

Gospel Tract Society, Inc. January 2015 Harvester Newsletter



Dear Christian Friend;

The Happiest New Year Greeting My Dear Fellow Worker.

It is our warmest and most sincere prayer that this letter finds you in good health and living in the blessing of our tender Heavenly Father. 2014 has passed with all of its good and bad events now in the history books. The Fall weather, like so many other things that we see, has been hard, even brutal to many people and nations around the world. Our prayers go out to those who have lost their homes in the fires, floods, and disasters. One can't help but think that the penalty of the nation's sins are being released on the proud and haughty with time being cut short.

God never changes, His Words are true. His Will



and pronouncements do not change. And they will come to pass. The only thing that His Grace might change is when they occur. The judgment of Nineveh, the capital city of the Assyrian empire, was postponed because the king and city of Nineveh listened to God's Words that Jonah preached, 2 Kings 14:25. However, after the 'newness' of their repentance wore off and they returned to their sinful ways, the penalty of their sin fell upon them and their city was destroyed.

More than ever before, the Christian **MUST** stand on the Word of God for strength, and survival. ***It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions will not fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.*** Lamentations 3:22-23.

We are looking forward and are excited about the upcoming months of 2015. Not because we are getting a fresh – new – start of another year with our New Year's resolutions or because Spring is rapidly approaching with the signs of new growth and more hours of daylight. These are, however, good reasons to look forward to the next few months. No, we are excited to see what the Lord has prepared for us, His children. Maybe we'll see His Son Jesus. We should be making ourselves ready and looking to the Eastern sky for Jesus, listening for the trumpet's sound of His Glorious and much awaited return, Matthew 24:27. We at the Gospel Tract Society are approaching the challenges that lie before us with great expectations of Victory and not doubt or fear, for ***A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*** James 1:8. God is our strength and our source! And in Him we will not walk in fear of the enemy,



(You) *Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord your God, He it is that will go with you; He will not fail you, nor forsake you.*

Deuteronomy 31:6.

Fear is NOT of the Lord.

And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws near. Luke 21:28.

We all know that only a few are really wanting, waiting, and watching for His return. The returning of our King is pretty much a joke outside the church walls, and sad to say, in some churches. So was the pending flood to the Nephilim's (sons of God and daughters of man) great influence in the world and all of the sin filled nations as Noah began (and finished) building the ark. But, Noah, found favor in the eyes of the Lord, Genesis 6:1-8. Noah was found worthy of the Lord's blessing and protection. The Word says that **Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time. Noah walked with God.**

The Word says that **Noah was blameless in his time.** What does it mean, 'blameless in his time?' The Law had not been given to man yet, but Noah walked in obedience to whatever God asked him to do. We don't know what God asked Noah to do, but Noah was obedient to the Voice of God, and was counted as righteous before the Lord. Therefore, he was obeying the Word of God and was righteous in the sight of God. If he was righteous we can assume God saw and treated, him as pure, sinless, and without spot or blemish as the Lamb of God.

There is an animal called the 'stoat' (Mustela ermine) or, the 'short-tailed weasel. The only reason for talking about the stoat is that it has a pure white fur during the winter months for protection. It is so pure that it is often seen on the robes of royalty and even on the robes of Catholic monarchs. You can recognize the stoat by its pure white fur with a distinctive black tipped tail. The Stoat takes great care in keeping his protective white covering clean, pure, and white as the snow in which it lives. So much so, that a hunter will surround the entrance to its den with oil or grease. When the stoat returns and attempts to enter its den, it will not enter its den because the entrance to its den is dirty, and it chooses to stay out in the open. That is when the fur trapper springs into action to capture the animal. This weasel will die to keep its fur clean, spotless, white as snow, and pure.



This past week has brought heaviness to my heart as I read through the letters that we received. Many years ago, as a young deacon in our small country church, the lives and sins of the local congregation were more than my mind could comprehend. That little church was (and is) no different than any other church, then or now. It took the Lord several years to teach and show me why there is sin in our camp. Often times while at the altar, praying with and for a fellow Christian, the Spirit would prompt me to ask, "Are you battling over your favorite sin, you know, the one that you like and keep going back to even after you have repented under the conviction of the Holy Spirit?"

Many times their eyes of total denial would be looking back at me, 'Hey, what are you talking about, there is no favorite sin in my life!' My question came from my own experience. Many years ago, the abundance of God's Grace convicted me of my sins and showed me why there

was pressure on me. It was because I had my 'favorite sin' (as does everyone) and I didn't want to let go of it. God showed me in His Word how and why it needed to go, and it did. If God can show that much grace to me, Lord, help me to show Your Grace to my brothers and sisters in Jesus. So what is written here is not finger pointing, but the cry of my heart toward myself and my covenant "Friends," for I have seen the Grace of God shown to me. The question must be asked, 'have you given your favorite sin over to the Lord?'

This week the written words of a church pastor sunk deep into my heart like a thin, sharp knife as his letter was read. He was asking me to pray for God's guidance as he and his live-in girlfriend were trying to buy a house together. Is there no shame, no guilt, and no Godly standard for us to live by? Have our hearts become so seared that the Word of God, and His convicting Holy Spirit, are meaningless to us? Oh, that this pastor would know that he is held to a higher standard as shepherd of his flock. Where is the purity of the heart and the flesh?

After reading and crying over this and other letters relating the cruel relationships and sinful habits that the 'family of God' is struggling with, the Lord led me to renew His Holiness in my life.

What is Holiness? What does it mean to be Holy? Why is **Holiness** even an issue for us if we are born again Christians? Let me dig this ditch a little deeper. Will a sinner be allowed in Heaven? Or, will a Christians get into Heaven with sin in their life? We're not going into anyone's doctrine, and can't begin to measure the Grace of God. Just asking some questions and looking to God's Word for His guidance! I am not your judge. ***For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*** 1 Corinthians 11:31. I am to judge myself by God's standard, His Word, for He is the final Judge over mankind.

1 Peter 1:13-16, because the Gospel of Jesus has been preached unto you, ***You gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which has called you is Holy, so be you holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be you holy; for I am Holy.***

Again, as a young deacon, my Lord showed me, without any doubt, that all of our wars and battles are fought in our minds before a shot is fired or the surrender flag is raised. They are won or lost according to our thinking. Several years, ago Gloria Gathier spoke to me, saying, ***"You are bringing upon yourself the battles you are fighting."***

At the time, I was surrounded by a thousand or more people. The Lord spoke to me through Gloria. **"Be Holy."** The war was in my mind, the battle was fought with my flesh. ***Examine yourselves, whether you be in the Faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus is in you.*** 2 Corinthians 13:5.



The spotless pelts of the short tailed weasel adorns many robes of kings, queens, cardinals, bishops, and Hollywood stars.

A scripture that always grips my spirit as it tells about the glory, excellences, and holiness of our Lord is Isaiah 6:1-3, ***I (Isaiah) saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: "Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of His Glory."***

No one would dare say that God is not Holy. God's Holiness permeates His entire being and shapes all His attributes. His Love is a Holy Love, His Mercy is a Holy Mercy, and even His Anger is a Holy Anger. These concepts are difficult for humans to grasp, just as God is difficult for us to understand in His entirety. Okay, you say, but we can't be holy because we are just human. We were born in sin. And you are correct, it is not our Holiness, it is Jesus'.

Leviticus 11 and 19 instructed Israel to be distinct from the other nations by His Law, His Standard, and His Commands, ***to be Holy.*** A Christian should stand out, not

just by being different, but because His Light in us makes us different. We should not love the same things that we once did. We should not do the things we once did.

Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as He which has called you is Holy, so you be holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be you holy; for I am Holy.
1 Peter 1:13-16.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Ephesians 4:29

God is Holy, but, can we really live a holy life?
"Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord,"
Hebrews 12:14. What, no man will see God accept that he is Holy? How then can any man see God?

A sinner is someone who has not accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and is looking for a way to sin or is not looking for a way to not sin. Many people think that by being 'good' or doing 'good' works they will see God. Some men even strive to do evil, and just not get caught. In the eyes of God, they are the same. You can't work your way into Heaven.

A Christian is one that strives to not sin, or, is not looking for a way to get away with sin, even with the 'favorite sin.' However, we all sin at one time or another. **What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that His Grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer in sin?** Romans 6:1-2.

Holiness is not a life style, although, holiness will change our life style. Holiness can only come through faith, faith in our Lord, faith in His Word, faith in the Holy Spirit, and faith in ourselves that we can live in His Word. There is dead faith. James 2:17 states that **Even so faith, if faith has no works, it is dead, being alone. Therefore, does work bring about faith and holiness?**

Just as the snow white 'stoat' will preserve the purity of its snow white fur for survival, so must we make the decisions and sacrifices to keep our souls spotless, white as the new driven snow, acceptable unto our Lord and Savior. We will stand out as being different. We will have to take the narrow path of righteousness, denying the desires of our mind and flesh. We can't try to keep up with the "Jones' next door. We should be the leaders in our neighborhood, our workplace, and in our churches. Leaders in

righteousness, following after the sinless – spotless – snow white Lamb of God, Jesus our Lord and Savior. Steadfast, insuring that our hearts and minds are clean as we look unto the Eastern sky. **Create in me a clean heart O God; and renew a right spirit within me,** Psalm 51:10.

What is your secret 'favorite' sin? Accusation, abortion, adultery, fear, arguing, lying, astrology, bitterness, blame, pride, cursing, double tongue, drinking, unforgiveness, envy, faithless, the list could go on and on. Whatever the Lord puts into your heart, that is what He wants you to change, and become Holy before Him.

Let's pray – *Dear Heavenly Father, we humbly come before you now, knowing that You are the God of all, servant to none. Abba, we ask You to be present within us and show us the rightness of Your Word in our minds spirits, and lives. Refresh in us how we need to walk upright before You in thought, word, and deed. We ask You to clean our vessels of darkness – hate – fear – secret sin. Place Your pureness and pure Holy Spirit within us full and free, so that we may be worthy of being used of You in our lives and be the Light of Jesus so that others will be drawn unto You through the purity of Your Word in our lives. Gracious Father, may there be no guilt found in us. Show us where to plant the seeds of our time and resources to advance Your Kingdom, now and forever.*

*Your Covenant Friend, in the name of Jesus.
Amen.*

Your Brother in Jesus,

Phillip Buttram
Phillip Buttram

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
2 Peter 1:4

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This Ministry is maintained by the Gifts of God's people.