

# THE SOWER

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## “I THIRST”

It has been said that Jesus preached some of His greatest sermons from the cross. On the cross, Jesus uttered seven statements that teach us how to live. One of Jesus' great sermon-statements is, “I thirst” from John 19:28. This short, powerful statement reminds us who our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is, and what He is all about.

As with some of the other cross-statements, “I thirst” was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. As Jesus uttered these words, He fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 69:21, “In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.” In Matthew, the Gospel of Jesus' Kingship, we learn that Jesus came to fulfill every aspect of Old Testament prophecy (Matthew 15:17-18). This makes Jesus the theme of the Old Testament Scriptures.

“I thirst” speaks to us of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. He was fully human, yet fully God as well. The Psalmist reminds us about His eternal nature. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2). Jesus, the eternal God, shared in the frailty of the flesh.

While some religious groups teach that Jesus is not eternal, Paul spoke of Jesus' eternal nature in Philippians 2:6-7. “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.” To say that Jesus did not exist prior to becoming flesh is to reject the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Sadly, those

who make such claims are teaching heresy, and ultimately they reject the eternal Word, who was made flesh (John 1:14). The Holy Spirit revealed to the apostle Paul Jesus' eternal nature: "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9). Jesus Himself affirmed that He existed before the world began. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which you gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:4-5).

When Jesus became flesh, He didn't empty Himself of His Deity. What He gave up was His equality with God. In partaking of flesh and blood, Jesus became the God-man, 100% God and 100% man. When the eternal Word in His fleshly state cried out, "I thirst," He showed us His human nature. He walked with us, He suffered in the flesh, He felt pain and loneliness, and He also became thirsty because He dwelt in the flesh.

The comfort of hearing our Savior say, "I thirst", is that we serve a risen Savior who sympathizes with our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:14-15). Jesus knows our weakness for He too was tempted (Matthew 4). He knows what it is to hurt, to feel forsaken, to suffer and even to hunger and thirst. It is this that makes Him our perfect mediator, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). As the God-man, Jesus can represent God with a full understanding of His holiness, justice and righteousness. As man, He can represent us with a full understanding of our weak and frail nature. When Jesus carried our cares, concerns and requests before the Father's throne, He does so with a perfect understanding of who we are, and of who the Heavenly Father is. When Jesus said, "I thirst," He showed us His humanity as He shared our pain. This is the thought that should come to our minds each time we pray to our Father "in Jesus' name." ---Clay Bond

## COMPLETE IN CHRIST

From the beginning of Christianity, doctrine has been a problem. Many of the epistles in the New Testament were written to counter false doctrine. As Paul wrote instructions to the young evangelist, Timothy, he warned of the abandonment of the truth of apostolic teachings. In 2 Timothy 4:2-4 he admonished, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine: but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Since these words were written, numerous departures have been made from Christianity in its purest form to a form that could scarcely be recognized were the apostles alive today. With multiple choices of "churches", every denomination, sect and group has its own set of doctrines. To those who are desirous of becoming Christians, the multiplicity of choices is mind-boggling. Some question, "Which group has the truth?" Others assume that truth is relative, and choose a church on the basis of such matters as its attraction to youth, or its standing in the community.

What Paul wrote the church at Colosse gives some direction that we would do well to heed today. Paul wrote them, “Ye are complete in him” (Colossians 2:10), referring to their completeness in Christ, identified as “the head of the body, the church” (Col. 1:18a). Our spiritual relationship with God is not through man’s imposition of his own authority upon others, nor even through angels, but only Through Christ. As Paul also wrote, “Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). Some regard themselves as receiving special enlightenment apart from, and often contradictory to, the words of Christ and His apostles. In the early years of the church, Gnosticism challenged apostolic authority, claiming special enlightenment apart from Christ. Every generation since has been bewitched by elements of this ancient heresy. The fact is that if we are in Christ, we have equal access to the truth and blessings that are in Him. Or as Paul stated it, “Ye are complete in him.” There is no supplementary source of grace or instruction that God has given us. They are to be found only in Christ and His word. -Ron

“**ONE HUMILIATING** thing about science is that it is gradually filling our homes with appliances that are smarter than we are.” (Anonymous)

## DARE WE KICK GOD OUT?

With all the political talk going on right now, we sometimes get the impression that the only thing that will save our country is to get the right people elected. While this may be a factor, there is one other principal that should not be ignored--neither by politicians nor citizens. It is that truth expressed by the LORD through the prophet Jeremiah to the nation of Israel, a nation threatened by collapse, while false prophets offered hope:

*“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy, if that nation, against whom I have pronounced. Turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them”* (Jeremiah 18:7-10)

A lesson we should derive from this is that God holds nations—their leaders and citizens—accountable. It seems to me that we, through our leaders, have been telling God, for several years now, that we can do without Him and His standards of righteousness. And if we kick Him out, can you imagine our fate as a nation?

· --Ron

**"SEVEN ATTITUDES TOWARD GOD" (Part 2)** will be today's message, with 1 Thess. 1:4-10 as the reading.

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Our grand-daughter, Katrina Bartanen, has been ill for over a week, but is improving. Her doctor believes it is a form of migraine. \*\*\* Continue to remember: Ruby Bradd (Clinton; recovering following from cancer treatments); Wayne Polk (Shelbyville preacher; health problems); and the many being persecuted the world over for their faith in Christ. Satan is the great deceiver, and all who follow Christ are in his sights.