

# *Bryan Station Baptist Church*

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## **'The God Who Works While We Wait For Him'**

By the late C. D. Cole



"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him" (Isa. 64:4).



From the foundation of the world men, left to themselves, have never imagined what God is like. The best representation men have had to offer for God have been terrible caricatures. In their representations of God men have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to fourfooted beasts, and even to creeping things. They have confounded God with His creation. Among the gods of the heathen there has never been one that bore any resemblance to the God of the Bible. Men never dreamed of such a God as ours who loves them and is Almighty and All-wise in His care for them. They have never known anything of the God who works wonders while they wait.

You will recall that great day on Mt. Carmel when Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to a demonstration as to who was the true God. They set up their altars and Elijah proposed that they have their first innings. You pray first and the God who answereth by fire, let Him be God. You remember what they did. They cried aloud, "O Baal, hear us." And in desperation they cut themselves until they were blood-soaked. And

you remember, too, how Elijah mocked them and urged them to cry a little louder; that their god might be asleep or away on a journey. They wanted their false gods to work for them, but there was no voice or hand to respond to their frantic cries. Then when Elijah placed the sacrifice on his altar and made it as hard as possible for the true God to answer by fire, he prayed to the God who works, and fire fell from heaven and licked up the water and consumed the sacrifice. Then the prophets of Baal fell on their faces and said, "Jehovah, He is God." Yes, Jehovah is the Christian's God, but how few professing Christians know much about Him or give Him much recognition.

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WAIT FOR GOD?

1. It does not mean to substitute idleness for necessary and legitimate labour. It does not even mean to substitute prayer for work. We are to work and pray while we wait. The farmer breaks the soil; he harrows it and sows and then cultivates it, and while doing all this, he waits for God to give the harvest. The doctor uses all the skill

he has for the cure of his patient, but he must wait for God to heal. The preacher prays as he witnesses to the lost, but he has to wait for God to save. Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but God has to give the increase. I have known people to sit down and do nothing and say they were waiting upon God. Parents do this way with their children. They never witness to them about the Lord—they seem to be afraid of their own children—and then say they are waiting upon the Lord to save them. Wives do this way with their husbands. They say they are waiting upon the Lord to save them, but they never witness to them—they seem to be afraid to invite them to go with them to church—they compromise their holy religion and let their husbands take them to forbidden places—and then say they are waiting upon God to save them. But this is far from waiting upon God in the true sense. You are not waiting upon God when you are in the path of disobedience.

2. To wait for God involves the recognition of our own limitations. It is to realize and say that I have done all that I can do, but this is not enough. If God does not work all our work will avail nothing. We cannot get our daily bread by all our working; nor can we get it without our working. But we can as easily get it without our working as we can without His working.

Someone in the home is ill—suddenly and seriously ill. To our limit we do all we can. But we have sent for the physician and when we have done all we know to do, we say, "Well, there is nothing more we can do; we must wait for the doctor." We recognize our limitations and wait for the expert—the man skilled in healing. But the doctor has his limitations, too. You have heard the doctor say, when he had done all he could, that the case is in the hands of God—we can only wait for Him.

3. To wait for God also involves the fact that He has no limitations. He is adequate to every occasion. There are no crises with Him. There are no difficult cases for Him. There is nothing impossible with Him. This is a good thought for the dying hour. When life is in the balance and the doctor is at his wit's end, we can feel that there is nothing too much for Him who is the resurrection and the life. Let this disease do its worst; let death turn this body into a dust heap; He can raise it from the grave, and fashion it like unto His glorious body.

This is a good thought for any hour. Whatever the problem is that confronts you, if you are right with God and have the right attitude towards Him and the spirit of obedience to His will, you can wait for Him who worketh for him that waiteth for Him.

Here is the road to the highway of faith.

If you want great faith, then you must have a great God. No man's faith can be stronger than his God.

And Jehovah is God everywhere. He is supreme in every realm. He is not confined to any particular place or limited by any set of circumstances. He is the Sovereign God who makes all things work together for good to them that love Him.

There is an ad that says of a certain firm. "We shop for you in all the world." There was pictured a map of the world. And the ad further stated, "We have buyers everywhere, in India, China, Africa, in Europe, in America—everywhere. We bring things from afar to your door-step, and deliver them to you. We shop for you in all the world." And so does God. To those who love Him and wait for Him, His ships, like Solomon's ships of Tarshish which brought gold, and silver and apes and peacocks—God's ships of promise will come freighted with blessings from everywhere as may be necessary to fulfill all His purpose concerning you.

"There's never a heartache and never a groan,  
Never a tear-drop, and never a moan;  
Never a danger, but there on His throne,  
Moment by moment He thinks of his own."



**What various hindrances we meet  
In coming to the mercy-seat!  
Yet who, that knows the worth of prayer,  
But wishes to be often there?**

**Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;  
Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright;  
And Satan trembles when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees.**

**Have you no words? Ah! think again,  
Words flow apace when you complain,  
And fill your fellow-creature's ear,  
With the sad tale of all your care.**

**Were half the breath, thus vainly spent,  
To Heaven in supplication sent,  
Your cheerful song would oftener be,  
"Hear what the Lord has done for me!"**

—William Cowper, 1779

# Have I An Immortal Soul?

## AM I AN ENDLESS BEING?

### THE MATERIALIST.

- A charge to keep I have;
- A God to glorify;
- A never-dying soul to save,
- And fit it for the skies.

There are many, particularly the materialist, who deny this, and would pull man down to the level of the beasts. "When we are dead we are done for!" they exclaim.

### A CORRECTION.

Strictly speaking, we neither have souls nor immortal souls.

1. We have not a soul for we are souls (Gen. 2:7). Man is a soul and has a body.
2. Immortality is only used in the Bible in connection with our bodies (I Cor. 15:53-54). Instead of, "Have I an immortal soul?" it is better to ask, "Am I an endless being?"
3. Of course, we know full well what is meant, and we use the phrase.

### SOME OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

1. "Doctors have dissected dead bodies, and have not found a single trace of a soul. Answer: The bird had flown; they had only dissected an empty cage.
2. "At the point of death they watched, but never saw anything leave the body." Answer: Their inability to see is no proof of lack of existence.
3. "But no one has ever seen a soul!" Answer: The world is constantly using this phrase. (Pictures can lack "souls"; business men say of listless employees: they "put no soul into their work," etc.)

### SOME PROOFS STATED.

1. Universal Belief in personal immortality amongst all nations of all time. Whence comes this universal belief—It is a part of our very nature.
2. Universal Instinct within man which recoils from the "dead and done with" theory. Man has been likened to a smoking cigar, with nothing but ash at the end of it. Instinct within us revolts from such a view.
3. Universal Conscience. Man is conscious that his body is not his real self.

(1) Brain cells change every seven years, yet we remember events 40 or more years ago quite clearly. How is this?

(2) That the immaterial is as real as the material. Illustration: "The caress in which a baby strokes its mother's face is a physical thing, and its force might be expressed in so many ounces of soft matter at a certain temperature, moving across the face at a certain

speed. But in the mother's heart it becomes transformed unto something which cannot be expressed in any such terms, the glow of love. Our inner life consists of thoughts, feelings, and desires, none of which are material, hence we say that the real self or soul is something which is not material."

4. Universal recognition of the immeasurable gap between man and the beasts.

(1) Intelligence in man is vastly superior to the most intelligent creature.

(2) Language of a kind appears to exist amongst animals, but only in man has it been developed to be a medium of complex thought.

(3) Self consciousness. Animals have consciousness, i.e., they are aware of feelings of pleasure or pain, but there is no evidence of self-consciousness, i.e., no evidence that they are able to detach themselves as distinct and separate from the rest of the universe.

(4) Love of the beautiful. A dog or horse never sees the beauty of the landscape. Man loves the beautiful in nature.

(5) Affection. Animals have no capacity for the complex emotions of human life.

(6) Complex desires. The animals are satisfied by the supplying of mere bodily needs, but men are not. Why?

(7) Capability for awe and worship. Man alone is capable of wonder, awe and worship.

5. If death ends all, human life becomes meaningless. Much of the suffering of life appears cruel, and unjust if there is no future in which the injustices of the present will be redressed.

### SCRIPTURAL DECLARATIONS.

1. Man made in Image of God (Gen. 1:26). If man's life be derived from God, it is hardly conceivable that it can end with death!

2. Origin of Word "Soul". An Icelandic word for the sea: mighty, mysterious, unfathomable. The soul is all this and more.

3. Soul in Scripture Has a Threefold Meaning.

(1) Living man (Gen. 46:27).

(2) Man's own self (Luke 12:19).

(3) The moral and spiritual part of man (I Peter 2:11 and 25).

4. Man a Trinity of Being. I Thess. 5:23. NOTE:

(1) Spirit and soul are not identical, as they are divisible (Heb. 4:12).

(2) Though God is Spirit, yet He speaks of Himself as possessing also a soul (Matt. 12:18).

(3) Note I Thess. 5:23. The spirit is the God-conscious part of man; the soul is the self-conscious part; and the body is the sense-conscious part of man.

—NEWS & TRUTHS