

The Advocate of Truth



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The Supreme Love Of Jesus

Bond Tennant

In the upper room, Jesus said to His disciples, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you...” (John 13:34). This new commandment should cause each child of God to search his or her heart. Do the words of this new commandment enter into our consciousness and control our thoughts, words, and actions?

Jesus loved the human creation so much that he laid down his life! “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). He died the cruel death of the cross. The keeping of this commandment is shown by our daily using of time in the Lord’s service which might be used to further our own interest in life. Each child of God must answer whether he or she is keeping the full spirit of the words of Jesus’ new commandment.

A portion of John 13:1 tells us that “having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.” In order to obey Jesus’ new commandment, we must similarly love one another. Jesus’ love is a constant abiding love that rises above difficulties of every kind and continues to sacrifice so that others, particularly our brethren, might be blessed. It is not a love that glows with enthusiasm when our efforts are appreciated, and then becomes dead when our service is unnoticed or not praised.

When we compare the glorious perfection of Jesus with the imperfect nature of His disciples, we realize that it was not a natural thing to love them. Yet, Jesus loved them despite all the things which might have discouraged His love for them.

It is not difficult to love those who love us. Also there are special kinships of interests and personalities among the brethren that draw certain ones closely together. It is good that all such love one another. However, this is not the full keeping of Jesus’ new commandment.

Perhaps there are those among the brethren who may seem different. Because of this, they may appear remote to us. Some of the brethren may irritate us by their words. We may pride ourselves in our growth in grace. We may feel superior to those who have not advanced so fully. We may wonder why those who are “new in the way” are not as good as we are. Let us not think along these lines. This may indicate that we are not loving all the brethren as Jesus loved His disciples and loves us.

NOTE: A minister once said that when he gave a sermon he was also preaching to himself, as well as his congregation, in order to be edified by God’s Word. This article was written for the edification of myself and all of its readers.



It Is Finished

Daniel Cruz

What makes a complete stranger perform the ultimate sacrifice of giving his life? The answer for many is that it was love. Yes, love conquered all that was before man, and the price was far greater than a human death. Did Jesus have to endure the punishment before His death? Yes, it was through this that we are able to see that if this was the cost for our salvation, then Jesus was going to suffer willingly to endure for us. So, do we say that the freedom to live our lives in the manner that we want was placed on the cross, that the price is paid in full and we can do as we desire? For a child of God, this cannot apply. A child of God can grasp the importance of the death of Christ and the gospel that is to be preached.

To say that the completion of Jesus' death was the beginning for us, will bring enlightenment to our future. "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:30). What was completed at this time? Was it the liberty to do as we please, or was it the evidential death of Christ? Isaiah clearly stated that this was prophecy being fulfilled.

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). Jesus carried the burdens of the world on His shoulders and became a complete sacrifice unto God. How do we honor this death today? We do this by living our lives patterned by the testimonies of Christ. He forgave until the sorrowful end, and He prayed unto His Father to

help those who would remain after His death. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word" (John 17:20). Why would prayer be needed if all things were completed on the cross?

The Lord knew we would have to endure many things. He was asking God to watch over us as we carry the gospel message today. The cross took away the need for the physical sacrifices, but the spiritual ones are still needed. If the commandments were nailed to the cross, to whom does Revelation 12:17 refer? "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Clearly we see that work is still being commissioned to the saints who have an established enemy that seeks to destroy the church.

The Apostle Paul gave words of comfort to those who were working in the fields. "For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ" (Colossians 2:5). Paul saw that much work was needed to be completed in Colossae and reached out to those doing so. This showed that the work of Jesus still needed to be done there. We are given this very same cry today with much urgency. The end times are approaching, and we find that there are still many to be warned and told of the gospel message.

A responsible child of God will carry his banner daily and call upon God to guide him in all things. In ancient

times, a banner was used to mark territories. Numbers 2:2 shows that the people of Israel were to place these far from the camp, after the Exodus, to let others know that they were pitched in a location. A banner was often an ensign of a tribe and a representation to all who would see it. Our responsibility to the Church of God is to carry out a message of hope for all those seeking His Truth. We cannot despair or become faith in this work. It is our privilege to serve the Lord until the end. To the church in Philadelphia Jesus said: "I know thy works: behold, I

have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name" (Revelation 3:8).

Brethren, let us hold fast to our profession and remain vigilant in the fields of our Lord. Let us complete the work that is before us with honor and glory. Let us pray that the peace that comes from the Father will give us the strength to carry out the duties of a child of God. Amen.

Suffering

By David DeLong



All people in the world suffer at one time or another. There are many reasons that contribute to this suffering. The question that must be asked, however, is: what is the underlying cause for the suffering? For instance, many people suffer because of wrong choices that they make. If a child, for example, runs outdoors in the cold without wearing the proper clothing, then he or she may become sick from exposure to the elements. So too, if a person chooses to smoke, drink alcohol, take illegal drugs, or eat unclean foods, then various diseases are often the result of such choices. Galatians 6:7 informs us: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Wrong Choices

The result of these wrong choices often hurts the lives of others as well. Many are forced to breathe second-hand smoke and may come down with cancer or other diseases; many die from being struck by a driver under

the influence of alcohol or drugs; sometimes babies are deformed because of parents who indulge in these sins during the mother's pregnancy; and many children will continue in the wrong practices of their parents because of the bad example they are exposed to.

Suffering from wrong choices does not only come from the physical abuses one does to the body. A lack of faith for the Lord's daily provisions will bring about great stress on a person, physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. Jesus counseled us in Matthew 6:25-34: "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for rai-

ment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Hating, or even being envious of, a brother or sister is detrimental to one's physical health and spiritual salvation. We read in I John 3:14-16: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

Closely associated with hatred is anger and unforgiveness. Jesus taught: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:21-24).

Concerning forgiveness our Lord warned: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15). This is serious business! Many of the wrong choices that people make bring devastating consequences into their lives as well as others' lives. Untold

suffering, destruction, and death come from rebelling against the Word of God. This, then, is a huge reason why many people suffer. But it is not the only reason.

General Suffering

We live in an imperfect world. Because of the collective sins of mankind, beginning with Adam and Eve's original sin down to our day, the "...whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain..." (see Romans 8:22). A man may lose his job; a person may be killed in a car accident; a house may burn down; people get sick and die. A general suffering comes to everyone. Even the Apostle Paul suffered many things from different sources as he served the Lord. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" (II Corinthians 4:8-10).

Chastisement

We all have done wrong and sinned against the Lord at some point in our lives (see I John 1:10). Like any good father the Lord must discipline us for our sins. We read of this in Hebrews 12:5-11. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye (illegitimate), and not sons. 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? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

We have a tendency to run from chastisement. But the Lord tells us not to despise it nor to faint from His rebuke. The purpose for God's discipline is to show us that we are His children and to be partakers of His holiness. Without the Lord's chastening we are considered to be illegiti-

mate. However, even though it is grievous for the time being, we must endure this chastening for it to be of value to us. Its end result will be "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" and eternal life. The Lord also will show us when we are being chastised by Him. It may be through some illness that comes to us or through some other suffering, but He will not leave us in the dark concerning it.

Persecution

One of the hardest forms of suffering to endure is being hated, reviled, or spoken against for living a godly life. Jesus blesses such a condition, however. He said: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:10-12). In Luke 6:23 we read: "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy..."

The Apostle Peter also had counsel to give concerning this condition. "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 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" (I Peter 4:14-19).

Furthermore, Jesus taught us how to respond when someone hurts us personally. He said in Matthew 5:38-40: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

For the Works of God

Closely associated with suffering persecutions and

personal hurts for the sake of the Lord is suffering for the works of God. We see such an example in John, chapter 9. Here, a blind man from birth is under scrutiny. We read in verses 2-3: "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him." The purpose that this man was born blind, it seems, is so that Jesus would one day heal him for the glory of God.

In one sense Paul also suffered for the works of God, showing that the Lord was working through him as a faithful minister. He wrote: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (II Corinthians 11:23-28).

As a Test

James wrote: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4). The trying of our faith is a precious thing to the Lord. But it will take some suffering on our part to accomplish this. Peter added this teaching: "Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:6-7).

One of the greatest tests of faith in the Bible was when Satan tempted Job to go against God. Job, we know, was a very rich man being blessed abundantly by the Lord. Then we learn: "Now there was a day when the sons of

God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land" (Job 1:6-10).

Twice the Lord allowed Satan to test Job to see if he would remain faithful even with the loss of family, possessions, and his health. Job passed the tests. Without knowing it Job became a spectacle to others, including the heavenly host, as a witness of his faithfulness to the Lord and God's faithfulness to him. Brother or sister, perhaps you are suffering today for the same reason that Job did. What Paul said of the apostles being a spectacle is true of us as well. "For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men" (I Corinthians 4:9).

Christ has already defeated Satan and, thank the Lord, there is a time limit on our suffering. Concerning God's people, Revelation 21:4 reads: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Until then, however, we must look to the words that Paul penned in II Corinthians 12:9: "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

People are a big reason that there is so much suffering in the world: dictators abusing their subjects; criminals hurting others; selfish people living only to get for themselves; those who think that the law does not apply to them; and, tragically, Christians who don't do their duty to their fellowman. As followers of Jesus our duty is

basically the same as the ministry which Christ performed. Let us list four such duties.

1.) Teach, or give witness to, the Word of God.

Are we witnessing to the lost, giving Bible studies when possible, or mentoring young people in the Lord? Even though Timothy was young, Paul exhorted him to: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Timothy 4:12-16).

2.) Visit others. There are many people in hospitals, rest homes, or who are shut-ins and alone. A visit usually helps to ease their suffering. James teaches us emphatically: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

3.) Help the poor and needy. When Jesus returns he will separate the sheep from the goats. Then we find: "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:33-40).

Notice what the Lord will do for those who help the poor. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the

earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness" (Psalm 41:1-3).

4.) Encourage others. Encouraging others in their walk with the Lord is a great duty of which we must be aware. It is only the person who endures to the end who shall be saved (see Matthew 24:13). Many are discouraged in their spiritual walk and have become weary. A man who had suicidal thoughts once said to me: "I just need a little encouragement." Even Jesus' ministry involved

healing the brokenhearted, preaching deliverance to the captives, and setting at liberty those who are bruised (see Luke 4:18). We can, and must, share in this ministry of our Lord.

Suffering, in some form, will exist until the Lord comes again to eradicate it. However, we can erase much suffering now by making godly choices in our lives and by ministering to others in their necessities. But, when needed, let us faithfully endure our Lord's chastening, persecutions for His sake, and share in the sufferings of our Lord Jesus for the glory of God.



Job

By David DeLong

In the previous article the Patriarch Job was given as an example of a person who suffered because of tests in his life that were proposed by Satan. Through faith in God he was able to pass these tests. Perhaps this is the reason that some of us go through suffering today: to help us rely on God through the suffering and to bring glory to Him. First Peter 4:12-13 tells us: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

Every child of God must be tested to determine his or her faithfulness to the Lord. However, the testing will never be too great for us to handle. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

Let us also remember that God does not tempt a person. James 1:12-15 informs us: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Satan brings us temptations to try to make us fall. The Lord allows testing in our lives to help us stand.

Now let us turn to the story of Job to analyze the testings that he went through. "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil. And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters. His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen,

and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east. And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually" (Job 1:1-5).

From this text we learn that Job was a godly man who was very rich. He had seven sons, three daughters, and many possessions. He was "the greatest of all the men of the east." His homeland was in Uz which is thought to be in or around Edom in the vicinity of the Dead Sea (see Jeremiah 25:20-21). Though this man was godly, it appears that his children were not. They loved feasting which included the drinking of wine (see verse 18). Job even became an intercessor for them in the event that they had sinned against God. This was a common practice for him.

Satan is a spoiler. His purpose in life is, "...to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..." (John 10:10). This is what Satan wanted to do to Job, but he couldn't do it without God's permission. So, Satan proposed having Job go through various tests. The story picks up in verses 6-12. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD."

Satan's argument to the Lord was that Job served God because he was richly blessed by Him and that he had a "hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side". The Lord did, indeed, place a hedge of protection around Job, his family, and all his possessions. He places a hedge of protection around all of His children, even today. Satan can only get at God's children if there is a break in that hedge, or if the hedge is taken away. There are two ways that the hedge is broken or taken away, and it can only be done through the Lord's permission. First, as in the case with Job, God removes a portion of the hedge as a test. Satan was allowed only to get at Job's family, servants, and possessions but not at his life (except for the boils he received later). Second, if a person is outside of God's will through sin, the hedge of protection can be broken or removed. Satan then has access to that person's life as permitted by God. A situation where God's hedge of protection was removed is found in I Timothy 1:19-20 where Paul wrote: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."

We learn of all the devastation that Satan was permitted to do to Job in the rest of chapter one and chapter two. Job's oxen and asses were taken away and some of his servants were killed. Fire from heaven burned up his sheep as well as some of his servants. His camels were stolen and more of his servants were killed. A "great wind from the wilderness" destroyed the house in which Job's sons and daughters were feasting, killing the "young men". Even though Job was in great distress as is shown by the tearing of his mantle and shaving of his head, he never forsook the Lord, but worshipped Him and blessed His name.

The story continues in chapter 2:1-8. "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause. And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face. And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life. So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes."

Make no mistake about it. Satan can cause sickness in a person if the Lord permits it! The text above proves this to be so. Again, I want to stress the importance of being within the hedge of God's protection by being in obedience to Him. In the previous article we noticed that some suffering from sickness comes about because of wrong choices a person makes such as smoking tobacco, taking illicit drugs, drinking alcohol, etc. The same condition can be the result from eating unclean meats. Any disobedience to the Lord can break that hedge of protection and allow Satan to afflict someone. In the case of Job, however, the sickness from boils was not a result of disobedience on his part.

Job's wife urged him to "...curse God, and die." But of course Job did not do so (see verses 9-10). Three of his friends, Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar came to comfort him. But, they did not even recognize him when they came, and even mourned with him for seven days and seven nights. These three friends actually proved to be "miserable comforters" (see chapter 16:1) by the wrong motives they gave to Job and their reasons for his suffering.

All of this inappropriate advice is a good lesson for us as well. Sometimes we think we know why things are going badly for a brother or sister and we want to help them very much. So, we may give them all sorts of advice and counsel. In the opinion of this author, Job's wife and his three friends could have helped him more by just being sympathetic and praying for him. We don't always have the answer, but God does.

Job was in such distress that he wanted to be dead (see chapter 3). Only a person who has ever been in that much misery can understand what he was going through. At one point he even thought that God may have rejected him and was condemning him. Job bitterly said in chapter 10:1-2: "My soul is weary of my life; I will leave my

complaint upon myself; I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say unto God, Do not condemn me; show me wherefore thou contendest with me." There may be some today who are feeling the same way. Brothers and sisters, God has not rejected you. Your very purpose in suffering so greatly may be because the Lord has chosen you for your faithfulness to Him. He knows that whatever you may be going through you will stand for Him as a faithful witness to His awesome goodness.

Job, at least by chapter 19, had his faith somewhat restored. He said in verses 25-27: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." That is the great hope for all of us. Knowing that our Redeemer lives, and having the hope to see Him, is worth all the suffering that we could ever go through.

A fourth person, Elihu, answered Job and his three friends. We find him in chapter 32:2-3. "Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job." Job, though he was a godly man, was living with a condition called "self-righteousness". His three friends were afflicted with a condition that we will call "judgment-itis". Elihu saw both conditions and abhorred them.

Finally, the Lord spoke to Job and asked him some very hard questions (see chapters 38-41). Job could not answer any of the questions, but they made him do some serious thinking. Job saw himself as he really was compared to God. He said in chapter 42:5-6: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." There is something about seeing ourselves in comparison to the Lord's magnificence that will make us respond like Job did. (See Isaiah's response to the Lord in Isaiah 6:1-5).

I like a story that turns out well. And so it was with Job. "And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before" (verse 10).

Blessed Are the Pure in Heart



"Thou shalt not commit adultery" (Exodus 20:14). This commandment of the Decalogue is commonly violated by many people who profess to be living Christian lives. In Galatians 5:19-21 it is listed as the first one of the works of the flesh. These verses read: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, 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."

In these verses we have listed a number of things that are contrary to the righteous principles of God and include a violation of the seventh commandment. God does not want anyone to commit any of the things listed, including "and such like". The five words, "Thou shalt not commit adultery" cover all the sexual sins that Paul mentions in Galatians five and prohibit anyone from inheriting a place in the kingdom of God.

There is no sin mentioned in the Bible that is not prohibited by the Ten Commandments. The sin of fornication is mentioned quite frequently in the epistles of the Apostle Paul. He openly declared himself against this prevalent sin, not only among worldly people but among professed people of the Church of God at that time. It is many times worse today than in Paul's time.

In I Corinthians 5:1 he wrote, "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife." This was written, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that

are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord..." (I Corinthians 1:2). Paul wrote again in chapter 5, verses 9-11,13: "I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat...Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

The command: "Thou shalt not commit adultery" also covers fornication and is related to the other things of the works of the flesh including murders, drunkenness, and such like. Many of these things are what you read about daily in the newspapers of the land and in the leading magazines. These are often given top priority and publicity over all the other news. The world is desperately wicked and evil people will God destroy.

Paul again mentions the sin of fornication (adultery) in I Corinthians 6:18-20: "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." My Christian friend (for Paul is speaking to the Church of God here) surely you are not ignorant of what Paul is writing about.

In Ephesians 5:3,5 we read these words given by in-

spiration: "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints...For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Every one of the Ten Commandments is so closely connected together to cover all sin, that to break one breaks them all. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10).

In I Thessalonians 4:3-7 we find: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

The seventh commandment covers all uncleanness, and no unclean person, young or old, has any inheritance in the kingdom of God. In Paul's exhortation to Timothy we read these words: "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (II Timothy 2:22).

Jesus said in His sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." In Titus 1:15-16 we read this about the pure in heart and mind: "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate."

Jesus magnified the law and made it honorable (see Isaiah 42:21). Again, we read from His sermon on the mount these words: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-28).

We find an exhortation to chastity in Proverbs 4:20-23: "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

THE UNBRIDLED TONGUE

By Betty Whetstone

**The tongue is a very small member,
But, harm it can bring to you;
With whispers and sly accusations
That are vicious, and often untrue.**

**A bridle is used for an unruly horse,
A small helm for a ship on the sea;
But an unruly tongue cannot be controlled,
No matter how strong you might be.**

**It has no mercy, cares not who it hurts,
And by people cannot be controlled;
It can separate even the very best friends,
Takes others away from God's fold.**

**For Satan is busy and quick to take charge
Of a tongue that's allowed to run free;
And he's always eager to gain the control
Of people, like you and me.**

**But God is almighty, His Spirit is strong,
And He will always be there;
For even the tongue must answer to Him,
And be ruled with the aid of a prayer.**

--James 3:3-10





THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

Religious Well-being: What About It?

The following is an article which appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*.

Gallup:

Most Religious Americans have high levels of WELL-BEING

By Adelle M. Banks
Religious News Service

The most religious Americans also have the highest rates of well-being, according to a new Gallup survey.

Overall, the very religious received a score on Gallup's well-being index of 68.7 percent while both the moderately religious and the nonreligious received a score of 64.2 percent. The very religious were defined as those who said religion is an important part of their daily lives, and they attend worship services at least every week or almost every week.

Researchers did not determine why the very religious had higher levels of health and happiness.

"It is possible that Americans who have a higher well-being may be more likely to choose to be religious than those with lower well-being," the organization said in announcing the finding.

But it is also possible that being religious can contribute to higher levels of personal well-being.

Comment

The above article is really confusing. First, it tells us that those who experience well-being are more likely to

choose to be religious. Then it tells us that being religious can contribute to higher levels of personal well-being. It cannot be both ways!

It takes more than just saying that religion is a very important part of one's life and attending worship services every week or almost every week. I assume that the inference of religion in this article is in reference to Christianity which requires godly living. How is the spiritual life of the well-being?

In reality, well-being has little relationship to religion. There are children of God in all walks of life. The ones who experience the well-being found in the world due to their own personal efforts are less likely to choose being truly religious. Of course, I write of material well-being!

God's Word says, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (James 2:5).

The thing to consider is this: are those who experience well-being truly happy? After He washed the disciples' feet, Jesus explained the relationship between a servant and his lord. Then He said, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them" (John 13:17). So we see that it takes more than just attending services every week or almost every week of the year to experience God sanctioned well-being. It takes obedience!

Still Relic Fever

I read an article about the importance of relics to some. The article read that relics such as the thread from the

Virgin Mary's veil, chips of wood from the cross on which Christ was crucified, bits and bone and flesh from the bodies of church martyrs were all displayed in tiny gold-clad cases. Of course, they cannot prove that the relics are genuine, but they believe that prayers before the relics facilitates healing through church saints. A priest said that the relics cannot heal, but it is God working through the relics.

The article concluded that relics help believers connect to their faith.

Comment

Prayers before relics do not facilitate healing. There is no place in the worship of God for relics. Would not bowing down before a relic be taking God's name in vain?

No material object can help believers connect to their faith. God does not recognize relics! It is the Holy Spirit that does the connecting! A person must have a spirit of obedience pleasing to God. When that spirit is obtained, the Holy Spirit will connect and help and comfort that person and make that person's faith to be a real and living reality.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Romans 8:16).

Still Virgin Mary Appearances

I saw on the internet the story of the Virgin Mary appearing at two separate Catholic churches. In one location, the Virgin looked as though she was crying, and tears were running down her face.

In the other location, the virgin seemed to be giving of myrrh which is a fragrant, bitter tasting gum resin exuded from any of several plants of Arabia and East Africa. Myrrh is used in making incense, perfume, etc.

Comment

We have commented on the so-called appearances of the Virgin Mary in churches and on objects many times before. The lying wonders mentioned in II Thessalonians 2:9 in regard to a man will be many. However, lying wonders, of which appearances of the Virgin are examples, occur frequently these days.

Oso, Washington Mud Slide

You more than likely remember that there was a terrible mudslide last March in Oso, Washington. At least 24 lost their lives, and many were missing. It is said that a scientist who worked for the government had warned 15 years ago about the potential for a catastrophic landslide in the fishing village.

The report raised questions as to why residents were allowed to build homes on the hill and whether officials had taken proper precautions.

Comment

No one really warned people not to build on the hillside because it was unsafe. The people were given no warning!

That is not the way that God does business. He is giving people warning today. One Scripture tells us that God will do nothing unless He reveals it to his prophets.

Jesus, our Apostle and High Priest, has revealed many things to happen before His second coming. So, unlike the people of Oso, Washington, God's people have warnings, and there is no excuse in not heeding them.

It seems like most dismiss the warnings that Jesus gave. A good analogy is that they are like the one mentioned in the song, "DETOUR, THERE'S A MUDDY ROAD AHEAD. DETOUR, PAID NO MIND TO WHAT IT READ."

Divide Jerusalem?

While watching *Global Public Square* on CNN, I observed a feature on the proposal of dividing Jerusalem in order that it may please the Arabs. The Arabs would occupy the eastern half of the city.

Comment

This is a completely wrong plan. It will not work! God promised Israel all of their land. He will punish those who try to part His land.

Drought Losses

According to a news article, several areas in the country are still suffering from the severe drought that occurred not too long ago. One source said that agriculture losses are more than 7.6 billion dollars, and the drought caused many to become more alarmed about their water supply.



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: How many times does the term “*Christian*” appear in the New Testament? How did the early followers of our Lord Jesus Christ designate themselves?

ANSWER: We understand that the New Testament centers on the life and teachings of Christ and the founding of the Christian church. Therefore, one would expect that the term “*Christian*” would appear many times in the text. But the word *Christian* appears only three times in the New Testament. In each of these three times, it is used as a reference to what others called the followers of Christ, not what they called themselves.

There were many names by which the early followers of Christ were designated. Let us consider the Book of Acts. In Acts 6:1, they are called “disciples”. In Acts 9:2, the “way” is used. In Acts 9:13, “thy saints” is used. In Acts 9:30, “the brethren” is used. The early followers of Christ never referred to themselves as Christians.

It is true that Acts 11:26 tells us that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch which was a Gentile city. In Acts 26:28, King Agrippa used the word *Christian* in reference to the Apostle Paul’s persuasive powers. Finally, in I Peter 4:16, we are advised that a man should not be ashamed if he suffers “as a Christian”. However, this suggests the term that a persecutor may use in identifying a believer.

QUESTION: Will you please name a few errors taught by the Seventh Day Adventist Church?

ANSWER: I am not an authority on the teaching errors of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. The following are only eight very obvious errors which they teach.

1. They claim that the writings and visions of an Ellen G. White are inspired and to be heeded on a par with the Bible. They claim her as a prophetess! Many of her revelations contradict the Bible. Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his SON, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

2. They teach that we will reign in heaven for 1,000 years. They teach that the earth will be desolate during that time. God’s Word teaches that the saints will reign on earth for 1,000 years, and the earth will never be desolate. Read Revelation 20:4-6; 5:9-10; Proverbs 10:30; Proverbs 11:31.

3. They teach that Christ’s feet will not touch the earth at His Second Coming with the resurrected saints. Zechariah 14:4 reads, “And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst

thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.” That day refers to the battle of Armageddon at the beginning of the thousand year reign of Christ. Read the entire 14th chapter. Also read Job 19:25-27.

4. The Adventists, along with practically the whole world, teach that Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday. Read Matthew 12:38-40. We all know it is impossible to get three days and nights from Friday night to Sunday morning. Read Matthew 28:1.

Here is the Greek of Matthew 28:1: “Now late on the Sabbath, as it was getting dusk toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.” We know the day would begin at sunset, therefore the beginning or dawn of a new day would be at dusk or evening.

From Wednesday evening to Thursday evening is one day and night. From Thursday evening to Friday evening is two days and two nights. From Friday evening to Sabbath evening is three days and nights. This is complete and fulfills Christ’s only sign of Messiahship.

5. The Adventists teach that during the time the seven last plagues are being poured out upon the earth, the righteous will live on the earth.

However Revelation 15:2-4 tells us, “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments (the seven last plagues) are made manifest.” Verses 5 and 6 tell us, “And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened: And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles.” These verses prove that the saints will be on the sea of glass BEFORE the plagues are poured out.

6. The Adventists use the formula Father, Son, and Holy Ghost when baptizing. Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name (not names) of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” What is the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same JESUS (the Son), whom ye have crucified, both LORD (the Father) and CHRIST (the Holy Spirit)” (Acts 2:36). Verses 37 and 38 tell us, “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Here the name given for baptism is Jesus Christ, and since Jesus was made Lord and Christ, it would be Lord Jesus Christ.

7. The Adventists elect their officers in a democratic way. God’s method for choosing officers for His church is found in Proverbs 16:33: “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.” “The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty” (Proverbs 18:18). The lot system was used in the New Testament. Acts 1:23-26 proves this: “And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knoweth the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”

8. The Adventists teach that Mrs. Ellen G. White and the books she is said to have written is the Spirit of Prophecy. Let us quote Revelation 19:10: “And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” What is the testimony of Jesus? Jesus said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). Therefore, the Bible is the spirit of prophecy.



Dallas, Texas

A Sabbath service during the ministerial meeting in Dallas.





Apostles from left to right; Brothers: Jerry Womble; Errol Noel; Del DeLong; Pascacio Tavizon; Ricky Herrera; Septimus John; Moises Torres; Paul Herrera.



Youth groups giving specials during the Sabbath service.



More specials.



Brother Alfonzo translating for Brother Pas.

LESSON I

BEING AFRAID

Scripture Reading: Psalm 91:1-16.

Golden Text: Psalm 56:3.

“What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.”

NOTE: Sometimes we are afraid and fear different things that come upon us in our daily lives. Let us now study how we can overcome these fears and put our trust in God.

1. Should we trust God and not be afraid? Isaiah 12:2.
2. Instead of being afraid, what should we do? Mark 5:36.
3. Why are we told to fear not in Luke 12:7?
4. Instead of fear, what does Jesus give to us? John 14:27.
5. Should we fear God if we are doing wrong? Proverbs 3:7.
6. If we tell even the smallest lies, should we fear God? Revelation 21:8.
7. What did the angel say to the two women who came to visit Jesus' tomb? Matthew 28:5.
8. If we fear, are we made perfect in God's love? I John 4:18.

LESSON II

BIBLE ANIMALS

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:24-25; 7:1-5.

Golden Text: Genesis 1:24 (first part).

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind.”

1. Did God make all the animals? Genesis 1:25.

2. Why did He create the animals and living creatures? Revelation 4:11.

3. Did God make a difference between unclean and clean animals? Genesis 7:2-3.

4. Who gave names to all the animals? Genesis 2:20.

5. Will there ever be a time when children need not fear wild animals? Isaiah 11:6-9.

6. Every kind of beasts and birds have been tamed. What does the Bible speak of that which no man can tame? James 3:7-8.

7. Should we care for and feed any animals placed in our care?

LESSON III

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1-17.

Golden Text: Psalm 19:8.

“The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”

1. What should the Commandments of God be to us? Proverbs 6:23.

2. Did Jesus come to destroy the Law that had existed since Creation? Matthew 5:17-18.

3. Did the Apostle Paul exalt the Law of God? Romans 7:12.

4. If we keep this same Law, what will it do for us? Psalm 19:7.

5. Are parents to teach their children the Law? Deuteronomy 6:7-8.

6. Did Jesus keep the Father's Commandments while

here on earth? John 15:10.

7. What do we show when we keep the Commandments of God? John 14:21.

8. Who will have the right to the tree of life? Revelation 22:14.

LESSON IV

EZEKIEL

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 2:1-10.

Golden Text: Ezekiel 2:1.

“And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.”

NOTE: In this lesson, we are going to briefly learn about one of the major prophets, Ezekiel. His name means “strength of God”, and he prophesied while in Babylonian exile. The book of Ezekiel covers many predictions, and it includes a full vision of the final restoration of Israel.

- 1. What is the first thing we learn about Ezekiel? Ezekiel 1:1.
- 2. Even though Ezekiel was in captivity, was the Lord with him? Ezekiel 1:3.
- 3. When God spoke to Ezekiel, what did He call him? Ezekiel 2:1.
- 4. What did the Lord want Ezekiel to do? Ezekiel 3:17-21.
- 5. What was one of the grievous sins of the children of Israel, and what did God do to them for their sins? Ezekiel 6:4-7.
- 6. Does God promise to restore Israel even though they were scattered among the countries? Ezekiel 11:16-20.

A SPECIAL DAY

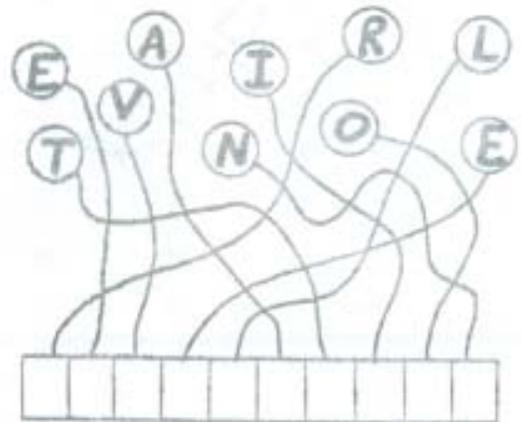
By Doris Sanders

I am glad when Sabbath comes;
I put my toys away
And clean up everything so nice,
Because it’s Jesus’ day.

It’s fun to go to Sabbath School;
I like the teacher there.
We sing, then close our eyes real tight
When we kneel for prayer.

We like to take a Sabbath walk,
My daddy, mom, and me,
I’m glad God made the birds and trees,
And flowers for us to see.

And when the Sabbath day is through,
We all kneel down to pray.
I am so glad that Jesus made
A special Sabbath day.



You can find this book of the Bible by following the path of each letter to an empty square where you then write the letter. When all squares are filled, you will have the answer.



Do you girls have a linen dress to wear to Sabbath School this summer? Or, do you boys have a pair of linen pants? Linen is such nice material for many things.

The flax plant is one of the most valuable of all plants, not counting the ones we use for food. From the flax, those threads of linen are obtained. Mother's most prized tablecloth came from the flax plant.

The plants are first drawn through iron teeth which remove the seeds. They then are soaked in water for several days, after which the outer fibers are separated from the core. It is from the inner part that the linen threads are made.

When the stalks are taken out of the water, they are laid out to dry. Then they are put through sharp teeth once more, which divide them lengthwise. It seems like rough treatment for a plant, but that is the only way linen threads can be obtained.

The reason the flax stands hard usage is because of the inner fiber which is made stronger and finer by it. All these harsh processes must take place before the flax can be spun into fine, strong linen threads.

Peter and John had to undergo rough treatment many times. Turn in your Bibles to Acts 3 to see if you can find the reason Peter and John were put into prison. It was for a good deed done to a lame man.

Nothing in all the world that Peter and John might have possessed, aside from their gift of healing, could have meant so much to the lame man. They might have given him the most comfortable home imaginable, with servants to do his bidding, but he still would have been helpless and lame.

No wonder he leaped up and praised God with all his heart and voice! No other but God, working through Peter and John, could perform this great cure. No wonder

the people standing about, who had always known the lame man, were filled with amazement!

It was then that Peter had the chance to preach about Jesus. At the beginning of their sermon, he told them it was not by their own power he and John had done this. No, it was through Jesus, the one they had crucified. Peter told them they ought to repent.

That struck them pretty hard. When Peter told them that God was even then ready to forgive them for treating His Son so, they felt a need to make a decision. Five thousand of them believed the words Peter preached. Just think! Five thousand!

The rulers were not among this group. They had taken hold of Peter and John, threw them into jail, and left them there all night. Peter and John were not discouraged, they went right on preaching about Jesus.

How is it, do you think, that those two men did not lose their courage through all this rough treatment? Remember about that strong, inner fiber of the flax that came out stronger and finer after harsh treatment? Peter and John possessed a strong inner fiber: their Father, God and Jesus, their Lord. The rough treatment made their faith stronger and brighter.

When the rulers were ready to let Peter and John out of prison, they threatened them with great punishment if they did not quit preaching. Did that scare them? They answered, "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. We ought to obey God rather than men." It took courage and faith to say this.

Young people, you may never be put to death nor even be imprisoned because of your faith in God. But remember, when you are laughed at or treated roughly because of your faith in God, that, like the flax, will help you come

Directions: Find words that are in the Bible text: I Corinthians 13.

L A B M Y C T S N I A T N U O M
 L S W A Y S L S W T H G U O H T
 I E F S G R E A T E S T A H A N
 W M I R R O R P N O E D I V V E
 L O V E I E Y D O G V K N A E I
 N C V W M G U L U H I I I E F T
 S E H O P R H S L E G N A L D A
 N E V P E E O T G U K P G N U P
 N E S S R J D F E N F A A Y R K
 H R M A F O W B O D I T E E E E
 S H A A E I P W U E S H S P A D
 I T N S C C L H I R T E T A S U
 D M Y S T E R I E S N S T O O R
 L H Y A D S B D T T P E O W N B
 I T C G T E N N F O I B D R E E
 H S E N R U A U K O O C N L D A
 C I H O U G L E H D E L I V E R
 E S P G O N W D Y T T E K W A S
 G N O R W O O I U N V L L A H S
 G I R R I T A B L E Y L M I D T
 U A P U Y A W A S U O L A E J I
 E S E C A F T R A P M E N E E B
 L O X E E S E I C E H P O R P K

CAN YOU FIND?

Look up the Scriptures below and find the answers.

1. How did we get the Bible? Look up and write out II Timothy 3:15 and II Peter 1:21.
2. How long will the Bible last? Find Psalm 119:89 and Isaiah 40:8.
3. When will the words of Christ pass away? Find Matthew 24:35.
4. Give a reason for studying and memorizing the Bible in Psalm 119:11; II Timothy 3:15; and II Timothy 2:15.
5. What was the reason the Bible was written? Look up John 20:31.
6. What is God in Isaiah 6:3; I John 4:8?
7. Read what God does in Romans 5:8; in Hebrews 13:5 and in Deuteronomy 31:6.

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Summer

By David DeLong

In Summer life seems like a dream,
Daffodils by flowing stream;
Green the grass and forest glades,
Overspreading, leafy shades,
Fun that grows, while sorrow fades,
And won't end, it would seem.
This time of fruit, by God, is granted,
Crops are growing that were planted;
Winter's cold has been forgotten,
Fields are filled with grain and cotton,
Blessings, by our God, begotten,
And, sin must be recanted.
And, perhaps, of all the year,
This is the season longed for most;
But as its promises draw near,
Few thank the Lord from coast to coast.

