

# The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,  
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



Volume 3

August 2, 2015

Number. 24

## Christ Is Our...

**H**ave you ever thought about what Christ means to you? From time to time we should reflect on what we have due to what Jesus was willing to give up for us. As Paul said, *"...he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9). In what way are we rich because of Christ? That question can be answered by reflecting on what Christ is to us. Let's thankfully consider the following:

**1. Christ is our Savior (Acts 5:31).** By giving His life as a ransom for our sins, Jesus delivered us from the darkness of sin's corruption (Colossians 1:13). Nothing else could wash our sins away and unite us with our God. The blood of animals could not do it (Hebrews 10:1-4). Only the blood of our perfect Savior could make us whole again before God. Listen to what Christ did for us: *"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. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more"* (Hebrews 10:12-17). Jesus is indeed the Savior of the world, and no man can get to the Father except through Him (John 14:6).

**2. Christ is our hope (1 Timothy 1:1).** Our hope as Christians is to make it to heaven where we will spend eternity with God. That is the prize we are striving to obtain at the end of this race of Christianity. Remember, hope is confident expectation along with desire. Not only do we desire heaven, we are confident about making it there if our minds are in the right place. You see, Christians are not to rely on their own ability alone to get to heaven. That would mean certain disaster. We all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). But we have hope because we rely on Jesus, our perfect Savior. That does not mean we sit back and do nothing as Christians. We will not go to heaven apart from some effort on our part. No one makes it to heaven by accident. We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). However, when we fall we need someone stronger than ourselves to pick us up. That Someone is Christ. He is our advocate when we sin against God (1 John 2:1). He is our propitiation when we stumble (1 John 2:2). He is our High Priest Who makes intercession for us when we are guilty of a transgression (Hebrews 7:25). With this kind of help, it is no wonder we have confidence that we are going to heaven. In order to miss heaven, we would have to almost do it on purpose. In order to make it, all we have to do is listen to and obey God, for Christ has prepared the way for us.

**3. Christ is our Lord (Acts 2:36).** The word Lord conjures up thoughts of submission in our

minds, and well it should. The Greek word for Lord is *kurios*, and means, “*he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has power of deciding; the owner; one who has control of the person; the master*” (Thayer). As servants of Christ, we belong to Him. He bought us with His blood (Acts 20:28). It is no wonder that He once said, “Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46). While the fact that Jesus is our Lord points to our responsibility to submit to Him in all things, it also points to how blessed we are to have such a one to rule over us. We should feel honored to have such a great Master to direct our path and show us the way to God, the Father (Jn. 14:1-3). After all, think of the alternative to not having Jesus as Lord. If Jesus is not our Master, then Satan is, and he cares nothing for us. Jesus loves us and wants to lead us to heaven. Satan only wants to see us burn in hell for all eternity. That is what we get for serving him. For serving Christ, we get eternal blessings with God and the host of heaven. To me, this makes having Jesus as my Lord pretty appealing. What do you think?

*Don*

## Choice And Consequence

by Dan Shipley

**B**ecause man is a free moral agent, he does what he chooses to do and is what he chooses to be (other things being equal). Had God programmed man, as some foolishly wish, so that he could only do and desire good, there would be no such things as morality, or responsibility, or accountability. With but little serious reflection, the awesomeness of volition becomes apparent. It means that responsible men are what they choose to be with reference to God; that none can be considered blameless. Paul concludes the Gentiles of old to be without excuse in their ungodliness. How much more we of this age? None can deny himself to be anything more or less than the product of his own choosing, whether with Christ or against Him (**Matt. 12:30**).

But, obviously, not all who choose to be against Christ choose to admit it. In fact, many still call Him “Lord, Lord,” while refusing to do as He says (**Lk. 6:46**). But man’s choice is always apparent because what he chooses he demonstrates. Allegiance to the Lord’s cause may be proclaimed loud and long, but it remains that “by their fruits ye shall know them” (**Lk. 6:44**) and “he that doeth righteousness is righteous” (**1 Jn. 3:7**). So, neither God nor the devil “made me” do the wrong or kept me from doing the right. What I did or failed to do reflects My CHOICE! — circumstances, situations and all the excuses in the world notwithstanding! Personal priorities cannot be hidden. They advertise, sometimes embarrassingly, what we have chosen to occupy our time, interests and attention. So, like it or not, your choice is showing.

But, not only is man what he freely chooses and demonstrates, he obviously endorses what he chooses. To endorse simply means to approve of, to sanction or to give support to. The man who smokes approves of smoking. The man who drinks sanctions the practice of drinking, and the man who uses profanity certainly endorses it. How could anyone possibly conclude otherwise? The same is true concerning affiliation with a certain religious group. It is not unusual to hear of some in denominationalism or liberalism expressing dissatisfaction over unscriptural practices and innovation; yet, with their presence and contributions continue to demonstrate and endorse a choice to support the very things they oppose. Wouldn’t that be something like knowing to do good and doing it not—and isn’t that sin? (**Jas. 4:17**) Some may rationalize. Some may blame the elders. But individual responsibility and volition are a package deal. With my choice and its demonstration goes my stamp of approval.