



# *Facing the* **FUTURE** in the Confidence of the Gospel

Our theme in this issue of *LTBS Quarterly* has been the mighty acts of God, and our concentration naturally has been on the past. But a study of the past is useful only as it equips us for the present and the future. That being the case we decided to add two articles about the future. In the first, the Moderator of the Free Presbyterian Church, Dr. Ian R. K. Paisley, tells us that Christians can face the future in the confidence that they are “held in the giant grip of gospel omnipotence.” In the second, we briefly consider the subject of eternity.

God's people are the covenant people. God's gospel is the covenant gospel. God, the triune Jehovah, is the covenant God. We can have absolute confidence as we face the future, for we are held in the giant grip of gospel omnipotence.

The beliefs of the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, are immutable. The blessings of the covenant are irrevocable. The blood of the covenant is indestructible. The benefits of the covenant are unchangeable. The bounty of the covenant is inexhaustible. The bonds of the covenant are unlooseable.

*By the gospel we are kept by the hand of the covenant God the Father.* "No man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10:29). God the Father is almighty (Genesis 17:1); therefore His hand is almighty. God the Father is love (1 John 4:8); therefore His hand is love. God the Father is incorruptible (Romans 1:23); therefore His hand is incorruptible. God the Father is eternal (Psalm 90:2); therefore His hand is eternal. God the Father is immortal (1 Timothy 1:17); therefore His hand is immortal. God the Father is only wise (1 Timothy 1:17); therefore His hand is only wise. God the Father is glorious (Psalm 145:5); therefore His hand is glorious. God the Father is most high (Psalm 83:18); therefore His hand is most high. God the Father is holy (Psalm 99:9); therefore His hand is holy. God the Father is great (2 Chronicles 2:5); therefore His hand is great. God the Father is gracious (Exodus 34:6); therefore His hand is gracious. God the Father is longsuffering (Numbers 14:18); therefore His hand is longsuffering. God the Father is jealous (Joshua 24:19); therefore His hand is jealous. God the Father—there is none beside Him (Deuteronomy 4:35); therefore His hand has none beside it. God the Father—there is none before Him (Isaiah 43:10); therefore His hand has none before it. God the Father—there is none

but He (Matthew 19:17); therefore His hand has none like it. What a hand! What confidence we can have in that hand!

*By the gospel we are kept through the embrace of the covenant God the Son.* What an embrace is that! Look at Ezekial 16:1-14. We sinners were born of a very bad family (v. 3). We had a filthy birth (v. 4). We had a despicable reception (v. 5). But Christ, through the glorious gospel of free and sovereign grace breathed life into us (v. 6), beautified us (v. 7), loved us, washed us, married Himself to us, guided us, and preserved us (vv. 8-13).

*By the gospel we are kept through the work of the covenant God the Holy Spirit, the sanctifier.* In 1 Corinthians 6:9-13, we have a description of what we were, but also what we now are through the operation of the Holy Spirit of God. Notice the divine order of verse 11: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Here is a sanctification before justification—the separation of the sinner from hell's pit of total depravity. "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit" (Psalm 40:2). The blessed Spirit by the gospel separates the sinner from his sin—from its penalty, pollution, power, and presence. How great in condescension is the Spirit, to enter our filthy, sin-corrupted souls and regenerate them, to sprinkle the blood of Jesus upon them, and to make within the believer's body the very temple of the Most High God.

*By the gospel we are kept for the glories of the Father's house.* "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Corinthians 5:1). This God-planned, God-created building—a house not made by human or angelic hands, the Father's

house of many mansions—was made by the very hands of God Himself. Do you think for one moment that the saints will never occupy it? Don't believe that lie of the Devil. God cannot deny Himself. God will not be hanging "To Let" notices upon it! Nay, rather by contrast the sign "No Vacancies—All Accommodations Occupied" will be there. Sin cannot keep us from it. The world cannot keep us from it. The flesh cannot keep us from it. The devil cannot keep us from it. Our old nature cannot keep us from it. Heaven is kept for us, and we are kept for Heaven. Hallelujah!

*By the gospel we are kept for the unveiled beauties of our Redeemer's person.* "Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Do you think that the Father cannot answer Christ's prayer? Do you think Christ would have asked something impossible? He, the Truth, said, "Father, . . . Thou hearest me always." Revelation 7:17 will be fulfilled to its celestial zenith: "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

*By the gospel we are kept for the unending enjoyment of our inheritance.* That enjoyment is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God. Some day the reservation tickets will all be pulled down and God will say to His elect, "Enter into the joy of your Lord. Occupy your inheritance!" It is as certain as God Himself! ■

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