

# The Broadmoor Bulletin

*A Monthly Publication for the Christians at Broadmoor*

*January 2009*

## Godly Goals Are Always Greater

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.

### 2 Thessalonians 1:11 NIV

**God is not indifferent to our good intentions.** He will honor the goals of our godliness and help us bring them to fulfillment. It is critically important, of course, that our goals be consistent with God's will, but if that is the case, we need have no doubt about where He stands with respect to their accomplishment. We are not simply on our own, trying as best as we feebly can to do God's will. We are His beloved creatures, and He has a vested interest in our success. If there is any question whether we are going to "make it," our Heavenly Father is certainly not neutral on that question. As the writer of Hebrews reminded his readers, "God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name" (**Hebrews 6:10**).

Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians was that by His power God "may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith" (NIV). Consider a few other translations and paraphrases of this text. "We pray for God's power to help you do all the good things that you hope to do and that your faith makes you want to do" (*Contemporary English Version*). "[We pray] that his power may bring to fulfillment every good purpose and every act inspired by faith." (*Revised English Bible*). "[We pray that God] by his power may fulfil all your good intentions and every effort of faith" (J. B. Phillips). And Kenneth Taylor renders it: "[We pray that God will] make you as good as you wish you could be!"

Speaking of the dream that keeps the athlete going despite difficulty and defeat, sports announcer Bob Costas once said at the opening of the Olympic Games, "We are beaten only when we quit believing in what we wish we could be." If this is true in athletic endeavor, it's even more true in our godly endeavors. What we wish we could be -- in God -- is very, very important. We dare not give up these dreams. And we dare not underestimate God's interest in making these dreams come true. Godly goals are greater than any other because He is their object -- and because He Himself is the help that will carry us where we need to go.

Lord, grant that I may always desire more than I can accomplish.

Michelangelo

Gary Henry

And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

**Romans 15:14**

## Will Moral Goodness Alone Save?

### Mother Theresa and the Grace of God

Ever since the recent death of the Roman Catholic nun known as Mother Theresa, I have heard numerous comments on television and other places to the effect that if there ever was a person of whom there could be no doubt that she would be in heaven, Mother Theresa was the one. It could make one stop and wonder if, in spite of some errors, the grace of God would allow someone like her to be judged righteous in the end. I am aware that this topic may be found controversial and troubling to some, but I believe it to be important. When discussing such matters, too many rely on their gut-instinct or inner feelings rather than the clear teaching of God's word. This can be spiritually fatal. The Lord will judge all souls by the standard of his word (John 12:48). I am not attacking any person living or dead, but only desire that we examine our beliefs in light of God's revealed word.

It is not within the realm of this article to fully argue the fact that the Roman Catholic church is an apostate religion. Suffice it to say there is no scriptural authority for its existence, organization (hierarchy), and most of its practices and beliefs. The orders of monks and nuns are unauthorized in Scripture, as is calling someone on earth "Father" or "Mother" in a spiritual context (Matt. 23:9; I use the name "Mother Theresa" accommodatively because that was the name she was best known as, mwg). Whatever else may be said about Mother Theresa, she was still a lifelong practicing member of a human denomination that was devoid of the teaching and practice of truth. She was not a member of the body of Christ, wherein the saved dwell (Eph. 5:23).

The main argument concerns moral goodness and the grace of God. Mother Theresa was a person of high moral character and work. Her labor among the poor and dying in Calcutta, India, is legendary and worthy of honor. But will this alone place her in the good graces of God and his salvation? Will the grace of God cover other faults, though unrepented of? Consider the case of Cornelius, "a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always" (Acts 10:1-2; see also v. 22). Here is a good, upright, moral man. If he would have died in this condition, many would argue that the grace of God would save him regardless. But is this how God saw his condition? Cornelius was visited by an angel of God who told him that, while God had taken note of his good character and deeds, he needed to send for a man named Peter who "will tell you what you yet must do" and "tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved" (vv. 3-6; 11:13-14).

(Continued on Page 2)

# Will Moral Goodness Alone Save? Mother Theresa and the Grace of God

(Continued from page 1)

As good and as moral as Cornelius was, obviously something was lacking in his life. Later, when Peter arrived, Cornelius told him, "Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God" (v. 33). Peter taught him that "in every nation whoever fears [God] and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (v. 35). This included being baptized for the remission of sins (vv. 47-48; Acts 2:38) and all other works commanded in God's word. We may do good, moral works here on earth yet not be in a right condition with God. The case of Cornelius proves that moral goodness alone will not save. One must be saved from sin by the blood of Christ and then live by God's moral and doctrinal will.

Jesus will render final judgment at the last day (2 Cor. 5:10). In teaching his truth today, righteous judgment is rendered on our present condition (John 7:24). If I could have talked to Mother Theresa, I would have told her what I tell others: leave the denominations of men and put on Christ in baptism, being added by him to his one church. Still, she had full access to the truth in God's word. On the other hand, you or I must never presume to say what God will do separate from what he has already revealed (1 Pet. 4:11). To say that God will judge differently than what he has revealed is to speak where God has not spoken. Be careful! To assume and teach that God will make exceptions to his revealed way will lead to a disregard for the authority of his revealed word. Maybe we should be busier teaching and obeying the truth instead of trying to figure out ways to get people into the kingdom of heaven without them doing "the will of the Father in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). God's grace is accessed by faith (Rom. 5:1-2), and true faith is a faith that obeys God's will (James 2:17-26). Fear God and work his righteousness today for your salvation!

**Marc W. Gibson**

**Guardian of Truth XLI: 21 p. 1  
November 6, 1997**

For an additional study on goodness, visit the site [http://www.executableoutlines.com/fs/fs\\_14.htm](http://www.executableoutlines.com/fs/fs_14.htm) to view an outline by Mark Copeland.

Times of Service

Sunday Bible Class	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	9:55 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.broadmoorchurch.com>

## Barnabas: He Was a Good Man

Men constantly are writing biographies about the great deeds which someone has done. A browsing of the biographical section of the library will expose a person to many biographies, sometimes extending into multiple volumes, about men unknown to us. The Holy Spirit summarized the life of Barnabas in these few words: "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith" (Acts 11:24). That is a good tribute for a life well lived.

### Who Was Barnabas?

Barnabas is first introduced to us in Acts 4:36-37 when he sold a piece of property and brought the money received from it and laid it at the apostles' feet for distribution among the poor. Later, Barnabas is mentioned as the man who introduced Saul of Tarsus to the church in Jerusalem (Acts 9:27). When news was received that the church at Antioch was preaching to Grecians, the apostles were concerned enough to send Barnabas to Antioch to check out the situation. Barnabas was so well received at Antioch that, when the church decided to send money to relieve the destitute in Judea, he was one of the men selected to deliver the funds to the elders at the various churches in Judea. The Holy Spirit set Barnabas apart with Saul to go on the first missionary journey in Acts 13. He participated in the so-called Jerusalem conference (Acts 15) and later went on a missionary journey with John Mark (Acts 15:37-39). We know much more about Paul than Barnabas, but we do know enough to see some lessons from his life.

### The Traits of Barnabas

1. He was a good man. To say that a person is good is to affirm that his life is morally pure. Barnabas was not a thief, drunkard, fornicator, etc. He did not habitually walk in sin. All men stumble into sin from time to time, as did Barnabas, but his general demeanor of life was to abstain from all kinds of evil. That is what being good implies.

Being good implies more than the avoidance of sin. It also implies the positive doing of that which is right. One could not say about the priest and Levite who passed by the man who fell among thieves, in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, that they were good (Luke 10:25-37). They could see their fellow man suffering and do nothing to relieve that suffering. Barnabas was a good man in that he not only abstained from evil, but also did good deeds, such as that recorded in Acts 4: 36-37 when he sold his property and gave the money to relieve the suffering of the poor saints.

2. He was full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 11:24). This is not saying that Barnabas had special power from God to work miracles. Rather, it is used in the same sense as Ephesians 5:18, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." A person is full of the Holy Ghost when he is led by the Spirit (Gal. 5:18). To the degree that a person's life is full of the things of this world which root out devotion to God, he is not "full of the Spirit." Sometimes we see men who are so involved in sports, work, accumulating wealth, and other such like things that God is effectively rooted out of their lives. These men are not "full of the Spirit." When we say that Barnabas was "full of the Spirit" we describe a life which is fully surrendered to the obedience of God.

(Continued on Page 3)

# Barnabas: He Was a Good Man

(Continued from page 2)

3. He was full of faith (Acts 11:24). In order to be described as one full of faith, Barnabas had a deep faith in God. The writer of Hebrews said, "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). We must conclude that Barnabas had a deep faith in God. Second, Barnabas had a deep faith in Christ. He believed and obeyed the gospel. He acknowledged that Jesus was his Lord and lived in obedience to him.

Third, Barnabas had a deep faith in his fellowman. When others were afraid to have anything to do with Saul of Tarsus who wished to be identified with the church in Jerusalem, Barnabas took him aside, talked to him, became convinced of his true conversion, and subsequently recommended him to the apostles (Acts 9:27). When the work in Antioch was greater than he could do alone, Barnabas went to Tarsus to bring Saul to assist in that work. He had faith in Saul.

On the first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas took his cousin John Mark with them. For some reason, John Mark turned back at Perga (Acts 13:13). When time came for the second journey, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, but Paul refused. The disagreement was so strong that Barnabas and John Mark went one way and Paul and Silas went another. Barnabas' faith in John Mark was justified. He did his work well so that Paul later could write, "Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11). Barnabas' faith in his fellowman was commendable.

## The Fruits of His Life

1. He was a liberal giver (Acts 4:36-37). He sacrificed to give to the Lord as witnessed by his selling his property and laying the funds received at the feet of the apostles for them to use to distribute to the poor. Stingy men never accomplish much for the Lord.

2. He was concerned for the souls of men. Barnabas was willing to leave the comforts of his home to preach the gospel at Antioch, in the various cities of the first missionary journey, and in his travels with John Mark. He made sacrifices to convert the lost. He had a perception that the gospel was to be taken to the whole world and was willing to be used in disseminating the message. Consequently, he was active in bringing many souls to Christ.

3. He was a "son of consolation" (Acts 4:36). The text tells us that the apostles changed Jesus' name to Barnabas which means "son of consolation." Just as Jesus changed the name of Simon to Peter because he could see the rock-like character in the man, the apostles could see the good consolation which Jesus gave and called him Barnabas. He had the ability to cheer and encourage his brethren. He was not a man who discouraged any good work done in a local congregation, with such words as "It'll never work" or "We've tried that before." Barnabas had an ability to stir men to greater service.

4. Barnabas was free from jealousy. When Saul first began working with Barnabas, the Scriptures referred to the pair as "Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:30; 12:25; 13:2, 7). After the

events on the island of Cyprus, the pair was referred to as "Paul and Barnabas" (Acts 13:43, 46, etc.). Commentators are generally agreed that the leadership in the group changed from Barnabas to Paul. Sometimes when strong men work together a spirit of jealousy interferes with their work. One is envious of the abilities of the other and bitter words follow. Barnabas was free from this evil spirit.

Someone has said that the most difficult chair to fill in an orchestra is "second fiddle." The conductor has no trouble filling the chair of "first fiddle" and maybe even third and fourth fiddle. However, few people want to be second fiddle. Barnabas knew how to accept the role of second fiddle without bitterness and animosity.

## Conclusion

A few years ago, a good brother and friend preached on Barnabas and said that he hoped that when he died men could say about him what was said about Barnabas – "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." I have remembered his words for six years now and find myself feeling the same way. I hope that when I come to the end of my way and am lying in a coffin that my children can lean over into the coffin and say, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith." I feel confident that, if these words can be truly said about me, that I soon shall hear these words from my Father, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25:34). (The idea for this lesson was taken from several sources, including Simple Sermons For A World In Crisis by W. Herschel Ford.)

Mike Willis

Guardian of Truth XXXVII: 7, p. 2  
April 1, 1993

Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. And it happened at that time that she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, imploring him, "Do not delay in coming to us." So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

Acts 9:36-42

For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:5-10