

They (Zacharias and Elizabeth) were both righteous (Old Testament Saints) in the sight of God, walking blamelessly (following God’s Protocol Plan) in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord

Luke 1:6

To be righteous in the age of Israel was to be made that way by God, having believed in the promises of God set forth by the Law. At the point of faith in the promise of God, one would be credited with the righteousness and be entered into an eternal right relationship with the Lord. That position could never be lost regardless of the failure on the part of the saint.

Walking blamelessly however is an option of the believer. The believer in Yahweh in the age of Israel, as we do now in the Church age, possess the option to make daily decisions to learn, to meditate on the doctrines and precepts of God; as born again believers we possess the option to not only be hearers of the word but doers as well. We can serve the Lord, understanding what is expected of us. In short the believer knows what to do by way of protocol and he does it.

Zacharias and Elizabeth followed the precise protocol set by God. They maintained their walk with the Lord as a married couple day in and day out. Though there were pressures in the life (they were childless and past child bearing years) they maintained their priorities before God; they followed God’s divine standard operating procedure.

Principle of Doctrine:

1. Ours, as believers, is not always the extraordinary ministries that can be pointed to and hailed as, “doing for God,”

Not every believer is called to be a Billy Graham, to be a pastor like D.L. Moody; to go to a missionary field. Not everyone is called to do such a ministry that is visible for the world to see.

2. God seeks obedience by all who are called; to be consistent in maintaining spiritual priorities and following divine protocol.
3. Because Zacharias and Elizabeth did so, they were prepared for the extraordinary when it came.

Protocol is the believer’s code of conduct. Protocol is doing a right thing in a right way and putting first things first by way of established procedure. Indecently that procedure was not established through a system of religion or denominationalism, but by God Himself and was revealed to Zacharias and Elizabeth through the Law and to you and me as church age believers in the New Testament scriptures.

Point of Doctrine: Ignorance

1. Ignorance of bible doctrine is ignorance of God’s protocol plan.
2. A willful ignorance of God’s divine protocol is the rejection of that protocol by the believer by default.
3. Where the protocol plan of God is rejected, the believer will often seek to substitute his own plan more to his liking.
 - a. Religion
 - b. Morality
 - c. Sincerity
 - d. Works
 - e. Emotionalism
 - f. Behavioral modification
 - g. Sacrificial living
 - h. Crusaderism
4. To reject God’s protocol plan and substitute one’s own initiative is an expression of Arrogance.

5. Arrogance is a lofty view of self placing emphasizes on one's own will plan and purpose over that of God's.

6. Arrogance is a sin and therefore regardless of how sincere and good intentioned the believer might be, he is walking in darkness rather than in the only environment by which one is able to serve and honors the Lord.

Such rejection and substitution is found in Matthew

Matthew 7:21-23 _____

Though the one who is made righteous will not lose one's own salvation, the one who fails to follow God's protocol plan will experience great loss at the Judgment seat of Christ where all the works of the believer will be evaluated (2 Corinthians 5:10). The loser believer will suffer loss of inheritance rewards and decorations.

The believer will forever be in heaven, but will have missed out on the best of the best.

Reward for Faithfulness.

Point of Doctrine: God uses prepared believers

In the life of Zacharias and Elizabeth there was the "wow" factor which was presented to two faithful Old Testament Saints.

Gabriel who was sent by God, shows up inside the temple where there was only suppose to be the priest by himself to bring the message from God.

Luke 1:8-17 _____

Zacharias and Elizabeth were nobody extraordinarily special in the average observer's eyes. Their neighbors and those that knew them would probably say that they were a quiet, humble couple. He was a priest in the Abijah division of priests, she was a common elderly lady, both lived a quiet life day to day. They had no family apart from themselves for they were childless.

But because they followed the prescribed protocol, they were malleable to God's will, plan and purpose for their lives and when it came time for God to use them in an extraordinary way, they were in the right place at the right time when God would provide for them the "Wow Factor."

The Wow factor:

1. God breaks his 400 year silence by sending a message through the Angel Gabriel to Zacharias while serving in the temple.
2. The wife, Elizabeth in her old age will bear a son
3. This son would bring great Joy in the life of Zacharias and Elizabeth because he would be a servant of the Lord.
4. Zacharias and Elizabeth would go from being suspect of a curse from God to great blessing from God.

Remember that going Childless was viewed upon culturally as being a curse from God. The neighbors would talk and they would wonder from time to time what secret sin the two might be covering that elicited such a curse from God as going childless. The people may have even questioned the fact that Zacharias was permitted to go into the temple at all.

Being childless, the two possessed no way to carry on a family legacy. They would die and be forgotten.

5. But because of their faithfulness their names would go down throughout history and all eternity on the pages of scripture.

Zacharias and Elizabeth lived in a time where the Protocol demanded first Faithfulness and then blessing.

You and I as believers in Christ live in the church age, the age of Grace where we are first blessed and as a response to what God has already done for us we do.

Worthy of praise and glorification (correct translation) **is God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.**

Ephesians 1:3

Our blessing in regards to inheritance is laid up for us in heaven and unlike Zacharias and Elizabeth our Wow factor need not be a surprise though we could never imagine all that God has waiting for us.

The Wow Factor for the Church age believer.

As believers, like Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth we should also live quiet and humble lives.

And to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands just as we commanded you,

1 Thessalonians 4:11

Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good.

2 Thessalonians 3:14

Such are they who would live quiet lives, who plugs along day in and day out. They maintain their spiritual priorities before God. They are persistence and consistent with regards to their walk with the Lord. They continue to grow in grace and in

knowledge of the Lord, they hear and do God's word. Such believers may go through life without notice and without themselves experiencing an external wow factor from God, but will certainly experience it in the eternity to come.

1. The permission from God to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God. (Revelation 2:7)
2. Crown of life (Revelation 2:10)
3. Not be hurt by the second death, (Works that are not burned up at the Judgment seat of Christ). (Revelation 2:11)
4. To eat some of the Hidden manna (Revelation 2:17)
5. A stone with a new name written on it which only the possessor knows. (Revelation 2:17)
6. Authority over Nations (Revelation 2:26-27)
7. The order of the Morning Star (Revelation 2:28)
8. The over comers (spiritual victors) will be presented by the Son to the Father and His angels. (Revelation 3:5)
9. The bowing down of the enemies of God's children before the ones that God loves. (Revelation 3:9)
10. The keeping from the hour of testing (Revelation 3:10)
11. Clothed in white Garments, a distinctive uniform of Glory (Revelation 3:4)
12. Be made a pillar in the temple of God. (Revelation 3:12)
13. Permission to sit down with the Lord Jesus Christ on His throne as He Himself is now seated at the right hand of the Father. (Revelation 3:21)

These are but a few of the blessings that you and I have been blessed up front with, but the inheritance here is contingent upon each of our individual

adherence to divine protocol. For each of these, demand that we be over comers.

But what is it that we are to overcome?

1. The world (Satan's Kosmic System)
(Matthew 13:22; 1 John 2:15; Romans 12:2)
2. Our adversary the devil (Ephesians 4:27;
Eph 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8 James 4:7)
3. the Sin Nature (the flesh) (Galatians 5:16-
17; Romans 13:14; Ephesians 2:3)

These are the three enemies that each of us must face in the battle for the soul.

As tough enemies as these are, our dependence is upon the one who has already conquered and is greater than any of our enemies, visible or invisible.

You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

1 John 4:4

We cannot imagine all that God has for us laid up in heaven but that can be easily lost forever. There are those universal blessings that every believer will receive in heaven as members of the royal family of God but there are those eternal rewards that are for the few who love Him beyond those universal rewards.

But yet we can lose all of this if we fail to adhere to the divine protocol of God for the believer in time.

We have every opportunity provided by God to experience the Wow Factor that He has made available to those who love Him.

but just as it is written, things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who Love Him"

1 Corinthians 2:9

Spiritual Recovery Procedure

The closer that we draw near to the Lord the more we see ourselves as we really are in God's light.

When we become honest with ourselves we recognize our own unworthiness, our own personal failures and inability to live a life free from that which dishonors the one we love. This is called humility.

Yes, it is a worthy goal to strive toward the objective of sinless perfection as did the Apostle Paul;

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead.

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus

Philippians 3:13-14

But at the same time we know that we'll continually fall short.

God knows this as well. He knows our every flaw and our every defect, but he also looks down and sees His very own righteousness that covers our sinfulness.

We will fail and we will continually do so while in the body. We will stumble, we will fall, we will at times be deceived into sinning and other times we will succumb knowingly to temptation.

But as it was with the Father of the protocol son, the Lord will take us back each and every time and restore to us to that which we stepped away from because of disobedience.

But it will require that we adhere to the protocol plan set forth by God if we are to step back into the light, resume our spiritual lives and press forward to the place where we have the opportunity will experience the divine Wow Factor of God.