

COMFORT FOR THOSE SPIRITUALLY GRIEVING

Our purpose in publishing this site is to uplift and encourage our brothers, and all of mankind, through the kingdom message – the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Based on the responses we receive, we know we are on the right track.

We are increasingly hearing from our fellow Jehovah's Witnesses who all express appreciation for this website and for the clarification that we all have one hope – the heavenly hope. As Paul said:

“You are all, **in fact**, sons of God through your faith in Christ Jesus.” – *Galatians 3:26*

This fact rings true to them, even though most have spent many, many years believing in, and teaching, the two-hope theory – that only 144,000 go to heaven, while the rest of faithful mankind will live forever on earth. The articles “**The Cherished Earthly Hope**” and “**The Glorious Heavenly Hope**” have been especially helpful in convincing our brothers and in breaking down the walls of the more stubborn among us, leading them to the truth.

For example, we recently heard from a few elders, from different congregations, who were at first very resistant to the information until they read “**The Cherished Earthly Hope.**” Now all of them are strong proponents of the heavenly hope and are sharing this truth with others.

But not all are hesitant. For example, a few months ago, we were told about an anointed brother in his 90's who was thrilled at this good news. He exclaimed “I knew it! I just knew it!” He had faithfully served with the Watchtower organization since his youth, but was never quite comfortable with the 1935 change in the teaching from a heavenly hope for all to two hopes. A few weeks later, we heard again from the individual who was caring for the anointed brother who informed us that the brother had died, but that his last days were extremely joyful and he died at peace. We were told he was just happy to have lived long enough to receive this confirmation of his faith, along with the hope that others among us will know this truth.

And more recently, we heard from another anointed brother in his 80's who was likewise overjoyed to receive the clarification that we are all God's sons. He said he **knows** this is the truth and he will spend the rest of his life working to be a better Son. His grandson tells us that the brother looks 20 years younger.

Over the few months that we have operated this website, we have heard from many other Jehovah's Witnesses, young and old, who are all excited and renewed at their heavenly hope. However, for each and every one of them, the good news is bitter sweet. They each have one regret. They are heartbroken as they recall the number of people whom they talked out of the

glorious heavenly hope and into the death-dealing earthly hope. They love the Father and they love their association of brothers, but they are cut to the heart. Our brothers are grieving.

We understand their sentiments. We share them. We, too, spent many years in the ministry teaching the two-hope doctrine and leading people away from their true destination. We can certainly sympathize with our first century brothers who were faced with the reality that their nation was responsible for the death of our Lord. We read:

“Now when they heard this **they were stabbed to the heart**, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: ‘Men, brothers, **what shall we do?’**” – *Acts 2:37*

We are being asked the same question – What shall we do? We hope this article provides some comfort for those brothers and sisters as they readjust themselves to their new reality.

Peter’s Counsel

After the question was posed to Peter, we read:

“Peter [said] to them: ‘Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all those afar off, just as many as Jehovah our God may call to him.’” – *Acts 2:38-39*

The solution, as always, is to turn to the Father. In this case, Peter recommended that they repent and be baptized. To repent means to feel regret and to turn around. It involves sorrow, but also a change in attitude. It means we are not only sorry for a past course, but we are making positive steps in the correct direction. So for our brothers who are spiritually grieving over their errors in the ministry, the counsel is to stop teaching the erroneous doctrines and begin teaching what is true.

Additionally, Peter counseled the brothers to get baptized. We remember that before Jesus began his ministry, many Jews underwent the baptism of John who instructed the nation to “Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.” (*Matthew 3:2*) It is likely that in Peter’s audience, there were many who had already undergone this baptism. But now, Peter told them they needed to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ and receive the holy spirit – the spiritual anointing. And we notice that the counsel was not only directed to them, but to their children “and those afar off.” Perhaps he is referring to our generation.

We are learning that many today who receive the message of sonship with God are taking Peter’s advice and getting baptized, some getting re-baptized, even among Jehovah’s Witnesses. They want to be certain that their baptism was not the baptism of repentance, but the baptism leading to the spiritual inheritance – the baptism into Christ’s death. (*Romans 6:3*)

We reached this decision for ourselves many years ago. Shortly before we partook of the emblems for the first time, we were re-baptized. We had already been baptized in association with Jehovah's Witnesses, but we realized that that was not the baptism into Christ's death that sons of the Kingdom are to undergo. And we did not wait for a convention or an assembly. We were baptized privately, with a couple of witnesses, before the Father, the Christ and the heavenly host.

We find it very interesting that many others have taken this course on their own – spontaneously! We have never before published the fact of our re-baptism. Yet, visitors from across the country are being stirred in their hearts to re-dedicate themselves to the Father. We will be publishing an article soon on some of the baptismal experiences we have heard about. In the meantime, we will share some excerpts here.

We are told of a pastor of a Baptist church who had been sharing our articles with his congregation. One Sunday, he announced that he would be willing to re-baptize any who desired it. As a result 65 members were baptized.

We received an email from a young man who is a Jehovah's Witness who has been visiting our site. He was saddened that he had been preaching the two-hope message and decided he needed to be re-baptized into Christ's death. So he and a few friends went to the WMCA and baptized each other.

We have also heard from a group who have baptized themselves at a local motel, one group in the ocean at the beach, and several who approached their pastors at their churches and stipulated that as long as the pastor recognized they were being baptized into Christ and not into their church, they would get baptized. Each of the pastors agreed.

These are just a few of the heartwarming experiences we have heard about. We intend to publish an article sharing their complete stories, as well as many others, very soon. If you have an experience you would like to share, please email us right away. In the meantime, please know that there are faithful men and women worldwide setting a fine example for all sons of God.

Maintaining Our Self-Respect

As we make the adjustment in our teachings, we have to accept the fact that there may come taunting and ridicule. As an organization, we have not been the most tolerant of the religions beliefs of our neighbors and our "enemies." (*Matthew 5:43-44*) There will be a "measure" measured out to us. (*Matthew 7:1-2*)

One way to avoid that type of judging is to leave the organization and join with those who ridicule us. That is certainly the easy way out, but not the most wise or the most loving. If we walk away, who will help our brothers who remain? Who will help those who listen to them as they continue to teach the earthly hope? It rests with the enlightened ones among us to correct **our own** error. That would certainly count as works of repentance.

At the same time, we must keep in mind that the preaching of Jehovah's Witnesses have done much good throughout the world. We have helped many individuals and many families come to know more about God and the Bible and the need to love one another. Even though our message is a bit off, much of what we teach is sound. And we believe that once we get the message of the heavenly hope for all firmly planted within our association, other areas of error will take care of themselves. The tiny mustard seed of the kingdom message will grow to a mighty tree!

We also want to keep in mind:

“It is for discipline you are enduring. God is dealing with you as with sons. For what son is he that a father does not discipline? But **if you are without the discipline of which all have become partakers, you are really illegitimate children, and not sons.** Furthermore, we used to have fathers who were of our flesh to discipline us, and we used to give them respect. Shall we not much more subject ourselves to the Father of our spiritual life and live? ”
– *Hebrews 12:7-9*

“True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness. Hence **straighten up the hands that hang down and the enfeebled knees, and keep making straight paths for your feet**, that what is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather that it may be healed. **Pursue peace with all people**, and the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord, carefully watching that **no one** may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God.” – *Hebrews 12:11-15*

Another reason we need not be overtaken by our grief is because we know that we acted in good faith. We sincerely believed what we taught; we had no intention of misleading anyone. To the contrary, we believed we were helping people, lifting their burdens, and giving them a real hope they could believe in. And we were effective. The people we taught were appreciative. Uplifted. Encouraged enough to join with us in the preaching and teaching work. They rejoiced in their newfound earthly hope.

Man could relate to life on earth. It's what we know – what we are familiar with. Whereas, heavenly life can be too far removed, too esoteric, too vague, and thus, unreal. At that time, all we knew about heavenly life was that we would be ruling as 'kings and priests.' (*Revelations 5:10*) Since few feel qualified to rule over others, many figured they must not be among that number. It was sound reasoning. It was logical. But it was only human reasoning.

We would even venture to say that practically every anointed son among Jehovah's Witnesses accepted their sonship only after much study, prayer and contemplation, and over many personal objections. Even though they had the 'witness of the spirit' (*Romans 8:16*), they wondered, how could that be? "Could I **really** be a son of God?" We were just ordinary men and women who loved God. But eventually, the spirit won out and we accepted our hope and our place in the Father's kingdom. Unfortunately, overmuch humility has caused many of our brothers and sisters to turn away from the spirit's call.

We hope that, through this work, many more of our brothers and sisters will let go of their fears, as well as their grief, and move forward in their faith. As Jesus said: "let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake day after day and follow me continually." (*Luke 9:23*)

Taking the Leap of Faith

Taking the leap of faith that you are a child of God can be difficult. But the interesting thing for us is that it was not until we took that leap of faith, accepted our sonship and partook of the Memorial emblems, that our eyes were opened to what the heavenly hope is really about.

One truth we discovered is that no amount of human reasoning can lead us to the heavenly hope – only faith can. There is a huge gap between the highest **ideas** of man and the lowest **ideals** of God. As the prophet Isaiah told us:

"'For the thoughts of you people are not my thoughts, nor are my ways your ways,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.'" – *Isaiah 55:8-9*

And the apostle Paul reminded us:

"For 'who has come to know the mind of Jehovah, that he may instruct him?' But we do have the mind of Christ." — *1 Corinthians 2:16*

Another truth we discovered is that while earthly things must be **seen** to be loved, **heavenly things must be loved to be seen**. The Father does not reveal his heavenly things to those who lack the ability to appreciate them. Neither does the Christ. Jesus said:

"I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present." – *John 16:12*

But when we take that leap of faith, we become subject to the leading of the spirit that 'guides us into all truth.' (*John 16:13*) And we experience the absolute truth that God **is** love. (*1 John 4:8*) We more clearly understand the scripture:

“Moreover, without faith it is impossible to please [him] well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.” – *Hebrews 11:6*

We must already believe in God **before** we approach Him if we are to ever really know Him or please Him. And it is the failure to take that leap of faith of sonship that lead us to believe in, teach and even pursue the earthly hope. (That also helps us understand and even sympathize with atheists and agnostics; for they cannot hope to find the answer to God’s existence by the pathways of physical science and human reasoning. But that’s a subject for another article!)

Another thing we discovered is the depth of the Father’s love. In other words, we discovered that it is deep, unfathomable, bottomless. And it is wide enough to encompass us in all our failures, our errors, our weakness, as well as those whom we may have misled. Consider this experience:

“John said to him: ‘Teacher, we saw a certain man expelling demons by the use of your name and we tried to prevent him, because he was not accompanying us.’ But Jesus said: ‘Do not try to prevent him, for there is no one that will do a powerful work **on the basis of my name** that will quickly be able to revile me; for he that is not against us is for us. For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink **on the ground** that you belong to Christ, I truly tell you, he will by no means lose his reward.’” – *Mark 9:38-41*

Here, Jesus tells us that the Father remembers every good work, and that even the **attempt** to teach about the Christ has value. Thus, we can be assured that we who taught as good faith ambassadors of Christ, and those who listened to us on the good faith belief that we were ambassadors of Christ, “will by no means lose their reward.” Even though some may sleep in death, they will awaken exactly where the Father intended based on their heart motivation.

Remember, too, we are not the only ones who have failed over the centuries to teach the true message of the kingdom. Even today, most of Christianity is a bit off course as respects the kingdom message of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Otherwise, there would not be so many divisions and sects among us. Nevertheless, we are assured, throughout all of history, that the Father in heaven never fails to accept the sincere worship of his children on earth, no matter how crude their concepts of Him and His purposes.

That experience of the apostles should also humble us, **GREATLY!** We should never speak ill of those of other faiths who likewise seek to teach on the basis of the Christ! For:

“If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?” – *Psalms 130:3*

But, if we discover others are teaching error, we can follow the example of Aquila and Priscilla:

“Now a certain Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, an eloquent man, arrived in Ephesus; and he was well versed in the Scriptures. This [man] had been orally instructed in the way of Jehovah and, as he was aglow with the spirit, he went speaking and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus, **but being acquainted with only the baptism of John.** And this [man] started to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him into their company and expounded the way of God more correctly to him.”— *Acts 18:24-26*

We may meet many people like Apollos. We ourselves, as Jehovah’s Witnesses, teach many things “with correctness,” but, like many, not all are acquainted with the true message of the heavenly hope. Instead of judging them, we can approach them and “expound the way more correctly to them.”

The purpose of the correction is not to prove ourselves more righteous and more spiritual:

“But let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and **not in comparison with the other person.**” — *Galatians 6:4*

The purpose is to “increase the master’s belongings” (*Matthew 25:14-18*) and ‘reconcile all things to the God.’ (*Colossians 1:20*) When we approach our ministry from the perspective of serving mankind, our work will be blessed and we will find the greatest peace.

Brothers, we have discovered that once you have made the correction in your understanding, and begin teaching the true kingdom message, much of your grief will pass. As you watch the change in the spirit and faith of the people you teach, your sorrow will turn to joy. We have experienced this a thousand fold! And not only joy at seeing the spirit at work, but a great joy in anticipating our glorious heavenly hope, and in knowing you are pleasing the Father.

Notwithstanding any of the above, if any of our brothers continue to spiritually grieve over their past, we encourage you to seek out others who share your hope. Lay bare your conscience, and you will receive refreshment for your soul. (*Matthew 11:29*) For then Jesus will be with you. (*Matthew 18:20*) And please feel free to write to us and we will do whatever we can to share further comforting information.

As always, we welcome your comments.

“Elaia Luchnia”