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**THE UNSEARCHABLE
RICHES OF CHRIST**

**EDITORS:
CLAYTON WINTERS
EDDY CRAFT**

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THEME:

**THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF
CHRIST**

**DIRECTORS: EDDY CRAFT AND
CLAYTON WINTERS**

**ELIZABETHTON CHURCH OF CHRIST
137 EAST "C" STREET
ELIZABETHTON, TENNESSEE**

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UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST-AN OVERVIEW

(Clayton Winters)

TEXT: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Romans 11:33,34).

INTRODUCTION

- A. How can we see the invisible (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:16; 1 John 4:12), know the unknowable (Job 42:3; Psa.. 139:6; Eph. 3:19), search the unsearchable (Rom. 11:23; Eph. 3:8)? Perhaps a complete answer lies only in eternity, but Romans 1.20 gives us a clue for starters-by the things which are made:
"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"
- B. Let us mentally take off our shoes as we explore this spectacular topic, for we are indeed in the presence of Deity, and standing on holy ground.

I. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS DEITY

- A. The nature or attributes of God.
 - 1. God is a Spirit (John 4:24), not flesh and bones (Luke 24:39).
 - 2. God's ways and thoughts are past men's grasp (Isaiah 55:8,9).
 - 3. He is invisible to the human eye(Col. 1:15;1 Tim. 1:17).
 - 4. No one can look upon God and live (exodus 33:20; John 1.18
 - 5. He dwells in light which no man can approach unto (1 Tim. 6:16).
 - 6. How can I see the unseeable, know the unknowable, touch the untouchable? The answer is one of the unsearchable riches of Christ- God incarnate.
- B. Jesus came as God in the flesh.
 - 1. He was from everlasting (Micah 5:2).
 - 2. He is the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8).
 - 3. He was Holy Spirit-conceived in the womb of the virgin (Luke 1:30-35).
 - 4. In this conception He became God incarnate (John 1:1,2,14,18; 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:8).
 - 5. In Him dwells all~the Illness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).
 - 6. This enabled man to know the unknowable. John 14:7-9 "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.
 - 7. This enabled him to see the invisible.1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."
Hebrews 1:3 "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sin, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long a time with you and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"

1 John 1:1-2 "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen 4 and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)"

8. It also enabled him to approach the unapproachable. Hebrews 4:15-16 "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

C. Indeed, "how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

II. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS GRACE AND MERCY

A. God gave His Son-the ultimate gift (John 3:16).

B. Jesus gave His life the ultimate sacrifice (Romans 5:5-8).

C. His ransom provided salvation for all-the ultimate atonement (Revelation 22:17).

1. Jeffery Dahmer, the man who killed and ate multi-victims, became a Christian in His last days. Was God's grace adequate to cover his sins?

2. We recently have been exposed to wide publicity concerning Carla Tucker, the woman executed in Texas as a pick-axe murderer. Somewhere I read that she too was a member of the church of Christ. Was God's grace sufficient?

3. You might add to this list the Herods, the Hitlers, or many other cruel tyrants of history, but the story would still be the same: if penitent and obedient, God's grace is sufficient to cover all sin.

4. After having been mocked, spit on, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the tree, Jesus could still say, Father, forgive them; for they know nor what they do " (Luke 23:34). No wonder Paul could exult that we "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19).

D. "Amazing grace! how sweet the sound! That saved a wretch like me!..."

III. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS CHURCH

- A. Angelic beings saw in the church the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. 3: 9-11).
- B. Jesus came to a fearfully divided world: Gentile, Jew, Samaritan, Sadducee, Pharisee, male, female, rich, poor, slave, free -yet all could find a safe haven in the oneness of the Lord's church (Gal. 3:26-29). It is nothing less than unsearchable riches that:
 - 1. The leopard and the kid would lie down together (Isaiah 11:6; Eph 2:12-17).
 - 2. The Master would wash the feet of the slave (John 13:1-14).
 - 3. The rich would sell his property and give to the poor (Acts 2:44; 4:34,35).
 - 4. A man would love his wife as his own body (Eph. 1:28,29).
 - 5. The persecuted would bring food to his hungry enemy (Rom. 12:20).
 - 6. The adulteress would find forgiveness (John 8:3-11).
 - 7. The Son of God would give His life for fallen mankind (John 3:16).
- C. It is His body (1 Cor. 12:13), His bride (2 Cor. 11:1-3), His temple (Eph. 2:21), His family (1 Tim. 3:15), the habitation of God (Eph. 2:22), and those whose names are enrolled in heaven (Heb. 12:22,23).

IV. THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF THE WORD OF GOD

- A. Israel's sweet psalmist said the Word of God is: perfect (Psa. 19:7), sure (Psa. 19:7), more to be desired than gold (Psa. 19:10), sweeter than honey (Psa. 19:10), and a light to our path (Psa. 119:105).
- B. It is milk for the new Christian and meat for the mature (Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:1,2). Someone has mused that the book of John is shallow enough for babies to play in, but deep enough for elephants to swim in.
- C. It offers help to the helpless (Psa. 46:1; Heb. 4:16) and hope to the hopeless (Rom. 8:24~5; Gal. 5:5). It offers food to the hungry (John 6:58) and water to the thirsty (John 4:13,14). It offers rest for the weary (Matt. 11:28~9) and refuge for the oppressed (Heb. 5:18,19). Most of all it offers salvation to the sinner (Mark 16:16) and security to the saved (Rom. 8:35-39).
- D. Without the Word of God we would have access to none of the unsearchable riches of Christ.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST' INCARNATION

Dale Steele

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Do we ever think about, ponder or consider seriously the incarnation of Christ, and appreciate who He is and what he has done for us?
- B. The more we appreciate Him the more we will value Him.

- C. The more we value Him the more we will cherish Him.
- D. The more we cherish Him the more we will protect and guard what we have in Him. V. Therefore, to obtain a greater appreciation for the incarnation of Christ, we will consider the proof of his deity, His eternal nature, His part in creation, and finally the unsearchable riches of His incarnation.

I. PART OF THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST IS THAT HE WAS AND IS DEITY.

- A. Christ deity was shown by inspiration.
 - 1. Deity refers to the supreme being who is over all creation, both visible and invisible, who should be revered and exalted above all, by all, being supremely good and all powerful.
 - 2. John was inspired to reveal Jesus as the Word, deity made flesh, full of grace and truth (John 1:1-2,14,16-17).
 - 3. The deity of Christ was proved by John the Baptist testimony (John 1:68,15,19; Isa. 40:3; Mal.2:17b-3:1).
- B. The deity of Christ was shown by His proclamation.
 - 1. Jesus claims His deity by claiming to be "I AM" (John 8:24,58-59).
 - 2. By Jesus claiming to be "I AM~", Jesus was claiming to be Jehovah (Exodus3:14-15).
- C. The deity of Christ was confirmed by His miracles.
 - 1. The Jews were provoked because Jesus claimed to be God by claiming He was the son of God (John. 10:25-33).
 - 2. Jesus instructs the Jews to believe His works if they would not believe Him, that they may believe that He was the son of God (John 10:37-38)

II. THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST IS UNSEARCHABLE BECAUSE OF HIS ETERNAL NATURE.

- A. John the Baptist was born before Christ but Jesus existed before John (not in the flesh). As God, Jesus has no beginning(Luke 1:31-36; John 1:1,30).
- B. A part of Jesus eternal nature is His Love (1 John 4:16; Romans 5:8,10; Ephsians 3:19).
- C. A part of Jesus eternal nature is His holiness (Isaiah 59:1-2; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Hebrews 12:14).
- D. A part of Jesus eternal nature is His justice (Proverbs 6:16-19; Galatians 6:7; Ezekiel 18:20a; Romans. 1:18).

III. THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST IS UNSEARCHABLE BECAUSE OF HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE CREATION.

- A. Christ created all things (John 1:3).
- B. All things were created for Christ (Colossians 1:16-17).
- C. Christ holds everything together by the power of His word (Hebrews 1:13b).

IV. THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST IS UNSEARCHABLE.

- A. In Christ incarnation, He had to be 100% man (Hebrews 2:14; 4:15-5:2).
- B. In Christ incarnation, He had to be 100% deity (Matthew 26:39-42; Galatians 3:21).
- C. The Incarnation of Christ was planned before the foundation of the World (Ephesians 1:4).
- D. The unsearchable riches of Christ must include the virgin birth (Ephesians 3:8-11).
- E. The virgin birth was alluded to from the beginning (Genesis 3:15).
- F. The LORD announced the virgin birth to the house of David Osaiah 7:14).
- G. God through His providence, made sure that Isaiah's prophecy of the virgin birth could not be misunderstood (Matthew 1:18-23; Luke. 1:34-35). H. Isaiah's prophecy is specifically supported by Matthew the inspired Apostle (Matthew 1:22-23).

CONCLUSION:

A. Brothers and sisters, how unsearchable are the riches of the incarnation of Christ. The scriptures plainly teaches that Jesus, the Christ, is over all people and things, having all power and authority over both heaven and earth, having the same eternal nature as God the Father, came to earth and dwelt among man, His creation, through the virgin birth to save all mankind. For this we should love, appreciate, value, and Cherish Him and what we have in Him. **HOW UNSEARCHABLE IS THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST.**

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS FIRST ADVENT

Clifford Newell, Jr.

TEXT: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law Gal. 4:4).

THESIS: To show His coming as a fulfillment of prophecy, the necessity of His earthly ministry, what He accomplished.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1. If unsearchable why are we here?
- 2. Are we engaged in a study that cannot produce riches or blessings?
- 3. Can we know of His first advent?
- 4. Because He came to earth, how does that affect YOU and ME?

II. DISCUSSION:

- A. The Promised One-Gen. 3:15.
 - 1. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel.
- B. Three things beg our attention:
 - 1. "Enmity" carries the idea of strong feelings, resentment, hatred.
 - 2. "Her seed" has reference to Christ. See Gen. 5:1-32; 10:1-8; Ruth 4:18-22; Mat. 1:1-17.
 - 3. The bruising of the heel was by Satan as Christ died physically, but the far more fatal blow was rendered by Christ when He overcame death, He bruised the head of Satan.
 - a. The redemptive plan was being enacted and accomplished by "Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins" (Mat. 1:21).
- C. The Virgin Born One-Isa. 7:14.
 - 1. Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and ye shall call His name Immanuel.
 - 2. The sign was from God, and would be miraculous, in that a young virtuous woman or virgin would conceive seed without the agency of a man, the seed would be the Son of God, and His name Immanuel would mean "God with us."
 - 3. All of the characteristics that this passage sets forth is fulfilled in one birth the virgin birth of Christ.
 - 4. The implications of this birth sets forth His deity. Because of His Deity, He has a right to demand obedience from us (Heb. 5:8-9).
 - 5. This is why-John 8:24; Heb. 11:6; Acts 8:37; John 6:69).
- D. The Prophetic One-Deut. 18:15-18.
 - 1. The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall harken...I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in His mouth; and He shall speak unto them all that I shall command Him.
 - 2. Moses wrote that God would raise up a Prophet.
 - 3. He would be like Moses; and,
 - 4. The people would hearken unto Him.
 - 5. The case is that God did raise up a Prophet (Acts 3:20-23), His greatness was like that of Moses (John 1:17), He spoke with authority (Mat. 7:28-29; 17:5).
 - 6. As a Prophet, He set forth His teachings which must be obeyed (Mat. 7:24-27); He foretold promises and blessings to be received and enjoyed (Mat. 16:13-19; 28:20).
- E. The Kingly One-Jer. 23:5

1. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."
 2. The raising unto David has reference to the seed of David.
 3. A righteous Branch and a King shall reign and prosper. This could not be literal upon the physical earth, for Jeremiah stated earlier, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord. Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah" (Jer. 22:29-30).
 4. Therefore, as King of kings, He is reigning and prospering upon His throne "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father" (Rev. 1:6).
- E. The Priestly One-Zec. 6:12-13.
1. And speak unto him, saying, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord: Even He shall build the temple of the Lord; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a priest upon His throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."
 2. This man whose name is the BRANCH would build the temple or church.
 3. Christ proclaimed that He would build the kingdom/church (Mat. 16:13-19).
 4. He did build the church and He is sitting and ruling right now (Heb. 8:1-4).

CONCLUSION:

1. Because He is the Promised One-we can know of His will for us (Heb. 10:10).
2. Because He is the Virgin Born One-we can know He has authority (Mat. 7:29).
3. Because He is the Prophetic One-we can know His word (John 8:31-32).
4. Because He is the Kingly One-we can know His judgment will be according to truth.
5. Because He is the Priestly One-we can know that our sacrifice is acceptable to God.

**THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES
OF HIS INTRODUCTION
BY BAPTISM
JEFF TROTTER**

INTRODUCTION:

The baptism of Jesus to the scriptural novice seems perplexing and wholly unnecessary. Even the skilled expositor must admit to some curiosities about the fullness of meaning in His baptisms' purpose to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). However, His baptism was obviously delineation between His life of relative privacy, and his very public and intense personal ministry. A study of His baptism is indeed a rich one.

I. THE PASSION OF JESUS TO BE BAPTIZED

- A. Jesus traveled some seventy to eighty miles to be baptized by John (Matthew 3:13).
- B. Jesus insisted on being baptized.
- C. Would that all people of the world desired to be baptism as did Jesus.

II. THE PAUSE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

- A. John greatly resisted the request by Jesus
- B. He correctly felt inadequate in the presence of the Lord.
- C. We can learn much from the humility of John in our interaction with the Savior.

III. THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' BAPTISM

- A. The only stated purpose is to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).
- B. Jesus could not have ignored the positive command to be baptized and comply with the authority of John's teaching.
- C. Jesus alluded to the heavenly authority of John's baptism (Mark 11:29-33).
- D. Since from God, John's teaching involved righteousness (Psalm 119:172), and righteousness involves something to be done (Acts 10:35).
- E. Though not baptized for the forgiveness of sins, Jesus in his submissive act forever identified with lost mankind (2 Cor. 5:21).

IV. THE PRAYER UPON HIS LIPS

- A. Only Luke's account mentions his prayer that preceded His validation (Luke 3:21).
- B. That Jesus would be in prayer is no surprise and in fact is consistent with the close relationship He enjoyed with His Father (John 11:42).

V. THE PERSONS OF THE GODHEAD REVEALED

- A. The full weight of heavens' approval was placed squarely upon Jesus by the descending Spirit and Voice (Matthew 3:16-17).

- B. The descending Spirit was in direct fulfillment to a promise made to John concerning the identity of the Son of God (John 1:33-34).
- C. The affirmation of the Father concerning the Son embarked Him upon His ministry to the world with heaven's endorsement.
- D. In a sense, all of us in an adopted sense, receive heaven's endorsement as sons when we arise from our baptism (I John 3:1).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Jesus went immediately from the waters of baptism to the wilderness of temptation (Mark 1:9-13)
- B. After our baptism there are similarly many challenges to our spiritual determination.
- C. Thanks be to God that victory is in Jesus (I Cor. 15:57)!

THE RICHES OF HIS TEMPTATIONS

Matthew 4:1-11

David Pharr

1. While we commonly use the term "temptations," the correct word as relates to Christ is "trials." This distinction is not made in the KJV, but is in the Greek and ASV. There is parallel account in Luke 4:1-13 and a brief reference in Mark 1:12-13. The event is not mentioned by John except as included in Jesus' statement in 14:30. Matthew and Luke differ in the order in which the temptations are named, but neither claim to be chronologically exact. It is interesting to consider the source by which the writers knew of the temptation. While they were certainly guided by the Spirit and could have had the information revealed directly, it is probably that Jesus Himself told His disciples of His great trials in the wilderness.
 2. The chief aim in studying these temptations is to show us how that Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15) and "in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18).
 3. The reading in Luke suggests that He was tempted the entire forty days, but it was at the last, when fatigue was greatest, that Satan "brought in the big guns." This may be familiar ground, but I hope we can go in our hearts into the wilderness with the Lord and try to feel the enormity of those trials which were laid upon Him.
- I. Our attention is called to a rich list of comparisons and contrasts.**
- A. He was tempted because He was the son of man; He was victorious because He was the Son of God.
 - B. The first Adam was in Eden with tame beasts; the second Adam was in a wilderness with wild beasts. (But, by the way, there was one beast, a roaring lion that was in that and every garden and in every wilderness. I Peter 5:8.)
 - C. The first Adam fell beneath temptation, bringing death; the second Adam

- rose above it, bringing life (I Corinthians 15:22).
- D. Adam sinned and turned paradise into wilderness; Christ overcame and turned wilderness into paradise.
 - E. Israel, God's national "son," was in the wilderness forty years; Christ, God's beloved Son, was in the wilderness forty days.
 - F. Israel was hungry and murmured for food; Jesus was hungry and trusted God's care.
 - G. At His baptism Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit; in the wilderness He was attacked by the evil spirit.
 - H. God gave assurance, "This is my beloved son"; the devil urged doubt, "If you are God's son . . ."
 - I. Jesus knew He was God's Son without an external sign, just because God said He was; we can know we are God's sons without external signs, just because God says we are (Gal. 3:26-28).
 - J. Jesus used scripture to resist temptation; Satan misused scripture as a means of devising temptation.
 - K. Satan came to tempt Him; angels came to minister to Him.
 - L. At the beginning of Christ's ministry the temptation was, "If thou be . . .," make bread to satisfy your hunger; at the end it was, "If thou be . . ., come down from the cross" to relieve your suffering. It has been correctly observed that every temptation uses the instrumentality of either pleasure or pain.
 - M. Each temptation had its parallel to those which are common to us all: I John 2:16.

II. There are the obvious meanings of each temptation, and there are richer meanings in their deeper significance.

- A. ***"Command that these stones be made bread."*** Here was "the lust of the flesh." It is not a sin to be hungry, but the desire opened the way for the temptation to seek an easy solution instead of trusting God. Satan often makes use of the appetites and needs of the flesh.
 - 1. It was a challenge to misuse His powers as the Son of God. How easy and quick it might have been just to prove that He is God's Son. Perhaps the appeal was as much to pride--to show Satan a thing or two--as it was to hunger.
 - 2. But that Jesus saw through a more subtle trap is revealed in the way Jesus answered. Notice that He did not quote a text on the purpose of miracles, rather on the needs of man: "Man shall not . . . He did not say "deity," but "man." **This temptation was more to deny His humanity than to prove His deity.** Satan knew He would always be the Son of God, but the scheme of redemption could be overthrown if He would give up being the son of man.
- B. ***"Cast thyself down."***
 - 1. This grows out of the first. Jesus' answer was that He would depend on God and cited the word of God. "So, you believe scripture and trust God, let's see how much you really trust him." He was calling for a "leap of faith."

2. Here is “the pride [vainglory] of life.” How often have we been tempted to do wrong just to prove a point to scoffers. Many a youth has taken a drink to prove he wasn’t a coward. Many a girl has yielded her purity to show that she was not a prude.
 3. Here is Satan’s misuse of scripture. He tried to give a godly basis for an ungodly act. But testing God is not the same as trusting God. It is foolish indeed to put oneself in either physical or spiritual danger with the presumption that God will take care of us. (We cannot but think of those whose misuse of scripture involves handling snakes.)
 4. We cannot imagine that there was much attraction in a mere jumping trick. This was not a mere bungy jump off the New River Bridge. Perhaps the place was significant. The people in the temple might see Him float down safely and believe in Him. This was temptation to do a great fete which would easily and quickly give Him a following among the people. Would not this be easier than three years of hard ministry?
- C. *“All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.”*
1. He showed Him . . . This was “the lust of the eyes,” the lure of personal possessions. But when Jesus looked at the kingdoms of the world He did not see the “glory,” but the peoples in their sinful, ruined and lost condition. Satan showed kingdoms of the earth, but Jesus saw the kingdom of heaven.
 2. The natural question is whether Satan could do this. Many have believed he can, including kings, presidents and businessmen (John 14:30; II Corinthians 4:4; I John 5:19).
 3. But the fact is that Christ would indeed rule over the kingdoms of the world (Revelation 11:15). But this enticement was to secure a throne by an easier method, by means of compromise. In all of these temptations there is an appeal to take a shortcut, to cut corners, to avoid hardship and suffering, to take the easy way out, to bypass the cross.
 - a. When churches lower their standards in order to entice or hold wealthy and powerful men is not this bowing to Satan without the thought of building up the kingdom?
 - b. Is there not a similar temptation that seeks to grow the church by whatever seems to work? “Don’t worry about scripture; look at the numbers . . . the successes.”

III. In Jesus’ method of resisting the devil we are impressed with the rich resources of the written word.

- A. Psalm 119:11; Eph. 6:17; I John 3:9 . Jesus’ strength to resist was not through impulses or spur of the moment notions, but with scripture He already knew. Some suppose they have sufficient strength and wisdom within, but Jesus relied on objective truth, which was outside Himself, the truth of the written word.

- B. It is useful to observe the hermeneutic principle He followed. When the devil made a point from a text, the Lord, in effect, replied: "That's not all the Bible has to say about that." The principle is that the entire Bible's teaching on any issue needs to be considered.
- C. Most significant is that each quotation Jesus chose is from Deuteronomy (8:3; 6:16; 6:13). More than any other part of the Law, Deuteronomy emphasizes the love and care of God.
- D. The underlying ground of each trial was to whether or not He would do the will of His Father, but always He sought to do the Father's will (John 6:38), and this included that will which was expressed in the Bible.

CONCLUSION:

We love the point that when Jesus resisted, the devil left (James 4:7b). "There is nothing weaker than the devil stripped naked"

**UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS MIRACULOUS
CONFIRMATION
JIM FARLEY**

TEXT:

"Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know..." (Acts 2:22)

INTRODUCTION:

1. Doesn't it amaze you how people of our age use the word "miracle" in such a common way?
2. You'll hear them say, as they look at a great architectural feat, "Oh, it's a miracle."
3. You hear people refer to the birth of a baby as 'a miracle.
4. But these things are natural, and a miracle, by definition, is supernatural.
5. W.E. Vine says, "*DUNAMIS*, power, inherent ability, is used of works of a supernatural origin and character, such as could not be produced by natural agents and means."
6. God created the first humans miraculously or supernaturally. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7, 21-23)
7. All humans from that time forth (with the exception of our Lord) have been conceived and born naturally.
 - a. The Lord's birth was natural, but his conception was supernatural (Matthew 1:18-25)
8. Now that we know what miracles are (Biblically speaking) it would be well if we would notice what they were for.

I. THE PRIMARY PURPOSE FOR MIRACLES WAS TO CONFIRM

- A. Peter appealed to this truth on the day of Pentecost, and this was no doubt one of the arguments that caused those folks to be pricked in the heart.
 - 1. Acts 22
 - 2. Jesus proved that He was who He said He was by the miracles He was able to do.
- B. The Word says that this is the primary purpose of miracles.
 - 1. Mark 16:15-20
 - 2. Hebrews 2:1-4
- C. Examples of confirmation by miracles.
 - 1. Jesus' very conception and birth confirmed that He was the Christ
 - a. Matthew 1:22-23
 - 2. The healing of the one "sick of the palsy" (Mark 2:1-12)
 - a. Notice especially verses 9 and 10 - "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins..."
 - 3. Jesus gave evidence to John concerning whether or not He was "...he that should come..."(Luke 7:19-23)
 - a. Notice especially verse 22 - "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."
 - b. John - "Are you the Christ???"
 - c. Jesus - "Yes! And these miracles prove it!!!"
 - 4. True also of the apostles and prophets of the early church.
 - a. Mark 16:15-20
 - b. Acts 2 - Pentecost - The apostles spoke in other languages as the Spirit gave them utterance.
 - (1) Caused wonder and amazement among the crowd, and caused them to listen to what the apostles said.
 - (2) "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not..."(1Cor. 14:22)
 - c. Peter and John healing the lame man at the gate of the Temple called "Beautiful". (Acts 3:1-11)
 - (1) Gave them opportunity to preach the UNSEARCHABLE riches Christ (Acts 3:12-26)
 - (2) Gave them opportunity to suffer for the Cause (Acts 4:1-ff)
 - (3) The Jewish leaders could not deny that "a notable miracle hath been done by them..." (Acts 4:16)
 - d. Philip preaching Christ in Samaria (Acts 8)
 - (1) The people "gave heed" to Phillip's preaching because of the miracles which he was able to do. (Acts 8:6-8)

II. CONSIDER SOME OF THE AMAZING AND WONDERFUL MIRACLES OF THE LORD

- A. His Power Over The Natural World In General
 - 1. Water into wine at Cana-John 2:1-11
 - 2. Twice He caused the disciples to catch a multitude of fishes; once at the beginning of His ministry, and again after His resurrection - Luke 5:1-11; John 21:6-11
 - 3. He stilled a great storm by just speaking - Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25
 - 4. He walked on the water - Matthew 14:24-36; Mark 6:47-56; John 6:16-21
 - 5. He miraculously fed five thousand and then four thousand with but little food. Matthew 14:13-23; 15:32-38; Mark 6:30-46; 8:1-9; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15
 - 6. He showed power over even death itself! -- Luke 7:11-18; Matthew 9:18-26; John 11:146
 - 7. His own resurrection from the dead serves as proof or confirmation that He is who He says He is !!!
- B. His Power Over Disease and Injuries
 - 1. Nobleman's son healed - John 4:46-54
 - 2. Peter's mother-in-law healed-Matthew 8:14; Mark 1:30-31; Luke 4:38-39
 - 3. He healed lepers-Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-14;17:11-19
 - 4. He healed those crippled, paralyzed and lame - Matthew 9:2-8; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26; 13:10-21; John 5:1-16
 - 5. He gave the blind sight and the deaf hearing - Matthew 9:27-34; 12:22; 15:29-31; 20:29-34; Mark 7:31-37; 8:22-26; 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43; John 9:141
 - 6. He even put Malchus' ear back unto his head after Peter cut it off with a sword Matthew 26:50-51; Mark 14:47; Luke 22:49-51
- C. His Power Over Demons
 - 1. The man in the synagogue with the unclean spirit - Mark 1:23-28; Luke 4:33-37
 - 2. The demon possessed man in the country of the Gadarene,s (Gergesenes Matthew)- Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-20; Luke 8:22-25
 - 3. The demon possessed boy whom the disciples could not heal because of a lack of faith - Matthew 17:r4-20; Mark 9:14-29; Luke 9:37-43
 - 4. The demon that caused the man to be dumb - Jews did not deny the miracle, but claimed Jesus worked it through the power of Beelzebub - Luke 11:14-26
 - a. Notice Jesus' logic here, again proving that He had to be who He claimed to be!
- D. The apostles and prophets of the early church had such powers too. (Acts 2:43; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11)
 - 1. Over the natural world in general - raised the dead -Acts 9:36-42; Acts 20:7-12; bitten by a poisonous viper - Acts 28:1-6; caused

- one to become blinded - Acts 13:6-12; spoke in languages that they had not learned - Acts 2:1-13; 1 Corinthians 14:22
2. Over injuries and sickness- Acts 3:1-10; 4:16; 5:12-16; 8:5-8; 9:17-18; 22:13
 3. Over demons or unclean spirits - Acts 5:16; 8:7; 16:16-18
 4. Like their Lord, and through His power and authority, some had the power to foretell the future - Matthew 24; Acts 11:28; 21:7-14
 5. The purpose of these miracles by the early Christians was, again, to confirm the Word.

III. HOW DID THE EARLY CHRISTIANS RECEIVE THESE POWERS FROM GOD AND HOW LONG WERE THEY TO LAST?

- A. The apostles received the ability to work miracles through the promised baptism of the Holy Spirit.
 1. Acts 1:1-9 - Notice the pronoun / antecedent agreement in this text
 2. Proves that the promise of the baptism of the Holy Ghost was for the apostles
 3. Apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost - Not many days hence" - Ten days later - Acts 2:1-ff
 4. Only one other recorded example of Holy Ghost baptism - the special occurrence among the house of Cornelia (Acts 10 and 11), and when Peter reported about what happened there, he said, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them as on us at the beginning. (Acts 11:15)
 - a. This was about 8 years after Pentecost.
 - b. There had obviously not been an outward occurrence of Holy Spirit baptism since the "beginning" ...since Pentecost
 - c. The obvious exception to this, of course, is the apostle Paul who, no doubt, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, though the actual occurrence of it is not recorded in Scripture.
- B. The only other way for people to receive the ability to perform miracles was through the laying on of the apostles' hands.
 1. Acts 8:5-19 and note especially verses 14-19.
- C. When the last apostle died, and the last person upon whom an apostle had laid his hands died, there was no possible way a miracle could be performed.
 1. They were to last until "that which is perfect" came. (I Corinthians 13:10)
 2. The Word of God, the perfect Law of liberty, is that which can furnish us perfectly or completely in all good works. (James 1:25; 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 3. The Bible is not a miracle, but it is indeed the product of miracles!

4. It has been confirmed by miracles! ! ! (Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:1-4)

CONCLUSION:

1. Jesus is the Christ, and this is substantiated by the miracles that He did, and the miracles that He empowered His early followers to do!
2. The greatest sign He gave was the "sign of the prophet Jonah"! ! ! (Matthew 12:38-41)
3. He was victorious over death! And so shall we be through Him! (I Corinthians 15; Hebrews 2:14-18)
4. Truly we can say with the great apostle, thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."I Corinthians 15:57)
5. And we should continue with his words... "Therefore my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Corinthians 15:58)

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST'S CONTROVERSIES

Stewart Schnur

TEXT: EPHESIANS 4:8

- A. **CONTROVERSY:** altercation, argument, debate, dispute, quarrel, conflict, contention, strife.
- B. Controversy begins in the Garden of Eden.
 1. An absolute stand with God...
 2. Separates one from those who will not stand with God.
 3. Separation from God is a loser/death problem.
 4. Christians seek union with God and a winner/life situation for all.
- C. Controversy is a natural part of this world because of Satan.
- D. This world of compromise (no absolutes). The American way.
 1. I'm OK Your OK. Win Friends Influence People.
 2. Don't rock the boat mentality.
 3. World views the uncompromising as TROUBLEMAKERS.
- E. There is NO controversy in heaven (Ps. 119:89).

I. TYPES OF CONTROVERSIES JESUS ENGAGED IN

A. Individuals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

B. Groups:

1. The religious establishment: Scribes, Elders, Lawyers, Sanhedrin.
 - a.
 - b.
2. Religious sects: Sadducees, Pharisees, and Samaritans
 - a.
 - b.
3. His own disciples:
 - a.
 - b.
4. Before civil authorities:
 - a.
 - b.

II. THE VALUE OF SUCH DISCUSSIONS

A. God's people commanded - "Contend earnestly for the faith" (Jude 3).

1. In so doing we prove ourselves to be the children of God.
2. Understand there are souls that can be reached.

B. God's people fight because they are alive and alert (Eph. 6: 12).

1. To save ourselves.
2. To save others.

- C. God's people must watch, stand fast, be brave and strong (1 Cor. 16:13).
 - 1. To do less is to minimize and misrepresent our powerful God.
 - 2. To do less is to make ourselves vulnerable to God's enemy (1 Pet. 5:8).

III. TIMES WHEN JESUS REFUSED TO ENGAGE IN CONTROVERSIES

- A. Jesus did not seek or look for controversy as if there were some value in that.
 - 1. He by his very nature knew he would be controversial (Mt. 10:34-35).
 - 2. He understood that in this world he would be despised and rejected (Isa. 53:3).
 - 3. He knew something would be wrong if he became "mr popular" (Lk. 6:26).
 - 4. He had no "martyrdom complex" to prove his righteousness/spirituality .
- B. Pray for wisdom in sizing up situations (Mt. 7:6).
 - 1. Some situations will lead to mud wrestling - lose/lose situation
 - a. 2 Tim. 2:14, 16, 23, 24
 - 2. Other situations will permit us to lead people to God.
- C. Hurting our own credibility, honor, and integrity.
 - 1. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.
 - 2. Refuse to be unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14).
 - 3. Count the cost (Lk. 14:28).
- D. A time to be silent (1 Pet. 2:23).
 - 1. Neither will I tell you (Mk. 11:33).
 - 2. Before the Sanhedrin (Jn. 18:19-23 Mk. 14:60-61).

- 3. Before Pilate (Jn. 19:9-10).
- E. Jesus would not get caught up in unimportant issues (matters of opinion).

IV. CONTROVERSIES AND US

- A. If we take a stand with God, controversy is unavoidable.
- B. Our attitude in controversy is important (Phil. 1:15-18).
- C. We must learn to love and support one another in our stand for God.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST'S TEACHING

David Irick

INTRODUCTION:

- A. This topic could have been the basis for entire lectureship by itself! I humbly approach this topic realizing that whatever I say, more could be said about the "Unsearchable Riches of Christ's Teaching". This outline contains more than I shall attempt to preach. The material is provided for the benefit of your personal study.
- B. Here are some of the 'riches' I have gleaned from the Master Teacher.

I. CHRIST TAUGHT IN SUCH A MANNER THAT MEN SAID; "NO MAN EVER SPAKE LIKE THIS." (Jn. 7:46, Matt. 7:28-29)

- 1. He Came Bringing The Distinct Truth Of God
 - a. Jn. 1:17
 - b. Jn. 8:32
 - c. Matt. 5:28; 38, etc.
 - d. Jn 7:26 (He boldly spoke the truth)
 - e. Mk. 10:17-22 (This enabled him to tell people what they needed to hear, rather than what they wanted to hear)
- 2. He Defined Righteousness By God 's Standard, Not Man 's.
 - a. Matt. 5:20
 - b. Matt. 6:5 (Jesus shows the abuses by religious leaders concerning prayer)
 - c. Matt. 6:16-18 (He corrects the abuse of fasting)
 - d. Matt. 23 (Jesus stood opposed to the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees)
- 3. His Teachings Were Free From Political Connections!
 - a. Matt. 15:1-14
 - b. Mk. 2:14-17 (Jesus calls Matthew, a publican. He eats with

- publicans and sinners. They follow him, the Pharisee's rebuke and Jesus reply)
- c. Jn. 4:27 (The disciples 'marvel' that he talked with the woman from Samaria).
- 4. He Spoke With Pure Motives, Not Seeking To Gain Wealth, Fame, Popularity Or Praise.
 - a. Mk. 12:38-40 (He warned of those religious leaders with impure motives)
- 5. He Expressed Genuine Concern and Love Toward Others.
 - a. Matt. 9:36-38
 - b. Matt. 14:14 (fed 5,000)
 - c. Matt. 15:32 (fed 4,000)
 - d. Matt. 20:34 (He had compassion on the blind men and healed them)
 - e. Luke 15:20 (Not only did Jesus exhibit compassion for others, he taught us the love the Father has for wayward children who repent)
- 6. His Teachings Drew The Common Man To Listen.
 - a. Mk. 12:37
 - b. Luke 19:48 ("...for all the people were very attentive to hear him").

II. SOME OF THE CARDINAL DOCTRINES OF CHRIST.

- 1. Love.
 - a. Matt. 22:36-39
 - b. John 13:34-35
 - c. John 15:13 (Jesus not only taught us to love, but also showed us the greatest love!)
- 2. He Taught The Necessity Of Keeping The Commandments Of God
 - a. Matt. 7:24-27
 - b. John 14:15; 21, 23-24; 15:10, 14, etc.
 - c. Mk. 3:31-35 (Jesus identified his real mother and brethren)
 - d. Mk. 11:12-14 (He curses the fig tree for not producing fruit. Without honoring God's commandments we will not bear fruit!)
- 3. Jesus Showed Us There Is An Objective Standard Of Truth To Follow!
 - a. John 8:32
 - b. John. 17:17
 - c. John 18:38 (Pilate asked the question, "What is truth?" Little did he know Jesus was the truth!)?
 - d. Matt. 7:15 (Jesus warns us of false teachers)
 - e. Matt. 16:12 (Jesus warns disciples to beware of the 'doctrine' of the Pharisees)
- 4. Jesus Over And Over Emphasizes Forgiveness.
 - a. Matt. 6:14-15
 - b. Matt. 18:15-35
- 5. The Mission Of Jesus Was To Fulfil The Scheme Of Redemption
 - a. Matt. 10:5-7 (Limited commission).

- b. Jn. 14:6 (Jesus is the way the truth and the life. His whole mission was to carry out this point!)
 - c. I John 3:5
- 6. He Taught All Actions Stem From The Heart. Therefore We Must Keep It Pure.
 - a. Matt. 5:8
 - b. Matt. 5:27-28
 - c. Matt. 6:21
 - d. Matt. 12:34-35
 - e. Matt. 15:8
 - f. Matt. 15:18-19
 - g. Matt. 22:36-40
- 7. Jesus Taught The Ever Present Need For Humility!
 - a. Matt. 20:20-29
 - b. Matt. 11:28-30
 - c. Jn. 13 (Washing the disciples feet)
 - d. Lk. 14:7-11 (The chief seats)
 - e. Lk. 13:23-30 (The scene at the judgment-many that are last shall be first and the first last!)
 - f. Matt. 18:1-6 (We must humble ourselves like little children)
 - g. Lk. 10:17-20 (Jesus cautions the disciples not to be lifted up with pride due to the evil spirits being subject unto them, but to rejoice that their names are written in heaven)
 - h. Lk. 18:10-14 (The parable of the Pharisee and publican going up into the temple to pray teaches us the right attitude to possess)
- 8. Jesus Stressed The Need For Prayer Both In Teaching And In Example.
 - a. Matt. 6:5-13
 - b. Matt. 7:7-11
 - c. Lk. 5:16
 - d. Lk. 6:12
 - e. Lk. 9:18; 22:41
 - f. Lk. 11:1-13
 - g. Lk. 23:34 (Jesus prays for those crucifying him)

III. THE INFLUENCE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING HAD A PROFOUND EFFECT UPON MEN!

- 1. His Teaching Led People To Make Decisions.
 - a. Mark 10:17-22 (It led the rich young ruler to walk away sorrowfully)
 - b. Jn. 8:1-10 (The teaching of Jesus convicted some of sin and hypocrisy.)
 - c. Jn. 4:39-42 (It Led the Samaritan woman to spread the good news)
 - d. Jn. 6:66 (It led some disciples to turn and walk with him no more)
 - e. Isa. 55:11
- 2. His Teaching Led Some To Shame.
 - a. Lk. 13:10-17

3. His Teaching Brought Anger To Some.
 - a. Matt. 21:45-46
4. The Teaching Of Christ Brought Joy To Others.
 - a. Mk. 12:37

CONCLUSION

1. What affect does the teaching of Christ have in your life?
2. May we each study with diligence the unsearchable riches of Christ's teaching.

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF HIS DEATH

Milton Mathers

INTRODUCTION:

1. It is so good to be here for this good lectureship.
2. What a great theme: "The UNSEARCHABLE Riches of Christ."
3. I am most humbly honored to be asked to speak.
4. I truly appreciate brothers Eddy Craft and Clayton Winters. They are to be commended for the good job they do in getting this lectureship to where it is today. I know that a lot of work goes into a lectureship of this caliber.
5. I am grateful to the eldership who oversee this fine work.
6. You brethren are to be commended as well, for all that you do, to get these lectureships, year after year, to be what it is.
7. We ever need to be so thankful, for God's great scheme of redemption, that through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, we all might live faithfully in Christ, having our sins forgiven, then someday, going home to heaven for the glory of it all.

[And so, we address the question that must be answered...]

I. How Could Christ Die, Being God?

- A. The Bible gives us much information concerning the eternality of the Godhead, namely: God the Father, God the Son Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit.
 1. Genesis 1:1, 26 - "In the beginning God...."; "... let us make man in our image..
 2. Deuteronomy 33:27.
 3. Isaiah 40:28.
 4. Psalms 102:12, 25-27.
 5. Jeremiah 10:10.
 6. 2 Peter 3:8.
 7. 2 Timothy 1:9.
 8. Titus 1:2.
 9. Jude 25
 10. When the Bible mentions God being "eternal"; "everlasting"; "never ending" it is referring to the Son and the Holy Spirit as well. What you say of one, you say of the other Two also.

- B. What would need to take place then, is that the Son, Jesus Christ, would have to leave the bliss of heaven, from the comfort of His Father, and come here on this earth with its inhabitants (many cruel), and take on the form of human flesh to dwell amongst men. John 1:1-2, 14.
- C. According to the all-sufficient, verbally inspired ("God's breath") word of God, the Bible; that would be the only way for Jesus' death to take place, to take on human flesh.
1. Hebrews 9:27.
 2. Ecclesiastics 3:1-2a.
 3. James 2:26 4:13-14.
 4. Luke 16:22.
 5. That was the case because Jesus did die. Luke 22:46; John 19:33.
- D. Let us note some brief accounts of the humanity of Jesus.
1. He was conceived of by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin - Luke 1:30-38.
 2. He went through the nine-month period and was born, just like everyone else - Luke 2:4-7.
 3. Being in the flesh, He went through the growth process just like everyone else.
 - a. He grew in wisdom and stature - Luke 2:52.
 - b. Isaiah 53:2 prophesied of Him and said - " For he grew up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."
 - c. He had to be a man of great physical stamina to endure the hardships of travel and long hours of work being a carpenter - Mark 6:3.
 4. He was tempted like us except without sin - Hebrews 4:15.
 5. How about when He was in the Garden of Gethsemane, praying to His Father, and His sweat became like drops of blood because of the agony He was in while praying - Luke 22:44.
 6. We can't leave out compassion, sorrow, grief, joy, and all the other things that we know and experience in life as humans. Jesus experienced the same and more.
- E. Why did Jesus, the Word, become a man; why was He made flesh? Why was it necessary for Him to leave heaven, come to this sin-cursed world, live in poverty, and finally die the shameful death of the cruel cross?
1. Jesus came to this world that we may know God - John 14:9.
 2. Jesus became a man that He might take away sin - I John 3:5.
 3. Jesus had to become a man in order that He might destroy the works of the devil - Hebrews 2:14-15.
 4. Jesus had to become a man in order to prepare a people for His own possession and return for them to take them to heaven to live with Him forever- John 14:1-3.
 5. Jesus had to come to this earth so that He could seek and save those that were lost- Luke 19:10.

6. Jesus was willing to come to this earth as a man, so that He could willingly go to the old rugged cross and die a shameful death, shedding His blood for our sins. All because of LOVE! As the old song goes....

Why did my Savior come to earth?
And to the humble go?
Why did He choose a lowly birth?
Because He loved me so! Why did He drink the bitter cup?
Of sorrow, pain and woe?
Why on the cross be lifted up?
Because He loved me so!
He loved me so, He loved me so;
He gave His precious life,
For me, for me, Because He loved me so.

J.D. Bailey

- F. The death of Jesus on the cruel cross portrays many things, namely:
1. That when man sinned, it offended God's holiness.
 2. That God's justice demanded that the penalty for His law be acted upon.
 3. But, God's mercy triumphed over His justice.
 4. And, God sent His Son, to show His love.
 5. And when Jesus died on the cross, He paid the penalty for sin, satisfying the justice of God.
 6. Also, the death of Jesus on the cross shows us how black sin is.
 - a. Sin is blacker than hell and worse than Satan. Had there been no sin, there would be no hell, and there would have been no Satan. And had there been no sin, there would be no need of Calvary.
 - b. Did you ever think that it was SIN that truly nailed our Lord to the cross?
 - 1) Eight times Isaiah makes reference to this fact - Is. 53:5, 6, 8, 10, 12.
 - 2) Christ shed His blood for the remission of sins - Mt. 26:28.
 - 3) He was delivered for our offenses - Rom. 4:25.
 - 4) He died for the ungodly - Ro. 5:6.
 - 5) While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us - Rom. 5:8.
 - 6) God sent His Son for sin - Rom. 8:3.
 - 7) Though He knew no sin He was made to be sin for us - 2 Cor. 5:21.
 - 8) Christ was offered to bear the sins for many - Heb. 9:28.
 - 9) Christ "his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" - 1 Pet. 2:24.
 - 10) Sin should not be taken so lightly because of all that

- it has done, namely, put our precious Lord on a tree!
- c. It was sin that put the crown of thorns, that drove those spikes, that thrust the spear into His side, which hurled sarcastic remarks at Jesus while on the cross.
 - d. And as we stand beneath that cross and feel the warm blood from the Savior's open veins trickle upon us, and as our ears hear His excruciating groans, and as our eyes see His now mangled body - how could anyone love to indulge in sin? For sin, it were, that slew Him,
 And not the hand of men:
 Judge, then the consequences,
 Of just one sinner's sin!
 --Carlos Beam
 - e. Concerning sin, we can't leave off the blood that was shed for remission of sins.
 - 1) Hebrews 9:22.
 - 2) The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin - Heb. 10:4.
 - 3) It required the sacrifice of Jesus - Heb. 9:26.
 - 4) The offering of His body - Heb. 10:10.
 - 5) Romans 3:25
 - 6) Colossians 1:20-21.
 - 7) Ephesians 1:7.
- G. We can't leave off without discussing the circumstances of the death of Christ on the cross.
- 1. At the cross Jesus is crucified between two thieves. A stupefying drink for such occasions is offered, but Jesus refuses (Matt. 27:34,38).
 - 2. He has had nothing to eat or drink since the night of the supper, which He ate with His disciples.
 - 3. He has undergone the severest kind of emotional persecution; He has been beaten (Matt. 26:67), scourged (John 19:1), and now He is crucified (John 19:16)
 - 4. The writers of the gospel account do not give a detailed description of our Lord's physical sufferings, but simply say " they crucified him.
 - 5. Secular writers of the time do not tell us much about the method of crucifixion, but new light has been thrown on the subject by archaeological work in Judea. The remains of a young crucified man, dating from probably between AD 7 and AD 66, judging from Herodian pottery found there, will perhaps shed considerable light on the matter of crucifixion in general. The victims' arms appear to have been nailed to the patibulum, the cross-beam. The legs had been bent at the knees and twisted back so that the calves were parallel to the patibulum or cross-bar. One iron nail had been driven through both his heels together, with his right foot above the

left. A fragment shows that the cross was of olivewood. The legs found in the sight itself seem to indicate that they had both been broken, presumably by a forcible blow, like those of Jesus' two companions in John 19:32.' Clements, a medical doctor, considers some of the physical aspects of crucifixion.

" The major pathophysiologic effect of crucifixion, beyond the exquisite pain, was a marked interference with normal respiration, particularly exhalation. A maximum inhalation would be obtained by resting the body weight on the nailed wrists with outstretched arms. In this position, however, exhalation would be impossible. In order to breathe the victim had to lift the body by pushing up with the legs, transferring the body weight to the nails in the feet. This allowed the arms and chest wall to relax and thus permit exhalation. Thus a respiratory cycle would require Jesus to lift himself on the cross, exhale and then gently let himself down as he inhaled. Muscle spasms in the legs, shoulders and arms, and pain directly from the nails in the hands and feet were cyclically experienced with each respiratory cycle. As a result, each respiratory effort would be more agonizing and tiring and would lead eventually to asphyxia.

6. From such a discussion it would seem clear that breathing, over an extended period of time would become increasingly difficult. Again, doctor Clements says, " The actual cause of death by crucifixion would vary in each case, but the two most prominent causes were probably hypovolemic shock and exhaustion asphyxia. Other possible contributing factors include dehydration, cardiac arrhythmia's, and congestive heart failure with the rapid accumulation of pericardia and pleural effusions. Crucifracture (breaking of the legs below the knee) led to an asphyxia death within minutes." '
7. Clements, in his, research continues to offer other possible contributing factors to the death of Jesus. For instance, he suggests that another possibility could be cardiac contusion with myocardial damage and subsequent rupture of the wall of the heart resulting in sudden death. On the cross, the workload of the heart was greatly increased due to multiple factors.. This, Clements says, could result in a rupture of the anterior wall of the heart causing Jesus to cry out in a loud voice and suddenly die (Mark 15:37).
8. Though the very cause of Jesus' physical death may not be precisely identified, still it is clear that Jesus did die while on the cross, and this can be known for several reasons.
 - a. First, the soldiers perceived that Jesus was already dead, so they did not break His legs (John 19:33). Instead, they pierced His side with a spear (John 19:34).
 - b. Second, flow of blood and water from His side is a proof of His death.

- c. Clements again says, " The piercing of his side almost certainly indicates a laceration of the heart itself which would, even under normal circumstances, be fatal. The separation of blood and water further implies some time had elapsed since his death. The appearance of blood and water probably meaning a post-mortem separation of the cellular components of blood from the fluid component (serum)."
- d. Third, Jesus Himself gave the time of His death by His own statement, "Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit" (Luke 23:46). Matthew goes on to say, "Jesus...yielded up his spirit" (Mt. 27:50).
- 9. It is most certain that our Lord and Savior died on the cruel cross, by biblical proof and as well medical proof.

II. How Did Jesus' Death On The Cross Differ From The Two Thieves?

- A. Notice Luke's account, found in Luke 23:32-43.
- B. Let's take a look at the three crosses and note some things.
- C. As we look, we see....
 - 1. One man dying in sin, the impenitent thief.
 - 2. One dying for sin, The Christ, Savior of the world.
 - 3. One dying to sin the penitent thief.
 - 4. The thieves had sin in them, but Christ had no sin.
 - 5. That these three crosses have a meaning for us today.
 - 6. The cross of redemption - Christ-Messiah-Savior.
 - 7. The cross of reception - the believing thief.
 - 8. The cross of rejection - the unbelieving thief.
- D. We see the unbelieving thief - Luke 23:39.
 - 1. Here was a man railing, blaspheming (denouncing, raging) against Christ.
 - 2. Here was a man dying in his sin talking like this.
 - 3. Joins others in shaming Christ as He hangs there.
 - 4. People die everyday shaming Christ and His followers.
 - 5. Here is a man on the edge of eternity. One who was soon to die.
 - 6. Rejecting the only One having power to save him from his sins. Who knew that death was very near?
 - 7. Today we to stand at the very edge of eternity.
 - 8. Each day we are closer to His coming or death itself.
- E. We see the believing thief - Luke 23:40-42.
 - 1. He is amazed even though he is suffering a slow death.
 - 2. That the other thief would not fear God even at the end.
 - 3. This man admits that he is getting what he deserves.
 - 4. He believes that Jesus is being falsely killed.
 - 5. His words to Jesus are for Him to remember him in the kingdom.

6. He believed Christ to be Lord and that His kingdom would survive death.
- F. We see Jesus the suffering Savior.
1. His words must have startled the multitudes - vs. 43.
 2. He tells the thief he would receive more than he asked.
 3. These words were spoken to the penitent thief.
 4. Though Christ was in pain and dying, He still had a word of comfort for one whom had faith in him.
 5. It is here He lets us know where He is going.
 6. By this means He is showing that a place is prepared for those who truly believe in Him.
 7. This place is Paradise, to be with the Lord.
- G. Yes, there was a big difference between Jesus and the two thieves.
1. Jesus had no sin. An innocent man put upon the cross to die as one accused.
 2. One thief was guilty of his crime, deserved his punishment, repented of his sin against Jesus, and went on to Paradise as Jesus had promised.
 3. The other thief, had a chance to repent and go on to Paradise with the Lord, refused to acknowledge the Christ, died and went to a place of punishment, in Hades, where the rich man is. Luke 16.

III. How Then Are We Crucified With Christ?

- A. Paul says it ever so plainly in Galatians 2:20, ** I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me. "*
1. Paul died to the Law of Moses by being "crucified with Christ." Christ's crucifixion was literal; Paul's was spiritual, but no less real.
 2. The effect of the death of Christ was to make Paul dead to the law because it was nailed to the cross, taken out of the way, when Christ was crucified (Col. 2:14).
 3. When Paul was crucified with Christ, he not only died to the law, but also to himself: "It is no longer I that live.
 4. Paul merged his own will, personality, yes, even life, with Christ's.
 5. This relationship between Paul and Christ was so intimate, that Paul could no longer live as he once lived.
 6. This is the way it should be with us all. As Jesus said, " If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me"- Luke 9:23.
 7. Only when we deny self, do we put self to death, so as to live for Christ.
 8. Well, by what means was Paul's crucifixion accomplished? When did he cease to live and Christ began to live in him? Paul answers that in Romans 6:1-11.

9. Other passages affirm this as well. That we need to truly crucify our flesh to the things of sin. Note:
 - a. Galatians 5:16-25.
 - b. Colossians 3:1-15.
 - c. 2 Timothy 2:11.
 - d. I Peter 2:21-25.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Jesus really did die, was buried, raised the third day - the first day of the week, showed Himself to many, went up into heaven to have all authority (Mt. 28:18), is on the right hand side of God.
- B. We have Jesus/God the man, our mediator for us to God - I Tim. 2:5. Jesus will come again.
- C. We need to ever live that we will be with Him throughout eternity. Like the apostle Paul, in his moments of preparing for eternity, said, " For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith= henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."
- D. Thank you, for this honor to speak on this lesson - "The UNSEARCHABLE Riches of Christ's Death".

Endnotes

- 1.The Cross of Jesus Christ. Truth In Love Lectureship. Director, Paul Sain. The Physical Death of Jesus Christ On The Cross by Jim Laws. "Medical Aspects of the Crucifixion Of Jesus Christ" by Joseph C. Clements, MD, pg. 107.
- 2.Clements, Ibid., p. 108.
- 3 Clements, Ibid., p. 108-109.
- 4 Clements, Ibid., p. 109.
- 5 Clements, Ibid., p. 109.

UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION
Sidney White

INTRODUCTION:

- A Same now as when preached in 1st Century - - many deny Biblical teaching of the resurrection
- B. Always some who reject the idea
 1. Sadduceses; Matt. 22:23ff; Acts 23:8; 4:1-2; Lk. 20:27
 2. Athenians; Acts 17:32
 3. Agrippa; Acts 26:8
 4. Some among Corinthians; I Cor.15:12
 5. Hymenaeus & Philetus; II Tim. 2:17-18
- C. Enemies of the resurrection of Christ:
 1. Attempted to prevent it; Matt. 27:62-66
 2. Attempted to pervert it; Matt. 28:11-15

3. Attempted to deny it; Matt. 22:23; I Cor. 15:12
- D. It was announced; Matt. 12:40; 17:22-23

I. EVIDENCES OF HIS RESURRECTION:

- A. The tomb:
 1. The body was placed there; Matt. 27:57-66
 2. Later was empty; Matt. 28:1-10
 3. Soldiers, religious leaders, disciples said so.
- B. Witnesses
 1. I Cor. 15:5-8; Acts 1:3
 2. Qualification of one to replace Judas; Acts. 1.22
 3. Acts 3:15; 4:33; 10:40-41
- C. Transformation of lives
 1. Consider changes in Paul, Peter and others
 2. How could a dead Savior prompt such changes?

II. IMPORTANCE OF HIS RESURRECTION

- A. Fundamental principle of the gospel; I Cor. 15:1-4, 13-14; Heb. 6:1-2
- B. Some things will stand or fall with the fact of the resurrection
 1. Claims of Christ; John. 2:19; Matt. 12:40; 16:21
 2. Credibility of the Scriptures; I Cor. 15:4
 3. Sonship of Christ; Rom. 1:4
 4. Comfort of the saints; I Thess. 4:13-14, 18
 5. The preaching of the apostles; Ac. 2; 3:15; 10:40; 13:33;7:3
- C. Enabled Him to sit at the right hand of God, Eph. 1:20; Col.1:18; Acts. 2:30,36
 1. To serve as our mediator; I Tim. 2:5
 2. To serve as our intercessor; Rom. 8:34
- D. Gives hope of our resurrection; I Cor. 15:20-23.
 1. Of special significance to the righteous - cf Jno. 1 1:25-26; Acts. 4:2
 2. Appear with Him in glory; Col. 3:4
 3. Receive eternal life; John. 5:28-29
 4. Receive incorruptible bodies; I Cor. 15:42ff, Phd. 3:21; 1 John. 3:2.
 5. Great consolation to the saved; I Thess. 4:13-18
- E. Significance of the bodily resurrection of the wicked:
 1. Shame and everlasting contempt; Dan. 12:2 2. Resurrection of damnation; John. 5:29
- F. "If Christ be not risen" - I Cor. 15:12-19
 1. Our preaching vain - including all the fundamentals; the preaching of the apostles would not be reliable.
 - a. F.R.C.B. -Heb. 11:6; John. 8:24; Acts. 17:30; 8:37; Romans. 10:10; I Cor. 12:13
 - b. New creature in Christ: II Cor. 5:17; Romans 6:1-4, 16-18; Gal. 3:26ff

- c. Faithfulness, I Cor. 15:58; Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:14-7: 1
- d. Death; Heb. 9:27
- e. Resurrection; I Cor. 15:42
- f. Judgment; Acts. 17:30-31; II Cor. 5:10
- g. Eternity; II Thess. 1:7-9
- 2. Faith vain - because of Rom. 10:17; salvation would not be available!
- 3. Apostles are false witnesses; I John. 1:1-2; Acts. 2:24, 30-36
- 4. Yet in sins; cf. Ro. 6: 18; 4:25
- 5. No hope for faithful brethren who have died; Rev. 14:13; no reunion possible; I Thess. 4:13-14
- 6. Miserable here without hope for future; Heb. 6: 19
 - a. No hope to help us through the storms of life.
 - b. No hope for a better life.
- 7. Christ is not dependable; I Cor. 15:13; Matt. 16:21
 - a. He is risen!
 - b. I can take Him at His word, on any subject; John. 17:17
 - c. I can depend on every promise He has made; II Pet.1:4

CONCLUSION:

- A. Christ's resurrection is a provable fact and provides assurance that we too will be raised.
- B. Will you be raised as righteous? Matt. 25:31-40
- C. Will you be raised as unrighteous? Matt. 25:41-46
- D. Invitation extended to all; Matt. 11:28-30
- E. All will not respond favorably; II Thess. 1:7-9; Matt. 7:13-14.

**THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST IN HIS ASCENSION:
BLOOD ON THE MERCY SEAT
BY EDDY CRAFT**

INTRODUCTION:

- A. This lesson has to do with the atoning blood placed on the mercy seat in heaven; but to be properly understood and appreciated, it must be viewed in the context of all the events surrounding the ascension of Christ and the great Pentecost, which followed.
- B. We hear many lessons on the crucifixion and resurrection; but as we look back, have we ever heard one on the ascension (a 62 year old preacher called Clayton Winters recently for an outline, because he had been assigned the topic, and couldn't find anything on it). We think you will be amazed at the many things tied to this grand event.

I. THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST TO THE FATHER

- A. The prophet Daniel had predicted it.
Daniel 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and

they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

B. Christ Himself foretold His return to the Father.

John 6:62: What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

John 14:1-3: Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. 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. 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.

John 20:17: Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION IN THE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION

CORONATION DAY IN HEAVEN

Fulfillment of Prophecy Dan. 7:13,14)

Christ Made High Priest (Heb. 8:1-4)

Atonement Made for Sins (Heb. 9:11,12)

Christ Seated on David's Throne (Acts 2:29-37)

Christ Made Head of Church (Eph. 1:19-23)

Apostles Became a Reality (Eph. 4:8-11)

Remission of Sin Possible (Luke 24:47)

Church Holy Spirit-Activated (Acts 2:1-4)

A. It marked the fulfillment of Prophecy.

Daniel 7:13-14: I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And them was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

B. Jesus Christ was made High Priest.

Hebrews 8:1-4: Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth. he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law:

C. It was the time of atonement for the world.

1. In typology, the sacrifice was killed outside the sanctuary, then its blood was brought within the veil and offered on and before the mercy seat.

Leviticus 16:15-17: Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out, and have made an atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

2. At His ascension Jesus entered into heaven to place His blood before the throne of God.

Hebrews 9:1-8: Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censur, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

Hebrews 9:11-12: But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by

his own blood he entered in once into the holy place,
having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 9:23-24: It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

Hebrews 10:12-13: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool.

Acts 2: 34-35: For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

- D. It was at this point that He was seated on the throne of David.
Acts 1:9-11: And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven. See also Daniel 7:13,14 above
Acts 2:29-37: Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
- E. Christ was made the head of the church.
Ephesians 1:19-23: And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is

named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

- F. The apostles became in reality the ambassadors of Christ.
1 Corinthians 12:28: And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.
Ephesians 4:8,11: Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he had captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;
- G. The remission of sin became a possibility.
Luke 24:47: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
- H. The church was activated by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of truth.
John 14:26: But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.
John 15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:
John 16:13: Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.
Acts 2:1-4: And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it set upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
1. The Spirit could not come until Jesus ascended back to the Father.
John 16:7: Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.
 2. Previous to this, the apostles had been placed under a "gag order" relative to the gospel.
Matthew 17:9: And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.
Luke 24:49: And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.
- I. Is there any wonder this day is called *great, notable, and the beginning?*
Acts 2:20: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:

Acts 11:15: And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

III. JESUS MADE MANY ALLUSIONS TO THE ASCENSION:

- A. It seems that the return to His Father was constantly on His mind.
- B. Luke 9:51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should Be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,
- C. John 6:62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?
- D. John 7:33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.
- E. **John 12:32** And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
- F. To see this continue to develop please note and read (John 16:5,10,17,28; 20:17)

CONCLUSION:

- A. Christ ascended to finalize Revelation (Heb. 1:13)
- B. Christ ascended to receive His power and kingdom (Dan. 7:13)
- C. The ascension of Christ marked the beginning of His priesthood (Heb. 10:12-13)
- D. The ascension of Christ brought Him full glory (I Timothy 3:16)
- E. The ascension of Christ made Him our forerunner (Heb.1: 19)
- F. Christ ascended to become head of the church (Eph. 1:19-22)
- G. The ascension of Christ is more than just a very meaningful and lovely topic for study. It is the confirmation of all that God is and has revealed to mankind.

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF THE CHURCH **Charles White**

INTRODUCTION:

- A. "*Unsearchable*" occurs twice in the New Testament.
 - 1. Rom. 11:33, referring to the "impossible to be searched out" wisdom, knowledge and judgements of God
 - 2. Eph. 3:8, referring to the "impossible to be traced our treasures of the gospel"
- B. The unsearchable riches of Christ (the gospel) are manifested to, in and for the church (Eph. 3:7-11)
 - 1. The riches were provided to every creature by preaching the gospel to every creature (v. 8; Mark 16:15; Col. 1:23)
 - 2. The fellowship of the hidden mystery (the divinely planned and executed etemal purpose of God) resides in the church (vv. 9-11)
- C. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7)
- D. Because it is the privilege of the church to know the wisdom of God (v.10), there are divine blessings for the church as a body, for Christians as individuals and there is the responsibility of the church to communicate these potential blessings

to all mankind)

I. There are unsearchable riches for the church as a body and they are those blessings that are tangible

- A. The church worships as a corporate body.
 - 1. John 4:24
 - 2. Hebrews 10:25
- B. The church is primarily blessed by evangelism (Acts 1:8)
 - 1. Locally (Jerusalem) in which the standards of a community are uplifted to the salt, light and city set upon a hill status mentioned in Matthew 5:13-16)
 - 2. Stateside (Judea) in which the local church is lifted out of the pitfalls of parochialism to a wider responsibility to people of our own language and culture
 - 3. Foreign (the uttermost parts) in which the local church expands its reach to areas different to our own language and culture
 - 4. It has been observed that the mission of the church, evangelism, is a strongly surging river, into which all activities serve as tributaries and we must never forget our primary reason for being.
- C. The church is blessed as a body by the physical care provided to the less fortunate
 - 1. The poor had the gospel preached to them (Matthew 11:5) because they are ever with us (Matt. 26:11)
 - 2. The destitute are to have a special place in the heart of the local church
 - a. The household of faith has a responsibility to itself for such physical care (Gal. 6:10)
 - b. The church has a similar responsibility to "all men" (Gal. 6:10) to provide care
 - c. The church is not a social institution governed by a social gospel, but it does have its "social" functions.

II. Individual Christians, who do comprise the church, have special riches available to us through our relationship with God through the gospel.

- A. We have fellowship with God because we have something in common with him: a family relationship
 - 1. Rev.21:1-4
 - a. The tabernacle of God is the church, where God dwells (1 Tim. 3:15)
 - b. Though there are trials in this life, the tabernacle of God can look to a time when there are no tears, pains or encumbrances of this life (v.4)
 - 2. 1. John 1:6-8 teaches that our fellowship with God is based upon our walking in the light (John 3:21) and dealing with our sins
- B. Christians have the privilege of prayer

1. It has been said that man is a worshipful being and yearns for communication with his creator
2. Only Christians can satisfy that yearful need in prayer
 - a. Heb. 4:16, the key word being "boldly"
 - b. We have two intercessors (Rom 8:26, 34) but only one mediator (1 Tim. 2:5)
 - c. John 9:31
- C. Christians have the riches of continual cleansing of our sins
 1. Children are born innocent and with no sin (Ezekiel 18:20), therefore sin is committed (1 John 3:4) and not inherited as the Calvinists teach .
 2. When this innocency is violated, those with no contact with the teachings f God must deal with their sins themselves without aid from their creator.
 3. Christians who sin repent of them (Acts 8:22), pray to God for forgiveness (Acts 8:22-24; 1 John 5:16) and confess them (James 5:16; 1 John 5:15).
- D. This fellowship with our father and the assurance of continually walking pure in his sight through the blood of the beloved one is the seed of our happiness and joy.

III. THE RICHES WE HAVE, OUR TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS, MUST BE COMMUNICATED TO THE WORLD

- A. Think: In a true sense, Christians are not soul winners, we are seed Sowers. God is the soul winner.
- B. We communicate in several ways:
 1. By preaching the gospel (Mark 16:15)
 2. By the unity we have (John 17:21)
 3. By our love one for another (1 John 5:2)
 4. By the influences we have and our good works (Matt. 5:13-17)

CONCLUSION

- A. The church at Smyrna was poor, but rich (Rev. 2:9), their confidence in their spiritual wealth fortified them against the upcoming tribulation and they knew what the reward of faithfulness was (v. 10)
- B. The church today have similar wealth which is impossible to fathom, but which can be implemented, internalized and communicated because of our confidence in the one in whom there is no poverty.

