

Destiny Newsletter

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by
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AN OPEN DOOR

OPPORTUNITY--THE GREATEST OF GIFTS!

There are many wonderful gifts which God gives to man. For each of us, the list grows ever longer because daily we are the beneficiaries by grace of a mounting plethora of good things from God.

Of all these gifts, which is the greatest? There is a word which presents an answer to that question which should be the subject of regular thanks to God by all of us. That word, that great gift, is opportunity.

Opportunity is a very wonderful thing. It means that I can be something today which I wasn't yesterday. It means that God has yet even greater things for His people. It means that there are vistas before us which have yet to be realized. This is promised by Jesus Christ when He speaks to the Church, saying, "*Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it*" (Rev. 3:8). This, of course, means that

opportunity is ours from God and will never fail us so long as our hearts are right with Him. We may thank God for the gift of opportunity.

But the word "opportunity" means little unless it takes an object. What opportunities are presented to us by a gracious God? With a little thought, that question has a marvelous set of answers.

First of all, God presents to every man the opportunity to be saved. With wide-open arms, Christ still stands before the world saying, "*Come to me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*" (Matt. 11:28). The invitation to come to Christ is extended to every man. God offers that man full and free salvation without price, by grace alone.

This is possible because Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. The death of Christ, the blood shed on the cross, was the most awful price ever expended for anything. Consequently, the debt of sin for you and for me has been forever paid. We therefore are invited to be Christians, and we can do so by responding to the simple formula: "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved*" (Acts 16:31). When I believe on the Lord Jesus, I am instantly and eternally saved.

The Bible does not say, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be put on probation." It promises instead the gift of eternal life.

When I become a Christian, I am still and especially the recipient of God's gift of opportunity. The great opportunity which God gives to every believer is the opportunity to serve Him. Paul says, "*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice*" (Rom. 12:1). When we do this, we are promised that we will bring to pass the perfect will of God.

Let's face it--the lives of most people in our world are simply worthless. For ninety percent of all who are now alive, at the time of their death it will be just as though they had never lived. They may have large possessions and great prestige, but these mean nothing apart from Christ. Human fame is no proof whatsoever that a life is significant. Therefore, we must remember that every person who is not a Christian, without exception, is even now living a wasted life.

Not so for the believer. In giving us the opportunity to serve Him, God promises that we will accomplish significant things for His glory. In fact, "*They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that*

**"OPPORTUNITY WHICH
IS USED LEADS TO
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turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." The Christian is promised that *"If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward."* We're invited to serve Christ on the promised reward which awaits us in glory.

But we are also rewarded here on earth for serving the Lord Jesus. No feeling is more wonderful within the human heart than the sense that we have served Christ well. Happiness comes from responsibilities met, from duties fulfilled. Many people living depressed lives wonder why happiness escapes them. There is no happiness apart from the accomplishment of significant things.

Serving Christ in this world also guarantees that we will have the satisfaction of knowing that we have made a difference in the lives of others. Never was a testimony given, never was a tract distributed, never was a word for Christ ever spoken which was void and without consequence. No indeed, God uses His people as they labor in the Word to make a vital, saving difference in other people's lives. God gives us in this life the opportunity to serve Him by doing vital things which will make an everlasting impact in the lives of others.

We must also remember that God will give us in eternity the opportunity, which is the greatest of all, of ruling the universe with Him. The Bible promises that *"If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him"* (II Tim. 2:12). Reigning with Christ! This is the final, joyous reward of a life lived for His glory. But wait, there is something else

about opportunity which needs to be remembered. Opportunity means nothing unless we are also given of God the capability to respond to opportunity. Open doors are but vistas of frustration unless we can move through them. Are we enabled of God to serve Him, to meet today's opportunities? Yes, indeed, we certainly are.

We are enabled, first of all, because we have in our hands the Word of God, the Bible. You and I may pass around our best thoughts about things, but these, while interesting, simply don't matter. But, when we bring the Word to others, the Word strikes upon an alien heart with an impact beyond what we could ever produce. Human eloquence is fine, but the Word of God is infinite. The Christian is impotent who does not know and use the Word.

We are empowered also by a knowledge of the Gospel. When a Christian has been to Calvary and there been cleansed from sin, he knows forever what the Gospel is. It is the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, which message is the object of our faith. In the mouth of the Christian, the Gospel becomes the power of God unto salvation for everyone who believes. Large elements of the Church today have slowed and then stopped because they have not continued to announce the essential Good News that God has a gift for man. That gift, for which only faith is required, is eternal life.

We are also enabled by the Holy Spirit to serve Christ. Every believer has the Holy Spirit

dwelling within him. Every believer has the Spirit working with him in His fullness as long as he is walking in fellowship with God. To know the power of the Spirit, we are told to walk with lives which are cleansed and therefore empowered for His glory.

Quite obviously, when we speak about opportunity we must remember that now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation. The greatest opportunity God has given the Church in the living memory of any of us is today. Everywhere is this true! Millions wait in Europe and Asia for the Gospel. Millions could yet be saved in Russia by the Word reaching through doors that are at least temporarily open. Millions await elsewhere across the world to hear the story of life. There is no impediment to this hearing except our own reluctant wills. Opportunity is now.

There is a principle about opportunity which is significant. That principle is that opportunity which is used leads to greater opportunity. Conversely, opportunity which is wasted itself dies and leaves us with the despairing sense that the tide has passed. The secret of success in anything is to respond affirmatively to opportunity. The secret of spiritual success is the same, but the rewards are greater by an infinite degree. Learn today to use one of God's greatest gifts, the gift of opportunity.

THE TIDE OF OUR TIMES

A SOCIETY BUILT ON INSTANT GRATIFICATION

is what we have in America today, reports one newspaper analyst. Pursuing instant gratification is a tricky, dangerous business. And, of course, it never works. It has two other liabilities. The first is that it is very costly. If you want something, it pays to wait a while, pray a while, think it through. If you must have it now, you'll pay through the nose.

Instant gratification is also very boring. One of the most fulfilling emotions of life is anticipation. If there is no time, no years, months, or days between desire and fulfillment, then we will die of boredom--which is the worst way to go.

"IF YOU CAN INDUCE a community to doubt the genuineness and authenticity of the Scriptures; to question the reality and obligations of religion; to hesitate undeciding, whether there be any such thing as virtue or vice; whether there be an eternal state of retribution beyond the grave; or whether there exists any such being as God, you have broken down the barriers of moral virtue and hoisted the flood gates of immorality and crime."

This timeless and very insightful bit of social commentary comes to us from, believe it or not, an edition of the renowned McGuffey's Reader of the nineteenth century.

THE TIDE OF OUR TIMES

will continue to break upon society with such intensity, that the people of the world will call for a human savior. This powerful global leader is known

as the Antichrist.

We have received hypothetical speculations that the Antichrist will emerge from any one of a number of places on the globe: The United States, Israel, East, or even the Far East. But, the Prophet Daniel, writing over 500 years before Christ, prophesied of this coming Antichrist:

"the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and to the end of the war desolations are determined" (Daniel 9:26).

Daniel then goes on to say how this prince will make a seven-year covenant with Israel and break it in the midst of that period. But notice, the prophet makes a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem and its sanctuary, a prophecy that was fulfilled in 70 A.D. Daniel says that the same people who did these things shall produce *"the prince that shall come."* Who destroyed the city and the sanctuary? Rome did--the people of the Roman Empire, the dominant world power at the time of Christ and thereafter. Although the vast Roman Empire encompassed most of the Middle East and North Africa, its powerful center was Europe, that portion around its very heart. **Write for your copy of "Searching For The Antichrist."**

THE CALL FOR A FORMAL EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT-

It is with the greatest of interest that we watch as efforts are made to unify the fragmented continent of Europe today. For over forty

years now, one small step has been followed by another in an attempt to turn Europe into a power base for political and economic hegemony on the world scene. We have seen, for example, the easing and

virtual dropping of trade and tariff restrictions between European countries; the introduction of the Euro, an all-European currency; and the formation of a European parliament and European court. We

have even seen the call for a 100,000-member European rapid-response military force. It is quite a dramatic change in history to consider that just over fifty years ago, many of the nations of Europe were fighting against each other, but now, they are willing to fight alongside each other in such a unified defense force.

DISHEARTENING NEWS

concerning the extremely negative effects that gambling is having upon our country has come to our attention. In some locales near casinos, churches are actually finding it "necessary to include a 'no-casino-visiting' clause in their leadership conduct covenants." Some have even lost elders, deacons, and Sunday School teachers to this dreadful addiction. One person from the Northwest corner of Mississippi--an area heavily infested with casinos--is reported to have said that "the casinos have sucked the spiritual life out of the community and have been the downfall of many a Christian."

See the *Collegiate Letter* on the internet at
www.christiandestiny.org





OPPORTUNITY

*The highest wave of any tide
Breaks only once upon the sand.
Each billow that is subsequent
But marks the sea's receding hand
In lingering isometric lines
Etched by the foam upon the shore,
A record written down the beach
Of fullness once, that is no more.*

*Does not the sea in this conspire
To illustrate God's way with men,
How life presents one highest hour
To make the thrust with sword or pen,
Or valiant deed, or act of love,
Or sacrifice, or gift, or word,
Or consecration of this life
To serve beside our glorious Lord?*

*And is it not apparent, too,
That other moments, other days,
That come beyond that highest hour,
Though lovely in a hundred ways,
Do hardly match the quality
Or privilege and hope sublime
That in our heart of hearts we knew
Within that pinnacle of time?*

*Who then can calculate the loss
To heaven and earth and in the soul
When youthful heart, preoccupied,
Says "no" to God's benign control,
To flounder on through wasted years
Consumed by ravages of sin
With vacant heart and vacuous mind
To dream of life that might have been?*

by Dave Breese

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"Thank you again for your faithfulness of sending us your wonderful truths of God's word." – Athens, Ontario, Canada

"Blessing to you, and peace from our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. I've often wanted to write, however, today is the day it is done. I'd like to have your **Destiny Newsletter** sent to me. I've listened to the program on a Billings, Montana radio station. Dave is an interesting preacher and what is coming through him it really touches me when I'm listening to the program." – Lavena, MT

"Thank you for the **Destiny Newsletter**. So much of the information is timely for me. You and the Apostle Paul have at least one thing in common: frequently, I feel both of you are writing to me personally." – Arcadia, CA

"I first heard you many years ago at Maranatha Bible Conference in Muskegon (Billy Graham and you were there - just young men.) Then, probably before that when you were director of Grand Rapids Youth for Christ, if my poor memory serves me right. We had to retire when my husband was diagnosed with Parkinson's. Later I returned with him to Costa Rica, one of the countries we had served in, as a volunteer teacher in Palabra de Vida Bible School. As an English teacher, I challenged my Costa Rican students with your book "Seven Men..." I am thrilled and blessed to have had these contacts with one of the most gifted Christians I have heard in my 71 plus years. Oh, yes, after we came home to Michigan in 1980, we never missed your speaking at Maranatha." – Salem, OR

"Thank you for your recent letter and the encouragement you gave me in reaching out to those who are in need of knowing the great love our God has available for them. Everyone has an awareness that causes them to feel something is not right in their world; most try to hide that, but with gentleness and your material and God's love, they can explore the plan Jesus has for them. God bless you and yours." – Terrace, WA



WORTH QUOTING

"The trouble with most people is that they think with their hopes or fears or wishes rather than with their minds." --Walter Duranty

"Always vote for the principle, though you vote alone, and you may cherish the sweet reflections that your vote is never lost."
--John Quincy Adams

"If thou wouldest conquer thy weakness, thou must not gratify it."
--William Penn

"Time is precious, but truth is more precious than time." --Disraeli

"Because of the law of gravitation, the apple falls to the ground. Because of the law of growth, the acorn becomes a mighty oak. Because of the law of causation, a man is 'as he thinketh in his heart.' Nothing can happen without its adequate cause."
--Don Carlos Musser

"The foundations of the world will be shaky until the moral props are restored." --Ann O'Hare McCormick

"I have not been able to find a single useful institution which has not been founded either by an intensely religious man or by the son of a praying father or a praying mother. I have made this statement before the chambers of commerce of all the largest cities of the country and have asked them to bring forward a case that is an exception to this rule. Thus far, I have not heard of a single one." --Roger W. Babson

*But especially,
"...Content for the faith which
was once delivered to the saints"*
(Jude 1:3).

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Q. Does God hear the prayers of an unsaved person?

A. Being omnipresent and omniscient, God hears every word

that is uttered on the Earth, including, of course, those that are addressed to Him. With regard to the unsaved, God always answers the "sinner's prayer," whereby an individual comes to Christ.

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

Occasionally, God will answer other prayers of the unsaved --if it is in His will to do so--for example, to make Himself manifest to that person in order to draw him to Christ; or in order that some other ultimate good will occur as a result. But God has put Himself under no obligation to answer these prayers of the unsaved. The many promises of answered prayer in the Bible are addressed primarily to Christians (for example, Mark 11:24, James 5:16, 1 John 5:15). One must first be in the family of God in order to confidently approach Him in prayer.

"Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Q. Who are the "saints" specified in Revelation 20:9? Is it possible for Christians to be tested again in Satan's final rebellion?

A. This final rebellion of Satan

comes after the Millennium and is discussed in the following passage: *"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:7-10).*

Regarding the question of whether this rebellion is to test Church Age believers, the answer is no. At the Rapture and Resurrection, we will receive glorified bodies and we shall be changed so that our sin natures are no longer resident in us. Therefore, it will not be possible for Satan to tempt us in this rebellion. Those who are tempted are the descendants of those who enter the Millennium in their mortal bodies and procreate such as we do now. Although Christ will rule in perfect righteousness, and the world will outwardly pay Him the homage He deserves, there will be some who inwardly rebel against His rule. These are they who will follow Satan in that rebellion.

As for the identity of the "saints" in verse 9, this is not clear from Scripture. It could either refer to those Earth-dwellers during the

Millennium who are faithful to Christ, or Church Age saints in our glorified bodies, also faithful to Christ. Either way, the "saints" are enemies of Satan, whom he tries to attack in order to secure victory in his rebellion. But as the balance of verse 9 points out, this attack is doomed to failure, and Satan is destined to share the fate of the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and ultimately, the unsaved of all ages.

Q. The world is becoming a very evil place. What can I hope to accomplish for Christ in such a world as this?

A. Indeed, the world is an evil place and it is getting worse with every day that passes. So the Scripture says, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof; but he that does the will of God abides forever" (1 John 2:15-17).*

Still, speaking to Christians in this present world, the Lord Jesus says, *"Behold, I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it" (Rev. 3:8).* The fact is that man's importunity is God's opportunity. The Psalmist is still true who describes the believer and says, *"He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season; its leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he does shall prosper" (Psa. 1:3).*

THINKING TOGETHER

THE MISSING ELEMENT

Western civilization is today characterized by many things. These include political developments, economic manipulations, military activities, vast pronouncements by statesmen, scientific experiment, and a thousand other things. The world of our time is a veritable kaleidoscope of colorful thoughts, things, activities, goings and doings. Today's world is a busy place with hopes and happenings aplenty. Any given day can be filled with activities and fascinations enough to preoccupy us all.

But also, there is a certain disquiet of soul, new nameless apprehensions, a sense of unsurety, the feeling that things are out of control. Yes, there is a missing element in most of the speeches, much of the teaching, and a lot of the preaching of our time. That missing element leaves us with the impression that life is finally without substance and anyone's ideas are just as good as anyone else's.

What is that missing element? It is, we suggest, the Christian view. The modern mind, the world of western thought, is attempting to function without the great imperative—the Christian view. There are many illustrations of this.

The professor stands before his students, even in our Christian schools, and says, "Think of the wonder of it all. You were once a tadpole, a fish, a monkey, a bird, and now, thanks to the evolutionary process, you are a human being. You were made by

the impersonal forces of nature, and isn't it grand what you have become? Natural selection has brought you a long way."

This statement, while interesting, is a lie. The truth is that man was specifically created by God and made in the image of God (Gen. 1:26,27). For want of the Christian view, man thinks of himself as being a beast of the field and entitled to act like one.

The Sodomite, his tribe increasing in our time, announces that homosexuality is a perfectly acceptable alternative lifestyle. He ought to, therefore, be received by society and within the Church as normal and acceptable.

This also is a lie. The truth is that vile affections are condemned by God and that homosexuals will receive *"in themselves that recompense of their error which was fitting"* (Rom. 1:27).

The politician breaks a solemn earlier promise, announcing that, "New economic considerations have made me change my mind." Such an attitude is a great mistake, for it assumes the philosophy that the basis of life is financial. It is not! The basis of life is moral. In fact, the truth is that morality, kept promises, fidelity alone, and the like produces prosperity. For want of the Christian view in our time, economic determinism replaces morality. This is a deadly alteration of the truth.

Hundreds of new events break upon our society every day.

by Dave Breese

Most of them are beyond explanation to the natural mind because that mind does not know or does not care about what the Bible says concerning the world. For want of the Christian view, the Western mind in our time is without foundation and without proper alignment. This is why, among the "ordinary people" of our world, there is an enormous thirst for reality. People everywhere want a Biblical, moral, spiritual, and prophetic interpretation of the events in which they find themselves. The comment, the explanation, which they receive of those events from the public press is simply an empty explanation in which drought is explained by saying, "The winds are from the south," and hurricanes come because of "the el nino factor."

Any explanation that includes the fact that God presides above history and that He is the Creator and Sustainer of everything—such an explanation is laughed at in our time. But of course, there is no final explanation of anything whatsoever which leaves out the existence of God and His providence continually working in our world. Now rejecting this, the Western mind increasingly thrashes about in frustrating impotence, unable to explain anything. Not only is the Western mind willingly ignorant of the Christian view, but for want of that view, it entertains pernicious insanities which are even now in the process of destroying our culture. The opposite of the Christian view is not merely ignorance; it is in fact insanity. Yes, even the public

press in these days, with its remaining rationality, talks about the "strange insanities" of our time.

What is the Christian view? In abbreviated form, the Christian view as relates to the world is the message that there is a God; that He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that He made and sustains the world; that man is a sinner, unable to extricate himself from his problems; that Christ came into the world to die for our sins; that by faith in Christ we have everlasting life; that believing in Him we have all that pertains to life and godliness; that wisdom comes from Christ alone; that the world will pass away, but he who does the will of God abides forever.

The Christian view teaches that reality is not political, not financial, not academic--rather, reality is moral. The issues of good and evil are more important than profit and loss, succeeding and failing, winning at cards or at roulette. The Christian view teaches the non-finality of this world and insists that it is a backdrop in which the play, the life of humanity, is carried on. The Christian view teaches that heaven is more important than earth and that this life at best is "*our light affliction, which is but for a moment*" (II Cor. 4:17).

At the center of the Christian view is the cross of Christ and the message of what Jesus did there, dying for us that the world through Him might be saved. But, of course, the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. The world laughs at the message that the cross is the key to life and that Christ is Himself the answer to every human need.

Why is the Christian view so ignored in our society? One reason

is that so much of our activity in evangelism and Christian teaching does not reach thinking people; it is not even the subject of a serious attempt to reach thought leaders, king-makers, and the world of academia. The Christian view must be presented in a way that it cannot be discounted by those who plan the affairs of this world.

But also, the Christian view is often unheard in our time because the god of this world, the Devil, "*has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine to them*" (II Cor. 4:4). Satan is yet the god of this world, and his major activity is perverting the Word of God, obscuring the Gospel, trivializing the message so that it loses its sense and saving power.

What then shall we now do? We Christians must determine to present the Gospel of the grace of God with

clarity and precision so that its truth cannot be mistaken. Perverted versions of the Gospel, so common in our time, will not avail in these demanding times.

Believing and preaching the message, we must also pray that the Word of Christ will be favored of God with a new social, cultural penetration in these days. Thoughtful Christians should have available a position paper on every relevant subject in our time so as to know how to answer the world--how to give a reason for the faith which is in him.

If we fail to newly influence the world of Western thought, civilization will have no future except to convulse with new agones and then die. The only remaining answer to the preservation of Western civilization is a mighty, new resurgence of thoughtful Christianity. Apart from this, a sane tomorrow will not be.

FINALLY



Dear Special Friend of Christian Destiny,

Again, we thank you for the part that you are playing in the ministry of Christian Destiny. Your prayers, your financial contributions, have once more been used of God to help us bring to many the truth of the Gospel.

We invite your faithful contributions once again, promising that your gift will not be dissipated in frivolous activity, but rather in holding forth the Word of Life.

Faithfully yours,

David W. Breese, President
Christian Destiny, Inc.