

Exalted
By Jason Cicero

“Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high” (Isa. 52:13).

Made a Little Lower

In eternity, the Word submitted to the will of the Father.

In the first century, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. He “was made a little lower than the angels” (Heb. 2:9). Angels are spirit beings of a higher order than physical men and women. The Word lowered Himself. A body was prepared for Him (Hebrews 10:5). The One who inhabits eternity inhabited a body for some thirty-three and a half years. He became flesh and blood. He was a baby, a young man, a teenager, a twenty-something. He was made a little lower.

Lifted Up

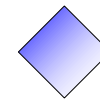
The Word became flesh for the purpose of being “lifted up” (John 3:14). The process of crucifixion was efficient. A hole was dug in the Earth. The cross was laid on the ground. The victim was laid on the cross where he was then nailed to it. The cross was then “lifted up” and dropped into the Earth. The Word “was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death” (Heb. 2:9). GOD in the form of GOD cannot die. The Word made Himself lower than the angels so He could die. He became flesh “so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone” (Heb. 2:9). He was made a little lower so He could be lifted up.

Exalted

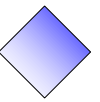
The death of Jesus on the cross is not the end of the story. It was never intended to be the end of the story. Isaiah prophesied the story from beginning to end over seven hundred years before the Word lowered Himself. “Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted” (Isa. 52:13). The I AM raised up His Servant and “Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:30-31). When He, “by Himself purged our sins,” He then “sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,” exalted (Heb. 1:3). Jesus is worthy of exaltation because He lowered Himself, He sacrificed Himself, and He loved us without end. With the “myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands” around the throne, let us say with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing” (Rev. 5:11-12).

Is He exalted in your life?

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com



The Voice of Truth



July 25, 2010

God Is Watching
By Jimmy Pettigrew

“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil” (1 Peter 3:12). The “righteous” are the ones over whom God watches in tender care. God is ever watching to bless them. They are here contrasted with “them that do evil.” God’s protection, guardianship, and care are so meaningful for the Christian. God sees all that happens on the earth. We are prone to accept only that which is visible; and, since we cannot see God watching, we are unmindful of His constant surveillance!

ward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7). Though many of these passages are so well known, yet, how much have they really influenced our personal lives? Are we conscious throughout every day that God is silently observing our deeds and hearing our speech?

We can no more hide from God than could Adam and Eve in the garden. God knew why the prophet (Elijah) was hiding in the cave. Jonah was not hidden from God on the ship, nor yet in the belly of the great fish. Man cannot escape from Him. There is nothing that can hide from God! “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Hebrews 4:13). When Christians are aware that they cannot escape from Him, we should “. . . walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3). Consciously walking under the surveillance of Almighty God will help:

So, it is difficult for any of us to remember always that there is an all seeing eyes watching our every act at all times. Yet, we’re told, “The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth” (Psalm 33:13-14). God sees and knows all that takes place in the world. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (Proverbs 15:3). There is no possible way to escape this all seeing eye of God! Job says, “For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings” (Job 34:21).

Since God knows all our goings, we should be aware of this, and live accordingly! We should have the same conviction as Hagar in saying, “Thou God seest me ” (Genesis 16:13). Are you conscious of this as you plan and proceed in your daily affairs? God sees and reads us constantly! “Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?” (Proverbs 15:11). Man becomes utterly foolish in thinking that he can fool God, and hide his sinful behavior! “Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?” (Isaiah 29:15). “. . . and be sure your sin will find you out” (Numbers 32:23). “But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the out-

- 1) A Christian to be an obedient child.
- 2) A Christian to be holy.
- 3) A Christian to be a walking sermon.
- 4) A Christian to be right in God's sight.
- 5) A Christian to be a good steward.
- 6) A Christian to be active in righteousness.
- 7) A Christian to be present at every service.
- 8) A Christian to be one who resists the Devil.
- 9) A Christian to be one who prays.
- 10) A Christian to be one who abstains from all appearance of evil.
- 11) A Christian to be servant.
- 12) A Christian to be giver to the church according to what he makes rather than the amount he has left over.
- 13) A Christian to be present at Sunday morning Bible class than staying home to sleep.

Continued on Page Two

About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew		
How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
Telephone: (920)499-5677 E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com  	1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313 	Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm* <small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small>
www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com		

In This Issue...	
Pages 1 to 2 - God Is Watching Pages 2 to 3 - “Sheep Of God’s Pasture”	Page 4 - Exalted

Continued from Page One, "God Is Watching"

14) A Christian to put the Lord's business above any other business.

15) A Christian to see his own faults and not just the

“Sheep Of God’s Pasture”

By Jarrod Jacobs

As one reads the Bible, it becomes clear that God is called the shepherd, and His people are called His sheep. Some make sarcastic remarks in reference to this, calling folks “sheeple” or implying that being a sheep in God’s pasture is demeaning in some way. Nothing could be further from the truth.

When we read the Bible, we see that the illustration of shepherd to sheep describes a relationship of love, care, protection, supplying needs, sacrifice, and the like. This is evident when we read **Psalm 23** and learn all the things the Lord does as our shepherd. Not only in **Psalm 23**, but also in **John 10**, we read about Christ’s contrast of the true shepherd and the hireling (**Jn. 10:1-18**). How thankful we ought to be for the love, care, nourishment, protection, sacrifice, and blessings God has afforded those of us who are His sheep!

In this article, I wish for us to look at things from a little different angle. Instead of a study about the Shepherd and what He does for us, let us look at His sheep. Let us ask what kind of sheep we are. Are we acting in a way that would please the Shepherd? Since we are to be the sheep of His pasture (**Ps. 79:13**), what kind of sheep are we?

Listening Sheep?

Jesus said that His sheep listen to Him and in fact listen for their name, because He knows them by name (**Jn. 10:3**). In fact, these sheep are listening so intently, and are so tuned to the Shepherd’s voice that if someone else tries to call for them, they run away from that person (**Jn. 10:5**). Are we like this? Do we listen for our Master’s voice as we read and study the word of God daily (**I Tim. 4:16; II Tim. 2:2**)? Are we listening for the Shepherd’s voice as we hear the words read and preached during worship?

Could it be that we are listening to other “voices” instead of the voice of the Shepherd (**Jn. 10**)? Other voices are ultimately calling us into sin and destruction because they are leading us away from the Good Shepherd (**Jn. 10:11**), the Chief Shepherd (**I Pet. 5:4**) who loves us so much that He died so that we might be saved (**Matt.**

other fellows.

God is observing all we do, and hearing all we say. Possibly no thought would add more zest to life and give it better direction than knowing that God is near and cares for us. Just remember that God is really watching! ♦

20:28! Are we listening to the devil, who tells us that God’s ways are “unreasonable”, or are “not realistic” in our current environment? Do we not realize that such “voices” are calling us away from Christ, and are leading us to destruction? Do we even care?

Hebrews 3:15 says, “*Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*” In connection with this, Jesus said, “*the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers*” (**Jn. 10:3-5**).

What if someone speaks falsehoods to us (**II Pet. 2:1-3**)? Do we run away from false doctrine, or do we draw near, wanting to hear what is said, like the Athenians did (**Acts 17:21**)? Sadly, some “sheep” are looking for the “new”, the “different”, and the “popular” to soothe their itching ears (**II Tim. 4:3-4**). “New”, “popular”, “and “different” are not words which describe the old Jerusalem gospel! It is the same truth that has been in existence for 2000 years! It is this same truth which will save, or set us free from sin (**Rom. 1:16; Jn. 8:32**). Friend, for what are we listening? Are we the listening sheep that bring glory and honor to the Chief Shepherd?

Wandering Sheep?

Jesus lamented when He saw people wandering like sheep without a shepherd (**Matt. 9:36; Mk. 6:34**). This was the way many people were then, and how many people are today. They go through life as if they have no “chart or compass” and then wonder why their lives are in such a mess. Could this be said of you? Be honest! (**Jer. 10:23**)

In thinking about wandering sheep, I remember that Jesus spoke a parable about a shepherd who had to leave his 99 sheep to go after one who had wandered away (**Lk. 15:1-7**). Yes, the shepherd was happy when he found his

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "Sheep Of God's Pasture"

sheep, and the point was made that in like manner there is rejoicing in Heaven when one sinner repents of his sin and returns to the “fold” (**Lk. 15:5-6**). Yet, have we considered the fact that the shepherd would not have had to spend his time and effort searching if the sheep hadn’t wandered off in the first place? I am not questioning the Lord, and there ought to be rejoicing on earth just as there is rejoicing in Heaven when a lost one returns. Yet, let us remember that the worry, work, energy, and effort used on that lost one could have been used in other ways if the sheep would have just stayed where he belonged and had not wandered off!

Could it be that as we read these lines, we can see ourselves as that wandering sheep in the parable of **Luke 15**? I would like to think that the events described in **Luke 15** produced a sadder, but wiser sheep, who then knew not to wander off anymore. What about us? Let these thoughts be a “wake-up” call to the wandering sheep today. Please repent and come back to God before it is too late. Have we wandered off due to our ignorance? If so, then listen to the voice of Christ, calling you through the gospel to return to Him (**II Thess. 2:14**). Listen to friends and loved ones who are calling you back to the “fold” (**Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:19-20**). Open your eyes and recognize what your sin has done to you and to those near you (**Rom. 6:23; Ecc. 9:18**). You are wandering further from the light, and further into darkness. There is nothing to be gained by this, and everything to lose! (**Matt. 7:13-14**)

Following Sheep?

Go back to **Psalm 23** and see the illustration of the sheep and shepherd. When we are sheep in the Lord’s pasture and are following Him, we “*shall not want*”, i.e., shall not lack (**Ps. 23:1**). We shall be nourished well (**Ps. 23:2**). Too, we will be well-protected with the Lord’s rod and staff. Even when going through the saddest and lowliest of valleys, we are protected, loved, and cared for by our Shepherd (**Ps. 23:4**)! This is what He gladly does for us.

John 10:4 speaks of the sheep of the Lord who follow Him and know His voice. This thought is repeated in verses **14** and **27** as well. Those who follow know Christ,

the Shepherd. Thus, we ask the question, “Do you know Christ?” If you say you know Him, but are not following Him, you are a liar. This is the sentiment of **I John 1:6**, as well as **John 10**.

To follow Christ means we are active in this work on a daily basis. It is not a “hit-and-miss” type of lifestyle, but a steady, ongoing, way of life (**I Cor. 15:58**). It fills our days with concern over pleasing the God of Heaven and bringing precious souls to Him (**Mk. 16:15; II Tim. 2:2; Eph. 6:4**).

The sheep who follow the Good Shepherd are those who follow Christ “*through the valley of the shadow of death*.” You know, it is easy to follow Christ to “*green pastures*” and “*beside the still waters*.” Yet, where are we when the sun goes down and the winds blow? Where are we when people curse us for following Christ (**I Pet. 4:4**)? Where are we when “*evil men and seducers... wax worse and worse*” and we are the subjects of their evil words and deeds (**II Tim. 3:13**)? Where are we when hard times come in marriages, or in other family relationships? Where are we when our friends act hateful toward us? Do we give up and quit? The Hebrew writer said that those Jewish Christians were “*not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*” (**Heb. 10:39**). Could he say the same thing about us if he wrote this letter today? Are we truly the “following sheep” that we ought to be?

Conclusion

In simple terms, it comes down to a matter of trust. Who do we trust? The point Jesus was making in **John 10**, and the point David was making in **Psalm 23** was that His sheep trust Him implicitly. They hear His voice, and no other. They trust Him and no other. They follow Him and no other. Could Christ say that about us, right now? If not, then it is time we corrected this attitude while we still have the chance to do so (**II Cor. 6:2**). So long as we are not trusting the Lord, Satan has a door through which he can “call”, beg, coax, cajole, and tempt us to turning from the Good Shepherd and following him instead (**I Jn. 2:15-17; I Pet. 5:8**). Friend, are we going to hear His voice and obey? Who do we trust? Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦