

Ensure fellowship with God through 1 John 1:9

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

With the July 4th 2006 Bible conference in mind:

Subject: LAUS DEO

On the aluminum cap, atop the Washington Monument in Washington, DC, are displayed two words: Laus Deo.

No one can see these words. In fact, most visitors to the monument are totally unaware they are even there.

These words have been there for many years; they are 555 feet, 5.125 inches up, perched atop the monument, facing skyward, to the Father of our nation, overlooking the 69 square miles which comprise the District of Columbia, capital of the United States of America.

Laus Deo! The translation? "Praise be to God!"

Though construction of this giant obelisk began in 1848, when James Polk was President of the United States, it was not until 1888 that the monument was inaugurated and opened to the public.

It took twenty-five years to finally cap the memorial with a tribute to the Father of our nation, Laus Deo, Praise be to God!"

From atop this magnificent granite and marble structure, visitors may take in the beautiful panoramic view of the city with its division into four major segments. From that vantage point, one can also easily see the original plan of the designer, Pierre Charles l'Enfant. . . a perfect cross imposed upon the landscape, with the White House to the north, the Jefferson Memorial is to the south, the Capitol to the east and the Lincoln Memorial to the west.

Within the monument itself are 898 steps and 50 landings. As one climbs the steps and pauses at the landings the memorial stones share a message. On the 12th Landing is a prayer offered by the City of Baltimore; on the 20th is a memorial presented by Chinese Christians; on the 24th a presentation made by Sunday School children from New York and Philadelphia quoting Proverbs 10:7, Luke 18:16 and Proverbs 22:6.

When the cornerstone of the Washington Monument was laid on July 4th 1848, deposited within it were many items including the Holy Bible presented by the Bible Society. Such was the discipline, the moral direction, and the spiritual mood given by the founder and first President of our unique democracy "One Nation, Under God."

Washington's prayer for America reads,

"Almighty God, We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be **pleased** to dispose us all to do

justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

When one stops to observe the inscriptions found in public places all over our nation's capitol, he or she will easily find the signature of God, as it is unmistakably inscribed everywhere you look. You may forget the width and height of "Laus Deo," its location, or the architects but no one who reads this will be able to forget its meaning, or these words: "[Unless the Lord builds the house its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.](#)" (**Psalm 127: 1**)

<http://www.fathershands.com/lausdeo/>



An illustration of a deteriorating influence of the PIVOT.

A call for believers to start answering the call to fulfill their responsibilities as CABPs.

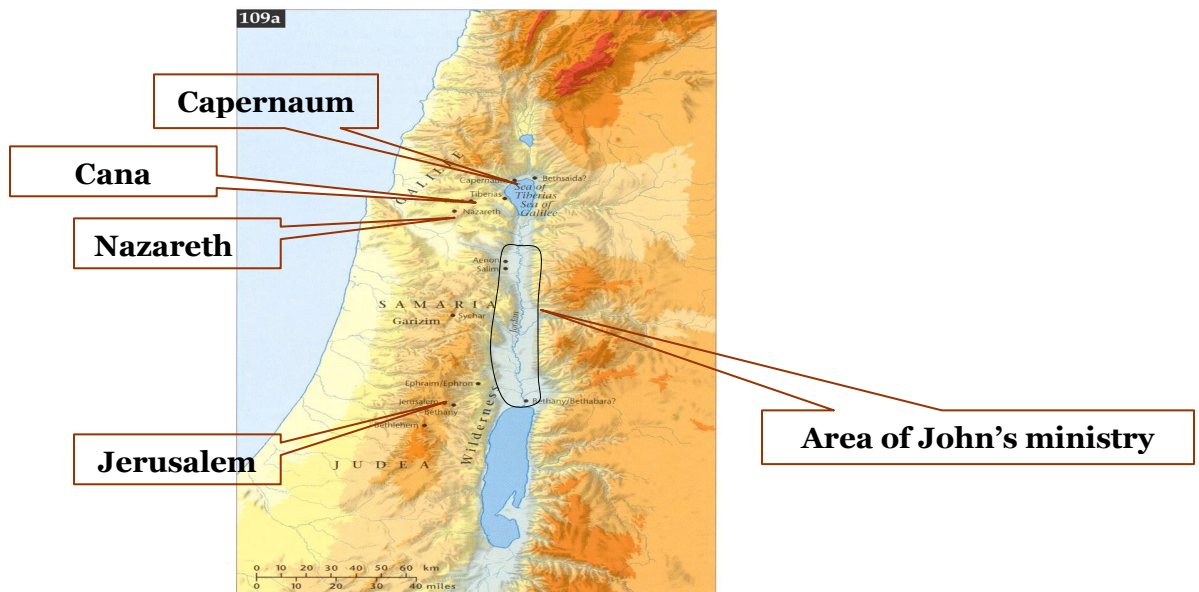
In Matthew's Gospel we noted a time gap between Matt 4:11 and 12. That is why we have turned to John's Gospel to fill in that gap.

Matt 4:11 – We have the conclusion of the Lord's wilderness testing.

Matt 4:12 – We observe the Lord withdrawing into Galilee upon hearing that John the Baptist (aka John the Baptizer) was arrested.

Historical Chronology between Matt 4:11 and 12 (Review)

1. Jesus returns to Judea after the wilderness testing and John [the Herald] identifies Him as the promised Messiah (John 1:29-36).
2. Christ calls disciples and travels to Galilee (John 1:37-49).
(*Not the same as His withdrawal to Galilee in Mt 4:12*)
 - Andrew and John - - vv. 37-39
 - Peter - - vv. 40-42
 - Philip - - vs. 43
 - Nathanael - - vv. 45-49
3. First miracle was at the wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2:1-11).
4. Christ travels to Capernaum from the wedding feast with Mary, His half brothers and the disciples (John 2:12).
 - Half brothers:
 - James
 - Joseph
 - Judas
 - Simon
5. Christ travels to Jerusalem for the Feast of Passover and drives the moneychangers and their animals out of the temple (John 2:13-21).
 - Different temple cleansing than mentioned in other gospels
 - Matt 21:12; Mark 11:15; Luke 19:45-48
 - A sign of His Messianic authority
 - Rejected by the religious leaders



John 2:23 – Continued ministry of Christ, in Jerusalem, after He drove everyone out of the temple. (23) Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed (believed that He was Messiah) in His name, observing His signs (signs pointing to the fact that He was Israel’s Messiah) which He was doing.

- 6. He meets Nicodemus (a Pharisee) and communicates that spiritual regeneration is a requirement to enter the kingdom (John 3:1-21).
- Conversation between Nicodemus and the Lord Jesus Christ during the week He spent in Jerusalem.
- Nicodemus was a member of the council of 70 high priests called the Sanhedrin. He came to visit the Lord under the cover of darkness.

John 3:1-20

(1) Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews;

(2) this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

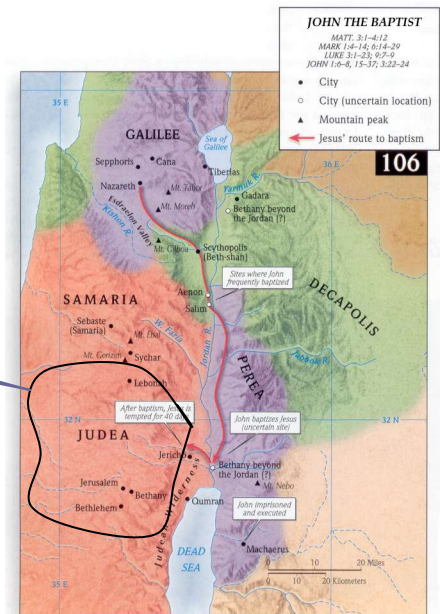
Corrected Translation: Teacher, we (he and a few of his peers) know that You have come from God (divine origin) a teacher (they recognized that Jesus was sent by God to teach the nation); because no one can do these signs **that You are doing** unless God is with him."

- They have concluded that God was on the side of Jesus and that Jesus had a divine origin – BUT THAT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH – they are still one step shy of faith in Him as their Messiah.
 - Nicodemus is a ruler of the Jews
 - ἄρχων – ARCHON – “Ruler” of the Jews
 - Indicates he belonged to the 70 member council composed of high priests who had jurisdiction over **Judea**
 - He, along with a few friends, had concluded that Jesus had a divine origin, because of the signs He was doing during the week He spent in Jerusalem.

Area of **Judea** in which the Sanhedrin had their authority.

In verse 3, the Lord replies - -

(3) Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."



Prerequisite for seeing the kingdom of God is to be **born again!**

1st birth - physical birth
 2nd birth - spiritual birth

- The Lord’s reply reveals the reason Nicodemus had paid Him a visit.
- Nicodemus wanted to confirm he would enter the kingdom of God, so the Lord told him the prerequisite – spiritual regeneration.
 - Nicodemus has to undergo a washing – a spiritual washing.
 - This is contrary to what Nicodemus and the Sanhedrin believed.

The Sanhedrin continued to believe that entrance into Messiah’s kingdom was based upon two things:

- 1. Being a Physical descendent of Abraham.
- 2. Personal righteousness by obedience to the Law.

- The Lord destroys this concept with the fact that entrance into His kingdom is predicated on being born again.

In verse 4 Nicodemus is very condescending to the Lord.

(4) Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"

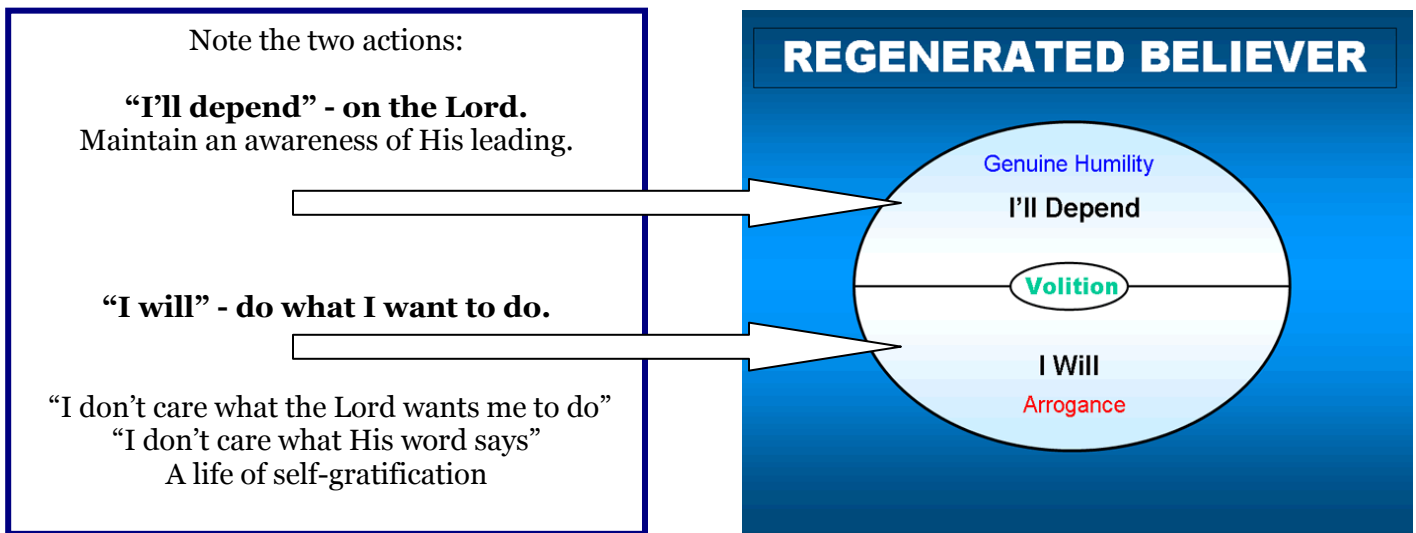
(5) Jesus answered (reiterating the prerequisite), "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of **water** and the **Spirit** he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- Physical birth begets physical life + OSN = spiritual death
Physically alive but spiritually dead!
- Spiritual birth begets spiritual life + new nature (*plus OSN plus +R plus eternal life*)

Inherent in death is separation.

If your parent has died – or your spouse – you are separated from that person.

- The death of an unbeliever is a separation of the body (mortal) and the soul (immortal).



As a believer you have the ability to choose to function on either side – the unbeliever does not! Apart from salvation, the only stabilizer is adherence to the four divine institutions: Volition, Marriage, Family, & Nationalism (Gen. 1-11).

The unbeliever has no counterbalance to the old sin nature.
The best that an unbeliever can do is –R (“filthy rags” of **Isa. 64:6**).

This is explained to Nicodemus in verse 6, but he is dumbfounded in verse 7. The Lord uses nature as an example to explain that the **how** is not important in spiritual birth -

(6) "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

(7) "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

(8) "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

In verse 9, Nicodemus is having a tough time comprehending Christ's words.

(9) Nicodemus said to Him, "**How can these things be?**"

(10) Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?"

(11) "Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.

- Nicodemus has rejected the requirement of being born again (spiritual regeneration) for entrance into Messiah's kingdom. WHY?
 - To what have Nicodemus and the religious leaders been holding for entrance into the kingdom? WORKS - and the fact that they are physical descendants of Abraham.

You cannot get to heaven by being a good person!

There are not *good* people in heaven – only sinners who get to heaven
by the work of another, Jesus Christ.

Spiritual regeneration is by grace through faith – not as a result of works of righteousness or heredity.

(12) "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

In verse 13, the Lord begins to communicate the one requirement to be born again.

(13) "No one has ascended into heaven, but He (Jesus Christ) who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.

(14) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be **lifted up**;

This is a reference to Jesus Christ being lifted up on the cross.

- Jesus knows where He is going – He knows that He will be rejected.
- Jesus is a testimony to the spiritual life – He lived the same spiritual life that we live today!
- In light of the fact that He knew He would be rejected, His desire was to fulfill the will of the Father:
 - Facing scorn
 - Facing rejection
 - Facing torture and persecution, in order to do what God wanted Him to do.

That is how powerful YOUR spiritual life is today!

(15) so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

- What is the Lord doing here?
 - He is communicating the one prerequisite for being born again - faith in Him alone.
- He uses an example that is well known to Nicodemus from the Torah in **Numbers 21:6**.

Remember who Nicodemus is –

- A Pharisee
- An ARCHON of the Jews
- A member of the 70 member council – the Sanhedrin
- A Scribe of the Law – a teacher of it – he knows the Torah

Nicodemus visited Christ that night to verify that he was getting into the kingdom of Heaven.


No one will enter Heaven apart from being born again.

Numbers 21:6-8

(6) The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

The people of Israel complained against the Lord and Moses, accusing them of leading them to the wilderness to kill them! They wanted to return to Egypt.

When things get tough in the spiritual life many people want to go back – back to a time when things were not as bad!

(7) So the people came to Moses and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against the LORD and you; intercede with the LORD, that He may remove the serpents from us." And Moses interceded for the people.  They now want Moses to intercede on their behalf, in order for him to prevent God's judgment from falling on them.

Principles:

1. Sin requires judgment, because of the integrity of God.
2. Therefore, God judges sin.
3. What the righteousness of God demands, the justice of God executes.
 - When righteousness is violated, righteousness demands judgment.
 - When righteousness is satisfied, righteousness demands blessing.

In this case, sin has violated righteousness; therefore, righteousness demands judgment. That judgment is being executed on the people in the form of fiery snakes.

What was the sin in this case? GOSSIP – a sin of the tongue.

“The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people”

The children of Israel recognize that they sinned

- Sin of the tongue in this case - they spoke against the Lord and Moses.

They ask Moses to pray for them and how does Moses respond?

- You treated me poorly, so why should I intercede for you – NO

Moses is executing the spiritual life in the dispensation in which he is living. “And Moses interceded for the people.”

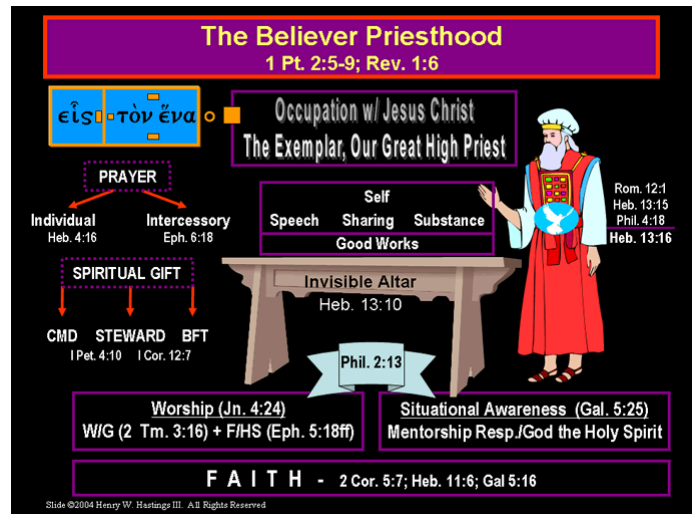
POD: Focusing on people is counterproductive to executing the spiritual life.

- It does not matter how people treat you.
- It is not an excuse for failing to fulfill the responsibilities of the CABP.

Responsibilities of CABP

- **Worship** the Lord (protocols).
- Maintain **situational awareness** to everything God the H/S was sent into your life to do and depend upon those things.
- Then **Phil 2:13** becomes operational.
- You will be motivated by **love** for your Savior and what He has done for you.
- Five sacrifices of the believer priesthood are speech, sharing, good works, self, and substance.

As goes the believer so goes the nation.



- Moses prays for the Israelites, long and fervently, interceding to the Lord on their behalf.
- The Lord answers his prayer.

(8) Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard; and it shall come about, that **everyone who is bitten**, when he looks at it, he will live."

Even though they have been bitten with poisonous venom, they will live. All they have to do is look at the serpent on the standard.

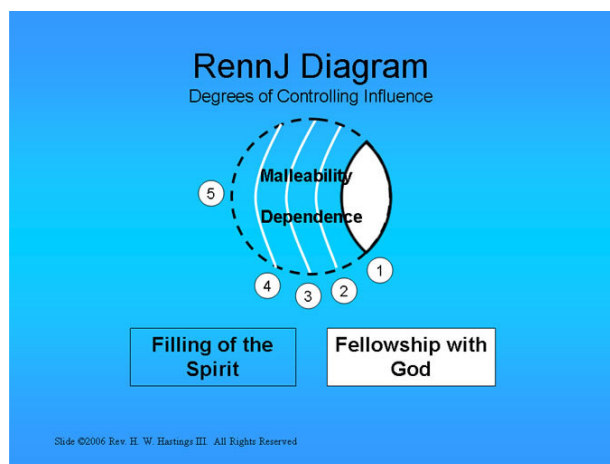
- **Looking** – a mere glance is analogous to **faith** – has no merit in it.
- All one has to do is look.
- That exemplifies faith in God's grace solution.

Problem: The people had been bitten with sin and that sin demanded judgment.

- The judgment was venomous snake bites that resulted in death.
- All sin results in death.

Romans 8:13

(13) for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.



Galatians 5:16 "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you **will not** carry out the desire of the flesh." Inherent in a walk by the Spirit is a moment-by-moment **dependence** on the Spirit.

The spiritual life is a supernatural life with a supernatural means of execution.

Anything the unbeliever can do is not the spiritual way of life.

The life of walking by the Spirit with doctrine in your soul is an experience. It requires thinking and evaluation with the word of God. When God the Holy Spirit has got a hold of you, and he is providing a controlling influence on you to go where God wants you go and to do and be what God wants, you don't need to be worried about anything else.

Problem - The people had been bitten with sin and that sin resulted in the judgment of venomous death.

Solution – God, in His love, provided a grace solution.

- Even though you are a sinner and are going to die (deserving death because of sin), you can live.
- That life is not by anything you can do that is meritorious.
- Just as the Israelites' deliverance was simple - "**LOOK,**" so ours is simple - "**FAITH.**"

So what did Moses do? Moses did what God told him to do – how simple!

Numbers 21:9

(9) And Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on the standard; and it came about, that if a serpent bit any man . . .

Judgment continued, just as it does with the human race.

- We are bitten with sin from conception.
- We are all judged at physical birth.
- We are judged by spiritual death, separated from God, and hopeless (in ourselves) to do anything about it.

. . . when he looked to the bronze serpent (the grace solution through faith), he lived.

Is it any different for us today?

- All of us have been bitten by sin through the transmission of an OSN.
- All of us are judged at physical birth resulting in spiritual death.
- All of us remain under that judgment until it is lifted.



How is it lifted? Only by God's solution, **faith in Christ**, producing spiritual regeneration.

Nicodemus should finally understand - -

- (14) "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be **lifted up**;
- (15) so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

Nicodemus knows exactly what the Lord is communicating to him!

Jesus is saying I am the Son of Man and I will be lifted up on a standard just like the bronze serpent.

- That standard is the cross.
- You just have look to Christ in faith.
- That is the moment you will be born of the Spirit.

Christ continues to talk about the solution - -

John 3:16-20

(16) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

(17) "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world. . .

At the Second Advent He will be sent to judge the world!

This First Advent of the Son was not to pass judgment.

... but that the world might be saved through Him.

(18) "He who believes in Him is not judged (because the judgment has been lifted – **Rom 8:1**); he who does not believe has been judged already, **because he has not believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Christ is communicating to Nicodemus that “unless you trust in Me you are not getting into My Kingdom.”

(19) "This is the judgment, that the **Light** (Jesus Christ) has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

People in darkness like sinning. They have no counter-balances.

(20) "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light **for fear that his deeds will be exposed.**

- People do not like to have their sin exposed.
- The problem is that **all our sins are exposed before the light of His countenance.**
- *Good people* don't go to Heaven – only trusting in the work of Christ on the cross will get you into Heaven.

For the Christian who needs forgiveness and purification from sins all you have to do is confess them and move on.

On the other hand, for those who have not believed, the answer is faith alone in Christ alone!



*I'm a sinner – Christ died for sinners – Christ died for me – I am trusting alone in Him to get to Heaven.
Amen!*

All Scriptures quoted are from New American Standard unless otherwise noted.