

How Well Would You Be?

In 3 John 2 John says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." If someone wished this for you and the wish came true how healthy would you be? Jesus said to the church at Sardis, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." (Revelation 3:1). I am sure they would not want someone to wish for them that their physical health would match their spiritual condition.

What about you? If your physical health matched your spiritual health how well would you be? I know of some who are feeble and unable to move about that would be like those spoken of by John. They love God and strive to please and glorify Him in all they say and do. They would indeed be thrilled to "prosper and be in health" even as their soul prospers. However, there are others who would die though they are now in good physical health. Which would it be for you?

- by James Hahn

Baptism and Blood

The blood of Jesus saves us from our sins: the blood was "*shed for many for the remission of sins*" (Matthew 26:28). What does baptism have to do with the blood?

Peter preached, "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 2:38). Note that the expression "*for remission of sins*" is the same as in Matthew 26:28. Jesus shed His blood for the remission of sins. How can both be true?

The answer is in Romans 6:3-4: "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*" This tells us that when we are baptized into Christ we are baptized into His death. We contact Christ's blood when we obey the gospel and are baptized into Christ.

What saves us? The blood of Jesus. How do we avail ourselves of the blood? Through baptism into Christ. Is baptism a work of our own merit? No. We simply must submit to the will of God. Now, how can anyone deny the necessity of baptism?

- by T. Doy Moyer

You Expect Me to Believe That?

- In the beginning there was nothing. And suddenly for no reason nothing exploded and created everything. You expect me to believe that?

- At some point, by chance the right chemicals happened to float together at just the right moment to be struck by an electrical charge and become life. You expect me to believe that?

- Somewhere two non-human mothers each gave birth to a human child. They were born at the same time and in the same place, one was male and one was female. These two new "humans" gave birth to the human race. You expect me to believe that?

- One of the descendants of these first humans was born with a knowledge of right and wrong. No longer driven by instinct, this person suddenly was making decisions based on a morality for which there is no real explanation. You expect me to believe that?

I'm sorry. I don't have that much blind faith. It's all just too farfetched to be anything more than a fairy tale. I can't believe intelligent people claim it is "science" (cf. I Timothy 6:20).

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1: 1). I can believe that without stretching my imagination into the realm of the impossible. The universe was created by an all-powerful, all-knowing God. That I can believe!

- by Phil Gear

Being 'Picky'

The classified section of most local newspapers has been replaced almost entirely by 'online' ads. For instance, the old 'For Singles Only' section in the newspaper has been traded for online dating services, but the concept is still primarily the same. Individuals looking for companionship by members of the opposite sex make their posts there. Most of the ads are fairly similar. People describe themselves as "attractive, fun loving, emotionally well-balanced, and financially secure". They are seeking to meet a person who is "sincere, considerate, down-to-earth, affectionate, romantic, honest, well-adjusted, intelligent, ambitious, caring, sensitive, professional, gentle, etc." You get the idea fairly quickly that these folks are down right picky about the person they want to meet. Many of the ads specify age, height, weight, hair color, etc.

One interesting ad was reported to us. In listing the desired qualities of a prospective mate, this one said, "height - average; eyes - no more than two; hair - not required"! While most ads were very picky, this one was not at all.

These two extremes can illustrate a point. In matters relating to this life folks are generally very picky. They know what they want, and are not timid about demanding it. Why is it that in religion these same folks will allow anything and everything? If things of this world deserve careful attention, why not the things that pertain to the world which is to come? And what about the one who had no requirements at all? With such standards anyone can find a mate, but who would want him/her? We need to be picky about some things. Religion is one of those things (Col. 3:17). Think!

- by Greg Gwin