

CAPITAL CONNECTIONS

Edition 185C Printed 2/21/2018

MARCH 2018

*“Without any doubt, the mystery of our religion is great: He was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, **seen by angels**, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.” (1 Tim. 3:16 NRSV)*

Using the term “epic” to describe 1 Timothy 3:16 could be misunderstood. It would be wrong to assume that Jesus Christ was a fictional or mythical character, as is so often the case in the epic poem. The reality of Christ is beyond question.

He’s the central figure in human history. The gospel’s concluding statement rings true, “...there are also many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.” (John 21:25 NRSV)

However, the epic and mystical qualities of 1 Timothy 3:16 beg for investigation, and interpretation. Though we’re Baptists, always emphasizing the pragmatic aspects of the gospel, our faith is a “mystery.” Paul acknowledges that fact.

When believers focus on Jesus Christ, they’re transformed. Godliness (translated above as “religion”) is a mysterious, spiritual experience. It happens on the inside of people. Transformation happens when believers believe and do Christianity. That mystery has been transmitted by the Church since its inception.



www.britannica.com/event/Council-of-Nicaea-

Epic poetry tells the story of a heroic journey. “The main function of (*epic*) poetry in heroic-age society appears to be to stir the spirit of the warriors to heroic actions by praising their exploits and those of their illustrious ancestors, by assuring a long and glorious recollection of their fame, and by supplying them with models of ideal heroic behaviour.” (<https://www.britannica.com/art/epic>)

Epics are usually quite long. However, Paul’s expression here is succinct, deliberately short. His snippet was most likely used in song by the early church; telling Jesus’ venture from heaven, his powerful ministry on the earth, then his victorious return to heaven. For our brief focus this month, I want to underscore Paul’s short statement, “seen by angels.”

A few questions appear immediately. First, when was Jesus Christ “seen by angels?” Also, what was the effect of their appearance? Then, how does this aspect of our mysterious faith affect us personally?

Of the several passages in the Gospels that detail angelic influence in the story, we can turn immediately to Matthew 4:11. “Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.”

<https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art>



For Jesus Christ, the appearance of angels fostered heaven’s affirmation, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. 3:17 NRSV) Jesus had entered a world in conflict. His temptation in the wilderness paired him with the primary source of the conflict, the Devil.

The Devil tempted Jesus in his humanity. Hunger, ambition, pride; each is a primal human experience. Jesus resisted each temptation,

retorting to the devilish taunts with Scripture, and, having succeeded at this point in his epic journey, he received heavenly aid. The angels were heaven’s ambassadors, specially dispatched to minister directly to him.

What was their effect upon Jesus Christ? It’s stated by the writer of Hebrews. “Are not all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?” (Heb. 1:14 NRSV)

Jesus received the angelic ministry, not as the “inheritor of salvation,” but as the progenitor of salvation. Their ministry strengthened him for the three years of service that were ahead, culminating in his saving death on the cross.

As difficult as his temptation in the wilderness was, it was just the beginning. His ministry was met with resistance, hypocrisy, foolishness, disappointment and betrayal. From a human perspective, all was lost. However, at the beginning of his journey, the angels ministered heaven’s perspective to him. Their apparition, along with heaven’s affirmation, enabled him to finish his journey.

How has Jesus’ experience affected us personally? As quoted above, the epic stirs “the spirit of the warriors to heroic actions by praising their exploits and those of their illustrious ancestors.” This is, perhaps, the main outcome for us. Our spirit is stirred by the activity of Jesus Christ. Jesus resisted temptation with the Scriptures. The Bible itself is a transformative text. It is our means to grow in “godliness.”

Make sure to read your Bible and to pray. It’s Christ’s example. Doing so, he received angelic support. We will too.

We’ve received the word “angel” in the gospel message. In its strictest meaning, it translates as “messenger.” As pragmatic Baptists, that’s what we emphasize in our own doctrine. *Angel* is subsumed quite well in our most important ministry priority, evangelism.

In the weeks ahead, I’ll ask you to become involved with me as *messengers* of the good news, as evangelists. It’s time to implement the Project you’ve heard me speak about for the last two years.

Please pray with me as we lay the groundwork and engage in the process of *Using the Golden Rule As An Aid for Evangelism Amid the Cultural Diversity of Oregon’s Capital City*. We’ll need angelic assistance.

I'm grateful for the biblical affirmation, "...all angels spirits in the divine service, sent to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1:14 NRSV)

Blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Pastor John

A Request from Micah Sharp

3.05 Billion. 5,901. 10/40. 86%.

These numbers have become very meaningful to me in the last months and years. 3.05 Billion people who have never heard of Jesus. 5,901 people groups presently unreached by the Gospel message. The 10/40 window is a region from 10 degrees South to 40 degrees North from West African countries like Morocco, through the Middle East, and into Southeast Asian countries like China and Indonesia. 86% of people living in the 10/40 window will never meet a single Christian in their whole lives! These numbers are startling and deeply saddening to me.

But we must trust in the faithfulness of God! In Revelation 7:9 John saw "a great multitude that no one could number, from *every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages*, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands".

How do we reconcile these shocking statistics and John's vision? By the last words of Jesus in the book of Matthew: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

My dream, and I sincerely believe God's plan for my life, is to follow this command into the 10/40 window. The next step is a Summer Missions Internship. Not only will this opportunity give me invaluable experience and further insight into God's will, but most importantly it will give me a chance to start ministering to these unreached peoples even now.

I was recently accepted into Pioneer Bible Translators Summer Missions Internship in the Middle East. I want to thank you again for your generous partnership with me last spring in Cameroon, with both prayers and finances. I am asking you again to partner with me in this incredible ministry opportunity. I invite you to join me in praying for unreached people groups, the Middle East, and my internship. Further, I need help with the price of the internship, which approaches \$7,000. This includes food, lodging, travel expenses, and the price of additional safety measures for the 10 weeks of the internship. The first installment of \$2000 is due March 7th.

I would deeply appreciate any support you could offer. Thank you! Micah



Library Media News

Yes, the Capital Baptist Library has books – no surprise! There are also some Audio CD's and DVD's on many subjects. You will find Prayer, Christian Living and Life, Medical, Grief, Cookbooks, Music, Sports Life, Gams, Showers, Biographies, Parenting, Baby names, Southern Baptists, Northwest Baptists—their history, commentaries and other reference books.

Children's books –Christian, classics, and by many authors found in school libraries can be checked out here to count as books for school requirements. We have found children sitting on the Library floor looking up their names in the baby books to see what they mean. Do you know what your name means?

Want to know how to build a Pinewood Derby car? Do you need ideas for a baby or wedding shower or recipes for a church dinner? Do you want to learn about other denominations or Religions? Or, historical information on individuals (this rarely changes but updates may be added)). And, of course, there is Fiction—Christian fiction, Biblical characters, Christian life, mystery, intrigue, locales, romance, and professions. We hope you can find just what you want in any area. God uses many writings by authors, editors, etc.to encourage us, strengthen us, and to bring comfort, peace, guidance and growth for our everyday lives.

Keep Reading! Keep Watching! Keep Listening!



by Ellen Kersey

DAD STORIES

From Bonnie Brough:

My dad was not necessarily funny but was outgoing and knew everyone. When he retired from the Wabash Railroad, he became a crossing guard for many years at an elementary school near his home in North Kansas City, Missouri.

On my wall hangs an oil painting representative of his time with the children there. The painting hung in the school's entrance hall for over 20 years, along with a plaque in his memory. They were kind enough to

allow me to have it after several administrative changes.

From Jan Landers:

My Dad could teach a lesson without you even being aware at the time... case in point...

I was just 17 and had just moved into in a tiny apartment in Portland with a roommate to share the \$55 a month rent for this "no" bedroom apartment. I made \$1.15 an hour. With that, I was occasionally able to save enough to buy a pair of flats (shoes) for \$3.

I lamented that I wished I earned enough so I wouldn't have to save up to buy shoes. Dad wisely remarked that if I could do that, then I'd want a pair of \$6 shoes.

The moral to the story is that we are seldom satisfied with what we have.

From Virginia Barker:

As a child, I loved playing in the dirt (still do!). One warm summer night I made mud pies and took one to my dad who was sitting on the porch. He started to eat it thinking it was really something to eat. I stopped him before he took a bite. I've always wondered if he really thought it was something to eat or if he was just humoring me.

From Diane Fowler:

My father often complained good-naturedly about a house full of women, though we knew he loved every minute of it. Ask what he wanted for his birthday, Father's Day, Christmas—his answer was always the same, "All I want is to have all my girls together."

One of his quirkiest traits was his love of weird words, spoonerisms and odd sound effects (a la Victor Borge). He collected them as if it were a hobby. When we moved to the Northwest in the 1960's, inexplicably he found "Ernst," the name of a chain of NW hardware stores at the time, perfect fodder. When he said it, it sounded more like a bullfrog than a word. One of his favorite ways to use it was to get our attention in public places, eliciting the typical teenage response of rolled eyes and groans. But now when his lines turn up in conversation, it makes us smile.

From Mary Bakke:

We alternately lived in East Tennessee on Mother's family's farm or Daddy's family's farm. Grandpa raised tobacco, provided each of the five boys acreage to build on, and a "ration" each year. We had hogs, chickens, mules, milk cows and "plow horses". The land was hilly, and "not safe for motors to run on" Daddy said.

Daddy was a hard worker who worked the auto industries and moved us from Virginia to Michigan to be with him, but we always came home at Christmas, usually staying so Mother could help her mama with milking, making butter, feeding chickens, pigs, cows, etc.

My dad was fun, had a hardy laugh, liked to tease and a great cook when he was home.

We moved west like the Beverly Hillbillies in a big Studebaker flatbed truck loaded with all our worldly goods. Crossing the southern desert in August, Daddy drove with the door open, standing on the running board, to get some breeze! Fortunately, not many cars were on the roads, but lots of trucks.

We traveled Route 66 to the end in San Diego, stopping at various roadside cafes. One morning, he ordered breakfast and some red-eye gravy to go with the biscuits, but a young gal was working and said she didn't know how to "fix" it, so he went into the cooking area, prepared all our breakfasts and some for her!

He was a son, brother, husband, father, farmer, moonshiner and millwright. Following the war in the 40's, moonshine was a main income for the McQueen boys and their families plus Grandpa and Granny.

Everyone loved my dad when he was sober! But look out if he'd been drinkin'--he could be mean and looking for a fight.

From Melvin Perry:

Ray Melvin Perry was born in Crab Orchard, Kentucky, in 1928, the second oldest of 12. His family traveled the U.S. picking whatever crops were being harvested at that time, sometimes traveling days between harvests.

He dropped out of school in the 10th grade, but was the most intelligent man I've ever known, especially about nature, animals and plants, all of which he could identify by name.

A friend his once told me that a person couldn't go wrong having my dad as a friend, and Dad never complained about anything, no matter the subject or situation. He also never turned down an opportunity to work. His last job before retirement was driving a tractor fertilizing fields 14 hours a day, seven days a week in Salinas, California. He was strong-willed, never gave up and his determination was evident to all who knew him.

He and mom never argued in front of us. When we were kids, he was very strict, but everything was done out of love. The only love that was stronger than the love he had for his family was his love for God.

He died in May 1996, and I miss him, his love, wisdom and amazing knowledge.

I was blessed to be half-named after my dad; his middle name is my first name. My brother, Danny Ray, was given Dad's first name for his middle name. I told my brother many times, "If you put us together we would be a 'junior' to Dad."