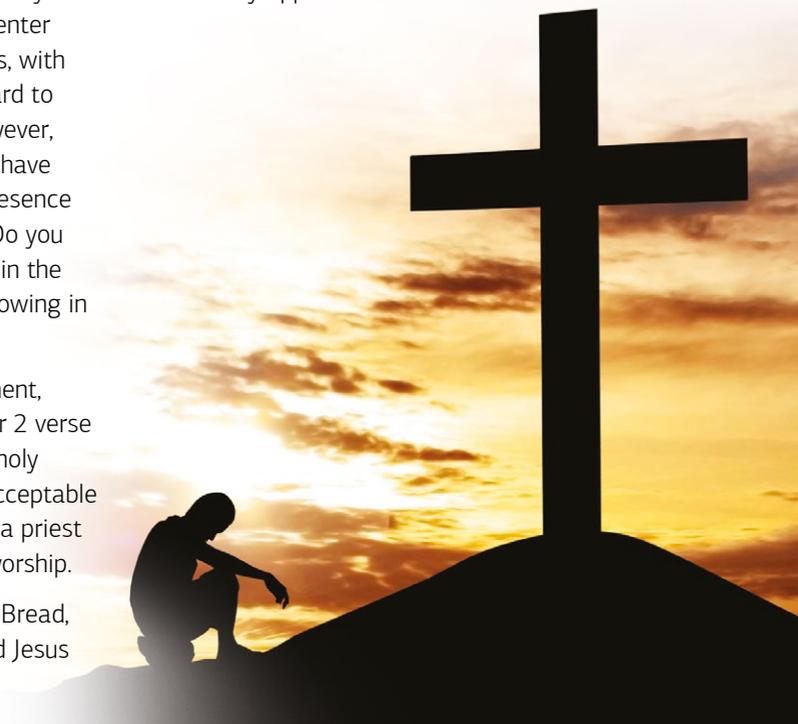
Worship is not restricted to the Breaking of Bread, but it is inevitable as we remember the Lord Jesus

that worship is the result. To effectively add spiritual contributions on that occasion, we will not only need to ensure that there is no unconfessed sin, and that we are in the right spiritual condition (read 1 Corinthians chapter 11 verses 27 to 34), but also that we have spent time considering the Lord Jesus in preparation for the time of remembrance and worship. Given that worship is not restricted to a special few, every saint, males, audibly, and females, inaudibly, 1 Tim. 2. 8; 1 Cor. 14. 34, should be a worshipper at the assembly meetings.

The scriptures are full of illustrations that demonstrate the holiness required when we enter God's presence to worship. Leviticus chapter 10 records the solemn incident when Aaron's sons were executed for approaching God with the wrong offering in the wrong way. We should be marked by reverence and obedience.

Practical Issues

1. Is my choice in music biblically sound?
2. Is my prayer life in private marked by thanksgiving and worship?
3. Do I prepare and contribute to the Breaking of Bread meeting?
4. Am I reverent and obedient in my approach to God?



A to Z of Priests – Hilkiah – 2 Chronicles 34

BY JEREMY SINGER, BRIDGE OF WEIR, SCOTLAND

Hilkiah's name means 'My portion is Jehovah' and this priest certainly lived up to his name. Hilkiah was high priest during the reign of Josiah, the last good king of Judah who 'walked in the ways of David', 2 Chr. 34. 2. In this article we examine three spiritual highlights which, taken together, demonstrate that revival is possible in the darkest times, even when divine judgement is imminent. Hilkiah and Josiah lived 'just before the curtain came down'¹ on the kingdom of Judah, yet they saw the greatest revival in centuries, 35. 18. Does this give us current cause for hope?

Removal of idolatry

The wicked practices of paganism had accumulated while previous rulers like Manasseh and Amon encouraged godlessness. People worshipped in the wrong places – at groves and idol shrines. False priests were employed to serve false gods. Images and immorality accompanied the idolatry. If idolatry demotes God, then its logical conclusion is atheism, which ignores God entirely. This is the state of modern society, remarkably similar to Hilkiah's day.

Hilkiah's ancestor, Urijah – priest during the reign of Ahaz, 2 Kgs. 16. 10 – was complicit in promoting idolatry. On the other hand, Hilkiah seems to have been faithful to Jehovah and served as a godly influence on young king Josiah.

In his campaign to eliminate idols, Josiah ensured there was no easy way back. Idols were ground to powder, 2 Chr. 34. 4, in the

same way that Moses destroyed the golden calf, Exod. 32. 20. We must be ruthless in ridding ourselves of spiritual hindrances, 'if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out', Mark 9. 47.

Josiah's intentions are captured well by WILLIAM COWPER's words:²

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,
And worship only Thee.



Restoration of the temple

There had been several temple restoration projects since Solomon's day. This reminds us that the Christian life involves 'constant renewal'.³ Following the destruction of false religion, Josiah promoted the construction of what is true. The temple at Jerusalem had been derelict for many years, the consequence not only of neglect, but also of active looting by Josiah's forebears, 2 Chr. 34. 11. The priests and workers were entrusted with the donated money. Hilkiah superintended this finance. The priest was 'faithful in that which is least' and 'faithful also in much', Luke 16. 10.

Rediscovery of scripture

The word of God had been lost in a 'haze of heathenism'⁴ – presumably in either Manasseh's or Amon's day. The book was discovered in the temple where it had been preserved. 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away', Matt. 24. 35. Who appreciated its value? Hilkiah realized he had found a treasure, but Shaphan seemed unimpressed as he communicated the news to the king. However, when Josiah heard the words of the book, he immediately understood its significance. Only when the book is opened and read can its message strike home to our hearts.

The word of God brought Josiah to repentance and a seeking after God's will. This led to further revelation from Huldah the prophetess. Although Hilkiah was not in direct communication with God, he knew someone who was – so he went directly to her, 2 Chr. 34. 22. Past revivals were often built on the foundation of spiritual women.

The joy of discovering God's word was expressed by Jeremiah, who may have been related to Hilkiah. 'Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart', Jer. 15. 16. Can we challenge ourselves – do we share this joyful response to scripture?

Finally, we leave Hilkiah and Josiah celebrating Passover, 2 Chr. 35. 1-19, enjoying God's goodness in the land. Revival, albeit brief, brings joy to God's people and, no doubt, to God Himself.

¹ This is a direct quote from JOHN GRANT, who spoke on Josiah in Liverpool in 1996. His stirring Bible teaching gripped me then as a teenager, and still does – thanks to a cassette recording, recently upgraded to MP3.

² Oh, for a closer walk with God. WILLIAM COWPER. *Olney Hymns*. 1779.

³ MARTIN LUTHER, except he said it in Latin (*renovatio*).

⁴ *Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary*. <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/phc/2-kings-22.html>.

Acrostic of



BY PHILIP RAGGETT, MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

The exhortation of 1 Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 17 to 'pray without ceasing' is particularly pertinent in times of difficulty, when we feel overwhelmed by the circumstances of life. Thank God for this precious recourse that we have, as believers, and the confidence we gain from knowing that 'in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving' we are exhorted to 'let your requests be made known unto God', Phil. 4. 6. In this article we are going to consider an acrostic of the word prayer to help us appreciate, in some measure at least, what prayer can do.

Perspective – prayer puts things into perspective
We get so focused on ourselves and so taken up with life's cares and concerns that, at times, we need to step back and gain God's perspective on life. The perfect example of prayer is seen in the life of Christ, particularly in Luke's Gospel. In Luke chapter 6, we have a scene of opposition where the Pharisees 'were filled with madness', v. 11, and it was 'in those days', v.12, that He 'went out into a mountain to pray'. Going up a mountain makes the world, and all its opposition, problems and difficulties, appear on a different scale altogether. The Psalmist, in Psalm 73, was feeling overwhelmed until He 'went into the sanctuary of God', v. 17, and appreciated God's viewpoint. The things of time that consume our thoughts seem so trivial when we view them in the light of eternity. Ascending, spiritually, into the sanctuary helps us to face earth's insurmountable problems, for we have an 'eternal God' who is our refuge, Deut. 33. 27.

Reminder – of our dependence on God
Overwhelming problems, painful experiences, trials and temptations are beneficial to us if we allow them to drive us to our knees in a fresh acknowledgement of our weakness, insignificance and complete dependence on God. So often we become self-reliant and forget that we are utterly dependent on Him for all things – even our breath is in His hands, Dan. 5. 23!

Appreciation – of the greatness of God
The very idea of praying is often seen as folly in the eyes of the world because it admits our weakness and

expresses our dependence on another to help. In times of crisis, when a person feels so helpless, they will, at times or as a last resort, bring God into the equation, although usually it is in anger at His seeming distance and disinterest. Thankfully, God is our first resort. He is a 'refuge and strength' in time of trouble, Ps. 46. 1. This is the one who is the Creator and sustainer of this universe, with infinite resources at His disposal. It is good to get a fresh appreciation that the One we trust is indeed 'the living God', 1 Tim. 4. 10. There is no one like Him, Exod. 15. 11-18.

Yearnings – expression of our desires
The attitude of prayer should not be one of a lifeless ritual but of a living relationship resulting in prayers full of meaning. Our desires, concerns, hopes and fears can all be poured out to Him in the conscious knowledge that we will never be misunderstood, and we will never be dismissed as unimportant. We are to pray 'always [at all times] with all [kinds of] prayer and supplication [entreaty] in the Spirit', Eph. 6. 18. There should be an earnest attitude as we approach the throne of God with our innermost desires.

Emotions – our feelings and fears
If we should pray with meaning we should also pray with feeling. How good to know we can turn to One who knows our deepest fears and our feelings and, more importantly, He cares about them because He cares about us! 'Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you', 1 Pet. 5. 7.

Rest – leaving it with Him
The final, and perhaps hardest point is to learn to leave things with Him. We are exhorted to 'be careful [anxious] for nothing', Phil. 4. 6. As has been well said, we should cast our cares upon Him and try not to take them back again! Trust Him, for He is in control and is working all things together to bring about His eternal purpose. The response to prayer might not be what we expect it to be, and it might not come when we want it to, but we can be sure it will be for our eternal benefit and blessing. 'O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever', Ps. 136. 1.