

# The Old-Time Evangelistic News

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What Shall We Do Now? (Part 3)

Luke 3:10; II Timothy 3:14

Last month we began considering the first answer to our question, “What shall we do now?” I answered that question with the strong command to Keep Preaching. But that yields another question, “What do we preach?” That question can be answered as we divide the Bible into three broad categories: 1) The Splendor of the Sovereign; 2) The Salvation to the Sinner; and 3) The Separation of the Saints. The Bible covers many subjects, but if you think about it, it can be summarized with descriptions of how wonderful God is, how wicked man needs to be saved, and how believers should live after salvation. We will spend the rest of this issue on these three ideas.

In Isaiah 57:15, we see God describing Himself. This is The Splendor of the Sovereign. Sometimes I hear someone say some disparaging remark about the Old Testament. They may not mean it this way, but they are questioning God’s wisdom in giving us the inspired record of the Old Testament. They murmur about the genealogies or the law or whatever. Now I do not understand everything in the Old Testament. No one ever has or ever will. But do not worry about what you do not understand. Focus upon what you do understand and what blesses you. Find the passages that talk about how great God is and read and reread them. Isaiah 57:15 is one such passage. But there are many more. You will find them many times throughout the Old Testament. You will see God talking about Himself, and you will see the people talking about God. Isaiah 12:2, 40:28, 44:6, 45:21-22, and 48:17 are just a few of the verses that describe the splendor of the Sovereign. Many other passages in the Pentateuch, the Historical books, the Psalms, and the Prophets can be found. Do not worry about what you do not understand. Go to the

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verses that describe God’s greatness and feast upon them.

The Lord describes His Splendor in Isaiah 57:15. He first mentions *His Immensity*. He calls Himself “the high and lofty One.” Dear believer, do not fall into the situation that many have fallen into in our day, and despair that God has forsaken you. So many times preachers and church people alike talk as if God has gone on vacation and forgotten about them. This idea has always been around, but in this current economic climate, it has grown worse. Preachers and church people are as worried about finances as unbelievers. They seemingly have accepted the false idea that this is the worst financial situation in generations. They seem to have forgotten that we have had other downturns before and our parents and grandparents made it through—without government intervention. But the biggest problem is that they have forgotten about God. Call some pastors and ask to present a ministry. The common response now is the economy is bad, so either missionaries are not being taken on or in some cases are not even being brought into the church. What is wrong with us 21<sup>st</sup> century believers? Has God lost His power? Has the economy weakened God? No, it has not! God is still the same. He still owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He is still high and lofty. He is still not constrained by man’s condition. His finances are not strapped. We must turn away from our situation, and look to God. In many of the passages that I have mentioned, Israel’s condition was terrible. But God was still immense. When Israel could not do it—God could. Missionaries can still be brought in, and they can still be supported. If we really believe what the Bible says, then now is the time to put it into practice. God Himself said that He is high and lofty. He has no constraints. I may be limited, but God has no limits. That is what we must preach.

God also mentions *His Eternality*. In Isaiah 57:15, we find the clause “that inhabiteth eternity.” It is interesting how many times God’s eternity is found throughout Scripture. God mentions it over and over to remind the people just who He is. Man had a beginning. There was a time when I was not. You can find my birth certificate

on record. That means that at one time I did not exist. But you cannot find a birth certificate for God. He is eternal. He has always been and will always be. That sets Him apart from man. Man, physically, will die. There will come a point when man cannot live any longer on this earth. Modern medicine has helped man live longer, but it can only do so much. Everyone knows this, but we still need to think about it every so often. It does not matter where you live, but in the paper you can read about the deaths of people. Some are old and some are young, but everywhere, people die. It seems as if God wants everyone to understand who He is. He is the eternal One. He is the Creator. Israel had lifted itself up with pride. Perhaps they thought that they had been around long enough to have found the solution to all their problems. But God is reminding them that they have not been around forever. They are not eternal. He made them. He took them from worshiping false gods, and then brought them out of Egypt. He established them as a nation. They had a beginning. They are finite. But He is far superior to them. He is eternal. He has always been. He is infinite. So it is with us today. Man so often lifts himself in pride thinking that he has finally arrived. We need to be reminded that we are the creature. We had a beginning. We are limited. God is the Creator. He has always been. We must answer to Him.

The final aspect of the Splendor of the Sovereign is *His Holiness*. God is holy. This thought is found repeatedly in Scripture. Sometimes it is vividly declared such as in Leviticus 11:44 when God says, “*I am holy.*” Other times it is understood, such as when God cast Adam and Eve out of the garden for their sin. Why were they cast out? Because they violated God’s law, and God could no longer openly fellowship with them as He had before. Why could He no longer walk with them in the garden? Because He was holy, and they were now unholy.

Think about this aspect of holiness. It is the reason Jesus came. God could not just ignore sin—it would violate His holiness. Sin must be judged. It was judged at the cross. If you accept what Jesus did

as your payment for sin, you will become holy in the sight of God. But if you reject Jesus’ offer of salvation, you will be judged eternally in Hell. Man wants to think of himself as all right. In each other’s eyes, we seem to be pretty good. But we must look at ourselves in comparison to God’s holiness. When we do that, we will see that we are sinners. In the Old Testament, Israel often forgot about God’s holiness. Perhaps they thought that they could get by without offering sacrifices. God would remind them that He is holy. Sin must be paid for. Man today looks around and thinks, “I am better than they are.” We must remind them, “God is holy.” If you want to go to Heaven, you must be as holy as God. The only way for man to become holy is through Jesus Christ. His blood can “make the vilest sinner clean.”

What else are we to preach? We must preach the Splendor of the Sovereign, but we must also declare The Salvation to the Sinner. Many verses could be mentioned, but I will only mention three. I Corinthians 1:17 says, “*For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.*” Notice Paul’s personal testimony of what he was sent to do—preach the Gospel. He was not sent to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. He was sent to preach. What was Jesus’ final command? Mark 16:15 says, “*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*” Jesus did not give a long detailed list of what the apostles were to do. He did not phrase it in cryptic language, so that it would be hard to figure out. He said it in plain language that even the apostles could understand. It was simple, yet so profound. It was simple, yet would take a lifetime to accomplish. He told them to preach the Gospel. The same command is for us.

The third verse is Acts 4:12. Peter there is preaching before the Sanhedrin. He does what Jesus had told him to do—preach Jesus. He says that Jesus’ name is the only name whereby a sinner can be saved. That is what we must return to. The church is not a social agency. We are not commanded to change the world by social action.

Society may change when sinners are saved, but our focus is not society. We must preach the Gospel. That is what we are commanded to do. That is what we must do.

Last, we must preach The Separation of the Saints. Many will claim to preach the Gospel, but ignore life after salvation. They say that it does not matter how we live after salvation. Apparently, they have never read the Bible. Even in our Fundamental, Independent Baptist churches, preachers and members alike do not practice separation. It is often seen as a relic of the past. There is no distinction between the world and the church. But does the Bible mention separation? Yes, it does. Here are a few of the New Testament passages: Romans 12:2, I Corinthians 5:9-11, II Corinthians 6:17, Ephesians 5:11, Colossians 3:8, II Thessalonians 3:14, I Timothy 6:11, Titus 3:10, James 4:4, I John 2:15, II John 10, and Jude 3-4. The Bible is concerned with how we live after salvation. It does matter to God how you live. A true believer will want to be as holy as God. The command is given to be holy in I Peter 1:15. It is not an option for believers. In fact to live an unholy life is disobedience. We must be holy in our dress, music, speech, and actions. Preachers, we must get back to preaching on separation. Believers, we must practice separation. What shall we do? KEEP PREACHING!