

The Way of Truth

Vol. 81

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

No. 5

JUNE - JULY 2023

**Have You Experienced
God's Mercy?**

Message begins on page 3

THE SENSES OF THE INNER MAN

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, *That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.*”

—Ephesians 3:14-16.

IN THIS editorial I would like to bring to your mind a few thoughts about the senses of the inner man spoken of in verse 16.

The inner man is the part of man that is most neglected. People seem infatuated with the outward man, the physical man. But Beloved, I want you to know that man is two-fold. There is more to man than just the body. Inside this house of clay lives a soul. Every human being is a living soul. Ecclesiastes 12 tells us that when we die, our body returns to the dust from whence it came and our spirit returns to God who gave it. When I speak of the inner man, and when the Bible speaks of the inner man, it is speaking of the soul of man, the real man, the eternal man. II Corinthians 4:16 tells us that *the outward man perishes day by day, but the inward man is renewed day by day*. The outward man perishes, but the inward man is renewed.

I want us to focus on that inward man. I want us to get our eyes off from the physical and into the real important part of man. It is true that our body is the temple of the inner man, and therefore it is important. But undue attention on the exterior to the neglect of the interior is wrong, and the Bible speaks against undue attention to the outward man. Appearances sometimes are deceiving. As we read in I Samuel, chapter 16, verse 7, “Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,” or the inner man.

Now, think about the inner man. The image of the inner man is determined by several things. The image of the inner man is determined by the words, actions, attitudes, and personality that is expressed by an individual. The inner man can be beautiful or ugly, irrespective to the outward man. The Bible says, “He will beautify the meek with salvation.” Though often applied to the outward appearance, that’s not talking about the body only. That’s talking also about the inner man. And no matter how beautiful some people might try to make the outward man, the outward man does not really tell what the inner man is like. Now, I believe that you will see outward manifestations of the inner man. Don’t get me wrong. But what I’m saying is, the inner man is the real man.

Warmth can radiate from the inner man or ice can chill from him. You can feel the presence of the inner man in another human being, depending on how that inner man expresses himself, either warmly or coolly.

Another thing we want to understand is that sin destroys the inner man. “The soul that sinneth,” the Bible says, “it shall die.” So in this sense, a lot of people are going about life who are dead on the inside. No wonder there is so much unhappiness. No wonder there is so much discontent. The inner man is dead in tres-

passes and sins in the lives of so many. But Beloved, I have good news. Salvation restores life to the inner man. Though the inner man dies through sin, Christ, by dying on that hill called Calvary, has made it possible for the inner man to be restored to a state of life.

Now, let’s think about the senses of the inner man. We all know there are certain senses of the body—a sense of feeling and a sense of taste, a sense of hearing with your ears and you’re able to see with your eyes, and so on. But the inner man also has some senses. These senses of the inner man oftentimes are overlooked to the detriment of the entire human race. The inner man has a sense of feeling. He can feel pain. We’re not talking about physical pain now. We’re not talking about a cut physically, or a burn physically. Nevertheless, the inner man can feel pain. This pain oftentimes is much more severe than the physical pain that is known to man. The loss of a loved one, for instance, brings pain.

Also, there’s such a thing as good feelings. The physical body can feel good feelings, such as someone rubbing your muscles that are aching. Oh, it feels so good! There are also good feelings to the inner man. And we need to be aware of this inner man’s sensitivity. He’s sensitive, Beloved. He’s easily hurt. But he can also be affected in a good way, depending on how he is treated. There is such a thing as *spiritual arm twisting*, too, and that can cause pain. A husband or a wife can have trouble because one tries to twist the arm of the other—not physically, but some *spiritual* arm twisting. But *feeling* is not the only sense the inner man has.

There’s also a sense of *taste*. The Bible says in Psalm 34:8, “O taste and see that the Lord is good.” There is such a thing as spiritual taste. The inner man can taste things. We’re not talking about food here, nevertheless, the inner man can have a good taste. But some things leave a “bad taste.” Surely, some experiences in life leave a *bad taste in your mouth*. The inner man can eat also. There’s some food for the inner man to taste. And the things of the world don’t satisfy this need that the inner man has. Jesus is the manna from heaven. He’s to be eaten by our inner man. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled” (Matthew 5:6).

That leads us to the thought of a sense of *thirst* that the inner man has. Thirst for what? It should be a thirst for God, but so many people leave their inner man to thirst for the world. That thirst for the world, if satisfied, will kill the inner man. It’s poison for the inner man, but some thirst for it. Oh, let your thirst be quenched by Christ! John 7:37 tells us, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” Isaiah said in chapter 55, verse 1, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.” There is a well of water flowing that will satisfy the thirst of your inner man, and you will never thirst again.

The inner man also has a sense of *hearing*. Not with physical ears, but when

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THE WAY OF TRUTH

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Devoted to the gospel of our loving Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave freely His life-blood, to save us from our many sins, to sanctify our fallen nature and to bring into one body all true believers, by whose stripes we are healed.

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Jesus was baptized, there was a voice from heaven that said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." This is not talking about with your ears, but with your heart, with your inner man. When you hear, when your inner man actually hears the Son of God, it shall live. This hearing causes us to do some things, that is, to *obey* what you hear.

There is also in the inner man a sense of *seeing*. The Bible speaks of blind leaders of the blind. It's not talking about physical blindness there. It's talking about the inner man being blind. But when you are saved, when you are delivered from the god of this world that hath blinded your eyes, when you're delivered from him, the scales fall from your eyes, as it were—not your physical eyes, but the eyes of your inner man, and you're able to see. We need light to see in a physical sense, and Beloved, we need spiritual eyes to see in a spiritual sense. Sometimes we can be in a lighted room and our inner man is in darkness. But we want you to *see*. We want the light to shine on your pathway. We want you to walk in the light as He is in the light, which leads us to our next thought.

The inner man has a sense of *walking*. Oh, you might not think of the inner man having legs. Nevertheless, the Bible says, "If we walk in the light." It's talking about the inner man there. The Bible talks about walking in the Spirit. The Bible also talks about walking in darkness. The inner man can walk in one direction or the other, on the highway of holiness or in the pathway of sin. There are only two ways, and every one of us has his inner man walking on one way or the other.

Beloved, there is also a sense of *reaching*. You might not think of your inner man as having arms. Neverthe-

less, the inner man can reach for something. The Bible says, "Reaching forth unto those things which are before."

I'm endeavoring to appeal to your inner man. This is the real man, and the inner man is the important man. I want your inner man to reach out for God, even as the publican in that parable that Jesus told, smote his breast and said, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." The publican was reaching for something. The inner man was reaching for something.

If your inner man is sick and needs to be healed, he is dead and needs to be resurrected. The only way for him to be healed or resurrected is to reach out for God.

Yes, the inner man has some senses. You can feel, you can taste, you can thirst, you can hear, you can see, you can walk, you can reach. Allow that inner man, that man that lives within you, to be filled through Christ Jesus. There's only one way to satisfy that inner man, and that is by becoming a child of God.

Our scripture says, "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." May your inner man, that man that lives within you, respond and reach out to almighty God, for He is not far from every one of us! †

Combined Issue

Because our design computer broke down, we were set back with scheduling, so we have combined the June and July issues into one. Lord willing, we plan on returning to monthly issues in August.

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HAGERSTOWN SPRING REVIVAL REPORT

April 19-23, 2023

We were privileged and thankful that we were able to have our Spring Revival with Bro. Doug Koerner, pastor of the Church of God, Essex, MD, as our evangelist.

The services were well attended, and the presence of the Lord was with us throughout the entire revival. The messages were very inspiring and encouraging to us to keep on living for the Lord and striving for the goal. May the Lord continue to bless Bro. Doug in the ministry.

Below are a few excerpts of the messages:

Wednesday—Title: “Do You Have Your Eyes on the Reward or Christ?” Text: Matthew 19:16-22. *Our goal is heaven. Too many people have their desires set on the rewards of heaven more than on Christ. The young man in our text wanted eternal life, but not Christ. Many people go to church, hoping that it's the ticket to heaven, but they neglect serving Christ.*

Moses wanted to see Jesus. Do we want to see Jesus above all else? Zacchaeus made an extra effort to see Jesus.

One day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. Many use God as an emergency. Many follow Jesus for the benefits: food, miracles, etc. Very few followed Jesus because He was the Christ.

Mary sat at Jesus' feet, hanging on to His every word. Martha became upset and asked Jesus to make Mary come and help her to prepare the meal. But Mary chose the good part.

Sometimes we let life get in the way of our serving Christ. Do we see the needfulness of serving Christ above all else? Is Christ truly who you are in love with?

Thursday—Title: “Going Through.” Text: Isaiah 43:1, 2. *Jesus will be with us through every single battle and all the way to the end. We all face trials. He's prepared to start with us and go through with us to the end. Do you have it set for yourself that you are going through? Not just give it a try. We have to make a commitment to God and live for Him faithfully. There can be no failure when Jesus leads the band. Sometimes we need to encourage ourselves. We raise our voices high upon the battlefield. Do you rest upon the words of God? God knows where I am. We need to have confidence that God's words are true. Our confidence needs to be in God—not man, the world, and other things.*

Friday—Title: “Fruit of the Spirit.” Text: Galatians 5:22, 23. *When we are born of Christ, we should reflect His attributes. Low-hanging fruits are relatively an easy task to get hold of. Love, joy, peace. Do people see those low-hanging fruits in our lives? Love towards the church, towards God. They should be easy to see.*

Does something easily hinder your joy? Do we allow things to affect our joy? Joy should be a part of our lives.

We have burdens and trials that can be going on in our lives, but there is peace. People should easily be able to see these low-hanging fruits.

The other six fruits take more work: longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. We may have to work on those. Do people struggle to see our fruit? People are watching us.

Saturday—Title: “Have You Experienced God's Mercy?” Text: Matthew 18:23-35. This full-length message begins on page 3 of this issue.

Sunday—A.M. Title: “Saved from the Penalty of Sin.” Text: Luke 16:19-31. *Hell is not a favorable subject in today's world. Everyone who dies “goes to heaven” regardless of how they lived, according to today's teaching. Jesus told this story in our text. Hell is a real place. Torment is used four times. Torment means “severe physical or mental pain.” Flames: remember, you have a choice. The rich man wanted Lazarus to give him water. He wanted relief. There's no relief in hell for all eternity. The rich man also wanted someone to go and tell his brothers not to come to this place, but he was told they have prophets to warn them.*

God does not send anyone to hell. A person chooses sin over living for God. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth there.

We all have a soul. What are we going to do with it? On the judgment day, we will not be able to do anything to change our lives.

Sin is separation from God—death spiritually. The wages of sin is death. Repentance saves from the penalty of sin. Our lives are rewritten. Jesus went through such suffering because hell is so bad, and He wanted to save us from that penalty. There was no resistance from Jesus on the cross. He was willing, because he wanted life for us.

Sunday—P.M. Title: “Have You Experienced Salvation?” Text: Ezekiel 11:19, 20. *Salvation brings a dramatic change. We are the salt of the earth, which is meant to make salvation appealing to others. Some people have a hard, stony heart. Only God can replace that kind of heart with a heart of flesh. Our desires will change to please God. †*

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Have You Experienced God's Mercy?

2023 Hagerstown Revival Message by Bro. Doug Koerner



IF YOU HAVE your Bibles, you may turn to Matthew, chapter 18, verses 23-35: "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Jesus gave this parable of the unmerciful servant. A lot of times when I look up my scriptures and study my notes, I use my cell phone, but this time something struck me, so I went back to my Bible to make sure that this was the title of the parable that was given. I thought to myself, *why is that the case?* In one sense, I think the more important part of the story is the mercy that the first lord had to the man who owed such a great debt that he couldn't pay, and he asked for forgiveness. The Bible says here that the lord had compassion on him and forgave him of the debt. But as I went back to my Bible and read it slowly, I realized that Jesus was putting more emphasis on the second part on the story of the unmerciful servant, the servant who was blessed and had mercy applied to him and had his debt forgiven.

Allow me to put it in our terms in our time today. If one of us here owed ten million dollars, I don't know if any of us would be able to pay that debt in our lifetime. If that debt was ten million dollars, and the person came to collect that particular debt, you probably wouldn't have it, so he had mercy and compassion on you and forgave you, but if you went out and found someone that owed you, maybe just one hundred dollars, what would you do? But what did the same servant

do? He went out and found someone which owed him an hundred pence. He took him by the throat and said, "Pay me." And the man said to him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." But he would not. Jesus made a little more emphasis on that particular man.

We want to look at a little thought here with this story. The very beginning of verse 23 says, "Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened ..." to something. It is understood that a parable is a natural story. It's not necessarily a true story. It's a natural story that reflects a spiritual application. That's what this story is about. We'll get a little more detail here before we get into the main thought of the message. Jesus is saying that the kingdom of God is likened to something, that is, Christ has paid the debt to set you and me free, a debt we could not pay.

Sin is a debt we could not pay. The Bible lets us know that when we come to the age of accountability, we'd know the difference between right and wrong. It also tells us that every single soul would travel the path of wrong. When sin comes and takes place in the soul, there is a separation between us and God. There is nothing in this world that we can do to buy that back. The Bible says all our righteousness is but filthy rags. We can't pay for it, we can't do enough good deeds, we can't do anything to purchase that back. The purpose Jesus came was to give forgiveness of sin. He paid that debt to pardon us.

Another characteristic of Jesus, other than forgiveness, is mercy. In my prayers, I thank God for mercy. I thank God for being longsuffering with me. I thank Him for having patience with me. I thank God for those things, but mercy! He has mercy.

I'm going to read to you four verses of scripture: Psalm 86:15: "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth." Psalm 119:64: "The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy: teach me thy statutes." Psalm 145:8: "The Lord is gracious, and full of compassion; slow to anger, and of great mercy." James 3:17: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." David and James used this phrase in every one of those verses I read to you: "full of mercy."

My title for this message is, "Have You Experienced God's Mercy?" God is full of mercy. Every single day God extends mercy to you and me. God extends mercy to you at this very moment. It is of the Lord's mercies that we're not consumed.

This morning when you woke up, it wasn't by an alarm clock. It wasn't by some rooster crowing. Someone didn't come in your room to wake you up. The sunshine coming through the windows didn't wake you

up. God! God kept you through the night and said, "Wake up." God woke up each and every one of us today. God's mercy! Have you experienced the mercy of God?

Titus, chapter 3, verse 5 says: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Mercy. If we're saved tonight, from time to time we need to reflect on some things. We need to think about the mercy of God. The Lord didn't have to save us. He could have just let us go through life as we were, but by His mercy, His love and compassion, He desired to save us to take us to heaven. The Bible teaches that it is not His will that any should perish. He desires to save people. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us."

Jesus tells us some things about the wicked servant in the latter part of Matthew, chapter 18. Jesus said that the wicked servant didn't show any mercy. In verses 34 and 35, Jesus says, "And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

How many of us here know the Lord's prayer? Probably most of us can recite it. Do you remember the time when the two disciples were talking with Jesus? When they were on the road to Emmaus, Jesus joined them. He drew near to them, but they really didn't know who He was. As they were drawing nigh unto the village, Jesus stopped, and they asked Him to stay for a meal. When He prayed, their eyes were opened. They knew it was Christ.

The disciples said to Jesus one time, "Teach us to pray." And Jesus gave them a model prayer: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name ..." and it goes on. In the middle of that prayer, Jesus said something that's very, very important. He said, "Forgive us our trespasses." You may have remembered my message from camp meeting. I used the thought called a *hinge word*. I said that those hinges on the doors here allow those doors to work. They allow them to open and shut. If those hinges don't work properly, those doors won't work. If those hinges are seized somehow, you can't leave this building. Those hinges allow those doors to swing both ways. The little hinge word that I use in the phrase "forgive us our trespasses" is very important. That small hinge word there is "as." As I forgive others, *as* I have mercy on others, *as* I have compassion on others.

Christ has forgiven us a debt we could not and cannot pay. He has given us the privilege to go heaven when we die if we will accept Him as our Savior. Christ has done that. He desires for us to have compassion and mercy to our fellow man, and to forgive those who may have something against us. As saints of God, from time to time, we may have to say "I'm sorry." We may have to apologize, and someone may have to apologize to us by saying "I'm sorry." God requires us to have mercy and compassion on one another.

Jesus said that one of the servants owed a great debt. In this parable, that debt is sin for us. Matthew 18:24, 25: "And when he had begun to reckon, one was

brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." If you're here tonight in your sins, there's nothing you can do to be forgiven, except to be forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ. You have to repent.

The only Person we truly have sinned against is God. He's the One we have to ask for forgiveness. When we ask for forgiveness, He forgives us from the penalty of sin. If there's sin in our lives, that penalty of sin is hell. He forgives us from the penalty of sin and frees us so we don't go to a place called hell. How can we get our sins paid for? What do we have to do to pay for that penalty? As I said earlier, we can't pay it with money. We can't do it with good works. We can't do it with possessions. We read in Titus 3:5 that it is not by the works of righteousness that we have done.

There are teachings out in the world that say if you do more good than you do wrong, it outweighs it, and you'll make heaven your home. There are people out there who can put me to shame for the works that they do for mankind. They help feed the homeless. They just give and give of themselves, but that's not salvation. Salvation is only through Christ. There's nothing we can do to buy back our salvation from the sin we have done.

Matthew 18:26, "The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all." Saints, if we get anything out of this chapter, it's found in verse 27: "Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt." As the story went on, the servant didn't have compassion on someone else who had just a small amount that he owed. In verse 35, Jesus said, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

I said earlier that the title for this message is, "Have You Experienced God's Mercy?" I want to continue by asking this question: Have You Recognized God's Mercy?

Whether you're saved or not, I believe from time to time you can recognize God's mercy. Nowadays if you go out on the road, it's dangerous out there. It's truly dangerous out there. Many times as you're driving down the highway and doing the speed limit, or a little over, you sometimes want to change lanes. You might look in your rearview mirror and no one is there. You don't do that anymore. You then look in your other mirror, and you may see somebody coming a hundred or so yards back, and they're coming at 90 miles an hour, and if you change lanes, you're going to have a wreck. I was coming here on Wednesday, and I was in the slow lane. A tractor trailer was beside me, and he started to drift towards me. I didn't even recognize it. I must have just passed an on ramp and was still in the slow lane, so I moved over just a little bit, and when I did, a pickup truck went by me on the median side. I was probably doing 70. He went passed me like I was stopped. I felt my car shake. I had no idea he was there. That's the mercy of God that protects us.

Saints and sinners, do we need to recognize God's mercy? We go into the hospital for surgery, we go to the dentist to have a minor thing taken care of, but there have been people who have been put under to have things done, and they never came back to consciousness. "Oh, it's just a minor thing." We have heard of people who went into the hospital as an in-and-out patient and were put under just to have a minor thing done, but they never came back to consciousness. Do we recognize God's mercy?

God's mercy is abundant. Many people presume on God's mercy. They take chances. In the beginning of Genesis, God repented that He made man, because man was wicked. The Bible says, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." He said, "I'm going to destroy man from the face of the earth." "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Mercy for the next 100 years; God stayed Himself from destroying this world.

Lamentations 3:22, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not." As you wake up every day and look outside, you should say, "Thank you, Lord, for another day. Thank you, Lord, that I'm not standing at the judgment bar of God, because I'm not prepared." When I thank the Lord for another day of life, sometimes I say, "Help me to draw a little closer to you this day. Help me to do things a little better. Help me to be more pleasing to you this day."

It's been over 2,000 years since Christ was crucified on the cross. For over 2,000 years, God's mercy has been extended. If the Lord allows the sun to come up tomorrow morning, it's through His mercy.

I mention at home in my preaching that sometimes when I wake up, I sit on the side of my bed for a couple minutes and think, this could be the day that the Lord could come. The Bible teaches that He's coming back. That day is unknown. No man knows the day or the hour. Unsaved, when you get up tomorrow morning and realize that today could be the day the Lord may come, you should say, "Thank you, Lord, for mercy right now that I have the opportunity to be saved."

One day mercy will run out. I want that to sink in. Today is a day of mercy. Today is the day of salvation. When we close our eyes tonight, and we drift off to sleep and God doesn't wake us up tomorrow morning, and we're at the judgment bar of God, it won't be a day of mercy. That's the day of judgment. When we're standing before God, that is not going to be the day to ask for mercy. People will say, "I need mercy, Lord." That day of mercy is gone. Today is the day that God gives people another opportunity to get saved. It's their will to serve God today. One day we will all stand before Him with the choice that we made.

Let's go to Micah, chapter 7, verse 18: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? [This last part is what I want you to notice.] he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." I trust those words will just ring in your soul as a blessing, because God delights in mercy. A question is asked

at the beginning of this verse: "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" No one. He stands alone. He's the only God who has great mercy, is full of mercy, and mercy that He delights in. Even from the depths and pits of sin, God says to the sinner, "If you'll look to me, I'll pull you out of that sin. I'll deliver you from sin." It doesn't matter how deep in sin you may be. I often wonder about people who have been good all their lives. They've never smoked, never used foul language, never did drugs, have been faithful to their husbands and their wives, etc., but sometimes they can be more difficult to reach. But regardless of how deep in sin you've gone, God will reach down and save you. "My mercy is abundant." His mercy is abundant. He delighteth in mercy. There's no other God like Him.

Let's go to Psalm 103, verse 11: "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." The word *fear* doesn't mean we're shaking or afraid, but it means "a reverence; respect." Whether you're saved or not, you can have that reverence for God. He is God. He is almighty. He makes the final decision on everything. Verses 12-14: "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." Thank God for those verses. At times, I've had to lean on verse 13. I've said to the Lord, "Lord, I need help." Sometimes the devil will come at us and say, "You should be stronger and have more faith," but the Lord knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. "We need help, Lord." Verses 15 and 16: "As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more."

Some years ago, a friend of mine and I did a lot of hunting together. We still do. We grew up the same way with hunting. Our dads hunted, and we had a lot of good memories as we were growing up. We had children, and he loved to take pictures. He wore us out sometimes trying to take pictures. At the end of the hunt, he had pictures and pictures and pictures. The guys we were hunting with were like, enough with the pictures. One day he and I were talking, and he said, "I want my son to remember some of these good times." I asked him a question. I said, "Tell me the name of your great-grandfather." He couldn't remember. I said, "How about your grandfather? Tell me a story about him." He didn't really have any. One generation passes away, never more to be remembered.

Many who were here have gone. There are many of us who remember them. We have memories of them and their families. They were a great part of the church, but in time, memories do fade. Psalm 103:16, 17: "For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." Mercy! God's mercy lasts forever. Every one of us will be gone one day. I remember growing up in our home. My mom and dad would have gatherings at the

house. The house had a big basement and it would be full of our relatives. I don't know if there's even five of them left. Before long, I'll be gone and you'll be gone, but God's mercy will last for all eternity.

We all will stand before this merciful God one day. By the grace of God, we want to hear Him say to us, "Well done," because, as we read in Psalm 103:17, "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children."

Luke 16:24 says, "And he [the rich man] cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." Lazarus died and was taken into heaven, but the rich man died and in hell he lifted up his eyes. As soon as he lifted up his eyes, he cried and said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me." Mercy was done. There's no more mercy in times like this. Father Abraham said to him, in effect, "Son, remember you had an opportunity. You had a choice to receive God's mercy, and you rejected. Lazarus didn't have good things in life. Today he's comforted, and you're tormented." Today is the day of mercy. Today is the day of salvation. Psalm 103:11, "For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him."

Do you have a respect for God? Do you recognize God's mercy? Whether you're saved or not, when you wake up tomorrow morning, think about the mercy God gave you today. When you get out of your bed tomorrow morning, thank God for mercy. You might say, "Well, I'm not saved." It doesn't matter. When we start recognizing God's mercy and understanding His compassion on us, that's what will draw our hearts closer to Him. When our minds start thinking on the things of God, we think of the mercy that He has. Again, Psalm 103:12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Thank God for salvation.

The Bible tells us that God has removed our transgressions from His mind. I don't know how that can be possible. When we're forgiven, our sins are remembered no more. God forgets them. We don't forget them. The devil doesn't forget them. Many times he reminds us of them, but thank God for His mercy. He's forgotten them. One day when we stand before Him, He won't remember those sins. Those won't be marked down in the Book of Life anywhere.

The Bible lets us know that every idle word will be brought into judgment. Every word we have said in life. We cannot even comprehend that. I don't know if there's a computer able to comprehend that. Every word we have said, whether good or evil, will be brought into judgment. Thank God, if you will call upon His mercy and ask His forgiveness, He'll wipe all those sins away and deliver you. The one servant owed a great debt. Regardless of your sin, it's a great debt.

I mentioned to you in one of my messages about the fruit of the Spirit. In Galatians 5:19-21, Paul tells us about the works of the flesh. All of these are sinful. He said, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication [People today are living together unmarried.], uncleanness, lascivi-

ousness, idolatry [People are still worshiping idols.], witchcraft [palm reading], hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." But God's mercy is the same towards everyone.

Luke, chapter 18, verses 9-14: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

As I said to you a little while ago, recognize God's mercy when you wake up tomorrow morning. Thank Him for His mercy. It will draw us closer to God. The Bible says, "The publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." He recognized himself as a sinner. Jesus said that the publican got saved because he asked for mercy.

God is full of mercy today. Have you experienced God's mercy, and can you recognize God's mercy? God's mercy is offered right now. Every moment His mercy is extended. Many have passed into eternity since this service started. We don't know when we'll be gone, but His mercy is extended right now.

There's a song in our hymnal called, "The Last Call." It says:

*O sinner, heed the Spirit's voice,
Ere mercy's day is past;
O while he's pleading make thy choice,
This call may be his last.*

*Remember, soul, the hour draws nigh
When you will call in vain;
Ah, hopeless then will be thy cry,
Thy doom, eternal pain.*

*Then seek him while he may be found,
And call him while he's near,
Lest slighted, grieved, he leave thee bound
And sealed in darkness drear.*

*Harken to the Spirit's voice,
Calling still, calling still;
While he's pleading make thy choice
Ere he's gone, ere he's gone.*

Every single moment of your life, God's mercy is given to you. I ask you to continue to recognize His mercy.

May the Lord bless you. †



These questions and answers are taken from *The Way of truth Question and Answer Book*, 1946-2001.



QUESTION: What was the spiritual meaning when Paul said, “I die daily”?

ANSWER: Some feel Paul was saying that he was in danger daily of being put to death, and there were those who tried to kill him; but to put a spiritual meaning on his words, I would say, he died daily to temptations, to some things that would not have been sinful but might have hindered him in his service to the Lord.

QUESTION: Explain Romans 7:7, “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”

ANSWER: In reading earlier chapters of this book, you will see Paul sets forth the truth that one is not justified by the law, but by faith; this was especially addressed to Gentiles. In this chapter, chapter 7, Paul seems to turn his attention to the Jews, and he is pointing out to them that the Old Covenant law was “dead” (verse 4). In verse 5, Paul makes a statement that some might take to mean that law produced death. Sin produced death, not the law; the law informed him of right and wrong, but it did not have power to give him life, so Paul is saying in verse 7, “I am not saying the law is sin; the law made me to know what sin was.”

Paul’s burden here was to help his people to know they did not have to forsake God to acknowledge that the Old Covenant law was “dead,” that there was a new law, and that through accepting Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, they could keep the new law. They could be “married” to another i.e., Jesus Christ!

As you read on in this chapter you will note Paul’s struggle, not as a Christian, but as a Pharisee, to keep the Old law, and he was not able. Then as you read the first part of Romans 8, you’ll note his experience as a true Christian and what Christ did for him.

QUESTION: In Genesis 15:13, God told Abraham that his descendants would be slaves for 400 years. Why, and what caused them to remain in Egypt for 430 years as in Exodus 12:40?

ANSWER: We are not to understand that Abraham’s descendants were “slaves” for the full four hundred years. The apostle Paul tells us in Galatians 3:17, “And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should

make the promise of none effect.” So Paul starts the period with the covenant God made with Abraham.

Later, you have Isaac being born, then Jacob and Esau; you have Jacob going to Laban and marrying two of his daughters; you have Jacob returning to his homeland later going to Egypt. At first they were treated well. Then after Joseph had been dead for some time, the children of Israel were made slaves.

Why were they made slaves? The answer is in Exodus 1:8-11, “Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.”

QUESTION: How long and how often should Christians fast?

ANSWER: The Bible does not say how long or how often Christians should fast. Jesus said, after He returned to the Father, His disciples would fast—they did not fast while He was with them.

I suppose it would depend somewhat on the burden and concern Christians have for whatever they are praying for.

QUESTION: Do you think there will be different levels of Christians in heaven suited to a particular rank or plane of ability or achievement? Are all of God’s chosen Christians going to be on the same level in heaven?

ANSWER: You ask me what I think, so I will tell you what I *think*! Everyone will have eternal life, everyone will be fully satisfied, everyone will be happy; no one will envy another, but the Bible does teach that everyone will be rewarded according to their works.

Some people in this life enjoy their salvation more than others, so it is possible it will be like that in eternity; but I believe everyone will enjoy eternal life to the fullest of *their* ability.

QUESTION: Clarify Hebrews 8:5 and Revelation 11:19. Is it true that the literal temple showed to Moses at Sinai was the identical copy of the heavenly temple?

ANSWER: We are not to understand from Hebrews 8:5 or Revelation 11:19 that there is a literal temple in heaven. In fact, Revelation 21:22 says the opposite. Further, Moses was given the plan for the Tabernacle, not a temple.

The Old Testament tabernacle, its altars, sacrifices, the priests, the high priest, and his work, all pointed to Jesus Christ, the work He would do for us in giving Himself on the cross, of coming out of the tomb on the third day, and His return to the Father to intercede in our behalf. The tabernacle itself, with its two rooms, was a type of the Church of God. The two altars, the two rooms, was a type of justification and sanctification.

Jesus Christ is not ministering in a literal temple in heaven and He is not conducting a “preliminary judgment.” There is nothing in heaven that needs to be cleansed. God’s church is His temple today, and Christ is ministering in it as its Head.

QUESTION: Were tithes nailed to the cross as part of the Old Covenant (Hebrews 10:5; Daniel 9:27)?

ANSWER: The two verses you refer to have nothing to do with tithing. Tithing was practiced long before the law was given to Moses. Abraham had the gospel preached to him, and he tithed, so tithing must have been part of the “gospel” preached to him.

The law was added until the seed should come (the seed being Jesus Christ), when the law (the Old Covenant) expired, tithing was still there. “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed [Jesus Christ] should come” (Galatians 3:19). †



Greetings!

This month’s article was taken from a Young People’s Wednesday evening service. The theme was on “Expectations.” One thing we can expect through our Christian experience is that trials and tests will come.

In I Peter 4:12 we read, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” We must all face these times of testing, but by God’s grace, we can be overcomers.

Later, in I Peter 4 we read in verse 19, “Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.” It’s beautiful to be able to commit our lives in His safe keeping and know He is always faithful.

May we be encouraged by these thoughts shared by Sis. Kirsten Goodyear.

—Bro. Doug Shenberger

TRIALS AND TESTS WILL COME, BUT GOD WILL SEE US THROUGH By Sis. Kirsten Goodyear

Job 23:10 is one of my favorite Bible verses. It says, “But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”

One of my favorite hymns written by Ron Hamilton is based off of this verse. The first verse is:

*God never moves without purpose
or plan;*

When trying His servant and molding a man.



Give thanks to the Lord, though your testing seems long;

In darkness, He giveth a song.

We’re all on different paths, but heading for the same destination. We’re all striving together for God. God meets each and every one of us where we are on our journey, and He goes along with us. Each trial that we experience, and each test that we are given, has a purpose. Through everything we go through in this year or continue to go through from the previous year or years, God will give our hearts a song. In music, often a composer will put a discordant note in the song to add richness and depth. Likewise, God is writing the music of our lives. If all the notes were pretty similar harmoniously, it wouldn’t be a very rich song.

Trials and tests add depth to our lives. They are used by God to cultivate empathy for others and for us to realize more what truly matters in life. It is easy to take health, safety, and things that add to our comfort for granted. It’s easy to take for granted that those you really care about will always be around. It is also easy to believe there will always be a tomorrow to change things that need to be changed, or to face things that need to be faced, or to make decisions. As long as we continue to commit our trials and tests to God, as long as we continue to keep an ear to hear what He is telling us through them, we can expect to become purer, more refined Christians. Testing can certainly seem long, but just as God stayed with Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-nego through the fiery furnace, He’ll stay beside us.

The second verse of the song says:

*I could not see through the shadows ahead,
So I looked at the cross of my Savior instead.
I bowed to the will of the Master that day,
Then peace came and tears fled away.*

A lot of our trials can be exacerbated by us trying to see ahead into the shadows of tomorrow. Either we fret for when God will bring us to the end of whatever we’re going through, or we worry over what’s coming next. This isn’t how God wants us to live. It robs the joy and peace of today and the strength for tomorrow. It is so important to make sure you are looking at how to do right and your best today for the Lord, and how to best answer the tests life brings today. It’s not bad to be prepared for future tests, but to be so worried about them that they take away some of the blessings of today is not what God wants for us. We need to bow to the will of the Master today.

The third verse says:

*Now I can see testing comes from above,
God strengthens His children, and purges in love.
My Father knows best, and I trust in His care;
Through purging, more fruit I will bear.*

We each have our own personal journey with God. We each are our own little branch off of the vine of Jesus to be purged. Our testing, though it may be similar to others, is going to strike us differently. For children, the things they face feel just as real as the things adults face feel to them. We all were children

WE ARE WELL ABLE

I WILL BE reading a few selected verses of scripture taken from the eighth chapter of St. Luke, and one verse from the Old Testament book of Numbers. Luke 8:4: "And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable." Verse 9: "And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?" Verses 11-15: "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."

Numbers, chapter 13, verse 30: "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it." The thought that I would like to dwell on for a few minutes is taken from that verse I just read: "For We Are Well Able." A very, very positive thought indeed. I trust that something will be said on this broadcast today that will encourage some precious heart, someone who may be on the brink of giving up the battle, to keep pressing on with the Lord.

A man by the name of Samuel Johnson wrote, and I quote: "Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance."

Down through the history of the world, and even through the history of Christianity as well, there have been men who stood strong in defense of their country, or the cause that they were working for. Down through the years, great leaders have stood in the forefront in battle and valiantly fought for their country and are still doing so today. Many, even in the face of the severest of obstacles, have succeeded in their march onward, as well, for the Lord.

Moses stands out as a great leader. He was a great man. The Bible says that he was the meekest man. Moses depended on the Lord. He made sure before he embarked on his mission that it was he that God was calling to lead the children of Israel.

Nehemiah stands out as accomplishing a great task in a very short time. If you read the Bible, it's one of the most beautiful stories you can read. The way Nehemiah rebuilt the broken down walls of Jerusalem was because he sought God. He wept and prayed and carried a burden for what was taking place there. David also stands out as a great statesman and leader.

There are times when we, as Christian soldiers, have to face the battle head on in the name of the Lord, with a positive attitude as well, and go on regardless of how discouraging it may seem at times. And there are times when Christians become discouraged. Even

once, and just because we were smaller didn't make things feel smaller. If children are blessed with wise parents, they're going to be learning many lessons as their character is strengthened. And this can certainly feel like a trial. But if a child can learn good character when he's young, it makes a good foundation for building on. Then as children grow into teenagers and young adults, their world expands and they begin making more of their own decisions and are around a lot more influences. They are beginning to build on the foundational habits and character laid in childhood or fixing some of the foundational problems they carried from childhood. The outside influences are the biggest test to a Christian young person in a Christian home. It's natural to want to fit in with those you're around, and it is natural to want those you're around to respect you. It is easy to start making small sacrifices of your character to appear better to those new influences.

I think of Daniel in the lions' den. He got there because he continued to do right when the government said not to. He was thought very highly of by the king. He probably didn't want to disobey the king, but when it came to disobeying the king or God, he chose to obey the God in heaven, not the king on Earth. God was there beside him in the lions' den. God does not ask us to go places He will not go with us. This is the same for adults. There are outside influences that try to tug us off the right path. As long as we go with God, He will go with us. It's important to only bow to the will of God through trials and not take the apparently easy way out. Bowing to the will of ourselves or to other people, sacrifices more than we can see in the moment. God truly knows best in whatever He plans to give or take away from us. Through purging, more fruit we will bear.

The chorus of the song is:

O rejoice in the Lord!

He makes no mistake.

He knoweth the end of each path that I take!

For when I am tried and purified,

I shall come forth as gold.

We can expect trials and tests to come, or ones we're already going through to continue, but we serve a living God. He will see us through, and we can expect to be purer gold as we continue to trust Him and go through the trials and tests instead of taking the easy ways out. †

OUT OF BOX 88

We just wanted to say "thank you" so much for your magazine. We really enjoy it. We are very grateful for all of you.

"Jesus" is at the door. We may not ever meet here, but we will when Jesus takes us home. What a thrilling blessing—God's many blessings.

Thanks again. —M. & L. S., Virginia

Dear Saints,

We so appreciate your computer (internet) broadcast! Also for being on your mailing list for *The Way of Truth*. ... Thank you. —M. G., Idaho

in Bible times, you will find where people became very discouraged, but God was always on time for them. God is never late. We can always depend on the promises of God. Sometimes it's when we're deep down in those valleys that we get closer to God, too.

The enemy, of course, is trying his best to discourage God's people, because the allurements of the world are catching so many people's attention. I said that to say this: The Bible tells us, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" We know that one man could never gain the whole world, but whatever becomes our master is our world. It is unbelievable what becomes people's masters in the world today. The simplest thing can keep people away from serving God.

There is a line drawn between righteousness and unrighteousness. There is such a thing as Christianity. There is such a thing as a Christian life. There is such a thing as living and working for God. There is such a thing as the Bible that can lead us along. It's a wonderful walk. It's a wonderful life. I keep saying that all the time, because I have found it that way. I'm not speaking from what other people told me, or what I have read in a book. I'm speaking from a half century of experience with the Lord. It's a wonderful, fulfilling, rewarding life. You have to take your eyes off circumstances and others. Your Christianity, or your salvation, and your getting to heaven is not based on what people think about you or say about you. It is based on the Rock, Jesus Christ. Even when David became discouraged, he said, "When my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:2).

In this parable of the sower, Jesus made it very plain for others to understand. Some allow the devil to snatch out their interest. Verse 12 in Luke 8 that I read earlier says: "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." It goes on to say that some begin well, but they stay in the shallows. They stay on the surface. Verse 13: "They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away." If you're going to plant a tree, you plant it in soil, not on the rock where there's no soil for the roots to go down into. Rock is used in two different ways in the Bible. Rock is foundation. Rock is stability. What this is talking about here is a tree planted. The only way you can serve the Lord is to go deep, because the storms of life won't blow you down.

Some people become overwhelmed with cares as well. Verse 14 of Luke 8: "And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." The only way to serve the Lord really is to sell out completely, and surrender our lives to Him, and say, "Lord, here's a vessel that you can use. Use it to your glory." We have to humble ourselves to walk with God. Let me tell you, the great apostle Paul, earlier called Saul, surrendered to the Lord. He made an immediate turnaround. He

didn't fight. He accepted it, and he never looked back. That's the way to serve the Lord.

It goes on to say that some try very hard, and they win. We must see ourselves as winners. I'm not referring now to gambling or any such thing. I'm referring to winning the Christian race for the Lord. Verse 15 of Luke 8: "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." The psalmist tells us in Psalm 1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Those are beautiful verses. If you read the other half of this Psalm, you will see the other picture.

When the mountains of problems increase, we must see Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. This Christian life begins with Jesus Christ, and it's going to end with Him. That's how it really is. When you are discouraged, the songwriter says, "Count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done." So many of us seem to see what we don't have, but we don't see what we do have. That's the way negativity is. Let us be thankful for what the Lord gave us and trust Him for what we need.

When criticized or ridiculed, pray for those who do that to you. This is what Jesus said: "Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." You can't let those things hinder your Christian walk. You can't pay attention to those kinds of things. You have to keep on going. The old song says—*I'm pressing on the upward way, New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day; Still praying as I'm onward bound, "Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."*

When you're feeling weary, get down on your knees and ask God to give you strength. The Bible says, "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isaiah 40:29-31). Beautiful scriptures indeed.

When tempted to slacken up, tighten up. Put down another anchor. Anchor your soul in the Haven of Rest, and sail the wide seas no more. Anchor your soul in Jesus Christ. Be sure you're anchored fast in the Rock. When bearing little fruit, reassure yourself of who you are. Build up self-confidence and trust in the Lord to keep you.

When God sent Joshua into Canaan, His words were to him, "Only be thou strong and very courageous." A beautiful scripture you'll find in the very first chapter of Joshua. Yes, "Only be thou strong and very courageous." God also told Joshua, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Chapter 13 in the book of Numbers begins with the sending out of the twelve spies to view the land of Canaan. They were to give account of the present state of the land itself—good or bad—fat or lean, we find in the Scriptures. The inhabitants, too; their number, whether they were few or many, their size or stature, and whether they were weak or strong. All of those you'll find in Numbers 13. They divided themselves into companies so they passed unsuspected as only wayfaring men. In other words, the twelve didn't band together. They separated themselves into smaller companies.

However, the spies returned, and the majority of them, which was ten, discouraged the people from going forward: "But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we" (Numbers 13:31). But Caleb and Joshua encouraged them to go forward: "And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."

Do you know what the apostle Paul said? "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." We know that there are things we can't do. What Paul meant by that verse was, whatever we can accomplish, or whatever we do for the Lord, it is through the power and strength of Him. We can't run this race in ourselves. Yes, Caleb and Joshua encouraged the people to go forward.

Caleb and Joshua, these two courageous men, showed the people plainly that all the danger that they were in was from their own discontent, and that they would succeed against all odds if they did not make God their enemy. Caleb and Joshua were told not to rebel against God. We must work with God.

Caleb was courageous. He believed in God. Don't let anybody beat you down, My Beloved Friends. Faith and confidence in God was what Caleb possessed. He was fearless, and he had an assurance.

How relevant is this for us today? If you will look into the fourth chapter of the book of Hebrews, you will see there in the first two verses, "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Friends, there is a soul rest now while we live, and there will be an eternal life if we die in Christ. Jesus said, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." That means *eternally* saved. Saved to sin no more. Away from the problems of this old world, we will have made it through to glory. †

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE

For many years, The Way of Truth publishing work has provided Church of God Sunday school literature for many congregations. If you would like a sample of Bible-based literature and a price list, please request it. We have a six-year series of lessons. Each quarter we print quarterlies for Adults and Young People, Intermediates and Juniors. Write or call and order your sample today.

BIBLE LESSON OF THE MONTH

GEMS FROM THE BOOK OF ROMANS

MORE THAN CONQUERORS

Scriptures: Romans 8:31-39; I John 4:4; I John 5:4, 5; Luke 10:19; Romans 12:21.

Romans 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

I John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Luke 10:19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Romans 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Memory Verse: Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

—Romans 8:37.

Aim: To encourage the student to overcome opposition to his faith.

INTRODUCTION

"Throughout the generations of humanity people have been annoyed by a pestilent, pernicious family; the heads of this family are known as 'Doubt and Fear.' These two will attack anyone, whether saved or unsaved, saint or sinner. Their offspring, or children, are known as: Indecision, Gloom, Sadness, Timidity, Temptation, Allurement, Trial, Test, Trouble, Confusion, Oppression, and a host of relatives all of whom make it their business to join their forces to harass well-meaning souls in order to discourage them and turn them into the way of destruction.

"So long as we are in this world we are still human beings and will come in contact with the ills and cares,

burdens and misfortunes, heartaches, trials, temptations, disappointments, and troubles of life. The snares and allurements of Satan are on every side, but there is a way of safety for the weakest Christian.”

—E. E. Byrum.

I trust the study of this lesson will be a help to each student in overcoming the opposition to your faith.

MEDITATIONS

WHAT CONCLUSION SHOULD WE COME TO?—Romans 8:31—What shall we say?—In verse 28, Paul says, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” It may not always seem so, and at times we may not understand why things happen as they do, but one thing we can know, “If God be for us” there is no foe that can overcome us.

WHAT LOVE—Romans 8:32—Spared not—If God so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son—His most precious Gift—then why should we doubt that He will give us other things of lesser value? Every promise in the Book is true! God stands back of all.

A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS—Romans 8:33-35—Who shall?—This verse, along with the next two, show the safety of the state of those who have believed the gospel of the grace of God. Who can charge God of respecting one person over another? God justifies all who come to Him sincerely. It is Christ who died, and He died for all, and rose the third day. He is now making intercession for us.

PERSECUTION COMES TO ALL—Romans 8:36—For thy sake—As it is written is also a quote from Psalm 44:22. We are told in the Scriptures that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. The apostle Paul, the writer of this epistle, knew much suffering as he made his missionary journeys.

THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE—Romans 8:37—Fight the good fight of faith—The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. By God’s grace, we to can say that we are more than conquerors. Jesus did not teach that the Christian life would always be easy, but He did promise us grace to face whatever may come our way.

HAVE A MADE UP MIND—Romans 8:38, 39—For I am—It is very important that we have a made up mind. As Paul said, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (I Corinthians 2:2). Let us look at the things Paul has listed: death—It is appointed for all mankind, but I don’t think that was what Paul was thinking of. I would say he was speaking of being put to death for Christ’s sake. Angels—not all angels are heavenly! Satan has them also. Principalities, nor powers—Paul had to face political powers as well as religious powers. He boldly testified before Festus and King Agrippa.

WITH GOD—I John 4:4—Overcome them—John speaks of many spirits. All spirits but the Holy Spirit are against God and must be overcome. With Christ in your heart, you can overcome.

LIVING BY FAITH—I John 5:4—Born of God—The Christian, with faith in God and in His Word, are the only ones who can overcome this sinful world. John said that the whole world lies in wickedness. But thank God, there is a highway of holiness for the redeemed to walk on. **Verse 5**—John said that we are not to believe every spirit. He is the only Bible writer who speaks of the “antichrist.” We find four verses in this little book with that word. None of them speak of some great leader in the political-religious world. In fact, John said that there were many antichrists in his day.

HOLY GHOST POWER—Luke 10:19—I give you—We are not to understand that Jesus is speaking of us walking on literal serpents. As the verse says, “I give you power over all the power of the enemy.”

DO WHAT IS RIGHT—Romans 12:21—Be not overcome—The instructions given in this short verse is full of meaning! It takes power to return good for evil, and Satan will do his utmost to overcome everyone who is living the Christian life. Living the Christian is a life of faith. Habakkuk said, “The just shall live by his faith.”

CONCLUSION

“The prophets of old foretold the coming of Jesus and what would happen. ... When He came He did what the prophets had said He would do. He preached the gospel of the kingdom, forgave sins, spoke peace to the souls of men, cast out devils, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, and performed many miracles. He was persecuted, crucified, buried in a tomb, arose from the dead, afterward ascended into heaven.”—E. E. Byrum.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

1. How willing is God to give good things to His children?
2. Who or what can separate us from God?
3. How important is it to be persuaded about the truth?
4. How does one overcome the world?
5. Where does a Christian’s power come from? †

POSTAGE RATES ON THE RISE!

We are sure that our readers know that the cost of publishing this magazine continues to rise. Postage rates have been increasing at an alarming rate. We do not charge for the magazine. We depend on the generosity of our readers to help us in our endeavor to send this gospel messenger to all the world. Please remember this ministry in your giving. May our Lord bless you abundantly as you do so.

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Way of Truth Internet Radio

Father, Are You a Glory to Your Children?

Message by Bro. Greg Tyler, delivered 06/17/01

I AM GOING to use one verse of scripture found in the book of Proverbs, chapter 17, verse 6, as a basis of our thoughts. I know I've read this verse of scripture before, but it really stuck out to me as I prepared this message. It reads like this: "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers."

I must confess that I've never considered fatherhood as being something that ought to be of glory to my children. Today is Father's Day, so most of my remarks will be to the fathers. But I want to ask a question this morning: Father, are you of glory to your children?

The word *glory* has a lot of different meanings. It's "the offering of praise and honor." One definition I really like, and I think it fits here. It's "the source of great joy and pride."

We often hear of children being the source of great joy and pride to their parents, but we don't often hear of parents, or fathers, being the source of great joy and pride.

God has made a beautiful plan. It cannot be improved upon. I believe that in the beginning God made the heavens and the earth. I don't think we're here by accident. I don't think we're here by chance. I believe that every one of us is here as part of the plan of an Almighty Being. I believe the Scriptural account of the creation of the world. I believe that God not only made the water, the land, the fruit, the plants, the trees, and the animals, but He also from the dust of the earth created a man, and He called him Adam.

In the beginning, God said that it wasn't good that man should be alone, and so He caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. He took a rib out of Adam, and He made a woman. He called her Eve. She was the mother of all mankind. I believe we're all related. All the family of man is related. We're family.

But there is a closer knit family that God planned in His great plan, for He said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." So God, in His great wisdom, made a plan where there were a man and a woman. He joined them together, and they became a family unit. God never joined two men together. He never joined two women together, not in this sense. This is God's plan. God's plan will work. It's a beautiful plan. But God did not stop with Adam and Eve.

God said to Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply." It's amazing to me how God could ordain such a wonderful plan: The chromosomes and genes of the man, and the chromosomes and genes of the woman can be brought together and bring about a new creation. It's wonderful!

God meant for families to be close knit, to be interconnected one with another. Let me say in passing that the scripture didn't say just have a child, but it said

"have children." I believe that a home is not really a home without the pitter-patter of children's feet. Now, if you're unable to have children, I don't want you to feel bad. God's ways are above our ways. But you know, I'm speaking the truth when I say that in general, it was God's plan that a man and a woman be joined together, and that their love will be united and bring about new lives. The family unit is the core of an ordered society.

I believe that every child that comes into this world has a God-given right to glory in his father. Sad to say, few men fill that bill in today's world. But it takes a lot more to be a father than just to mate with a woman and make a baby. There's a lot more to it than that.

Someone has said: "One father is worth more than a hundred schoolmasters."

I have a couple of poems I want to mix in with the message this morning. I like poems. Do you know that just about every one of the songs in our hymnal are poems put to music?

A Tribute to Father—by Byron Tousignant:

A father is a guiding light

Sent to us from above.

He listens to our sorrows

And soothes them with his love.

A father is a teacher

Whose place no one could take,

For he's the source from which

We learn to think and navigate.

A father is a gift from God

From which we learn to be

Patient, strong and loving,

Filled with integrity.

Speaking of the thought about a father being of glory to his children, I want to use the word *father*, which has six letters, and use each letter as a basis for an old-fashioned acrostic that can glorify fatherhood.

I believe in the old-fashioned way—the Bible way. It's a good way. I believe the Bible, and the principles taught in the Word of God are applicable to every generation. America today would do well to take heed to the instructions found written in the Word of God.

The first letter that I would like to use is the word—

Faithful—A father is to be faithful. I'll begin with faithfulness to his wife. If I had some time this morning, I would love to elaborate a little bit on the husband and wife relationship, because I believe that is the beginning of a good fatherhood. Someone has said: "The best thing that a man could ever do for his children is to love their mother." So for a man to be a good father, to be the type of father that his children could glory in,

he would need to be faithful to his wife. Surveys say that in over 50% of all marriages, either one or both spouses are unfaithful to their mate. That is not the way to go! God meant for a man and a woman to come together and marry and be faithful to one another till death do they part. This is the very foundation to a successful home.

Marriage is still honorable, even though people want to believe that the best thing to do is to try it out before they get a marriage license by shacking up together and setting up a home to see how they'll make it without the marriage license. Beloved, marriage is still honorable! Many a life has been wrecked and ruined by trying things that have been condemned by the Word of God.

Someone has said: "There are no illegitimate children, only illegitimate parents." I believe there's some truth to that. Children are not to be blamed when that happens. It's the parents who are involved.

I believe that a man who would be a faithful father will put forth an effort to make his marriage work. Maybe some have said, "Now, when we enter into holy matrimony, we're in love, and nothing is going to separate us. We're going to be together. We're just going to have a happy, wonderful time. We're just going to float on the clouds 365 days of the year." But about one week after your honeymoon, you'll find out it's not that way. You have to work at it. I don't believe that you can really be the father your children can glory in unless you put some effort into this marriage. You must be faithful to your wife.

Perry Tanksley wrote this short poem—

Let's Make Marriage Work

*None has a right to seek his own self-centered joy
If he forfeits the peace of his own girl or boy.
But often a child is forced to pay a fearful price
Of a parent's search for new love that enticed.
Then let's make marriage work,
And put our children first,
And share parental love,
Lest one small child be crushed.*

I believe for a man to be of glory to his children, he will treat his wife the way he wants his children to treat her. Oh, a father can tell his children, "You treat your mother with respect. You don't talk to your mother that way. You be kind to your mother. You speak softly to your mother," and then he'll come through the door and say in a demanding voice, "Where's my dinner!" To be a faithful husband, you treat your wife the way you want your children to treat their mother. She's the same person, and they need to see an example out of you, especially if you have some boys under your roof. How are your sons going to know how to treat their wives if they don't see you treating your wife correctly? One reason why men fall into a trap and divorce grips generation after generation is because boys never figure out how they're supposed to treat a woman. They've never seen it. They've never known. So most times children treat their mates, when they grow up and get married, the way they saw their mother and father

treating one another. A father must be faithful, not only to his wife, but also to his children.

Ephesians 6:4: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Sounds easy, sounds pretty simple, but when it's put into practical terms, that too, takes work and time. To be faithful to his children, a father will endeavor to train them up in the way that they should go. A child comes into the world knowing nothing. Innocent. They could take any direction in life. It's a proven fact that a child, by the age of three, has learned over 50% of all that he's going to learn in his lifetime. So it's incumbent upon a father to train up his children in the way that they should go from the time they're born. Abraham Lincoln said: "For a man to train up his child in the way he or she should go, he must first walk in that way himself." To whip your children for smoking cigarettes while you're puffing away is hypocrisy. You show them the way.

This includes correction when necessary. "What, Father? Don't you love me?" Yes! That's why correction is necessary. I don't believe that correction in every case has to be with a rod. There are different ways to correct a child. Sometimes I feel that I have in the past, and doubtless others have, issued a punishment that was far more severe than the crime. On the other hand, a crime that was severe was let go and passed by. It takes great wisdom to be a good father. It takes a lot of prayer to be a good father.

In Hebrews 12:9, we read, "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" Colossians 3:21 says, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

This is a quote from someone: "Rearing children is like holding a wet bar of soap—too firm a grasp and it shoots from your hand, too loose a grip and it slides away. A gentle but firm hold keeps you in control."

Above all, a father must be faithful to God. I don't believe that man can be all that he could be as a father unless he has given his heart to God. I don't think there's anything so precious in this world as having a praying father. I know some of these comments could have been made toward mothers. If it was Mother's Day, doubtless, I would have made them that way, but today is Father's Day. There's nothing so precious as a praying father. Fathers today are worried about getting their paycheck and using it to go out and get drunk. Going out and having a good time. Oh, for more praying fathers, fathers who'll get on their knees and weep before God for their children and for the needs at hand!

F for father—a lot of could be said: *firm, fair, forgiving*, and the list goes on and on.

Let's move on to the letter A, which also has a lot of words I could use: *adviser, amiable* (pleasant, affectionate), *amusing*.

The A word that I've chosen to use is—

Available—A father must be available to his children. Now, what a basic thing for a minister to say! However, we know that in the day and age in which we live, life is such a hustle and bustle with men and

women working at their jobs. Sometimes some have two or three jobs trying to make ends meet and being involved in so many activities, that frankly, they don't have time for their children. I believe that a father needs to have daily contact with every one of his children, especially when they're under the roof of his home. I know when they get married and move on and have families of their own, it might not be so necessary for a father to have daily contact with his children, but especially in the formative years, children need a masculine influence upon them. Oh, mother is wonderful, mother is sweet, mother is precious, and we can't do without her, but I'm preaching about fathers today. Children need that masculine influence in their lives.

I read about a medieval tale of a construction superintendent who stopped to ask three masons on the construction job what they were doing. The first one said, "Oh, I'm laying bricks." The second one said, "Well, I'm working on a wall." And the third laborer who demonstrated genuine esteem for what he was involved in, said, "I'm raising a great cathedral." They were all doing the same thing, but their view of it was different. So it is with fatherhood.

If you ask some fathers what it means to be a father, they would say, "It means I have to work from sunrise to sunset to put food on the table." That's their attitude towards fatherhood. But if you ask some who have an understanding of God's plan, they would say, "I'm endeavoring to rear children in the right way." I believe that's why God made the family unit as He did, because He knew every child needs a guiding hand to help him in life's way. That place God has chosen for father. Yes, the father must be a bread winner, he must work, but a father must be available for his children, for children reach crises at all different ages, and if they don't find any counsel or any comfort in the arms of their father, they're going to go somewhere else to find it. Oh, time, time, such an important thing to give our children!

Time is the thing all of us are losing every second. I read somewhere in preparing for this service, that every day is a gift from God, and the wage, and what you do with today is how you're spending it. That's really food for thought. We get money, and most of the time we're pretty careful how we spend that money. We have today. How are we spending it? We're going to have one less of them tomorrow.

The importance of parental presence as a support for children's achievement should not be underestimated. Someone went to his child's classroom at school. I believe this child was five or six years old. The children were asked about their fathers. The conversation went like this:

Child A said, "My daddy is a physician. He makes lots of money, and we have a swimming pool in our backyard."

Child B said, "My daddy is a lawyer. He flies to Washington, and he talks to the president."

Child C said, "My daddy owns a company, and we have our own airplane."

Then my son, with a smile on his face, of course, said, "My daddy is here," with a proud look and a satisfaction.

June-July 2023

Children regard public presence of their parents as a visible symbol of caring and connectedness that is far more significant than any material support could ever be.

Here are some tips for Dad to build strong relationships with his children:

Make time for family-oriented activities

Shut off the entertainment system and go outside for some physical interaction

Let your children know you love them in word and deed

Listen

Model the behavior you want your children to exhibit

Show affection

Read to your children—if you initiate the habit when they're small, some day they'll seek you out to read

Don't talk negatively around your children, particularly about their mother. Doing so can hurt the child's self-esteem.

The next letter in father, is *T*. Again, there are a lot of *T* words I could use: *temperate, thankful* for the privilege of being a parent, *tenderhearted*.

Someone said, "Authentic men aren't afraid to show affection, release their feelings, hug their children, cry when they're sad, admit when they're wrong, and ask for help when they need it." That's a pretty good father.

The *T* word that I've chosen to use is—

Trustworthy—"worthy of trust and confidence; dependable." A father must be dependable. A father must be a conscientious worker, not lazy, and showing the children how to work. Not being a liar. Telling the truth. I told you that these are some old-fashioned characteristics, but they're still good for today.

William Franklin said, "If he's wealthy and prominent and you stand in awe of him, call him 'Father.' If he sits in his shirt sleeves and suspenders at a picnic, call him 'Pop.' If he wheels the baby carriage and carries bundles meekly, call him 'Papa' (*with the accent on the first syllable*). If he belongs to a literary circle and writes cultured papers, call him 'Papa' (*with the accent on the last syllable*). If however, he makes a pal of you when you're good, and is too wise to let you pull the wool over his loving eyes when you are not; if, moreover, you're quite sure no other fellow you know has quite so fine a father, you may call him 'Dad.'"

Another poem by Perry Tanksley—

A Father's Wish

*On this bright Father's Day,
I hope my boys and girls
Will have, or think they have,
The best Dad in the world.*

*I know no children I have
Will long remain a child.
They'll soon be grown and gone,
In just a little while.*

*That's why I'd like to be
Deserving of their praise,*

*So my children that I love
Can cherish me always.*

The letter *H* of father. I think I found more words for *H* than any of the other letters: *honest, humble, holy, happy, helper, healer.*

The *H* word I've chosen to use, and very important is—

Hearer—A father must be a hearer. Now, father is the head of the household. He's in an authoritarian position. He's used to giving orders, and it's much easier to give orders than it is to listen. Listen to your children when they're little. Sometimes that's tough to do, because frankly, little children can sometimes be annoying. You know it's true. We love them, but sometimes they just get on our nerves. But little ones are still human beings with feelings, and we need to listen to them.

I read this story, and I thought it has some merit—

A five-year-old boy was at a restaurant with his mom and dad. The waitress said to the boy, "What would you like to eat?" The little boy answered, "I want a hamburger and french fries."

"No, no, don't listen to him," his mother said. "I want him to get a broiled piece of chicken and mashed potatoes with a little butter."

The waitress looked at the little boy and said, "What would you like to drink with that hamburger and french fries?"

After the waitress left, the little boy looked at his mother and said, "Mommy, she thinks I'm real." Sometimes it's easier to treat a little child, like they're not even there. Little children realize and sense things like that.

Our children grow up so fast. They reach their teenage years before we know it. Someone said, "The best thing to do when your child turns thirteen is stick him in a barrel and put a cork in it, and bring it back out when he's eighteen." That's not the answer. Can't do that. I have found that God is a helper of a father of teenagers. I had five of them at one time.

Five thousand Americans will today try cocaine for the first time. Two thousand today will start using crack. 3.3 million teenagers are alcoholics, partly because they turned to someone who will listen to them.

One of the greatest challenges for a father is to keep the communication going through his children's teenage years. It takes a lot of prayer and a lot of help from the Lord to get through those years. After they're grown, your children are still your children. I am amazed how often my married children will call asking us about something. They're out on their own. They have their own families, but they still look for advice. I believe that's the way the Lord wants it to be.

Take a Moment to Listen—by Denis Waitley

*Take a moment to listen today
To what your children are trying to say;
Listen today, whatever you do
Or they won't be there to listen to you.*

*Listen to their problems, listen for their needs
Praise their smallest triumphs, praise their smartest deeds;*

*Tolerate their chatter, amplify their laughter,
Find out what's the matter, find out what they're after.*

But tell them that you love them, every single night

And though you scold them,

Be sure to hold them;

Tell them "Everything's all right; tomorrow's looking bright!"

Take a moment to listen today

To what your children are trying to say.

Listen today, whatever you do

And they will come back to listen to you.

A hearer. A father who is a glory to his children will be someone that they can communicate with.

The *E* word that I've chosen to use is—

Example—A father, to be a glory to his children, must be an example to them on how to live.

A man and his young son were climbing up a mountain. They came to a place where the climbing was difficult and even dangerous. The father stopped. Considering which way to go, he heard the voice of the boy behind him saying, "Choose a good path, Dad; I'm right behind you." So true, isn't it? Even when the children are wayward, the father must stay the course. A father leaves footprints—footprints to follow, even long after he's gone.

I think a father who is a glory to his children, thinks about the things of the Spirit more than the things of the world. He's eternally-minded. There's another world coming, and he does his best to teach his children principles that will help them to make it safely to the Promised Land.

A young minister, when he was about to be ordained, stated that at one period in his life he was nearly an infidel. "But," said he, "there was one argument in favor of Christianity, which I could never refute—the constant conduct of my Christian father."

Father must eschew evil. Stand for what is right.

Father needs to be energetic and let his children know that he loves them. Abraham and Sarah had Isaac when he was almost 100 years old. They must have been different than we are, because the older we get, the tougher it is to be at our very best for our children.

The letter *R*—*responsible, reliable, reasonable.*

I had to choose one for *R*, and I chose—

Reconciler—A father loves his family to be reconciled. I don't know how other fathers feel. I think I know, but as far as I am concerned, I want all my children right around me. Even when they're married, I want them nearby. Some have moved away, but that's life. Fathers never want anything to come between his children as siblings, or between his children and himself.

Ten things which you can do as a father for which you will never be sorry:

1. *Do your level best, even when you're discouraged*
2. *For hearing before judging in family quarrels*
3. *For thinking before speaking when emotionally upset*
4. *For not harboring unkind thoughts of a tale-bearer*
5. *For being generous to an enemy, perhaps the next door neighbor*
6. *For stopping your ears to gossip over the fence*
7. *For standing by your principles in dealing with your teenagers*
8. *For asking pardon when an error, even from your own child*
9. *For being square in your business dealings, even with the news boy*
10. *For accepting the stewardship of yet another child.*

A father is a reconciler who stands between his children and eternity. This is dear to my heart. There's only one Mediator between God and man, and that is Jesus. But I believe a father who is a glory to his children stands in the gap. The school system doesn't care where our children are going to go for eternity. Hollywood could care less what's going to happen to our children morally and for eternity. Rock musicians, famous musicians want money and fame. They don't care about the soul of a child. But a dad, a father, who does his best to provide for the material things and shows his love to each of his children, tries to be understanding, tender, compassionate. He not only does what he does because he wants his child to be happy in this time world, but Dad, if he's the dad he ought to be, cares for his children.

Oftentimes, a father is misunderstood and accused, even by his own children, but he is a reconciler. He finds himself, day in and day out, crying for God to have mercy on any of his children who might be wayward and outside of the fold of God.

A father's love is precious. A father's kindness is dear, but to have a father who cares for you, not only for this time world, but cares and desires that you prepare for the next world to come, now that is a father you can glory in.

A Father's Prayer—by Mouzon W. Brabham

*Father, today I bring to Thee
This child of mine whom Thou hast made;
In everything he looks to me;
In turn I look to Thee for aid.*

*He knows not all that is before;
He little dreams of hidden snares;
He holds my hand, and o'er and o'er
I find myself beset with fears.*

*Father, as this child looks up to me
For guidance, and my help implores,
I bring him now in prayer to Thee;
He trusts my strength and I trust Yours.*

*Hold Thou my hand as I hold his,
And so guide that I may guide;*

*Teach me, Lord, that I may teach,
And keep me free from foolish pride.*

*Help me to help this child of mine,
To be to him a father true;
Hold me, Lord, for every thing,
As fast I hold this child for You.*

Father, are you of glory to your children? Part of the verse of scripture from the book of Proverbs 17:6 says, "Children's children are the crown of old men." Children, are you a crown to your father? Father, are you of glory to your children? I believe God has a beautiful plan. In that plan is a saved father and a saved mother, working together in their marriage relationship, rearing their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to the best of their ability, and children who are serving the Lord also. Oh, that God's plan might be fulfilled, even in their lifetime!

There are some elderly saints here this morning who have done their best to raise their children for God, and they're nearing the end of the way and have not yet seen the fulfillment of their prayers. Be encouraged. Pray on. God hears and answers prayer, and none can put to naught your Christian life and the example you have set before them.

There's a song that touches my heart every time I hear it sung: "Will the Circle Be Unbroken?" I know heaven is not going to be like this. I know we can't know any sadness in heaven, but the very thought of an empty chair, as we're gathered together beneath the throne of God, grieves my heart sore. Will the circle be unbroken, by and by?

Fathers, let us pray on, labor on, be at our best for our children. Children, those of you who are here without God, won't you consider your soul's need, and make sure that the circle will not be unbroken? I believe that great day is coming. We're nearer to it now than we have ever been. At the end of all things, each one of us will be called into judgment according to the life we have lived.

I trust these thoughts have been an encouragement and a help to someone here today.

In closing, I'd like to call your attention to one father that Jesus told us about in the Bible:

A father had two sons. One of them was faithful, and the other one was a prodigal. How grieved that father was that his son had wandered far away and gone into the very depths of sin. Jesus told of how that boy came to himself and desired to return home. Perhaps he wondered what kind of reception he would get. Perhaps he wondered if his father had forgotten him. But as he arose and was on his way home, he saw his father waiting for him with outstretched arms. That's the Lord waiting for you, dear prodigal.

If you have a desire to come home, this would be a good time—on Father's Day—to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Consider what you've heard this morning. Prepare for the world to come, for in doing so, you're going to find the life in this world is far better than what the world has to offer. God has made a beautiful plan, and it cannot be improved upon. †

THE CHILDREN'S CORNER



POTATOES FIVE WAYS

A Bible Lesson by Sis. Rebecca Bland

“Grandma, could you please tell me a story?” I begged. My grandmother had an active imagination and a great memory. Those attributes made her a wonderful storyteller, and I always did my best to convince her to tell me some new and exciting tale.

“What kind of story do you want to hear?” Grandma asked me.

“I want to hear about something that happened long, long ago—when you were a little girl,” I told her.

“Hmmm! Let me think,” said my grandmother. She closed her eyes, and I snuggled closer to her on the couch. Grandma sat there so long with her eyes closed that I began to think she had fallen asleep.

Just when I thought I might have to wake her, my grandmother opened her eyes. She smiled at me.

“Did I ever tell you the story about potatoes five ways?” she asked me.

“No,” I told her. “I have never heard that story.”

“Once upon a time,” began my grandmother, “out in the West, there lived a large family.”

“Was it your family?” I asked.

“Yes, it was my family,” she said. “We lived on a farm, and sometimes we felt we were quite poor.” She paused, remembering. “We never went without food to eat,” she said, “but sometimes we had very little variety.”

“One day,” my grandmother continued, “my father came home with a guest.”

“Who was the guest?” I asked.

“I don’t remember exactly who the guest was,” said Grandma. “He was probably a neighboring farmer. Or maybe he was a newcomer my father had met in town.” She paused to think, and then she smiled as she said, “It doesn’t matter who he was. He was a guest, and my parents always did their best to make guests feel comfortable and welcome.”

“It was almost dinner time,” said my grandmother, “and so my father said to the guest, ‘You might as well stay and eat with us.’”

“My mother was a wonderful cook, and my father was proud of the meals she made. He knew our guest was in for a real treat.”

“But,” said my grandmother, looking at me with a little smile, “I think my father must have forgotten how low we were on food. We had no meat in the house, and it was too early in the spring for garden vegetables. We had potatoes in the cellar. That was all.”

“What did your mother do?” I asked.

My grandmother threw back her head and laughed. “She cooked potatoes,” she said.

“Just potatoes?” I asked in surprise. “How could she make dinner with just potatoes?”

“Well,” said Grandma, “she made potatoes five ways.”

“What does that mean?” I asked.

“She made five different dishes using potatoes,” Grandma explained. “My older sister, Pearl, and I helped her peel a whole lot of potatoes in a big hurry. Then my mother took some bacon grease and put it in a cast iron skillet. She took some of the peeled potatoes and sliced them thinly. She added some sliced onions, and then fried those potatoes and onions in bacon grease until they were very crisp. While the sliced potatoes were sizzling in the skillet, she cooked a pot of potatoes in their jackets.”

“In their jackets?” I repeated. I didn’t understand.

“Their skins,” explained Grandma. “She cooked some potatoes in their skins. When they were tender, she drained the water from them and seasoned them with butter, salt and pepper.”

“My mother cubed some of the peeled potatoes she hadn’t sliced. She divided them into two pots. To one pot of cubed potatoes, she added a little chopped onion, and she cooked the potatoes and onions in water until they were tender. Then she drained the water and added milk and butter. She returned the pot to the stove and heated the potatoes and onions in their buttery milk broth. That was how she made potato soup.”

“She cooked and drained the other pot of cubed potatoes, and then she added some chopped onion and a little dressing she had made by combining vinegar, oil, and some dried herbs. This created a kind of potato salad.”

“I’ve counted only four ways,” I said to my grandmother. “What was the other potato dish your mother made?”

“She cut up the rest of the peeled potatoes in chunks and cooked them in water. Then she drained the water from the potatoes, added a little butter and milk, and mashed them until they stood in a great, fluffy pile.”

“So when my father brought our guest to the dinner table, he saw that it was loaded with delicious dishes—all made from potatoes. We sat down to a meal of potato soup, potato salad, crispy fried potatoes, potatoes boiled in their jackets, and mashed potatoes.”

I laughed. “What did the guest say?” I asked.

“He thought the meal was delicious,” said Grandma. “And it was,” she added with a smile.

I smile, too—all these years after—whenever I think of my great-grandmother’s resourcefulness in making an entire meal from potatoes.

But this story also reminds me of a serious life lesson. In the story my grandmother told, there were five different dishes on the dinner table. But they were really not so different. They were all made from the same main ingredient—the potato. There is a scripture in the Bible that says, “There is no new thing under the sun” (Ecclesiastes 1:9).

Temptations are not new. As you go about your daily life, you meet with many temptations. When you are a young child, you may be tempted to disrespect your parents, tell a lie to get out of trouble, or be unkind to

(Part XX)

OTHER RITUAL TYPES

In addition to the greater and more important ceremonial institutions or types hitherto considered, a number of other ritual types are set forth in the Pentateuch which also are shadows of good things. We purpose in this chapter to bring together the more important of these miscellaneous types. These were given for our learning, and doubtless God intends we should get the lessons they contain for us. As we have already dealt with the principles of truth set forth by most of these, they will be treated only in those particulars that belong especially to them.

Clean and Unclean Meats

(Leviticus 11, Deuteronomy 14)

The distinctions of the Mosaic law between clean and unclean foods might seem puerile were it not for their manifestation of profound knowledge of the animal kingdom, of wholesome dietetics, and their far-reaching influence as types of great moral and spiritual realities. That these distinctions belonged to that great system of types hitherto considered there can be no doubt.

The clean animals were those which both divided the hoof and chewed the cud. These were especially the ox, sheep, goat, and deer species. The swine was unclean because, though it divided the hoof, yet it did not chew the cud. The camel, coney, and hare on the other hand, were unclean because they did not part the hoof, though they chewed the cud. Of fish only those were clean which had both fins and scales. Of fowls no general rule was given by Moses; but from his long lists of clean and unclean fowls the general principle usually applies that, as with animals, carnivorous birds as the eagle, vulture, raven, and owl were unclean.

In these distinctions and restrictions there were probably a number of sums and advantages, though the chief one was typical and moral. Along with this chief idea were certain secondary benefits accruing to Israel, as we found to be true of the Sabbath and other feasts, which though they were principally beneficial in their lessons of spiritual truth, yet they brought physical, social, political, and commercial benefits.

In these distinctions between meats God gave a system of wholesome dietetics. The clean animals were generally the very best and most nutritious for food, although we must allow that some pronounced unclean were almost if not entirely as wholesome as those called clean. The distinctions were somewhat arbitrary because typical. So likewise in the feasts, though there were temporal benefits in the times and nature of their observance, yet there was more or less of the arbitrary element in their appointment. Science has allowed and the facts of experience demonstrate that as a class the clean animals are very healthful. Swine's flesh is said to be especially unhealthy in warm climates where such diseases as leprosy are common. It has been asserted

your siblings. As you get older, other temptations arise. You may be tempted to use profane language, take something that doesn't belong to you, or try a substance that is harmful to your body. These may all seem like temptations that are very different from each other, but in reality they all have the same main ingredient—disobedience to God's Word.

In order to resist these temptations, we must always keep the fear of the Lord before our eyes and in our hearts. The fear of the Lord will help us resist every temptation, and will lead us to make our home in heaven one day.

Our wise saying this month comes from Proverbs 2:5 which says, "Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." To "fear the Lord" simply means to respect, honor, and obey Him above all others.

We read many places in the book of Proverbs that a wise heart seeks to fear God and keep His commandments. God's commandments are found in His Word. Hide the Word of God in your heart by studying and memorizing Bible verses. This will help you understand how to fear God so that you can resist every temptation that comes your way.

Activity

The book of Proverbs has much to say about the fear of the Lord. Can you complete the following statements from Proverbs about the fear of the Lord?

1. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of ____."
2. "The fear of the Lord is to hate ____."
3. "The fear of the Lord longeth ____."
4. "The fear of the Lord is strong ____."
5. "The fear of the Lord is a fountain of ____."

Answers to Last Month's Activity

1. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20).
2. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psalm 19:7).
3. "Our soul waiteth for the Lord: He is our help and our shield" (Psalm 33:20).
4. "Obey them that have the rule over you ... for they watch for your souls ..." (Hebrews 13:17).
5. "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). †

WATCH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES LIVE!

As many of our readers know, we can be found on the internet at www.wayoftruth.org where in addition to reading past issues and other information, you can watch our general services every Sunday LIVE at 10:40 A.M and 6:00 P.M. E.D.T. Enjoy Spirit-filled singing and preaching. Also, our mid-week service at 7:00 P.M. Wednesdays is aired live. There is a chatroom where you can interact with us and share your prayer requests. Tune in and worship with us!

that during epidemics, plagues, etc., Jews do not suffer to the same extent as do those who eat swine's flesh. Since God chose to make this distinction in meats, wisdom and mercy are shown in the choice of those for food that are best adapted to man's needs.

Another great temporal benefit to Israel from these distinctions in food was that it made a wall of separation between them and their heathen neighbors socially. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego demonstrated this when they refused to defile themselves with the king's food in Nebuchadnezzar's court. By eating the ox, which the Egyptians regarded as sacred, the Israelite separated himself from the subtle influence of his idolatrous neighbors to the south, and in refusing swine's flesh, which was eaten by the Canaanites, we would not be very liable to social intercourse with these wicked neighbors.

But the more direct purpose of these restrictions on food was to teach that important fact of moral distinctions and to educate men to the idea of holiness. As the washings of the body are a proper type of the cleansing of the soul, so the food that furnishes nourishment and pleasure to the body is a fit symbol of those things of which the soul partakes. As holiness requires careful discrimination in what is given place in the heart, so in this type God made discrimination as to clean and unclean foods for the body.

Because of natural depravity and perverse teaching, men without the influence of God's revelation have very confused ideas of holiness and sin. And except for these ceremonial distinctions and what has them for its basis, we might be as mixed in our ideas of morals as are the Turks and Hindus at this day. It is an elementary lesson in holiness. It, along with similar lessons from the tabernacle, priesthood, offerings, and feasts, goes to make up the Christian conception of holiness. The veils, consecrations, sprinklings of blood, and washings with water constantly witness to us, as well as do these distinctions in meats, that God is holy, man is sinful, and that fellowship between God and men is possible only by men being cleansed from sin and made holy. Opposers of holiness today among professors of Christianity have missed the most important fact of true religion—that God desires to make men holy.

Defilement of Childbirth and Issues

(Leviticus 12, 15)

A perusal by the reader of the chapters to which reference is given beneath the title of this paragraph will doubtless be profitable, especially since, for obvious reasons, we refrain from giving the details of these impurities. The defilements of this class were all related to the production of life—the giving birth to children or issues in the organs connected therewith. That these impurities were viewed not primarily as of a physical but as of a ceremonial nature is certain from the fact that burnt and sin-offerings were required for their purification. This is further proved by the fact that a woman who had given birth to a male child was disqualified from entering the court of the sanctuary for thirty-three days after she was clean to enter society; also by the period of uncleanness for a female child being twice as long as for a male child.

Here then we again have a rite that typifies a great moral fact. But how do production and birth have connection with moral defilement? What is this birth sin that is here typically depicted? The "sweet singer of Israel" answers, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). In this ceremonial defilement and cleansing, as well as in certain other forms of uncleanness and their cleansing, God has been pleased to set before us the awful fact of the inborn depravity of men's natures that causes them to "go astray as soon as they be born" (Psalm 58:3). This view has been held by such modern writers as Seiss and Fairbairn as well as by some of the Jewish doctors. This depravity of the nature here typified is probably that uncleanness for which that fountain was opened in the house of David, as both sin and uncleanness are mentioned (see Zechariah 13:1).

Neither is it unreasonable that a truth so significant to religion should be given such typical recognition as to its existence and removal. That ceremonial defilement was cleansed by the offering of a lamb for a burnt offering and a fowl for a sin-offering forty days after the child's birth if a male, or eighty days after if a female. The blood of those animals was typical of the precious blood of Christ, who, "that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate" (Hebrews 13:12). This typical rite teaches, contrary to the Pelagian theory, that native depravity exists, and, contrary to a more common theory, that it may be removed not by a growth process but by the blood of Jesus in full salvation.

Leprosy and Its Cleansing

(Leviticus 13, 14)

The description of leprosy given in Leviticus 13, 14 is said to be the oldest description extant of any disease. It was not given here, however, for medical purposes, nor were the regulations concerning it for affecting a cure. This is clear because the rites of the cleansing were for him who had become clean already. He was to go to the priest, not to the physician.

Doubtless the restrictions on the leper in separating him from society were beneficial in preventing the spread of the disease at the time of the exodus, when the mode of life would make the Israelites especially liable to it. But as with temporal benefits from other Mosaic institutions, that was not the primary purpose of Moses' writings on the subject. Other diseases more deadly, equally difficult to cure, and more contagious are not mentioned. No sacrifices were prescribed for those who had recovered from them. To have required elaborate rites for every form of disease would have made a great burden upon the people. God chose this particular disease because of its general nature to be a type of that most awful of all diseases—sin. In several respects it is parallel with sin and its effects in men.

It is a loathsome, defiling disease in its developed stages. It begins with a white spot in the skin which slowly and gradually spreads over the entire body "bleaching the hair white wherever it showed itself, crusting the affected parts with shining scales, and causing swellings and sores. From the skin it slowly ate its way through the tissues, to the bones and joints,

and even to the marrow, rotting the whole body piece-meal.” And as leprosy affects the body, so sin affects the soul. This loathsome, corrupting, degrading disease of the body, as someone has remarked, “is God’s language by which he describes sin as it appears in his sight.”

Leprosy is like sin also in that it is seemingly not serious in its earlier stages. It may be scarcely visible to the eye, only a small rising in the flesh, a slight red spot, like the puncture from a pin. An expert may be necessary to detect it. But it spreads gradually and deepens until the subject becomes horrible to behold; fingers are eaten away, ears drop off, and he becomes a mass of putrefying corruption indescribable. So sin, so awful in its consequences, is very harmless in appearance in its beginning. That shocking crime of which you recently read in the newspaper doubtless had its beginning in what appeared a very harmless thought. All the sin that has stained the world throughout man’s history began with one admiring look of our mother Eve at the forbidden fruit. Beware of sin. It is terrible in its consequences.

Leprosy is contagious by intimate contact. For this reason the leper must dwell in a house apart, as did Uzziah king of Judah, whom God smote. The leper was to go with rent clothes and bared head as a sign of sorrow, to wear a bandage on the lip or chin as a badge of his uncleanness, and to cry to any who approached him, “Unclean, unclean.” If God chose such an awful spectacle to symbolize sin, how hateful to His holy eyes must sin itself appear! The sinner, like the leper, is unfit to associate with his fellows—a menace to society, spreading his awful malady wherever he goes—is an object of abhorrence to the holy; and himself is filled with dread of the awful consequences awaiting in the future.

Finally leprosy is almost incurable and was probably entirely so by human means in Bible times. Only when God in pity heard the prayers of the meek Moses was Miriam made clean. Only the God of Israel by the word of His prophet Elisha could heal the great man Naaman of his disease. But, thank God, He who said to the suppliant leper, “I will, be thou clean,” can say as effectually to the moral leper, “Thy sins be forgiven thee.” How remarkably parallel are leprosy and sin! No human remedy availed for either; but He who healed the lepers also saves from sin. And here we have the most glorious part of this type in the rites for the cleansing of the leper, which foreshadowed God’s work of cleansing men from sin.

When the leper became clean he was to present himself to the priest. If the priest found him clean, two birds were taken “alive and clean.” One of these was killed in a vessel containing some fresh water, that its blood and the water might be mixed together. Then the live bird was dipped in the mingled water and blood and released to fly away clean, while the priest took the scarlet wool and hyssop on the handle of cedar wood to sprinkle the bloody water seven times on the cleansed leper. What a beautiful type of our cleansing from sin! Cleansing was by blood and water, water the symbol of God’s Word. One bird died that his fellow might through his life’s blood be made clean and go free. No comment is needed here. The sprinkling of the bloody

water seven times was symbolic of the cleansing of the leper, while the freed bird represented his release from sin’s consequences. But the atonement also had to be made. After eight days he had to appear at God’s altar with a trespass-offering, a sin-offering, a burnt and a meat-offering, also a log of oil. The blood of the trespass offering was to be placed upon his ear, thumb, and toe to signify complete cleansing, and likewise of the oil to typify the making holy of the sinner by the presence of the Holy Spirit coming upon him.

Reader, if spots of sin mar your soul, behold in this vivid type of sin the awful picture God has here given of your condition. Your sin will “eat as doth a canker,” and finally destroy your soul forever. Flee to the cleansing blood of Jesus, which can cleanse you from every spot of sin’s awful malady and even remove its taint from your inmost nature. Bow before your Lord as one of old with the earnest prayer, “Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean,” and hear His voice saying in accents of infinite pity, “I will, be thou clean.” †

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Alvin A. Craig, Radio Minister

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An eternal God	Psalm 90:2
A divine Christ	John 1:1, 14
An infallibly inspired Bible	II Timothy 3:16
Salvation from sin	Matthew 1:21
The new birth	John 3:1-7
Entire Sanctification	Ephesians 5:25, 26
A holy life	Titus 2:11, 12
	Hebrews 12:10-14
Unity of God's people	John 17:21
	I Corinthians 12:13
Divine Healing	James 5:14, 15
The ordinances	Matthew 28:19, 20
Eternal life	Matthew 25:46
	John 3:15; 6:54; 10:28
Eternal punishment	Mark 9:43-46
	Revelation 20:15

YOU SHOULD KNOW MORE ABOUT THE CHURCH OF GOD

Jesus bought it with His own blood	Acts 20:28
It has a good foundation	Ephesians 2:20
	I Corinthians 3:11
Christ is the Head	Ephesians 1:22; 5:23
	Isaiah 9:6
Christ is the Door	John 10:9
	John 10:1
	Acts 2:47
Only the saved are members	John 15:2-6
	I John 3:8, 9
Membership is offered to all	II Peter 3:9
	Revelation 22:17
Membership is rewarded	John 14:2, 3