

You're of no earthly value unless you're...

Heavenly Minded

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He was despised and afflicted...

In this issue ...

Wisdom's Cry Wising Up Pilgrims No More Dr. Frankenstein Lives

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Dear Friends,

The picture below intrigues me. Oh, I don't expect any of us will literally climb a stairway to heaven, but it does remind me of Jacob's dream where he saw a ladder to heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it. And, what grabs me is not so much the flowers or peaceful setting but the destination. We know so little of heaven – almost like babes in the womb, we anticipate emerging literally into that brilliant glory. One day soon, that awesome reality will come, in overwhelming and eternal power, to our meager temporal existence.

Personally, I have no expectation that politics or science or religious fervor will solve the mess we've created in this world. I do anticipate the imminent return of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who will make all things right. That is the blessed hope. Meanwhile, may we each be preparing His way!

In Christ's Love,

John and Darlene Dickey



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WISDOM'S CRY

Here's a topic near and dear to the human heart – riches. In Revelation chapter five, the multitudes of worshippers around the throne in heaven proclaim that the Lamb, Jesus Christ, is worthy of seven things. In "Power to the Lord", we examined the first which is power. The second is riches. Why is He worthy of them?

There is perhaps no other single issue that has enticed, entranced and/or enslaved the church throughout the age as much as riches. So much spiritual garbage has been passed around on it in our contemporary setting that many, many Christians cannot fathom a spiritual walk without including its pursuit. This is especially true in America where capitalism and conservatism are frequently so closely associated with Christianity that to question either of them is tantamount to questioning the 'true faith'. This is in spite of the fact that the Bible says that, "...the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." (1 Tim 6:10)

Oh yes, riches are such an attraction to both pewsters and pastors that it has often been taught from the pulpit that a man's spiritual walk is closely tied to his wallet. So, as we consider this topic, we must be careful to stick to the Word. Of course that's true with all our topics but perhaps especially so herein because like the Pharisees of Jesus'

day, we also have elevated traditions or man made opinions to the level of scripture and in some cases we don't even recognize that.

Riches are presented in the Bible in both negative and positive ways. As we look at both 'angles', you'll come to realize just why Jesus is indeed worthy of them. Now, the first mention of riches is in Genesis 13 where they were the main thing that brought division between Abram and his nephew Lot. They both had acquired so much stuff that they literally overburdened the land where they dwelt. Now, Abram considered Lot so dear that in a later chapter he risked his own life and the lives of all his servants to rescue him from an invading army. Nevertheless, the idea of divesting themselves of some of their riches in order to hang together never occurred to them. They esteemed their riches more greatly than their fellowship – thus the family breakdown. Of note is that they acquired much if not most of these riches in Egypt when Abraham, then called Abram, pulled the wool over Pharaoh's eyes so to speak by calling Sarai, who was his wife, his sister. (See Gen 12:16)

Later, however, in the book of 1 Kings, God speaking to Solomon said, "Because you have asked this thing (wisdom), and have not asked long life for yourself, **nor have asked riches for yourself**, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like

you arise after you. And **I have also given you** what you have not asked: **both riches and honor**, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days." (1 Kings 3:11-13)

Solomon was known for millennia as the richest man who ever lived. Later in his life though, the king turned away from the Lord who had blessed him so amazingly. Yet interestingly enough, the Bible records that it was not the riches which caused his backsliding but his enormous number of wives (see 1 Kings 11:4). Apparently, many of them introduced (and seduced) him to worship their own gods as did their people from the surrounding countries.

So with that introduction, let's look more closely at both sides of the coin on this issue. We'll start with the negative aspects:

Psa 49:6,7 - Those **who trust in their wealth**

And boast in the multitude of their riches,
None of them can by any means redeem his brother,
Nor give to God a ransom for him

Psa 52:6-8 - The righteous also shall see and fear,

And shall laugh at him, saying,
"Here is the man who did not make God his strength,

But trusted in the abundance of his riches,

And strengthened himself in his wickedness."

But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;

I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

Pro 11:28 - He who **trusts in his riches** will fall,
But the righteous will flourish like foliage.

Eze 28:4 - **With your wisdom and your understanding**

You have gained riches for yourself,
And gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; (spoken to the Prince of Tyrus who is a type of Satan's son, the AC)

Mat 13:22 - Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the **deceitfulness of riches** choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

Mar 10:23,24 - Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!" And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who **trust in riches** to enter the kingdom of God!"

1 Tim 6:17 - Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to **trust in uncertain riches** but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

Now, fundamentally, you can see from the verses above (emphasis mine) the error of the wicked is that they put their trust in their riches. Also, we note that they do not acquire their wealth from the Lord but by their own means. When Jesus referred to the deceitfulness of riches, He was pointing to the truth of these scriptures – the

enticement of mammon is to draw the heart of man into a bogus trust relationship. Sinful man, including the fleshly sin nature of believers, has the inclination to trust in "uncertain riches" and I'll suggest that this is so at least partly because of the means by which they are acquired. However, before we expound on this, let's consider the 'other side of the coin'.

Psa 104:24 - O LORD, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of **thy riches**.

Psa 112:1,3 - Blessed is the man that **fears the LORD**, that **delights greatly in his commandments**... Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endures for ever.

Pro 3:13,16 - Happy is the man that **finds wisdom**... Length of days is in her right hand; and in her left hand riches and honour.

Pro 8:1,18 - Doth not **wisdom** cry? and understanding put forth her voice?... Riches and honour are with me; yea, **durable riches and righteousness**.

Pro 13:7 - There is one who **makes himself rich**, yet has nothing; And one who **makes himself poor**, yet has great riches.

Pro 22:4 - By **humility and the fear of the LORD** are riches and honor and life.

Luk 16:10,11,13b - He who is **faithful in what is least** is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust

in what is least is unjust also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the **true riches**?... You cannot serve God and mammon.

Rom 2:4 - Or do you despise the riches of **His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering**,...

Rom 9:23 - ...that He might make known the riches of **His glory** on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,...

Rom 11:33 - Oh, the depth of the riches both of the **wisdom and knowledge of God!**

Eph 3:8 - To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the **unsearchable riches of Christ**,...

From these verses, we can see that God's Wisdom, the Old Testament's way of alluding to the gift/presence of the Holy Spirit, is the creating force and guide into the true riches. This Wisdom leads one into a healthy fear of the Lord and a deep delight from His Word. Indeed, happy is the one who responds to Wisdom's cry and seeks her out. The riches that Holy Spirit leads one to are "durable"; that is, they are eternal and are accompanied by a right standing before God.

"To lay up for yourselves treasure on earth is also to doom yourself to a life of frustration and emptiness. Regarding material things, the secret to happiness is not *more*, it is *contentment*. In a 1992 survey,

people were asked how much money they would have to make to have "the American dream." Those who earn \$25,000 or less a year thought they would need around \$54,000. Those in the \$100,000 annual income bracket said that they could buy the dream for an average of \$192,000 a year. These figures indicate that we typically think we would have to have double our income in order to find the good life. But the Apostle Paul had the right idea in 1 Timothy 6:6: *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*"

– D. Guzik

Each man has a choice, to attempt to make himself rich materially – i.e. to be absorbed by the pursuit of and servitude to mammon, or to make himself poor spiritually – to be absorbed by the pursuit of and servitude to Father God. **It is impossible to do both.** The consequence of the former is to remain a pitiful pawn of lifeless stuff. The consequence of the latter is to become an eternal vessel and conduit of the unsearchable riches of Christ – humility, faithfulness, goodness, forbearance, longsuffering, wisdom and the knowledge of God.

"The Lord says, 'Hey, don't lay up for yourselves treasures on earth. The value of gold is apt to depreciate, silver is apt to depreciate; moth and rust can corrupt it, thieves can break through and steal. But lay up for yourself treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.' (Mat 6:20) Now, he has a reason behind this. Why should you

be laying up treasures in heaven instead of here upon the earth? The whole reason is this - wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also (Mat 6:21)." – Chuck Smith

Now, consider Christ; why is He proclaimed in heaven to be worthy of riches? I submit that it is because He made the perfectly right choices concerning trust and obedience – He chose to obey the Father's will and come to earth. He chose to fulfill and obey God's Word. He chose to reject the temptation of material wealth and power offered by Satan in the wilderness. He chose to live a life completely dependent upon God even though it meant no where to lay His head, a dishonest, back-stabbing 'accountant' (Judas), a simple wardrobe (one outer garment), and the cross of Calvary.

I also submit that in our day and age, much of the church has become the very antithesis of this. Our church buildings, attendance rosters and temporal ambitions are not pleasing God. It is time for us to repent, to change our ways. We are blind, naked and in desperate need of Him! We need our eyes opened to our true state before it's too late.

May we all seek His guidance in this most sincerely so that, with the saints who have gone before us, we also may be found happily among that heavenly host richly proclaiming the worthiness of the Lamb!

Wising Up

It was Satan's first and best shot.

Remember the old Indiana Jones movie where Jones and the bad guys get to the cave in search of the Holy Grail? They had to chose wisely to get the cup which brought life. In Eden, to be like God was the temptation, specifically, to have His wisdom. You see, when Eve looked at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she saw "...*that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise...*" Yet, as for nutritional value and visual beauty – these things could most assuredly have been attributed to many, many trees in the garden, so the first two observations she made were not really 'the hook'. Satan had told her that if she ate of the fruit, she would be like God, knowing good and evil. And, this is what she desired, this wisdom – this was the bait and the hook so to speak. As you know, when she ate of it, her eyes were opened, but the wisdom she received was not God's.

And this is the real problem, isn't it? Ever since, man in his ego-centric nature has always considered himself as wiser than God. That's because the source of this worldly wisdom is a dark, deceptive enemy bent on our destruction.

Now, the third thing that Jesus is proclaimed to be worthy of in

heaven (see Rev 5:12) is wisdom. If we are among those gathered around the throne proclaiming His worthiness, we will be praising Him all the more sincerely if we know why He is worthy of each of the seven things mentioned.

We've looked at power and riches in two earlier essays. Herein, we'll consider wisdom – why is Jesus in particular worthy of it?

To answer that, we will look at the sources of wisdom, its characteristics and fruit and then finally its part in the overall plan of God.

The nature of wisdom is directly attributable to its source. In the garden of Eden, there wasn't yet an economic system so a lust for mammon (i.e. material goods) was not a valid temptation. Neither was nicer clothing tempting, nor finer food. Fame couldn't be used since there weren't any other people. In fact, virtually all the things we would consider as temptations to our own sinful hearts were simply non-starters for Satan – so how do you tempt true innocence?

The only thing Adam and Eve could recognize as a deficiency, if you would, in their existence was linked to their desire to be more like the One who made them. In their sinless situation, I submit that it was a perfectly natural desire and one that we as believers share. Perhaps the time they spent in direct fellowship with God left them with such inspiration and awe that they truly wanted to be like their Maker.

Now, we all know the Genesis story. Satan deceived them while fostering the notion that God did not want them to be like Him -- to have His wisdom. Of course, we have the benefit of the scriptures that tell us just the opposite.

1 John 3:2 says, "*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we **shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.*" While, 1 John 4:17 says, "*Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because **as He is, so are we in this world.***" And James wrote in James 1:5, "*If any of you **lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.***" So we now know that the very things which the devil said were not in God's heart have been revealed in Christ Jesus to be His sincere intentions after all.

Nevertheless, Satan offered wisdom and in doing so he enticed Eve with the 'method', but he didn't specify the source – himself. Yes, our enemy has his own brand of wisdom – one that insanely perceives the wisdom of God as foolishness. Keep in mind that mankind did not originally have a desire to rebel against God but rather a desire to be more like God. The devil used that to snare and enslave us in the same way demented cult leaders use it to create their own followings.

In speaking to the Prince of Tyre (the son of the King of Tyre who is

the picture of Satan), the Bible says,

*"Because your **heart is lifted up,***

And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,'

Yet you are a man, and not a god,

*Though you set your heart as **the heart of a god***

(Behold, you are wiser than Daniel!

There is no secret that can be hidden from you!

*With **your wisdom and your understanding***

You have gained riches for yourself,

And gathered gold and silver into your treasuries;

*By **your great wisdom** in trade you have increased your riches.*

*And your **heart is lifted up because of your riches,**"*
(Eze 28:2-5)

And to the King of Tyre (Satan) it says,

"You were in Eden, the garden of God; ...

*Your **heart was lifted up because of your beauty;***

*You corrupted **your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;**"*
(Eze 28:13,17)

Thus, Satan's wisdom, though corrupted, became man's. Thus, it is the wisdom of this corrupted world. Here's what the scriptures have to say about it:

"Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made

foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through [Satan's] wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe." 1 Cor 1:20,21

"However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory," 1 Cor 2:6,7

"Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." 1 Cor 3:18, 19

As for Satan's wisdom, it says, "This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic." And it adds, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy." Jam 3:15, 17

Yes, God's wisdom is entirely different from the devil's. And, He has spoken of it plainly throughout the Bible. For instance:

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore." 1 Kings 4:29

"Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,

And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom."

Psa 51:6

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;"

Psa 111:10

"Happy is the man who finds wisdom,

And the man who gains understanding;" Pro 3:13

"For wisdom is better than rubies,

And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her." Pro 8:11

Now, as we saw above, Satan and his servants, mankind, have used his wisdom to gain material prosperity and a false sense of security. This has always led to great pride which is the fundamental sin of the devil. (See Isa 14:12-15)

Conversely, God has consistently used His wisdom to create blessings for others –

"Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!... To Him who by wisdom made the heavens,"

Psa 136:1,5

"The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;

By understanding He established the heavens;"

Pro 3:19

Basically, Satan's wisdom is self-centered whereas God's is others centered. And this point is what brings us to Jesus. Isaiah the prophet wrote of Him,

"The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,

The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD." Isa 11:2

Luke recorded concerning the child Jesus, "And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." Luk 2:40

Never was there a life so oriented to humble submission to the Father. Never was anyone so oriented to saving and serving others. Never was such purity, peace, and gentleness lived out. Jesus had a godly wisdom that Adam and Eve could have had – wisdom that you and I as believers can now have for the asking.

The wisdom He is indeed worthy of, because He was true to it, He has passed along liberally to His followers who desire it. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." Col 3:16

"Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist." Luk 21:14,15

Satan indeed suckered man into following his insidious wisdom and I suspect that he did the same thing long ago in the spiritual realm to the principalities and powers

therein. But Jesus the Lamb of God is worthy of wisdom because in obeying Father God – coming to planet earth, living a humble, others-oriented life, following God's will all the way to the cross - He created the church "...the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ..."

Eph 3:9

And why did He do that? Because contrary to the devil's grand deception, his implied claim that God doesn't want to impart His wisdom, the whole of man's dilemma and salvation is, among other things, a grand impartation. It's a demonstration, if you would "**...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,**" Eph 3:10,11

Yes, all the cosmos in the unseen spiritual creation is learning the many faceted and wondrous nature of God's wisdom. Through the church, they are observing the glorious truth of it – that which was hidden from Satan and sinful man, ordained from before the ages even began! That wisdom is embodied in our dear Savior Jesus Christ forever! Col 2:3. Worthy is the Lamb!

Pilgrims No More

Excerpts from Pilgrim's Progress by John Bunyan

The talk that they had with the shining ones was about the glory of the place; who told them that the beauty and glory of it was inexpressible. There, said they, is "Mount Sion, the heavenly Jerusalem, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. 12:22-24. You are going now, said they, to the paradise of God, wherein you shall see the tree of life, and eat of the never-fading fruits thereof: and when you come there you shall have white robes given you, and your walk and talk shall be every day with the King, even all the days of eternity. Rev. 2:7; 3:4,5; 22:5. There you shall not see again such things as you saw when you were in the lower region upon earth; to wit, sorrow, sickness, affliction, and death; "For the former things are passed away." Rev. 21:4. You are going now to Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob, and to the prophets, men that God hath taken away from the evil to come, and that are now "resting upon their beds, each one walking in his righteousness." The men then asked, What must we do in the holy place? To whom it was answered, You must there receive the comfort of all your toil, and have joy for all your sorrow; you must reap what you have sown, even the fruit of all your prayers, and tears, and sufferings for the King by the way. Gal. 6:7,8. In that place you must wear crowns of gold, and enjoy the perpetual sight and vision of the Holy One; for "there you shall see him as he is." 1 John, 3:2. There also you shall serve him continually with praise, with shouting and thanksgiving, whom you desired to serve in the world, though with much difficulty, because

of the infirmity of your flesh. There your eyes shall be delighted with seeing, and your ears with hearing the pleasant voice of the Mighty One. There you shall enjoy your friends again that are gone thither before you; and there you shall with joy receive even every one that follows into the holy place after you. There also you shall be clothed with glory and majesty, and put into an equipage fit to ride out with the King of Glory. When he shall come with sound of trumpet in the clouds, as upon the wings of the wind, you shall come with him; and when he shall sit upon the throne of judgment, you shall sit by him; yea, and when he shall pass sentence upon all the workers of iniquity, let them be angels or men, you also shall have a voice in that judgment, because they were his and your enemies. Also, when he shall again return to the city, you shall go too with sound of trumpet, and be ever with him. 1 Thess. 4:14-17; Jude 14,15; Dan. 7:9,10; 1 Cor. 6:2,3.

Now, while they were thus drawing towards the gate, behold a company of the heavenly host came out to meet them: to whom it was said by the other two shining ones, These are the men that have loved our Lord when they were in the world, and that have left all for his holy name; and he hath sent us to fetch them, and we have brought them thus far on their desired journey, that they may go in and look their Redeemer in the face with joy. Then the heavenly host gave a great shout, saying, "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb." Rev. 19:9. There came out also at this time to meet them several of the King's trumpeters, clothed in white and shining raiment, who, with melodious noises and loud, made even the heavens to echo with their sound. These trumpeters saluted

Christian and his fellow with ten thousand welcomes from the world; and this they did with shouting and sound of trumpet.

This done, they compassed them round on every side; some went before, some behind, and some on the right hand, and some on the left, (as it were to guard them through the upper regions,) continually sounding as they went, with melodious noise, in notes on high; so that the very sight was to them that could behold it as if heaven itself was come down to meet them. Thus, therefore, they walked on together; and, as they walked, ever and anon these trumpeters, even with joyful sound, would, by mixing their music with looks and gestures, still signify to Christian and his brother how welcome they were into their company, and with what gladness they came to meet them. And now were these two men, as it were, in heaven, before they came to it, being swallowed up with the sight of angels, and with hearing of their melodious notes. Here also they had the city itself in view; and they thought they heard all the bells therein to ring, to welcome them thereto. But, above all, the warm and joyful thoughts that they had about their own dwelling there with such company, and that for ever and ever; oh, by what tongue or pen can their glorious joy be expressed! Thus they came up to the gate.

Now when they were come up to the gate, there was written over it, in letters of gold, "blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

Then I saw in my dream, that the shining men bid them call at the gate: the which when they did, some from above looked over the gate, to wit, Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, etc., to

whom it was said, These pilgrims are come from the City of Destruction, for the love that they bear to the King of this place; and then the pilgrims gave in unto them each man his certificate, which they had received in the beginning: those therefore were carried in unto the King, who, when he had read them, said, Where are the men? To whom it was answered, They are standing without the gate. The King then commanded to open the gate, "That the righteous nation (said he) that keepeth the truth may enter in." Isa. 26:2.

Now I saw in my dream, that these two men went in at the gate; and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured; and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them; the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honor. Then I heard in my dream, that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, "enter ye into the joy of your lord."

I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, "blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb, for ever and ever."

Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and behold the city shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold; and in them walked many men, with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps, to sing praises withal.

There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord. And after that they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them.

Dr. Frankenstein lives!

By Hal Lindsey

It was only last week that I read what first appeared to be the kind of headline you see when walking out a supermarket checkout, like "Man Has Two-Headed Baby" or "B-52 Found on Mars."

But this headline, "Scientist Clones Himself," was real. Samuel Wood, a researcher at Stemagen Corporation in La Jolla, Calif., plucked cells from his skin and injected them into donated eggs that had been treated to remove their own genetic material.

The eggs developed into very early stage embryos that were genetically identical to the scientist's own DNA. It wasn't the first time that scientific pride overtook scientific ethics – a cloned human embryo was created at Newcastle University in Great Britain, although it survived just a few days.

Dr. Wood, on the other hand, cloned himself for the express purpose of extracting the resulting embryo's stem cells, killing "himself" in the process. It gets scarier and scarier: Two teams of researchers have been licensed to create a hybrid cow/human embryo for use in medical research to cure human

diseases. The license was granted because the scientists said there was a shortage of human embryos for research. The hybrids are 99 percent human and under the license would have to be destroyed within two weeks. In essence, the research teams have been granted a license to create a class of sub-humans to be grown as parts to be used as raw material for medical research.

Yesterday, the Associated Press published a story in which it claims: "U.S. Scientist Close to Creating Artificial Life."

In this particular episode of "Frankenstein Lives On," "celebrity scientist" J. Craig Venter's laboratory produced a study published in *Science* that trumpeted: "Through dedicated teamwork we have shown that building large genomes is now feasible and scalable so that important applications such as biofuels can be developed," said Hamilton Smith.

Ventner became a "celebrity scientist" by championing the creation of artificial life forms as a cure for human illness and global warming.

His researchers had "dedicated the last several years to designing and perfecting new methods and techniques that we believe will become widely used to advance the field of synthetic genomics," he added.

Here's what Ventner's team accomplished. They took the DNA from bacteria that causes venereal disease and inserted a synthetic genome sequence. "The chromosome," says the AP, "which Venter and his team has created is known as *Mycoplasma* laboratory and, in the final step of the process, will be transplanted into a living cell where it should 'take control,' effectively becoming a new life form."

The AP report reminds me of the joke in which a scientist challenged God, claiming that science could now replicate His work and create a man out of the "dust of the earth." This time, God accepted the challenge. The scientist showed up at the appointed place and time and began to gather together some clods of earth.

"No fair," God says. "You have to make your OWN dirt."

All the experiment did was manipulate existing life, in this case a bacteria that causes venereal disease. But the life existed before Ventner's team "created" it.

Am I the only one who thinks it strange that otherwise brilliant men could dedicate their lives to proving the scientific theory that no intelligent Creator was necessary to create life by trying – and failing – to create even the most simple life form from nothing – yet claim the real

McCoy was nothing more than the product of time and chance? The Apostle Paul described it like this: "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

One doesn't have to be a theologian to recognize the irony there. Even some scientists can no longer ignore the obvious. Observed Robert Jastrow, founder of the Goddard Space Center, "For the past 300 years, scientists have scaled the mountain of ignorance, and as they pull themselves over the final rock, they are greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries."

Or, as poet Joyce Kilmer put it, "Poems are made by fools like me. But only God can make a tree."

The Treasures in Heaven

Live your lives doing to others, as you would have them do to you.

There is no generosity in giving to those who can easily repay. Even misers lend money when they are certain of being repaid in full. Give to those who appear before you in need, to the destitute with no hope of repaying your gift. Practice forgiveness, even if such persons take advantage of your kind acts.

The poor, when they give, contribute more than the wealthy, who give from their abundance. The poor contribute from their need, and with great love often give what they cannot spare.

How nearly impossible it is for those who love money to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to squeeze through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom. And yet, what is impossible for man is made possible by God's mercy.

Do not hoard treasures on earth where moths and rust corrupt, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where neither moths nor rust corrupt, nor thieves break in to steal. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Some do good acts only when they are certain of an audience. For these, there is no reward. When you give, do not behave like the hypocrites, who ring bells in the temple and parade in the streets. These have their own reward.

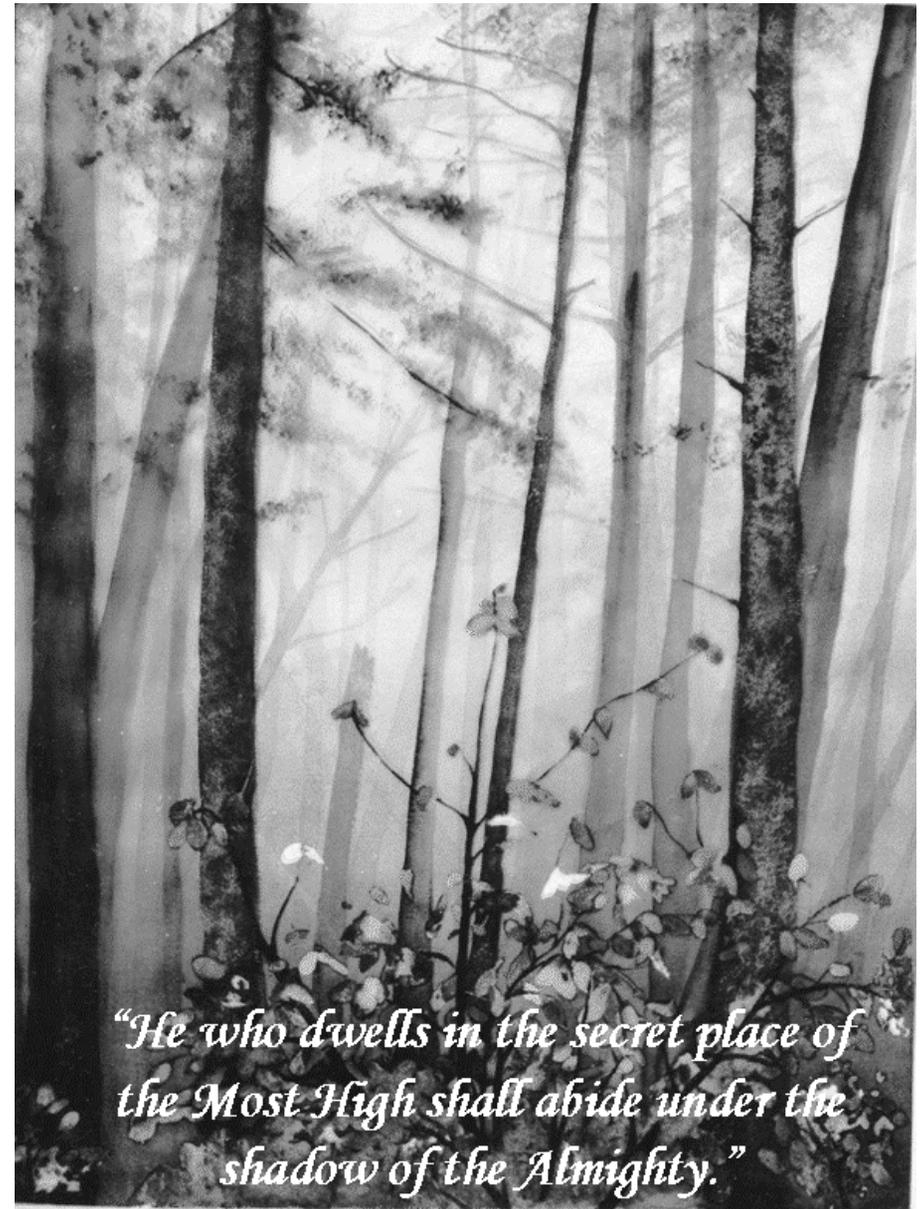
Do not even let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Give quietly and in secret; and your heavenly Father who sees such acts of kindness will reward you openly.

Learn to give and it will be given back to you abundantly, more than you can imagine, multiplied and overflowing. By the same measure that you distribute your generosity, your reward will be measured in return.

Once the investment of a rich man yielded a great profit. Considering his increased riches, the man said to himself, "What shall I do with my profits?" And he came to this decision: "I will pull down my old houses, and build ones that are greater. I have amassed immense treasure, and will rejoice in my wealth. I will be content for many years to come, and will spend my time eating, drinking, and being merry."

But God said to him: "Reckless man! Do you not know that this same night your soul will be demanded of you! When you are gone, whose will all these things be?"

Such is the fate of those who store up treasure for themselves, and are not rich in the possessions of God. What merit is there in attaining all that the world can offer, if in so doing you forfeit your soul? What can be given in exchange for your soul, or your place in the kingdom of heaven? -- Jesus



*"He who dwells in the secret place of
the Most High shall abide under the
shadow of the Almighty."*