

WHAT KIND OF BEING CAN DO THAT?

by Danny Tunnell

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Genesis 1:1). “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). Paul declared to the Athenians, “God Who made the world and all things therein, Who gives life” (Acts 17:24,25).

Joyce Kilmer wrote, “I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree.” He concludes, “Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree.”

What kind of Being would it take to make a tree? Consider the tiny Redwood seed, about the size of a tomato seed. You can hold up to 30 of those in one hand. Yet, from one small Redwood seed, grew a tree 380 feet high and weighing 14 million pounds! It had the life God created inside, all the genetic material in a tiny seed. What kind of Being can do that?

Fanny Crosby wrote, “To God be the glory, great things He hath done!” “I will speak of the glorious honor

of Thy majesty, and Thy wondrous works” (Psalm 145:4,5).

Revelation comes through the 139th Psalm about what happens in conception and the development of a baby. “For it was You Who created my inward parts: You knit me together in my mother’s womb” (Psalm 139:13, Holman).

There was a time when your head didn’t exist, your heart didn’t exist, or your lungs, bones, hands, and fingers. There was a time when you couldn’t be seen with the naked eye.

“I will praise Thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knows right well” (Psalm 139:14). The word “fearfully” is beyond saying, “That’s interesting, or that’s impressive.” It’s beyond that; you are in awe of it!

“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in Thy book all my members were fashioned, when

as yet there were none of them” (Psalm 139:16). God wrote the list of your parts even before they existed, and He even continues to track the number of hairs on your head (Luke 12:7). What kind of Being can keep all the stars burning in all the vast galaxies, and track the hairs of your head? And why would He? It matters to Him. We are significant to Him. We’re worth saving to Him. We’re worth redeeming to Him.

“Many, O Lord are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done” (Psalm 40:5). “O Lord, Thou art my God: I will exalt Thee, I will praise Thy name: for Thou hast done wonderful things” (Isaiah 25:1).

“I am God, and there is none else. I am God, and there is none like me” (Isaiah 46:9). That answers our question.

— Miami, OK

“TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?”

By Cecil Burch

“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to go away?’ But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life’” (John 6:66-68).

Some of the saddest times in the life of Christ were when His disciples, even after he had performed miracles and fed and taught them, rejected Him. Their excuses for not believing in Him were many. Before they walked away on this occasion, the complaint was made, “This is a hard saying, who can understand it?” (John 6:60).

Today, it is heart-breaking when we see those who, for whatever reason, leave the fellowship of the church and align themselves with unbelievers. They choose to follow their own opinions and feelings. Jesus described a group of people who were very religious and very dedicated, but religiously wrong, by saying, “You

make the commandments of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying, ‘These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men’” (Matthew 15:6-9).

Jesus made it very clear that He comes even before family. He said, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate (love less) his father and his mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26).

Some people who desire to be popular allow their lives to be controlled by the majority. Jesus said, “Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it” (Matthew 7:13-14).

Every child of God should consider Peter’s wise response : “Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (1937-2026)

—

“Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11). “When Christ who is our life appears, then you will also appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:4).

Old Paths

Vol. 50, No. 8 August 2026

“ask for the old paths” (Jer. 6:16)

I’LL CHOOSE TO BE HAPPY

by Dalton Key

I would be happy, or so oft I say,
If trouble could leave me somehow;
If life started suddenly going my way,
And not as it’s going right now.

Oh! what a joy, what a blessing I’d be,
I’d be a true servant, you know;
If only my burdens weren’t bothering me,
If life hadn’t brought me so low.

I have more than my share of burdens to bear,
I suffer such pain and distress;
Since life isn’t fair, I’ve no time to care,
For the Lord or His kingdom, I guess.

What choice do I have? What else can I do?
I have problems enough of my own;
I can’t be concerned with the church or with you,
I think I’ll just sit here and moan!

But then I remember what Paul had to say,
When he, though beset with a thorn,
Was taught to look past the pain in his way,
And offer his best for the Lord.

I can do all things, Paul wisely did write,
Through power and strength from above;
Now if Paul could continue to fight the good fight,
Then I too can labor and love.

Regardless my problems, in spite of my pain,
I’ll give to the Savior my best;
I’ll spend and be spent, come sunshine or rain,
I’ll choose to be happy and blest!

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4)

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

DO PEOPLE SEE JESUS IN US?

by Wayne Robbins

Luke tells us in Acts chapter four that the apostles, Peter and John, were arrested for preaching Jesus. They were brought before the great Sanhedrin court for trial. The court quickly associated Peter and John with Jesus. Luke records, “. . . they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). How did they know that these men had been with Jesus? They saw that their speech and conduct were the same as the man they knew as Jesus.

When one becomes a Christian, his life should constantly portray the life of Jesus. We are conformed to His image (Rom. 12:2) and walk in His religious footsteps (1 Pet. 2:21). Thus, we let the religious light of Jesus shine through us (Matt. 5:14-16). When we do this, people will quickly see that we have been with Jesus.

When one claims to be a Christian but says and does things that are unbecoming the lifestyle of Jesus, he leaves a false impression of Christ and His work. He plays the hypocrite and does a lot of spiritual damage. Such a life drives potential converts away from Christ.

Do those with whom we come in contact think we have spent time with Jesus? If not, why not?
— Arkansas City, KS

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11).

“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth, who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (1 Peter 2:21-23).

DON'T DISMISS THE WORDS OF THOSE OLDER

By Milton Smith

The Psalmist has written, “Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, your power to everyone who is to come” (Psalm 71:18). We quickly note the concern that the inspired writer had for the generations that would follow him. He wanted to show God’s strength and power to “this generation” and “everyone who is to come.”

Our attitude should be the same. It was not so many years ago that I was young, and the older generation was there to teach me the strength, power, and ways of God. I will always be indebted to that “older” generation for doing so.

May we never forget that God’s truth must be taught and re-taught to each generation. The aged apostle Peter wrote to the young and old alike, “I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me” (2 Peter 1:12-14). In this passage, Peter strongly emphasizes the need to always remind people of divine truth, even though they may already know these things.

I belong to a generation that has witnessed a change in direction within the church. Beginning several decades ago, attitudes started to change. Less emphasis was given to what the Bible calls “first principles” (Hebrews 5:12). The Hebrew writer lamented the fact that such “first principles” had to be taught over and over again to some in the church who should have been “teachers” themselves. This tells us that we do not need to teach only first principles especially to those who know and honor such simple truths. But if first principles are not being followed and respected, it becomes necessary to teach and re-teach them.

We will always owe the next generation the knowledge of fundamental divine truths. Failure to do so today will bring nothing but trouble tomorrow.
— Tulsa, OK

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deuteronomy 6:6,7).

EDITORIAL . . .

NOT YET DONE

by Dalton Key

Regardless your age, you are never too old to be of service in the Lord’s work.

Noah was nearly five-hundred when he began building the ark. Abraham and Sarah were both at or nearing the century mark when their first-born, Isaac, was born. Moses didn’t begin his life’s greatest work, that of leading the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage and toward the land of promise, until he was a ripe eighty years young. Moving to the New Testament, what of Paul, who described himself to Philemon as “Paul, the aged?” (Philemon 1:9).

Great things have been accomplished (and are still being accomplished) by seniors navigating life’s “golden years.” The Bible speaks of bearing “fruit in old age” (Psalm 92:14).

Many of the world’s best artists, inventors, composers, poets, writers, statesmen - and yes, even preachers - have done their best work late in life.

Youth has its advantages, but so does old age. As one sage senior pointed out, “Youth is faster, but age is more accurate.”

Don’t let the inevitable accumulation of birthdays get you down. Focus on what you can do and those works you can perform. You may be unable to lift heavy boxes, but surely you can use your words to lift the spirits of those around you! You may find it difficult to cook, to clean, to mow, or to build as you once did; but you can still give it your best, and at least cheer on those who are able!

In short, do what you can, with all that you have, as long as you are able!

Strive to maintain a positive, faith-filled, optimistic attitude. And do your best to focus more on the needs of others than on your own aches and pains and frustrations.

In the words of Robert Browning, “Grow old with me! The best is yet to be.” Who knows? Your best days - your best work - may yet lie ahead!

(MEN, plan now to be with us, September 10-12, for our annual Old Paths Men’s Retreat, conducted on the site of Flint Hills Christian Camp, just north of Sedan, Kansas. Our theme: Potpourri (A Medley of Matters from John’s Eighth Chapter. Cost: \$45.)



STUNTED GROWTH

by Hank Lawrence

the parable of the feast (Luke 14:16-24), the Lord deals with the need for us to spiritually grow up.

The parable begins with the invitation to a great feast. The people invited to the feast knew of it in advance, but when the time came, suddenly they came up with excuses right and left to avoid going. Just to put these excuses in our modern understanding, here is why they are so foolish. One said he needed to look at land he had just bought, but how many times have you bought land unseen? Another gave the excuse that he needed to try out the fine yoke of oxen he had just bought. How many of you buy an automobile without a test drive? One even said he had just married and could not come. Why not bring the bride along with him? The lord was rightly angry and filled his home with people willing to come; people who would truly appreciate what he offered.

The Lord applies this parable in Luke 14:25-35 and unveils an issue we see all to frequently today. There are many people who accept the Lord’s

invitation to become a Christian, but they are unwilling to follow through on commitment. Some will put family first, others will put themselves first. “If any man comes to me, and hates not his own father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). Family is important, and so is taking care of ourselves, but our main focus must be on God. Children want to go to their grandparents to play but don’t want to take the trip to get there. People want heaven, but don’t want to be forced to sit through worship (Malachi 1:12-13). We want the wisdom, but not the education (James 1:2-5).

Children are wonderful gifts from God. However, we cannot remain spiritual children forever. There comes a time when we must grow up. That time is now (Romans 13:11-14; 2 Corinthians 6:1,2). Let us strive to heed the words of the writer of Hebrews: “Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Hebrews 4:11).
— West Plains, MO

IT IS WRITTEN

by Joe Slater

written.”

John the apostle said he wrote the book bearing his name “that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). When the apostles and elders at Jerusalem met to settle a controversial issue, they wrote their Spirit-inspired decree and sent the letter to the brethren (Acts 15:20-30). Paul said that the things he wrote were the commandments of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37). That same apostle said that by reading what he wrote, we can “understand [his] knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Ephesians 3:3-4).

Family history is interesting, but not essential. I can go to Heaven without ever learning who is in that old photo. But I can’t go to Heaven without learning, believing, and obeying the gospel of Christ. I’m thankful I don’t have to rely on faulty memories or oral traditions.

God has preserved His word in writing.

Let us show our gratitude for the Scriptures by reading, studying, obeying, and teaching them!
— Springfield, IL

Old Paths

830 W. Fargo Drive,
Broken Arrow, OK. 74012

On a nonprofit basis.
Published monthly and
supported by Churches of Christ
and individuals.

Dalton Key Editor
“Subscription Free;
Prayers Requested;
Contributions Appreciated.”