

The Advocate of Truth





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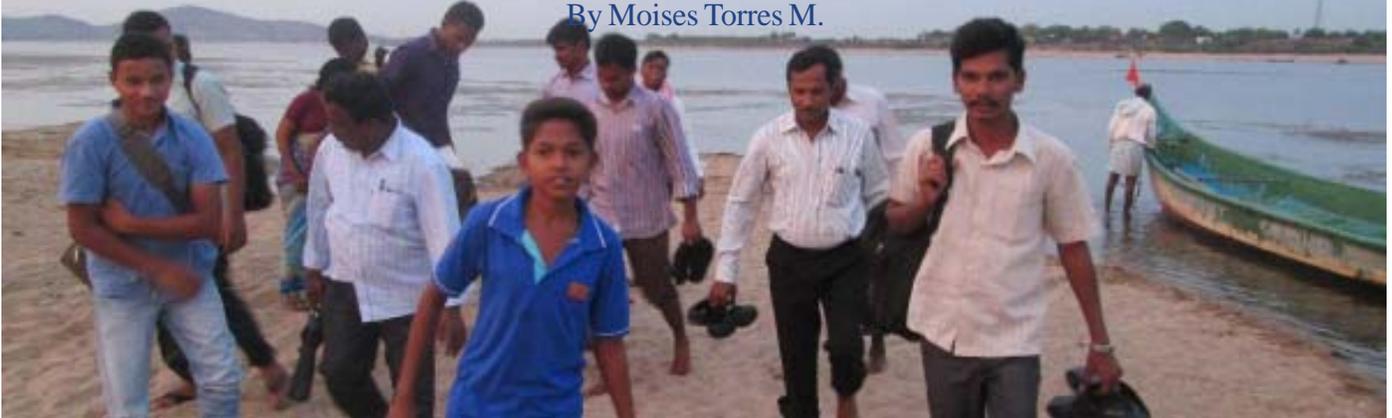
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GOD, His Nature and Divinity

By Moises Torres M.



1. How can we prove that God exists?

The Bible, the Creation (including man) and everything that exists prove the existence of God. IF YOU EXIST, then GOD EXISTS!

The Bible itself is one of the strongest confirmations and statements of the existence of One true God. “For the prophecy (The Scriptures) came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:21).

The Bible is a book with power. It is not a common book of hero stories or anecdotes and teachings; it transmits peace and consolation, hope, courage, and strength to all who read it and study it. This is an evidence that its inspiration, or power, can only proceed from a higher source which is God Himself.

“All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Timothy 3:16).

Besides, the Bible is a book that was collated in such a complete way that makes it very complex and extraordinary in a structure that leaves no gaps, and no doubts in its task. And there is even a space of many centuries between the writing of each and every one of its different books. The prophecies, types and figures of the Old Testament, match exactly in their intent with the accounts of the New Testament. The types and figures of

the Pentateuch, the writings of the prophets, and the Psalms match exactly as set forth in the Gospels, in the Epistles of the apostles, and in the book of Revelation. And surprisingly, using different types of literary language (*parabolic, figurative, symbolic, allegorical, prophetic, etc.*), the message of the Bible is focused entirely in just one direction and gives testimony of the will of God, and His Son, Jesus Christ. The Bible is an exceptional book that only could have been compiled in that way by the inspiration of an infinitely superior Being called God.

The Creation. The heavens and the earth, in their intention, design, distance, and dimension project the power of an unattainable Creator of an infinite vision, of a Supreme Being of an intent and defined purpose, of a Celestial and Divine Being who is not from earth, since He Himself created it.

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork” (Psalm 19:1).

“For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so **that they are without excuse**” (Romans 1:20).

The Man. Man is one of the manifestations and most prominent evidence of the existence of God: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and

over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Genesis 1:26-27).

NOTE: Just as the common expression says: “You look a lot like your father,” thus man projects a similarity and an image that looks like his Creator, our heavenly Father.

In his implicit character of development and creativity, on his desire to search and his latent desire of superiority, man reflects a likeness of his Creator. Man has the ability to think for himself, has intelligence, senses, movement, choice, etc. These are gifts, or virtues, that make man a surprising and wonderful being who could not have come out of nowhere, nor may have come by chance or due to nature. Then is when we admit **the intervention of a higher intelligence** involved in the creation of a wonderful being such as man; and the story of Creation in Genesis, Chapters 1-2, then takes on credibility before our eyes.

In his amazing inventions and his vast technology, man only exhibits the same creative physiognomy of God. Man was equipped with a memory and a capacity to store information and the way to process it; and this same system (capacity and memory) has been implemented by man in computers, cell phones, and in all modern systems of technology.

NOTE: A son always tries to do what he sees his father do.

Apostle Paul said: “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28).

2. Who is God and why does He not die?

God is a spiritual being, eternal and Self-existent.

The Lord Jesus says that God is a SPIRIT (John 4:24). This tells us that His nature is different from human nature. There is human nature and divine nature.

“There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another... There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body” (I Corinthians 15:40-44).

NOTE: God IS NOT a created being; On the contrary, He is the CREATOR OF ALL THINGS! He is Almighty, Omniscient, and Omnipresent. He can do everything, He knows everything, and His majesty covers everything.

God is eternal: “And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the LORD, the everlasting God” (Genesis 21:33).

“Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, throughout all generations” (Psalm 135:13).

NOTE: As humans, we expect God must also have a father like we have, or that He is born and dies as befalls us, or that He needs a woman to beget children. But here the distinction is between the divine nature and human nature. God has no need of these procedures because His nature is different from ours. HE IS NOT HUMAN! That is why He does not die. HE IS ETERNAL. He did not need a woman to create His Son before the foundation of the world. The Son of God was not conceived in His pre-existence. He was created by His heavenly Father (see Revelation 3:14). Then, when it was required, He was born of the virgin Mary as a human, being begotten by God’s power, the Holy Spirit (see John 1:14).

3. Why God is God.

Because He is Eternal and Creator of everything that ever existed!

NOTE: He created the universe (everything that exists) FROM NOTHING! He created the elements, materials, chemicals, minerals, planets... from what did not exist. He created visible and invisible things, thrones, dominions, powers, angels, etc., and finally, he created man. Everything man produces, his whole industry is performed with the materials already created by God.

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, **that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth**, fainteth not, neither is weary? *there is no searching of his understanding*” (Isaiah 40:28). “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).



OUR LORD'S STANDARDS

Bond Tennant

In Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, there are two statements which sum up our Lord's standards. Those who claim to be followers of Christ must follow these standards. One is found in Matthew 5:47: "what do ye more than others?..." It is true that those who don't even profess Christianity love those who treat them well. Jesus was telling us that if one professes to follow Him, something should make him different than others. The second standard is found in Matthew 6:8, "Be not ye therefore like unto them..." This statement conveys the lesson that followers of Christ must not conform themselves to the thoughts and actions of the world in general. These two statements point out that Christ's standards are much higher than those of anyone else in the world. During the time that Jesus walked on the earth, the Pharisees were generally thought to have the highest religious standards, but they were not high enough. Jesus said, "...except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20). Jesus showed that His standards were much higher than any human standards. The religious leaders had many laws, ceremonies, and rituals. They were considered the most religious people of their time, yet they came well short of the righteous standards of God.

High human standards have always fallen far short of God's perfection. This was the case not only in the New Testament, but also is borne out in the Old Testament. As an example, after rescuing His people Israel from Egyptian bondage, He made a covenant with them saying, "...I am the LORD your God. After the doings of the land of

Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances. Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God" (Leviticus 18:2-4). God was telling His people that His standards, which they were to follow, were higher than the standards of the people in the land to which they would be brought.

Peter says that the Lord's people today are "...a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Peter 2:9). Therefore, we must be totally different from all others. We are to follow God's commandments and live by God's standards. We also know that this is sometimes difficult. We must be continually looking for higher goals in our lives as we live separate from the world's ideas and standards. We must do this to the best of our ability if we are to inherit the kingdom of God.

I John 2:15-17 tells us, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." The three standards of the world in general are recorded in these three verses. They are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These are the fallen standards which every child of God must fight against!



Iron Sharpens Iron

The phrase “iron sharpens iron” is found in [Proverbs 27:17](#): “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” There is mutual benefit in the rubbing of two iron blades together; the edges become sharper, making the knives more efficient in their task to cut and slice. Likewise, the Word of God is a “double-edged sword” ([Hebrews 4:12](#)), and it is with this that we are to sharpen one another—in times of meeting, fellowship, or any other interaction.

The proverb also indicates the need for constant fellowship with one another. Man was not made to be alone, for did not the Lord God say this, even before the Fall ([Genesis 2:18](#))? How much more, then, after the Fall of Man, do we need to come together with our brothers and sisters in Christ for seasons of fellowship and prayer? Clearly, this was recognized by the saints of the early church ([Acts 2:42–47](#)), who “devoted themselves” to teaching, fellowship, communion, and prayer, all corporate activities that provided opportunities for sharpening one another.

There are two points to make about the above proverb. First, the meeting of two together in the Lord’s name will always guarantee blessing. It is a means of grace that the Lord Himself promised—where two or more are gathered in His name, there He is among them ([Matthew 18:20](#)). Also, we see a similar meaning in Malachi, for those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard ([Malachi 3:16](#)). When we sharpen one another in real Christian fellowship, the Lord bends an ear from heaven and is pleased. Not one word about Him which brings Him glory escapes His notice.

The fragrances of divine unity are best sensed in the relationship of David and Jonathan, son of Saul. When David was being hotly pursued by Saul, Jonathan sought David out “to help him find strength in God” ([1 Samuel](#)

[23:16](#)), which leads us onto our second point. Iron sharpening iron is an opportunity to fulfill the Law of Christ. The apostle Paul says that we are to carry and share the issues and burdens that we face daily, to lament over personal sin, advise on how best to repent of it, and rejoice over the conquest of it. This is the same “royal law” mentioned in [James 2:8](#), where we are exhorted to love one another.

Returning to the analogy, if a knife is blunt, it still continues to be a knife, although it is less effective, less useful in service. Let us therefore be encouraged to spend more time together, exhorting, encouraging, praying, admonishing, sharing God’s Word, praying over God’s Word and the needs of our local church, that we become sharper, more cutting in the ministry that the Lord has assigned to each of us. Too often what passes as fellowship in the modern church is centered on food and fun, not on sharpening one another with the Word of God. In far too many instances, the only knives being sharpened are the ones used at potlucks.

Finally, a knife that has been sharpened will also shine more because all the dullness has been rubbed off its surface. Likewise, we will shine better for our Lord if we do the things mentioned above consistently, all of which will unite us in harmony. “How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity” ([Psalm 133:1](#)). Therefore, as the author to the Hebrews says, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” ([Hebrews 10:24–25](#)).

Source: “Iron Sharpens Iron” Got Questions Ministries, (n.d.) Web.10/25/2015 formatted: 01 Jan. 2014.

GENERATION OF VIPERS

By Gonzalo Hernandez H.

“...Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee” (Luke 7:27).

“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” (Matthew 3:1-3).

Just like many candidates who run for the presidency of a country have their own campaign teams which give them publicity and prepares them for their public appearances, John the Baptist was sent by God to prepare all for the appearing of our Lord Jesus as “...the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). John the Baptist was the campaign team of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he had to make known the character of Jesus. He had to make sure that every single person who accepted Him was sincere at heart.

While telling people to “prepare ye the way of the Lord,” John reprehended harshly the Sadducees and Pharisees. Matthew 3:7 says, “But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?”

Luke 3:7 says that he would say the same thing to the multitude that would go to be baptized by him. It is obvious that John knew the heart and attitude of this people, and that is why he spoke in this manner.

When the Son of God appeared, He offered the people forgiveness of their sins and the promise to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Of course, all of us want to be part of this promise from the Lord Jesus Christ and avoid being part of His wrath which is THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES.

The “generation of vipers” which John referred to, had a pact with the enemy of the Lord who doesn’t want the

people to obey God’s commandments. He offers them the kingdoms of this world, pleasure and riches. This is why John told them to “bear fruits worthy of repentance.” Please read Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:9-14.

It is necessary that we understand that baptism by itself is not a guarantee of salvation. It is necessary to become converted and to flee from the king of this world which is Satan. It is worthless to be baptized if one continues in sin and is indifferent to the commandments of God!

Does one need to hurry to be baptized? Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ will save one from the wrath of God that is to come, but one must do it with all his heart. The first phase of the second coming of the Lord is near, and the rapture of the saints could happen at any moment. It is urgent that one repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, but it must be done with all his heart.

The only way to escape from the wrath that is to come is to be taken by the Lord to the New Jerusalem, which will close its doors as soon as those who are to be safe go inside. It will be too late for someone who became baptized and was not sincere to even try to make fruits worthy of repentance during the plagues. Also, if a person was never baptized because of lack of faith or because he was afraid of “what would they say” and wants to do it during the pouring out of the plagues, it will also be too late.

Brothers and Sisters, meditate and be honest with yourself when answering these questions: Do you really think the wrath of God is coming upon all inhabitants of this earth? Do you think you will survive if you failed having the fruits of repentance? Do you think you could have another chance after the plagues? Repent! Now is your opportunity. Do not be counted with this evil and adulterous generation!

The Sower

by Betty Whetstone

*A sower went forth one morning
With a bag of "seeds" for to sow;
The "seeds" were God's words from the Bible,
Freely offered so all others may know.*

*Some "seeds" fell by the wayside,
Some did hear them and heed;
But Satan was quick to step in there,
And their joy was replaced with greed.*

*Some fell from the hand of the sower,
And landed on hard, rocky ground;
They had no root or foundation,
And lost all the joy that they'd found.*

*Some fell among thorns that were growing
In abundance, with brambles and weeds;
They were crushed, and died without knowing
The blessing of living God's seeds.*

*Others fell on soil that was fertile,
That could nourish and offer them life;
They grew and provided in abundance,
Withstanding the trouble and strife.*

*They depend on the help that God gives them
As they live and study God's Word;
Offering thanks for the chance they've been given,
And thanking their God that they'd heard.*

*They now with joy are growing,
Providing "seeds" that others may sow;
Sharing God's blessings by being
Examples that others can know.*

HOW TO MANAGE YOUR ANGER

Reprinted

"**I AM SO MAD** I could spit nails!" The father's anger was at the boiling point. His teenage son continued to display an attitude of negligence and irresponsibility around the house. The father was unable to suppress his true feelings any longer, and anger surfaced like a wounded shark.

Anger is an emotion that can bring forth either creation or chaos. It is like a wild stallion that needs to be tamed. Once it is harnessed, it can provide a wholesome journey within the world of interpersonal relationships.

Anger is not a sin. You as a child of God have a right to display your anger. You can love a person and be angry at him simultaneously. You love him for who he is and be angry at him for what he is. The Bible teaches and encourages anger. The Apostle Paul said, "**Be angry and sin not!**" A modern day paraphrase reads, "Arrest your anger, let it surface, aim at your target, and do so without sinning."

You can suppress your anger. Your emotional door can be shut tight. But this is extremely damaging. One who suppresses his anger becomes a plastic personality, a mechanical robot void of feeling and sensitivity. Suppressed anger results in a split personality. The real you is on the inside struggling to get out. What your friends see is a fake. Wholeness will never come until the dam of suppression springs a leak. William Blake once said, "I was angry with my friend: I told my wrath, my wrath did end. I was angry with my foe: I told it not, my wrath did grow."

You can depress your anger. Your emotional door opens occasionally. This can be a frustrating experience because you taste the world of honesty and realness, only to retreat. Yet on the other hand, it is a healthy sign. You

have now allowed yourself to be aware of your emotions. You sense a way out. Complete honesty with your feelings is the key.

You can express your anger. Your emotional door is wide open. You no longer play games with people or yourself. You are free. Free to be yourself. The game is over. The mask is gone. Wholeness is on the horizon.

On the other hand, expressed emotions can also be dangerous. When we suppress our emotions, we threaten ourselves. When we express our emotions, we can threaten others. It is a sad but true fact that most of the world is afraid of honesty. Even in the church, the lack of honesty is tragic.

It was graduation day. One hundred and twenty-five seminary students were to receive their diplomas. The academics dean began to call the various names. The name of a particular student was called. Immediately applause broke out among the graduating class. He was the only one to receive such an honor. Why? This student had been honest with his feelings throughout his three years at seminary. He had worn blue denim overalls to class in protest to conservative Believers' attitude toward minority groups. He had questioned and disagreed with the outdated theology of certain teachers. He had refused to attend class to listen to a professor's twenty-year old lectures. He was angry over the injustice, laziness, and hypocrisy that surrounded him, and his protest was a threat to some professors and students. Yet, on graduation day his honesty was deeply appreciated, and he was honored by applause from his graduation class.

There is a great deal of anger suppressed by many people, and a great deal of it is expressed as well. How can you decide whether you should suppress or express your anger?

Take The Responsibility

First, take the responsibility for your own feelings. It is impossible for unknown people, your enemy, circumstances, or any external force to make you angry. Feelings of anger are the result of personal threats, and not external threats.

The individual who possesses an uncontrollable anger also possesses an uncontrollable self. The person responsible for your feeling of anger is not your enemy,

but yourself. The immature person diagnoses the other person's feelings. The mature person diagnoses his own feelings and seeks to describe them. Take personal responsibility for feelings of hostility, resentment, and anger. This is the first step toward healing. Without it, there is no healing.

Confront, But Do Not Condemn

Secondly, let me suggest confrontation without condemnation. The Bible teaches in Proverbs 27:5 that "open rebuke is better than secret love." Solomon knew the value of eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation. The carnal reaction is to go tell our closest friend that we have been assaulted. The offender finds out by way of a secondary source, and the sparks begin to fly.

A minister was installed at his pastorate. A nearby minister was mistakenly left out of the installation service. He came to the new pastor prior to the service and, without a spirit of condemnation, said, "I was hurt by not being asked to participate during the installation service." His non-condemning attitude in this confrontation quickly made the installation committee aware of their mistake, and he was inserted into the program at the last minute. The minister was frank, straight-forward, and to the point. Again, Solomon knew the value of loving confrontation when he wrote, "In the end, people appreciate frankness more than flattery."

Turn To The Positive

Thirdly, communicate the desire to correct the negative feeling. The Bible teaches that a soft answer turns away wrath, but harsh words cause quarrels. A soft answer implies more than what is said. It involves how something is said. Communication is a very delicate act. It involves words and, like a magnet, they give off both negative and positive charges. The correction of the negative feeling is crucial to wholeness because, if left unattended, it will create internal emotional poison. The suppression of the negative feeling will take its toll on the body in due time.

Once these negative emotional feelings are discovered, they need to surface as quickly as possible. This is accomplished by communicating the desire to correct the negative feeling. A particular man had a condition called anesthesia, which is the inability to sense feeling in certain

parts of his body, such as his hands or feet. He walked for five miles, unaware that a small pebble was lodged in his shoe. When he returned home and removed his shoes, the stench of pus was evident as the pebble had pierced the insensitive skin. Negative feelings have a way of penetrating our emotional skin. They will cause inflammation in the intestinal tract, line the stomach with ulcers, and create a host of other illnesses.

The psalmist sought earnestly to rid himself of this emotional poison by seeking to correct the negative feeling he had with God: “O Lord, do not punish me while you are angry! Because of your anger my body is sick, my health is broken . . . My wounds are festering and full of pus . . . My loins burn with inflammation, and my whole body is diseased.” Now notice how in Psalm 38:18 the psalmist wrought to correct the negative feeling; “I confess my sins; I am sorry for what I have done.”

Push For Reconciliation

Fourth, push for reconciliation. This is tough, especially when you believe you stand on innocent ground. Yet a reconciling love has a way of moving. Jesus said, “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 5:23-24).

The child of God has no other option. We are admonished by Paul, “Do not let the sun go down on your wrath.” Real love will push for the healing of damaged relationships. Real love is dangerous because it makes one vulnerable to further attacks from the offender. But if Paul’s definition of love “. . . **Love endures all things**” is true, as saints we can and must seek reconciliation.

Withdraw

Fifth, withdraw from the person for the time being. This is a course of action that is rarely taught in the Sabbath School or heard from the pulpit. We have emphasized “not seven times seven but seventy times seven” so much that we fail to consider that withdrawal can be a means of healing severely damaged relationships. I recommend this course of actions for four reasons:

First, **it is biblical**. For those in the church, you should

remember that some of the strongest words ever to come from the lips of Jesus dealt with this matter of interpersonal relationships. Our Lord recommends that you personally try to resolve the conflict. If that does not work, ask one or two of your friends to go with you. If that fails, bring it before the church. After trying all three methods, and the person still refuses to yield, as one translation reads, “excommunicate him.” Whether you realize it or not, in some cases withdrawal is a form of love.

Second, **it is best for the sake of your own mental and emotional health**. Constant, intense conflict can lead to severe mental and emotional stress. It is like being on the front lines of armed warfare. Yet, if you can withdraw to the rear, there is less chance of your body and mind being wounded by bullets of stress and depression.

Third, **some people are not ready**. They simply cannot take such mature overtures as “I am sorry, please forgive me.” In their own egotistical, self-sufficient world, expressions of love and forgiveness such as this merely feed the monster inside them. It gives them a feeling of power. They become blind to truth, insensitive to love, and balk at any suggestion that seeks to reconcile. These people can be dangerous. Withdraw from them if you discern such a spirit.

Fourth, **withdrawal is a means of establishing an interpersonal moratorium**. It provides a climate whereby we can proclaim a temporary cease-fire. It will enable our rational faculties to harness our emotional faculties. It will clear the air. A subjective relationship now becomes objective.

The Holy Spirit’s Role

You must never undermine the role the Holy Spirit plays in the management of anger. The Lord can take feelings of anger and perform emotional surgery upon them. But a physician cannot perform surgery without the patient’s consent. The great Instrument of this surgery, God’s Spirit, changes and transforms your internal anger. The Lord wants to take your anger and harness it, cleanse it, and redirect it until it comes forth as a wholesome emotion.

The cluster of nine spiritual fruits found in Galatians 5:22-23 helps to do this. The fruit of the Spirit is composed

of such emotions as love, joy, and peace. These positive emotions emerge as you yield completely to the control of the Holy Spirit. Anger must be properly channeled in order for love to be properly expressed. So trust the control of God's Spirit. The Lord is the Great Physician

of our damaged emotions.

As anger carves deeply into your personality structure, find a way to properly express it, and thank God for its intrusion. You should realize that you can experience the positive emotions of life, while dealing with the negative.

Sin In The Church

By David DeLong



The Apostles Jude and Peter address the problem of certain people who, at times, infiltrate the Church with all manner of sinful practices, from adultery, to covetousness, to teaching wrong and harmful doctrines. Notice how Jude refers to them: "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 1:8-13). Let us examine these types of people, whom Jude places into three categories.

The Way of Cain

Jude mentions these "filthy dreamers" as having gone in the way of Cain. What was the way of Cain? To an-

swer that question, we must go to the book of Genesis and see how Cain was behaving. Chapter 4:1-11 gives a good insight into this behavior. "And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand".

Several things stand out as being the way of Cain. For one thing, he was a wilfull person, wanting to do his own way and not the Lord's. Because of this, his offering was not accepted by the Lord. Many people, today, are like Cain, in that they want to serve the Lord on their terms, not God's terms. God is very specific on how He wants us to serve Him. It takes a diligent, and thorough, study of the Bible to determine His will for our lives. Nothing more, nor less, than His way will satisfy Him in our service.

Cain was quick, apparently, to become jealous over his brother Abel's offering being accepted by the Lord. Abel had presented his offering in the correct way--God's way--and the Lord had respect for him. As so often happens when a person becomes jealous of another, some sort of negative confrontation occurs between them. In this case, Cain murdered his brother Abel. We learn in I John 3:11-12: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

Instead of confessing his sin right away to the Lord, Cain tried to cover it up. When the Lord asked him "Where is Abel thy brother?", he replied, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" The Lord placed a curse upon Cain for his sin, and said to him: "a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth" (verse 12). However, Cain's life was spared.

Cain was a religious person, but not a true child of God. He, apparently, was more concerned with appearances than with obedience to the Lord. He wanted to serve God his way and wasn't concerned with living the truth. He persecuted his brother who did serve God in truth. Cain had earthly ambitions, even building the first recorded city. Genesis 4:17 informs us: "And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch."

The Error of Balaam

Balaam was the type of person who, it seems, wanted one hand with God and one hand in the world. Like Cain, it appears, he was also a wilfull person. He was a prophet, but it seems he served the Lord for the profit he could get. We learn about Balaam in the book of Numbers, beginning with chapter 22. Verses 1-6 tell us: "And the

children of Israel set forward, and pitched in the plains of Moab on this side Jordan by Jericho. And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many: and Moab was distressed because of the children of Israel. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time. He sent messengers therefore unto Balaam the son of Beor to Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying, Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt: behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me: Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed."

Balaam appears to have been a renowned prophet for Balak the king of Moab to have known about him. Though he was a prophet, it doesn't appear that he was from the children of Israel. Balak sent messengers to him to try to get him to curse Israel, but the Lord would not allow Balaam to do so. Instead, Balaam blessed the Israelites. We probably know the story how that the Lord was angry with Balaam for going with the messengers of Balak. Three times his donkey kept him from being slain by the angel of the Lord.

Though Balaam blessed Israel as the Lord put the words of blessing in his mouth, he still tempted the Israelites to sin. In Numbers 25:1-5 we find: "And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor."

We know that Balaam was one of the instigators, causing the Israelites to commit this great sin, because Num-

bers 31:8, 16 record: "And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword...Behold, these (the women of Midian) caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD." So, Balaam blessed Israel, but also counselled them to commit fornication and to eat the sacrifices offered to idols as well as worship those idols. God punished Israel with a plague, and Balaam himself was slain with the sword. That was the kind of servant Balaam was.

In Revelation 2:12-14 we can see that the "doctrine of Balaam" had infiltrated the Church of Pergamos. "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write; These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges; I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication." If we are not watchful, this doctrine could infiltrate our Church as well.

The Gainsaying of Core (Korah)

The gainsaying of Korah has to do with his unwillingness to be submissive to God's appointed authority. Thus, he was also a wilfull person. We read of this tragic situation in Numbers, chapter 16. "Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face: And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to morrow the LORD will show who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come

near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. This do; Take you censers, Korah, and all his company; And put fire therein, and put incense in them before the LORD to morrow: and it shall be that the man whom the LORD doth choose, he shall be holy: ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah, Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi: Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the LORD, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee: and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" (Numbers 16:1-11).

We see that others, besides Korah, were involved in this rebellion against Moses, Aaron, and the Lord Himself. But it was Korah who was the ringleader in the conspiracy. When there is unsubmitiveness toward God-appointed authority, there is also, automatically, unsubmitiveness to the Lord. This is actually a case of rebellion on the part of the perpetrator. In verse 13, Dathan and Abiram accused Moses of making himself "altogether a prince over us?" Moses had done no such thing. The Lord had given Moses the authority to lead the children of Israel for their good.

Sometimes, in the Church today, people will not accept the God-given authority that He has appointed for their good. This comes out in a number of ways. For one, when a dissatisfied church member continually complains of the leadership in the Church, this is one sign of unsubmitiveness on the part of the church member. If there is a genuine complaint against the leadership, the one with the complaint is to go personally to the leadership and work out the situation. If that doesn't work, then 1 or 2 others are to be involved. If that doesn't work, the situation is then to be brought before the local church (please see Jesus' instructions in Matthew 18:15-17). We are told in I Timothy 5:1, "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father..."

Concerning Korah and his company, we read, "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods" (verse 32).



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.

DEATH WITH DIGNITY?

The governor of California signed a bill which allows a doctor to prescribe a life-ending drug to a terminally ill patient of sound mind who makes the request. The patient must swallow the drug without help. Oregon was the first state to adopt such a law in 1997. In Oregon, it was known as the Death With Dignity law. A concern called Compassion & Choices seeks to expand these laws in the United States.

Comment

Being terminally ill is no excuse for allowing a doctor to help you die! It is still against the commandment of God which states "Thou shalt not kill." Such a law amounts to nothing more than assisted suicide.

BOOTS ON THE GROUND

Recently there has been an upsurge of fighting in the Middle East. This has caused the concern that the president will have to reconsider his promise that there will be no boots on the ground in the contested areas. Several military leaders have come to the conclusion that boots on the ground are needed.

A HEART-FELT APOLOGY?

There have been many people calling for an apology from those who criticize and/or slander them. This is true especially among political foes. Such an apology means nothing, and would be a lie, if it does not come from a true feeling in the heart. Jesus said to the Pharisees, "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE

HEART THE MOUTH SPEAKETH" (Matthew 12:34).

DRUG ABUSE CONCERN

Drug abuse, especially among the young, continues to be a major crisis in America.

Following is an article, which appeared in the Abilene Reporter News, entitled Heroin use concerns Obama.

CHARLESTON, W.VA. —Traveling to a region in the throes of a drug abuse crisis, President Barack Obama promised Wednesday to use his bully pulpit and federal programs to try to combat the "epidemic" of heroin use and prescription painkiller abuse that is upending communities across the country.

"This crisis is taking lives; it's destroying families and shattering communities all across the country," Obama said at a panel discussion on drug use. On stage at a crowded community center, Obama heard from advocates, health care workers, law enforcement officials and policymakers about the depth of a problem that has just recently risen to the national political stage. Charleston Police Chief Brent Webster said his officers deal with a "community of zombies walking around" in need of treatment. A father of five daughters described what it was like to find one of them had overdosed, a needle hanging from her arm.

Obama said the stories reminded him of his teenage daughters and his own rebellious teen years.

"I did some ... stuff," he noted, referencing his drug use as a teenager. West Virginia has the highest rate of overdose deaths in the U.S. - according to a report by the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Jonson Foundation.

Obama's visit comes as politicians are grasping for a policy response including presidential candidates in both parties. Former Secretary Hillary Rodham Clinton has laid out a \$10 billion plan that promotes treatment over incarceration. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christy has visited drug rehabilitation centers and talked up his work to create drug courts at home that mandate treatment over jail time for non-violent offenders.

Before leaving the White House, Obama ordered federal agencies that employ health care providers to offer training on prescribed painkillers. They also must review their health insurance plans and address policies that might prevent patients from receiving medication as part of their treatment.

Both steps are relatively modest efforts, given the budget stalemate in Congress. The White House has proposed \$133 million for new treatment programs. The administration also wants to expand access to medications that can help addicts transition off other opioids, and has also pushed to expand availability of naloxone, with a drug that can reverse overdose.

Cary Dixon, of Huntington, who sat next to Obama during the panel discussion, explained how her 28-year-old son is in prison for drug-related crimes. She said he had been to multiple treatment facilities, including recovery centers, before he was locked up.

Comment

Yes, we have commented on drug use before in this column. But this situation, which is one of the Signs Of The Times, bears repeating and cannot be overstated. Heroin is only one of a number of the many drugs which plague authorities. I heard that drug use is higher in those who are in the minorities. But no facts or figures were given as proof that this is true.

Drug use and abuse did not seem to be a main concern several years ago, especially for school children. It seems like alcohol and drinking were more popular among the public. These days, both sins are at a zenith!

I remember more than sixty years ago, when I was in elementary school, being a member of L. T. L. which was the Loyal Temperance League. The L. T. L. met after school once a week. The Loyal Temperance League educated school children about the harmful dangers of drinking and persuaded them never to start using alcohol. During the meetings, cans of soda and other "harmless"

drinks were served. Of course, we still have the drinking problem.

Both, illegal drug use and improper alcohol consumption, are condemned in God's Word. They will harm the body! Heed the following Scriptures:

"Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine" (Proverbs 23:29-30).

"And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and DRUNKENNESS, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" (Luke 21:34).

"Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and DRUNKENNESS, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying" (Romans 13:13).

"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" (Galatians 5:21).

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Corinthians 3:16-17).

NOTE: I Corinthians 3:16-17 includes both drunkenness and illegal drug use!

THE RICH

I read a Personal Finance column in the Houston Chronicle which had the heading, U.S. has growing dependence on the rich. The following is an excerpt from this column:

"Most of the money that sustains our government comes from rich people and borrowing. That's not a very stable condition. A major recession, and government tax revenue would collapse as companies cut dividends and capital gains plummet. In a major recession, even excessive compensation could disappear. And borrowing money at any interest rate, could get a bit difficult."

(Continued on page 19).

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Do you think that obedience can be made a pleasure?

ANSWER: Yes, obedience can be made a pleasure!

Thoughtfulness and consideration are truly oils that help to lubricate the machinery of human relations. This is especially true when these qualities are manifested by those who have the duty of eliciting obedience from others. Many persons chafe at the thought of having to obey, and this is true of both children and adults. But when persons having authority are thoughtful and considerate, obedience can be made a pleasure where otherwise it might be an irksome duty.

For example, parents have God-given authority over their children. But how do they exercise it? Some parents may insist that their children obey them but give no thought as to whether they obey willingly or begrudgingly. No doubt, this lack of consideration on the part of adults is one reason why, in these “last days,” so many children are “disobedient to parents” (II Timothy 3:1-2). How can parents make obedience a pleasure for their children? Most helpful is for them to show empathy, for empathy is conducive to thoughtfulness and consideration. To be empathetic means for parents to put themselves in the shoes of their children, as it were. Commands to children should be given in terms that a child can easily grasp and from a child’s point of view. Important also is that a command or a request be given in a kind, loving tone of

voice, and yet firmly if need be. Above all, never should a command be given in uncontrolled anger.

It is very helpful, when time and circumstances permit, to explain why a certain thing should be done. And, of course, there always are reasons. It is ideal to be able to work together, as father and son, or mother and daughter. Where such is not possible, a request might be coupled with some such remark as ‘while you are doing this, I will be doing that.’ For obedience to be a pleasure, there must be consistency. Parents must practice what they preach. If they want their children to respect them, they must show respect for authority. All such factors, it might be said, apply to even more force where adults are concerned. To obey means to submit to the authority properly exercised by one over another, which may tend to go against the ego or pride of some. Thus, the Bible tells a child of God to do “nothing.” **“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves”** (Philippians 2:3). Compare Galatians 5:26: **“Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”** Wives are told to be in subjection to their husbands in everything. But if the husband also follows the Bible’s counsel and loves his wife as he loves his own body, if he shows empathy and consideration, then his wife will certainly find it a pleasure to obey him (see Ephesians 5:22-28). To demonstrate, a husband who is big-hearted, understanding and has a keen mental

discernment will couple his requests with appeals to his wife's reason, her loyalty, her love. And he will not forget to praise her for her capable support as his helpmeet and her industriousness, even in small things (see Proverbs 31:10, 27-31).

Likewise, it is thoughtful and considerate to give reasons before making a request. For example, a husband may say: "Our expenses this past month far exceeded our income, and if that continues we will not be able to go on vacation this year. So this month let us try to live within our means – right dear?" Not to be overlooked by the husband is reasonableness in making requests, keep in mind the words of the Apostle Peter: **“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered”** (1 Peter 3:7).

Similar principles may be applied in the relationship between a worker and his boss. The Bible commands those having authority over others in secular matters not to be abusively threatening them, as bosses are frequently prone to do, which is hardly conducive to making obedience a pleasure. Also, God's Word commands such to be “dealing out what is righteous and what is fair.” There is nothing that does more to take away the pleasure of working than having to work under unjust and oppressive conditions (see Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1).

Here too, appealing to reason is helpful and so is appealing to the willingness of the other. Thus, an elder in the congregation might preface his requests or assignments with a word of appreciation of assignments or volunteer service willingly performed in the past. An overseer might seek the cooperation of fellow workers by kindly asking whether they would like to assist in this or that project, or by sharing with them some of the burden of the task at hand.

Especially helpful in making obedience a pleasure is expressing appreciation for work done. This is such a simple thing that it may be overlooked as old-fashioned, but it still works today. There was a clerk whose duties included sweeping the center aisle of the company warehouse. The first time that the boss noticed how well the clerk had swept the floor, he exclaimed: “Hey! Nice job you did there.” Simple words like these can make a person feel that he or she has achieved something. Someone cares about what you are doing and that what

you do is important. So every time you do it, you do it better.

It is easy for parents to get out of touch with their children, for husbands to be thoughtless in dealing with their wives and for employers or overseers in the business or industrial world to be so absorbed in their responsibilities that they overlook the human element in dealing with those under their authority. But empathy, so conducive to thoughtfulness and consideration on the part of those who make requests or give orders, can do much to make obedience to them a pleasure, instead of a duty reluctantly discharged.

QUESTION: Will you please briefly comment on what the doctrine of the Trinity teaches and where it originated? Is it Scriptural?

ANSWER: The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there are three gods in one person, and one god composed of three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. This similar teaching is found in most heathen religions of the world.

This false doctrine of a Trinity began first in the corrupt religion of Babylon. Nimrod was a descendent of Cush, and Cush was a grandson of Noah. Nimrod became a mighty hunter. He became a rebel, and through violence he also became the first king on earth. See Genesis 10:8-10. He made himself a demi-god. After his death he, his father Cush, and his mother Semiramis, were worshiped. They became god the father, god the mother, and god the son. This formed a mysterious holy trinity, and they were worshiped as such. Nimrod was also called **Ninus**, and one of his cities was Nineveh. After Nimrod married his own mother, they first established an abominable religion with many secrets and mysteries.

We do not find the word trinity in the Bible! God taught His selected people, Israel, saying: “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD” (Deuteronomy 6:4). Jesus also quoted this verse (Mark 12:29). Jesus always said that He was sent by God. He cannot be God, as He prayed to God.

The biblical facts, the words of Jesus and His apostles, clearly teach that the Father and the Son are two separate beings with different powers, glory, and honor. The doctrine of the Trinity is of pagan origin. It cannot be accepted by discerning Christians.



India

An open air Church meeting in India.



(Continued from page 15).

Comment

America's growing dependence on the rich to pay its debts is very dangerous. The real rich are very few, and their status and numbers of them keep changing. Also, many of the rich in these last days are totally corrupt. These corrupt rich people also pay taxes.

James tells the condition of the corrupt rich men in these last days in James 5:1-4. Let us quote it: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

We see that dependency upon the rich in these last days is not wise!

LASER BEAM PROBLEM

Many airplanes flying over cities and the countryside have experienced being hit by laser beams. These laser beams can blind the pilot and cause major accidents. These laser beams can extend many feet into the air.

This is one Sign Of The Times which confirms that many have no regard for human life. As a matter of fact, some take pleasure in putting others in danger. These people are the ones who are "...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Timothy 3:4).

LAW OFFICERS' DEATHS

It has been in the news that in 2014 the number of law officers' deaths was up. In Texas alone, there were five killed and 48,000 assaulted.

The news reports tell us of many deaths that occurred in 2015. Many authorities ask why this is so, and what can be done about it. Is it revenge on policemen for shooting and killing unarmed colored men? Is it for using excessive force on some?

It is human (fleshly) nature to want to get even with someone who you think has done wrong. But that is not God' way! Romans 12:19 records, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath:

for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

CRUCIAL CYBERATTACK

While viewing CNN there was a report of the possibility of a cyberattack which could occur that would cripple this nation's power systems, such as water and electricity.

An authority on the subject said that several enemy nations of the United States, such as Iran and North Korea, could cause such an attack. He said that other nations have the ability, but they are too interconnected with the United States.

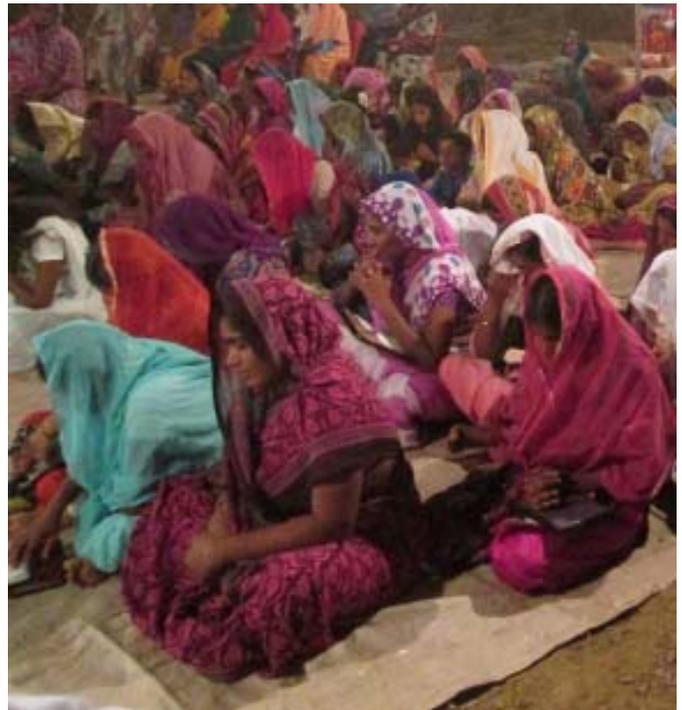
MATCHMAKING SITES

Have you noticed that on television there are several matchmaking sites advertised such as E Harmony and Match? There is even one advertised for farm mates. I believe it is called Farmer's Only.

They promise to find a soul-mate for those who wish marriage. These sites make it seem like the matched couple will experience nothing but bliss in their marriage.

Like all marriages, in the beginning this may be so. But as time goes on, they will have problems and disagreements among themselves which they will have to work out.

Then they must solve their problems together and acknowledge the Lord. Please read Ephesians 5:22-25.



LESSON I

PETER'S LOVE FOR JESUS

Scripture Reading: John 21:1-19.

Golden Text: John 21:17 (last part).

“...And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

1. Who was gathered together at the sea of Tiberius, or Galilee, as recorded in John 21:2?
2. What did Peter say he was going to do, and what happened? John 21:3.
3. Who stood on the shore the next morning? John 21:4. Did the disciples know who this was? Remember Jesus had been crucified prior to this time.
4. What did Jesus say to the disciples? John 21:5-6. What was the result when the disciples followed the command of Jesus?
5. Who first recognized Jesus? John 21:7. What did Peter do when he heard it was the Lord?
6. When Simon Peter brought the fish to shore that they had caught, how many fish were there, and what was the condition of the net? John 21:11.
7. How many times did this make that Jesus had showed Himself to His disciples after He was risen from the dead? John 21:14.
8. What question did Jesus ask Peter? John 21:15. What was the reply, and what did Jesus then say?
9. What did Peter answer the second and third time Jesus asked him this question? John 21:16-17.

LESSON II

PETER PREACHES IN JERUSALEM

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-42.

Golden Text: Acts 2:38.

“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.”

1. Where did Jesus say the disciples should remain, and why? Acts 1:4-5, 2:1.
 2. What happened as the disciples were gathered in one place and in one accord? Acts 2:2-4.
- NOTE: Tongues means languages.
3. What was the action of the men gathered together? Acts 2:5-7.
 4. What words were being heard by all present? Acts 2:9-11.
 5. What was said of the disciples, and who became their spokesman? Acts 2:13-14.
 6. Name at least three statements Peter made in his message. Acts 2:15-36.
 7. After Peter gave his message, what did the people ask him, and what was his reply? Acts 2:37-38.
 8. What did those who believed Peter's words do? Acts 2:41. How many people were added to the church that day?

LESSON III

A LAME MAN IS HEALED

Scripture Reading: Acts 3:1-20.

Golden Text: Acts 3:6.

“Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but

such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.”

1. Where do we find Peter and John in Acts 3:1?
2. What do we know about the lame man? Acts 3:2.
3. What did Peter reply when the lame man asked him for alms? Acts 3:3-6. What are alms?
4. What happened to the lame man after Peter took him by the hand? Acts 3:7-8.
5. Who did the lame man give credit to for his healing? Acts 3:9.
6. What was the reaction of the people who saw this miracle? Acts 3:10.
7. Who gathered at the porch of Solomon? Acts 3:11. Peter took this opportunity to preach to the people about Jesus.
8. What did Peter say was responsible for the lame man's ability to walk? Acts 3:16.
9. What did Peter say in Acts 3:19? Define the words “repent” and “converted.”

LESSON IV

PREACHING FORBIDDEN

Scripture Reading: Acts 4:1-22.

Golden Text: Acts 4:12.

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

1. Who was not happy that Peter and John were teaching the people about Jesus? Acts 4:1-3.
2. How many that heard the words of Peter and John believed? Acts 4:4.

3. What did the rulers of Israel and the high priest ask Peter and John? Acts 4:7.
4. What answer was given to the rulers? Acts 4:10. Peter and John did not take credit for the miracle they performed. The glory was given to Jesus where it belonged.
5. What is said of the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts 4:12.
6. What did the rulers say about Peter and John? Acts 4:13.
7. What did the rulers decide among themselves? Acts 4:16-17. Why do you think the rulers were afraid for Peter and John to continue to preach the Word of God?
8. What reply did Peter and John give when they were commanded not to speak nor teach in the name of Jesus? Acts 4:19-20.
9. What did the rulers then do to Peter and John? Why? Acts 4:21.

DON A SMILE

You may not wear the latest shoes,
 No feather in your hat;
 And yet, you need not sing the blues,
 Dear friend, because of that.
 You may not follow fickle style,
 And yet, if you are wise,
 You'll find a good old-fashioned smile
 Will always take the prize.
 Though fashions come and fashions go,
 From year to year you'll find
 The fairest faces still will show
 The smile that God designed.
 Then don today the one true style
 That wins the loving cup;
 Put on your very nicest smile,
 And pin the corner up!

Answers page 23 -

1. Moses
2. John the Baptist
3. Boaz
4. The twelve disciples
5. Joshua
6. David
7. Peter
8. The preparation of the gospel of peace



THE BEST LUNCH

By Frances P. Clarke

"Tell us a story, Grandma," begged the twins. They loved to visit their grandparents, especially on a Sabbath afternoon, because they had so much fun together.

"What kind of a story would you like today?" she asked, as they settled down on the floor at her feet with the well-worn wooden blocks.

"Well," said Tim, as he started sorting out blocks for a garage, "I was wondering if you could tell us a new one we have never heard before."

"Oh yes, that was a good idea. There, Tim, want some more of this kind?" said Janet, and Tim nodded.

"Let me see," began their grandmother petting their cat who had jumped up beside her on the couch. "Once upon a time, in fact, nearly 2,000 years ago -- there was a young boy. I do not know his name."

"But he must have had a name. Everybody has a name," said Janet. "Even cats have names, don't they, Blackie?" she asked fondly. He purred contentedly as she paused to stroke the white spot under his chin.

"All right then. We will call him Jonathan," Grandmother continued. "Now Jonathan lived near the Sea of Galilee and liked to go fishing with his father."

"What kind of bait did he use?" wondered Tim.

"Oh, what difference does it make?" Janet asked. "Let us get on with the story."

"Well, did he catch any fish? That is what matters, I guess," decided Tim.

"Yes," agreed Grandma, "In fact, one morning he got up extra early and caught two nice fish. He cleaned them and gave them to his mother to bake. He asked her if he could have some of the bread she was baking to take for his lunch the next day. You see, he wanted to find where the crowd was gathering to listen to the new teacher. He had heard that some of the followers had even been called. His mother had finally consented to let him and knew he would probably get quite hungry after his long walk."

"I figured you were going to tell a story about Jesus," remarked Janet, "when you said this happened almost 2000 years ago."

"Yes, our calendar is based on when people think Jesus was born," agreed Grandma. "But to go on, Jonathan did start out the next day carrying his lunch and found a group of people who were on their way to try to find Jesus, too. Soon a large crowd came together, and they watched a boat coming across the lake. Sure enough, Jesus and some of his closest friends were getting out and coming up on the shore. There were so many people it was hard at first for Jonathan to see, but he managed to work his way through the crowd so that he could watch Jesus' face and hear what he was saying.

"He listened so hard that he lost track of the time. And so did the others. When the afternoon sun was fading, some of the disciples began to realize the people would be getting hungry, and some were quite far from their homes. 'How can we feed all those people?' They thought. Jonathan could see the worried look on Philip's face as he said to Jesus, 'It would cost a lot of money to buy food for all these folks.'

"Jonathan had been so busy he had forgotten to eat any of his lunch. So when Andrew looked around, Jonathan said to him, 'I have some food here in my bag. Would this help?'

"Andrew was very polite and he replied, 'That is very generous of you, young man. Let us show it to Jesus and see what He says.' So Jonathan pulled out his lunch and gave him all he had -- the two fish and the five pieces of

bread. It seemed like enough for a growing boy like him, but for all these men and women and children it did not seem like very much.

“But Jesus told the disciples to have the people all sit down on the grassy slope. Then he took what Jonathan had offered to Andrew and said a very special prayer, broke the bread and fish apart and had the disciples pass the pieces to the whole crowd. When they all had enough to eat, he told his helpers to gather the uneaten food and not to waste any. Jonathan could not see how there could be any left, but he decided to help too. Imagine their surprise when they collected twelve baskets full of leftovers! Jonathan could hardly believe his eyes. He had heard that Jesus could make miracles happen, but never anything like this. And to think that Jesus had used his very own lunch! What joy he shared with his mother when he came home that night and told her all about that wonderful day!

“How is that for a story you never heard before?” Grandmother asked.

“I still do not know if it could really happen,” sighed Tim.

“Neither do I,” agreed Janet, “but I know the Bible does say that thousands of people were fed that day. We have heard that story at Sabbath School but you made it seem like we were right there too.”

“Well, it was fun trying to imagine how that he might have felt. The story is told in all the Gospels, but I discovered once that only John mentions the boy, and I supposed they all did,” concluded Grandmother.

Just then the door opened and the twins saw Gramps coming in after delivering some of Grandma’s custard to a sick neighbor. They ran to greet him and showed him the village they had been making with the blocks while they listened. Then they asked him if he would come out in the yard and give them a few pushes in the swing before supper.

Why do you think the twins liked to visit their grandparents?

You will find the Bible story in:

Matthew 14:13-21

Mark 6:30-44

Luke 9:10-17

John 6:1-14

Draw a line around the things you think a Child of God should do.

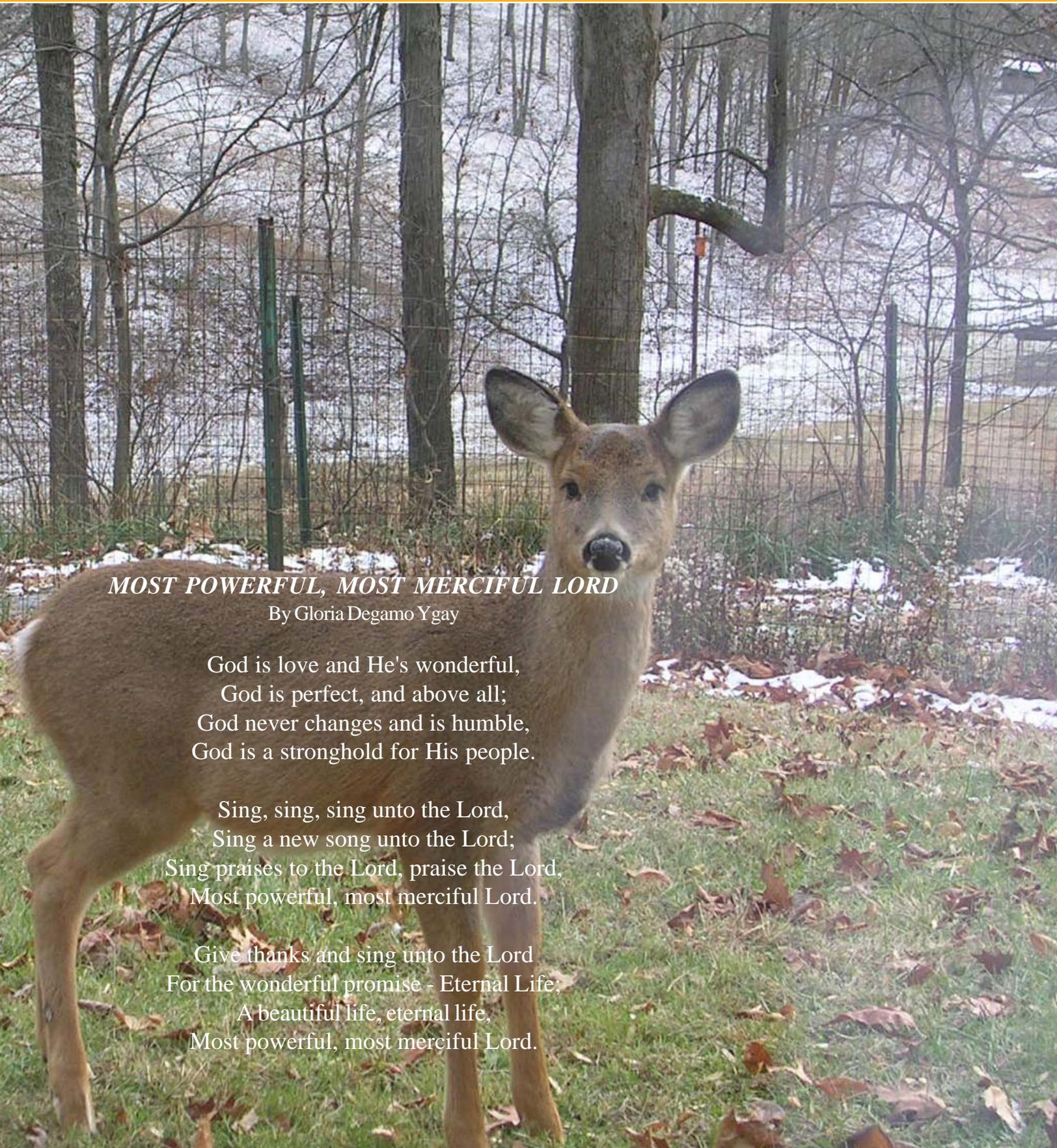
1. Tell lies.
2. Keep away from evil things.
3. Help mother.
4. Pick the neighbor’s flowers.
5. Be friendly.
6. Play games on Sabbath morning instead of going to church.
7. Go to Sabbath School.
8. Help clean the church.
9. Pray.
10. Swear.
11. Try to be like Jesus.
12. Read the Bible every day.

BIBLE SHOES

1. Who was told to take off his shoes, because the place on which he stood was holy ground? Exodus 3:4-5.
2. Who said he was not worthy to bear the shoes of Jesus? Matthew 3:1,11.
3. Who drew off his shoe as a sign of buying a piece of land as his inheritance? Ruth 4:8.
4. Whom did Jesus command to be shod with sandals? Mark 6:7-9.
5. What other Old Testament leader was told to loose his shoes from his feet, for the place on which he stood was holy? Joshua 5:15.
6. Who took off his shoes when he went up Mount Olivet? II Samuel 15:30.
7. Who was told by an angel to bind on his sandals? Acts 12:7-8.
8. With what is the Christian to have his feet shod? Ephesians 6:15.

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MOST POWERFUL, MOST MERCIFUL LORD

By Gloria Degamo Ygay

God is love and He's wonderful,
God is perfect, and above all;
God never changes and is humble,
God is a stronghold for His people.

Sing, sing, sing unto the Lord,
Sing a new song unto the Lord;
Sing praises to the Lord, praise the Lord,
Most powerful, most merciful Lord.

Give thanks and sing unto the Lord
For the wonderful promise - Eternal Life;
A beautiful life, eternal life,
Most powerful, most merciful Lord.

