

# *The Advocate of Truth*



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By David Royer

Have you ever been asked: Are you a “born again” Christian? From my research on the internet, most of the major Christian denominations have adopted becoming “born again” as a foundational concept. It wasn’t but a few decades ago that the “born again” movement was considered a “fringe” group. At the end of this article is a brief history of the growth and acceptance of this corrupted doctrine.

Yes, corrupted, because the liberal use of this phrase has confused even the definition of “Born Again”. Here are a few examples:

1. With the Pentecostal movement in the late 19th century, born again was referred to as a second blessing when a person was baptized through the Holy Spirit while praising God and Jesus Christ. Speaking in tongues was also a key to receiving the Holy Spirit. Source: 9.
2. It was taught that being born again is very simple; it does not require us to turn over a new leaf, but rather to repent, that is, to turn our heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to believe in all He’s done for us. We can do this by praying a genuine, honest, and simple prayer like this:” Lord Jesus, I need You. I believe in You. I receive You right now as my life.”

Source 1.

3. It is an expression used by many Christians to define the moment or process of fully accepting faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation comes first from the so-called “faith alone” and that we only need to accept Christ as Personal Lord and Savior in order to be saved. Source: 2.
4. The phrase “born again” is one of the most popular phrases used by present-day Christians. However, many people who use this term to identify themselves have trouble explaining what it means, which raises the important question: What does it really mean to be born again? To be “born again” literally means “born from above”. When you are born again, you experience a spiritual transformation, a total change of heart. To be born again is to be saved. Source: 3.
5. Catholics claim they are “born again.” However, what the committed Catholic means is that he received spiritual birth when he was baptized—either as an infant or when as an adult, he converted to Catholicism. Source: 4.
6. Today, the phrase “born again” can have any one of a host of meanings. It can have meaning in the secular world, such as a “born again” politician who changes political parties, or in the religious world, where “born again Christian” is sometimes used to differentiate one from a “regular” Christian. Source 5.
7. Associated initially with Jesus People and the Christian counterculture, born again came to refer to a conversion experience, accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in order to be saved from hell and given eternal life with God in heaven and was increasingly used as a term to identify devout believers. By the mid-1970s, born again Christians were increasingly referred to in the mainstream media as part of the born again movement.

Source 6.

8. What does it mean to be “born again”? The most common explanation is that a Christian becomes born again and saved at the moment of acceptance of Jesus and confession of sins. Source: 8.

These various definitions all stem from a discussion Jesus had with Nicodemus, a Jewish Pharisee ruler, as recorded in John 3:3: “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” And John 3:5-8: “Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

Misinterpretation of these words from Jesus and a desire to promote catchy slogans and creeds has distorted the meaning of salvation, the forgiveness of sin, and our personal responsibilities. These distortions include:

Jesus saves us  
Once saved, always saved  
Baptism is not necessary  
Speaking in Tongues  
Religion is based on a “feel good” experience  
Belief in Jesus negates Studying the Word of God  
Ignore God’s Commandments

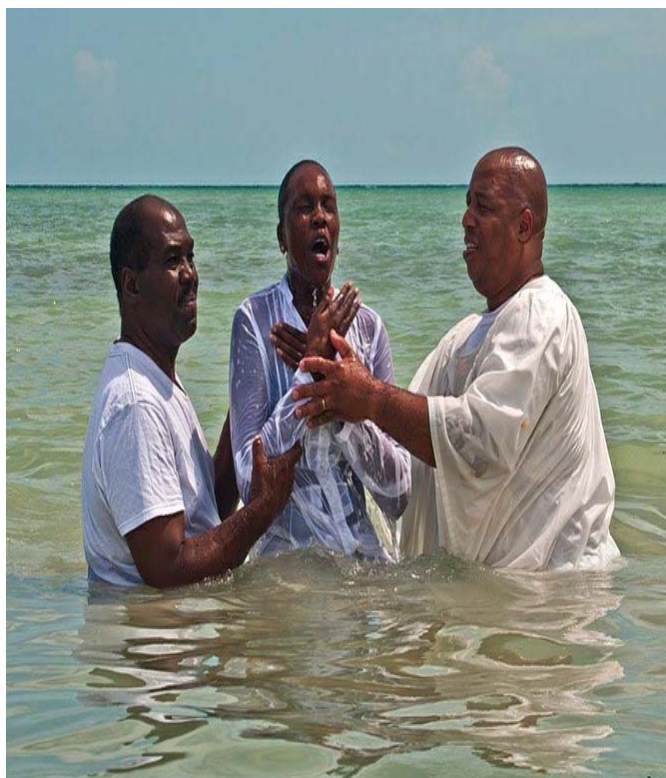
We do not design our own salvation. “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44). These words of Jesus teach us an important principle of salvation: God not only provides salvation, but He initiates an individual’s salvation experience. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2: 8-9)

Salvation is a continuous process. “Wherefore, my

beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Philippians 2:12-13) The Bible clearly tells us what we must do to be saved:

- \* Love God, our Father in heaven, and keep His commandments.
- \* Trust and accept Jesus Christ as your personal savior, repent of our sins, and become baptized in the name “Lord Jesus Christ”.
- \* Continually strive for a better understanding of God’s truth. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (II Timothy 2:15) “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (II Peter 3:18)

None of these individual requirements alone will save you. Baptism, by itself, will not save you. Nor will just professing your love and devotion to Jesus.



## A brief history of the born again movement in the United States

Baptism is essential in the process of becoming a renewed person in Christ and confirming the receipt of the Holy Spirit. Notice the instructions Peter gave to thousands of people who asked what they should do in order to receive eternal life. His first directive was to “*REPENT*.” His second was to “. . . 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” (Acts 2:38).

There are no promises, but the Bible does offer a few examples of receiving the Holy Spirit (after accepting, by faith, the full belief in Jesus) before water baptism. However, the surest way to receive the Holy Spirit is to accept Jesus Christ as your/our personal savior, repent of our sins, and then be baptized (full immersion) in the name “Lord Jesus Christ”. Our ministers continue after baptism by the “laying on of hands” for the reception of the Holy Spirit. See Acts 8:14-17 and Mark 16:15-16.

You see, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit allows for God’s gift of salvation. So, here is the message Jesus gave us in His dialogue with Nicodemus: You have to have the Spirit of God (aka the Holy Spirit and Spirit of Jesus) in you when you die or are alive at the rapture, to allow our body to be changed from a physical form to spiritual. . . .hence: Born Again or changed to a spiritual being when Jesus raises us up upon his return to earth (the rapture) for his saints.

Here is the biblical confirmation: “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” (Romans 8:11) This required change, at the resurrection, is confirmed by Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 15:50-53 “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

### **1900s**

According to Philip St. Romain, in his book entitled How To Get Along With a Born Again on page 7, the born again movement or Evangelical Protestantism can trace its origin back in 1909-1915, when scholars from the Moody Bible Institute published a set of pamphlets entitled “The Fundamentals: A testimony to the truth.” Source: 10.

In the 1920s, marginalized fundamentalists (so-called because they defended the “fundamental” tenets of classic Christian theology against modernist deviations) formed networks of believers and organizations committed to such doctrines as the literal infallibility of the Bible. Source 10.

**Note:** Since the history of the Evangelical, Born Again Movement can only be traced back to 1909, they cannot claim to be the true church that Jesus Christ Himself established. Source 10.

Throughout at least the first half of the twentieth century, being a “born again Christian” was something of an oddity. While most Americans belonged to Christian churches, they placed their hope for eternal salvation in the grace of God. An increase in liberal theologies implied universal salvation and emphasized Christian nurture and a social gospel more than, or even in place of, special grace received through sacraments or personal repentance and faith. Those who spoke of the need for a personal decision for Jesus Christ (conversion) and regenerative work of God (born again experience) were often considered fanatics by more mainstream Protestants. Source: 11.

### **1945**

Another group—led by Billy Graham and known today as evangelicals—sought to preserve its orthodoxy while engaging with modern American life; it wanted an orthodoxy that could reach the masses. Source: 12.

### **1950s & 60s**

During the 1950s and 1960s, Billy Graham and a host of other tent and television evangelists moved around the North American continent, preaching the message of the

born again experience. Many of them did not identify with any specific denomination and urged those who surged forward to their altar calls (invitations to accept Christ) to join the church of their choice. No longer did one have to join a fringe church or denomination to be a born again Christian. To the dismay of many more traditional and liberal Protestant ministers, many of their parishioners brought the gospel of being born again into their congregations and lobbied there for church renewal, revival, and even charismatic experiences. Source: 11.

**The 1960s** saw the rise of the so-called Charismatic Movement of neo-Pentecostal Christians, who remained in their mainline Protestant and Catholic churches while speaking in tongues and exercising gifts of healing, prophecy, and other spiritual experiences once confined almost exclusively to what traditionalists and liberals had considered a lunatic fringe of Christianity. Almost all charismatics considered themselves born again. Source: 11.

### **1970s**

The 1970s witnessed the rise of the so-called Jesus People Movement of hippies and other countercultural young people who converted to Christ and spoke often and loudly of being “born again Jesus freaks.” When many of them eventually put on three-piece suits and joined the mainstream of society, they continued to believe that their true Christian lives (as opposed to nominal Christian identities as members of churches) began with their born again experiences. Source: 11.

The term “born again” leaped into public discourse in America when Jimmy Carter was running for president in 1975 and 1976. The candidate and future president of the United States openly used the common evangelical phrase for a decisive conversion to Christ to describe his own spiritual experience and status. This and other similar events brought the concept of “born again Christians” into common usage. It had previously been used primarily by evangelical Protestant Christian evangelists and theologians to distinguish between themselves and their followers and other types of Christians who do not believe that initiation into authentic Christian life involves a conscious commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and savior. Source: 11.

### **1980s**

The 1980s were the decade of the “Reagan revolution” in politics and the rise of the so-called Religious Right in American society. Previously, most evangelical (born again) Christians had avoided direct political action based on their religious beliefs and values. Throughout the 1980s, however, many self-appointed spokesmen for conservative evangelical Christians formed Christian organizations to promote a generally conservative social, political, and economic agenda. Two notable ones were the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition. Many journalists and other social critics and observers assumed that these right-wing Christian political action groups represented all born again Christians. Source: 11.

While many evangelicals did support conservative causes in a new way, many others chose to avoid labeling the entire evangelical movement as politically conservative. In the public mind, “born again Christian” came to be identified as virtually synonymous with the Religious Right. Source: 12.

### **1990s**

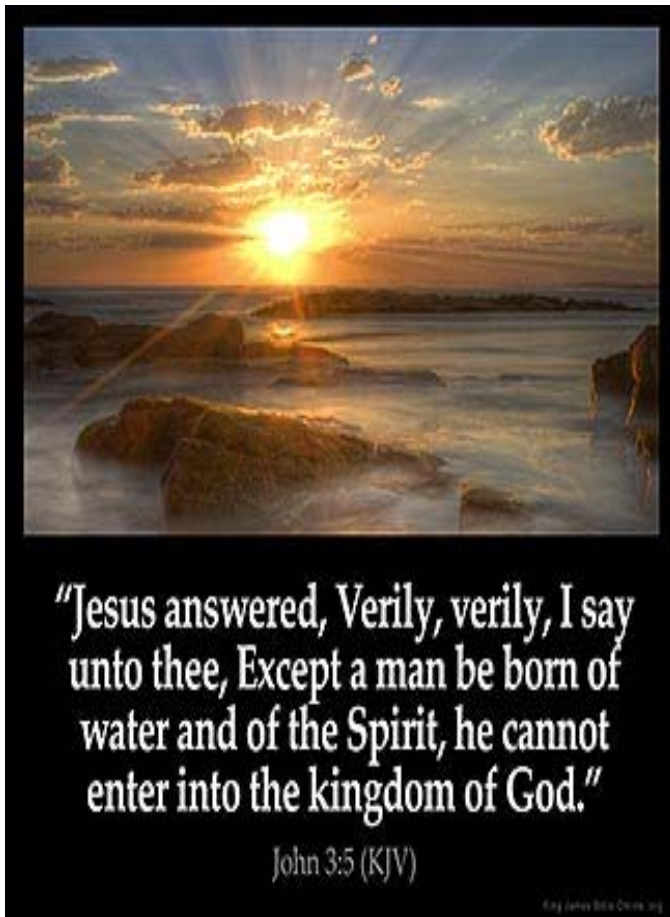
Born again Christians had entered the religious and social mainstream of American society. The stigma often attached to being born again in the early part of the twentieth century largely dropped away as evangelical Christians exerted their voices and inserted their institutions firmly into the middle of American social, political, and religious life. Some observers believe that this mainstreaming process of evangelical, born again Christianity in the 1990s weakened its prophetic voice and that with respectability and acceptance came a certain vagueness about the message of being born again. Source: 11.

### **2015-2020**

The second half of the twentieth century has witnessed a rise of respectability of born again Christians. This is so much the case that many evangelical Christians (a term virtually synonymous with born again Christians) began to shy away from the term “born again” out of concern that it was widely used for too many vague religious experiences. Some polls taken in the 1980s placed the total of the adult American population who claimed to be “born again” at as high as 40 percent. Source: 11.

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## GOD'S WAYS ARE HIGHER THAN OUR WAYS

Bond Tennant

Many expect to find God in their own limited, and oftentimes, short-sighted concepts of what they would like Him to be. Many make the mistake of trying to find God in the midst of the confusion of a selfish and dying world. They think of the crime, war, accidents and suffering from all causes, and they wonder where God can be found in it all. The truth is that He is found in none of these things, although He has permitted them for a time. If they are to find God, they must look for Him apart from all that has been distorted and defiled as a result of the deception of mankind which has originated from Satan. Most who do think of God usually do so in terms of their own restricted experiences and limited understanding and viewpoints. The majority throughout the ages have not even discerned, as some of the Athenians did (Acts 17:23), that there is an "unknown God" whom Paul said is not far from any one of us.

The eternal God said, "...my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:8-11).

Truly, God's ways are higher than ours. He has illustrated this in His reference to the purpose served by the rain and snow. Shortsighted humans often complain when it rains or snows, forgetting that their very life depends upon the objects of their complaints. However, God does not withhold the rain and the snow because His human creatures, in their foolishness and selfishness, may complain about it. The rain and snow continue to fall and water the earth, "that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater."

# "Philosophy and Vain Deceit"

By David DeLong

The other day I was watching a game show on T.V., and apparently for the second time that week, a "gay" man was introduced on the show. I mentioned this to another person who was also watching the game show with me and he didn't seem to be shocked at all, but said something like: "yeah, it's getting to be more common all the time."

I had noticed that this same game show had also introduced pieces of evolutionary beliefs as if they were well known facts. I started thinking how common it is today for people to accept man's philosophy as if it is established upon truth and scientific fact. Evolutionary belief, especially, shows to me just how desperate men and women are to get out from under God's authority. As the Psalm says in chapter two, verses 2-3: "The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

Right and wrong today is largely determined by what a person believes is right and wrong, not upon absolute standards. It is similar today to what conditions were like in the days of the Judges of Israel: "...every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

My main concern is not what the world believes, however. Some of these same beliefs and attitudes are also affecting some of our church members. How many of us today are really shocked to see gay couples being introduced on social media? How many of us have at least considered the possibility that evolution plays a part in the existence of creatures around the world? Are there some in the Church who are starting to believe that the Bible is not the only authority by which to guide one's life? I sincerely hope not, but I am not so sure.

Colossians 2:8 warns us: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." In Joshua's day it was living by your own authority; in Paul's day it was living according to the law of

Moses; in our day it is following the world's latest fashion or belief. In all of these situations people were/are not living by absolute, eternal standards but by man's philosophy and vain deceit. Only when we base our complete lives upon the Word of God will we be living rightly and safely. So vital is the Word of God to our very existence, that we find in II Corinthians 10:5: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

It is not hard at all for a Christian today to become lax on eternal standards as set forth in the Bible. Paul had to warn the Corinthian brethren not to be fooled by another (perverted) gospel (Galatians 1:6-12). He had to warn the Colossian brethren not to be taken in by man's philosophy (Colossians 2:8). And there was even a council in Jerusalem which was called to counter against false doctrines (Acts 15:1-11). So, the same issues can be seen to day to be trying to force their way into the Church of God.

Also, if the Church members are not careful, Satan will try to bring in false teachers into the Church to try to lead the membership astray. In Acts 20:29-30 Paul warned the brethren: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The Lord Jesus warned the members of the Church of Thyatira: "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works" (Revela-



tion 2:20-23).

Let us be diligent to not let the world become our standard of righteousness. The world's, including our own righteousness, is of nought. As Isaiah 64:6 informs us: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

## What Do You Think, Of The Word That's In Ink?

By David DeLong

What do you think, of the Word that's in ink  
Of our Scriptures, today, that are written?  
Do you hold them as true, the Old and the New,  
Or, do you believe they're not fittin'?

What you believe, is the thing you'll receive,  
And that's why this topic's in vogue;  
For what you will do, with the Bible, 'tis true,  
Will make you be right or a rogue.

If you read of the page, no matter your age,  
And follow the precepts set down;  
Then your life will go well, and you can then tell  
That the Lord will give you a crown.

But, if you hold back, on God's Word you attack,  
And disregard all that it reads;  
Then right at the end, my presumptuous friend,  
You'll be judged by your dastardly deeds.

## The Mustard Seed

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof" (Matthew 13:31-32).

## A Good Name

In Proverbs 22:1 we read: "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." Many people in today's world would look at this proverb just the opposite: they would rather have silver and gold than a good name. This is a real tragedy because a person's good name is the most precious possession that he or she has.

In having a good name a person will not lie, not even to save face or to be protected against some harm that could befall him. Many will lie to save themselves from embarrassment or to save themselves from losing money in a business deal. Revelation 21:27 informs who will not be able to enter the New Jerusalem: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

People with a good name will live lives of integrity. This means that the people will always choose to live righteously even when no one is around to see what they are doing. A person's good name should be as weighty as a written contract. If he or she says that they will perform a certain deed, then it needs to be as good as done.

The Lord is giving us this present time period to develop a good name for His honor and glory. If riches cannot move us to betray our Lord and His commandments, now, then we will be proven people for His upcoming kingdom. Let us hold on to our most important possession: a good name.



# FORGIVEN

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Ephesians 1:7.

"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Mark 11:25.

It was said, by a preacher in London, that there is not a man in all London that Jesus Christ cannot save. When William Dorset, the preacher, made that statement, a woman challenged him to his word. She told him that there was a man who said he was beyond salvation.

Very early the next morning the two came to a run-down tenement building. The woman told Dorset that the man was in the top story in a back room.

As Dorset climbed the stairs alone, he found each flight in worse shape than the one preceding it. At the top, he found a door hanging by one hinge which barred his entrance. With some effort, he managed to squeeze into the windowless room; and when his eyes became accustomed to the darkness, he found a young man lying on some dirty straw in the corner.

Dorset's soft tone greeted the young man as his friend. The young man made it clear to Dorset that he had no friends in the world, but Dorset insisted that the young man had at least two - Jesus Christ and himself.

The young man protested that Jesus could not be a friend of his, because he had broken all His laws and disgraced Him by his actions. It was then that Dorset proved to the young man from the scriptures that Jesus truly was his friend. The young man listened intently as Dorset told of the love of Jesus and how He would forgive anyone who would ask. The young man accepted these words and found pardon, but he was yet unhappy. He told Dorset that he knew his Heavenly Father had forgiven him, but now he needed the forgiveness of his earthly father.

Since the young man was about to die, Dorset decided to go and see his father; even though his father would not allow the young man's name to be spoken in front of him. The father's house was a beautiful mansion with ser-

vants and much finery. An English gentleman shook Dorset's hand as he entered the mansion. The cordial greeting turned very cold when Dorset mentioned the nature of his business. The father stated emphatically that his son's name was not to be mentioned in front of him, and with that he asked Dorset to leave.

Dorset then explained that the man's son was dying. This seemed to change the father's attitude, as Dorset explained that the only thing the young man wanted now was forgiveness from his earthly father since his Heavenly Father had already forgiven him.

The English gentleman ordered his carriage and the two men went quickly to the young, dying man. As they traveled, the wealthy English gentleman explained that he would have forgiven his son long ago if only the son had asked. The father's eyes fell upon his pitiful son lying there in the dark corner. With a feeble voice the son begged forgiveness from his father. As tears fell to the gentleman's cheeks, his words came from within his heart as he told the son that he was forgiven.

The boy could now die in peace knowing that both his Heavenly Father and his earthly father had forgiven him.

Forgiveness is there if only we will ask. Jesus emphasized this when He stated: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" -Matthew 7:11.

Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." And Jesus makes it clear in Mark 11:25, where He states: "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."

Forgiveness is the act of remitting an offense and of treating the offender as not guilty. Forgiveness of sin is the act of God and is the GREAT BLESSING OF THE GOSPEL. (Read for further study on Forgiveness: Mark 2:7; Acts 5:31; Ephesians 1:7).

The duty of mutual forgiveness is urged in the Bible by the most solemn and impressive considerations. (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:15-35; Luke 17:3-4).

## FORGIVENESS OF SINS

1. The need of Forgiveness - Guilt. Romans 3:23.
2. The Ground of Forgiveness - Christ's Blood. Hebrews 9:22.
3. The Authority of Forgiveness - God. Mark 2:7.
4. The Knowledge of Forgiveness - Through Preaching. Acts 13:38.
5. The Condition of Forgiveness - Repentance. Luke 24:47.
6. The Assurance of Forgiveness - The Word of God. I John 2:12.
7. Evidence of Forgiveness - The Walk. I Thessalonians 1:4.

### WHY FORGIVING IS SO NECESSARY

When Jesus taught us how to pray one of His statements was to "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" (Matthew 6:12). "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us..." (Luke 11:4). Later when Jesus was speaking to the disciples, He made another point for the reason we must forgive others, "...If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if HE REPENT, FORGIVE HIM. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I REPENT; thou shalt FORGIVE him" (Luke 17:3-4).

If we do not forgive our brethren the Lord will not forgive us our trespasses and sins. "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you" (Matthew 6:14).

"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man (Jesus Christ) is preached unto you the FORGIVENESS OF SINS" (Acts 13:38).

### FORGIVE ME, LORD

**Forgive me Lord, for all my wrongs,  
I need Your help, to keep me strong.  
I need Your love from day to day,  
To show me how, to find my way.  
And thru my life stay by my side,  
In all my needs, be Thou my guide  
To help me find, in faith above,  
That peace of mind, which comes with love.**

**-Francis X. Wadland**



### TO THE ISOLATED AND LONELY

Noah preached the coming judgments of God for over a hundred years – ALONE.

Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord all night – ALONE.

David went forth to accept the challenge of the giant – ALONE.

In defiance of the king's decree, Daniel prayed to the God of heaven three times a day - ALONE.

Jesus suffered and prayed in the garden of Gethsemane - ALONE.

Jesus stood before Pilate, and a howling mob – ALONE.

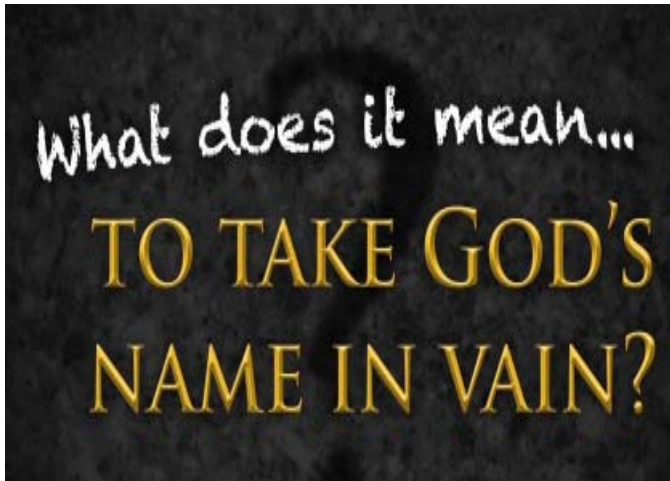
Jesus was despised, rejected, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, He died on the cross – ALONE. (Isaiah 53:5-8).

The Apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa – ALONE.

Stephen was brought before the Jewish Council and then was cast out of the city by the Council and stoned - ALONE.

If you do not belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, you will stand before the judgment seat and you will then be really - ALONE.

*Reprinted*



By Ross W. Hayslip

Reprinted Advocate of Truth January 1973

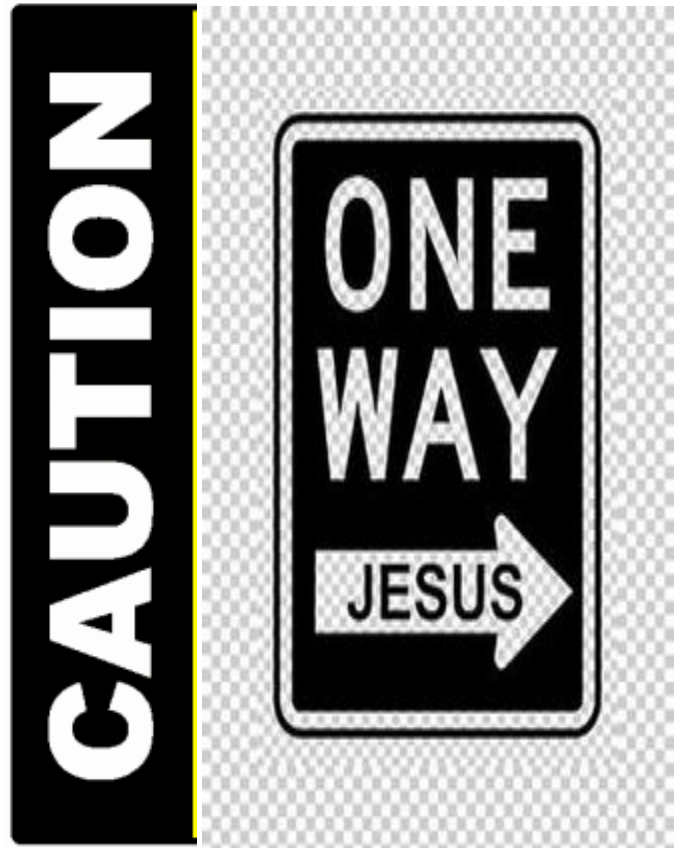
To take the name is an ancient expression for the use of the name of some great personality in taking an oath. The name of Caesar and the Roman state and pagan gods were often used in this procedure. To the Jews the name of God was so sacred that any vow made in His name was the most sacred obligation that a man could undertake.

The Bible says, "...the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). The inference seems to indicate that it is indeed a terrible sin to take a solemn oath in the name of God and not carry it out. This commandment challenges our basic integrity and our deepest honesty. Are we taking God's name in earnest or are we merely giving verbal assent with our heart following through to the demand of the gospel?

Many of us have made promises to God in His name and have failed to carry out our expressed intentions. We are like the man of whom Dr. Samuel Johnson writes who tried to satisfy his vow to attend religious services by always tipping his hat as he passed by a church, although he never entered one. The sacred vows of church membership which include faithfulness in attendance, stewardship, and spreading the gospel of the Kingdom are easily bypassed under the stress of the cares of life, along with all of its demands and activities.

Profane use of the name of God is a sad practice and one that we deplore, but equally dangerous is what Elton Trueblood terms "vague religiosity," when men declare a

resolve with their lips and fail at the vital area of performance. It is sad indeed to stand before a sacred altar and pledge in the name of God to give ourselves to the fellowship and work of God as set forth in the general and special rules of the church and then to allow ourselves to degenerate into the area of half-hearted effort, violating moral standards when convenient or pleasurable to do so and making only a token contribution in time, effort, or money toward the spreading of the Word of Life and the strengthening of the work of His kingdom. Should we not constantly be on our guard lest we commit the sin of taking God's name in vain?



### PASS THE WORD - YOU MAY KNOW

There is only one road to salvation - the way has been shown to us by Jesus Christ. He is our pathfinder and guide upon whom we can depend. We must then do what Jesus did. We must accept all His words of truth. We cannot accept just those teachings of Jesus that we like, and reject those that do not appeal to us. We must have total obedience to do ALL THE WILL of God that He has outlined for us through His Son Jesus Christ - Our

great example.

It is possible to know whether or not you are a child of God: to know where you will spend eternity--a home prepared for you in the New Jerusalem. Why can you be sure? Because it is a matter of choice --your choice.

Joshua said, "...choose you this day whom ye will serve....but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

Just as there was need for a choice in Joshua's day, so it is today. You are not a puppet to be moved about with strings. God has given you a free will, the ability to make decisions. You can choose today whether or not you will become a child of God, or whether you will remain a servant of Satan.

It is not a matter of trying to do right in spite of your natural inclination to evil. Jesus said, "...Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). Conversion happens when a person accepts the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour. It is the receiving of spiritual life -- life that lasts forever -- which God gives to a person when he accepts His way of salvation through and by the death of His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said, "...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

God says "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14:12).

God made a way for man to become part of his family. "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).

You can know that you are a new creation, begotten into the family of God. John wrote, "...many other signs truly did Jesus....But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). Later he wrote, "These things have I written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life..." (I John 5:13).

You can know. Come to Him now and trust Him for the salvation which He offers in Jesus Christ.



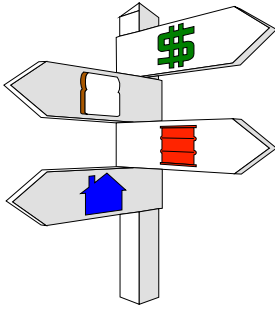
Frances Durisseau's

**INSPIRATIONS:**

**STRESSFUL DAYS**

We are living in some interesting times these days. Worries and fears seem to be running rampant. The added stress is causing our physical bodies to feel like we can't take another step. Our emotions and spirits may have reached their limits. Often, when we look around, we still have much to do when we reach our limits. Then what? For many of us, we have no choice but to reach down and pull up some imaginary strength and keep going until we reach a stopping point, then we collapse. I know I talk about it often, but I wanted to remind you again, don't stress. Stress is a killer, it ages you. It robs you of happiness, contentment and peace. It sneaks in and before you know it your quality of life has sunk to an all-time low. Whatever strength you have, use it to stand up to all the stress and say no! Fight it off with everything you can. You deserve peace, times of relaxation, and happiness and joy even and especially in stressful times. Take a deep, cleansing breath. You can do this!

From **The Post** newspaper



## ENDURANCE IN TIMES

### OF FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY

At the time of the writing of this column, the coronavirus crisis is first and foremost in the news. One cannot view any of the news channels without seeing exclusive coverage of the crisis. The whole world is experiencing this coronavirus crisis, leaving many in fear for their health and uncertainty of their future.

Children of God can endure times of fear and uncertainty with the assurance that no matter what happens to them they have the promise of, although they may die, attaining eternal life in the resurrection.

I wish to share with you an inspirational article which appeared in USA Today. It was written by Gabrielle Giffords. She is a former congresswoman from Arizona who survived an assassination attempt in 2011 that took six lives. She gives us some good thoughts from her own experience on how we can endure in times of fear and uncertainty. The following is that article:

With growing and necessary isolation, economic uncertainty and looming deaths that make us feel dread and anxiety for our loved ones and ourselves, these are harder times than many of us have faced in our lives.

I know something about fear and uncertainty. A bullet to the head one sunny morning in Arizona almost a decade ago left me fighting for my life and then fighting to build my life anew. But in experiencing the worst – and in facing fear, the unknown, pain, and the deep desire to move forward – I have learned a lot about resiliency and what it takes to endure. I want to share what I learned in my journey in hopes it may help others find their way forward:

Have faith in first responders, doctors and nurses.

# 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.*

From the moment the medics arrived to lift me off the pavement where I'd been shot, to the time I still spent with therapists, working on my speech and use of my right arm and leg, the dedication, fearlessness and talent of medical professionals has been a gift and my guiding light. There were days when pain and frustration made it hard to carry on, but their professionalism never waned, and I never stopped following their lead.

Listen to experts and find solutions. Because of the progress my medical team has helped me make, I've gotten to take on a new role as an advocate for gun violence prevention. I've learned the value of putting the facts over ideology, of finding creative solutions. I've sat with Republicans and Democrats and know that when lives are at stake, they can find ways to move forward, together. We need our leaders to respect scientists and public health experts and to act on their best ideas.

### We will need each other:

Rely on each other. In my darkest days, my friends filled my hospital room with pictures of beautiful vistas and my favorite places – reminding me of the world outside I aspired to rejoin. Jimmy Hatch, a dear friend and retired Navy Seal Special Warfare Operator, exemplifies for me the healing power of these connections. After he was grievously injured in combat, I spent time with him at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center. After I was shot, he came to my hospital bed. We talked about recovery, pain and determination. Three years later, we jumped together out of an airplane above my beloved Arizona.

Turn to service. Service can take so many forms. Check in on elderly neighbors or those needing a little attention (from a safe distance of course). Make a donation to a food bank or an emergency fund. Send a

text to a friend who is ill, or caring for someone, or simply struggling to be home alone. Each gesture, however small, is a stitch in the quilt that keeps our communities connected.

There's a quote attributed to Maya Angelou that I've thought about often. "I can be changed by what happens to me, but I refuse to be reduced by it." These are hard days. They will get harder. We will lose far too many lives. Some of us will be physically weak. Some will fight back from economic insecurity.

### **We can emerge stronger:**

It is staggering to contemplate. But as one who has been, metaphorically and literally, brought to my knees by a shocking blow, I know the power of insisting on our own strength, our own potential. And I know the power of Americans standing together – not just to endure this, but to emerge from it stronger.

In the days after almost being killed. I lay in a hospital room not fully conscious, relying on a ventilator to breathe, as so many are now. My husband Mark Kelly tells me that when he held my hand, my fingers found his wedding ring, touching it and twisting it again and again. My memories are hazy, but I think I was trying to send Mark a message of hope. I think I was trying to focus not on the pain and challenge that were to follow, but on the connection between us.

Our connections to each other bring strength, hope and resilience. It is my hope for my fellow Americans and all humanity that we find our strength and our belief that we can get through this and rebuild, together.

**COMMENT** - During these last days, fear and uncertainty rule the days. Certainly, America and the rest of the world is going through a highpoint of just two things (disease and economic trouble) that confirm that we are living in the last days. Speaking of the time of the end of the world (age), Jesus said, "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines (lack of food), and pestilences (disease causing pests), and earthquakes in divers places" (Matthew 24:7). Let us read verse 8, "All these are the beginning of sorrows." In Luke 21:26, Jesus goes on to say, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of

heaven shall be shaken."

Let us think about the word endure. Is one enduring just to preserve his or her physical life, or is he or she enduring with the thought of obtaining eternal life that God has promised to give His children in the first resurrection?

Many will die physically in the many evils that will take (and are taking) place upon the earth, and they tried hard to endure them in order to preserve their physical life.

Yes, the child of God would wish to preserve his or her physical life. But the child of God is not mainly thinking about preserving his or her life and being resilient in the time of calamity.

The child of God's mind is in overcoming the many devices of Satan and making his or her calling election sure, and that calls for much enduring. No doubt the child of God will feel sorry about what is happening on the earth, but he or she will mainly dwell on pleasing God. God's children will take the counsel of Matthew 6:19,21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

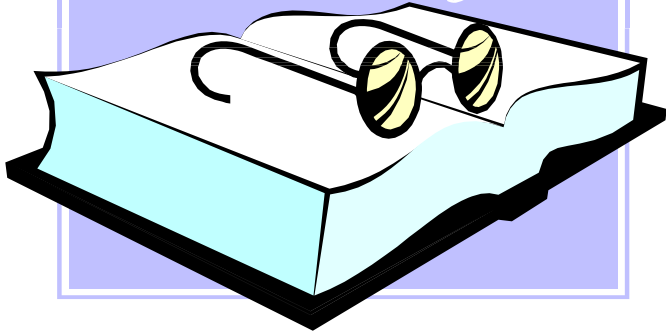
The child of God endures because he or she knows that Christ loves them. He or she knows that the evils that occur on earth have no bearing upon their saving relationship with God and His Son.

The evils on earth do not make one who is saved curse God. Listen to Romans 8:35-39: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13).

# BIBLE

## Study



**Question:** I read Psalm 37:4-5 which states, “Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.” Is this a formula for getting anything that we desire?

**Answer:** No, it is not! It is actually a formula for you to receive from God, as you delight yourself in Him, “desires” that He will place into your heart. This is confirmed in Philippians 2:13 which states, “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”

God is working in you to accomplish two things – to will His good pleasure and to do His good pleasure. As you delight yourself in Him, He will give you the desires of your heart; His will, His good pleasure. It is not what you want, but what He wants.

Having a heart open to God, we are then in a place to receive from Him. We can then with much greater assurance discern God’s will – His good pleasure. As we commit our way to Him and trust in Him, He will accomplish His good pleasure in us and through us.

**Question:** Will you please comment on Micah 6:3-8? Please emphasize verse 8.

**Answer:** In Micah 6:3, God asked Israel, “O My people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.” The Lord then reminded His

## Questions and Answers

people of some of the many ways in which He had demonstrated His care over them. He had brought them out of bondage and servitude in Egypt, and had raised up Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead and instruct them (verse 4).

The people of Israel seemingly had not profited from these gracious acts of God on their behalf, and instead followed many of the idolatrous practices of the heathen nations around them. In verses 6 and 7, they are represented as asking how they might please God, as though He had never given them any instruction along this line. “...shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old?” they asked. They knew that the Lord had called for the sacrificing of animals, and so they further asked, “Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil?...”

In verse 8 the Prophet Micah answers the questions propounded in the previous verses. He sums up the Lord’s requirements quite simply. They were to practice justice, have a love for mercy, and walk humbly with God. These requirements not only apply to Israel, but also to all of God’s people of every age. “To do justly” simply means to do what is right in God’s sight. In our dealings with others, this principle is applied by following what we have come to understand as the Golden Rule. Read the words of Jesus in Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31. The lives of most of us would be changed if each day we made sure that we treated others exactly as we would want them to treat us. People wish to be treated fairly, righteously, and without injustice.

In the phrase “to love mercy,” the Hebrew word translated mercy is often rendered “kindness” or “lovingkindness” in the Old Testament Scriptures. The Lord also wants His people to exhibit the quality of kindness, motivated by unselfish love. God is just, merciful, and kind. He wants His people to be like Him! The Lord loves “with an everlasting love,” and with lovingkindness



(Jeremiah 31:3). God is delighted to do this. If we would be pleasing to Him, we must also delight in showing mercy, love and kindness to all.

Finally, the Prophet Micah says that the Lord wants His people to walk humbly with Him. The Jews also had the realization that their standing before God was of His doing, not theirs. Similarly, the will of God for His people of this present age, those who endeavor to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, is that they walk humbly in the narrow way of sacrifice.

Let us not seek what we can get out of life, but how much we can put into our service to the Lord.

**Question:** Will you comment on the bitter experiences and persecutions that the church experiences? Do they really do the church harm?

**Answer:** Romans 8:28-30 records, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”

The bitter experiences and persecutions of the church do not harm it! In fact, they produce a beneficial effect upon the church. Only through suffering can true character be developed and perfected. Only through suffering can a sympathetic nature be produced which is mindful of the difficulties of others. It is God’s will that every member of the body of Christ should be touched with a feeling of the world’s infirmities and difficulties. Only by this means can they become tender, sympathetic, and generous toward the members of the fallen race.

Let us also note that a hostile and unfriendly world acts as a very effective proving ground for the church, testing the fidelity and loyalty of its members. This is also quite reasonable since only the church is invited to the heavenly calling and the exceedingly great reward of glory, honor, and immortality. See Romans 2:7 and II Peter 1:4.

**Question:** Will you please comment on why works are necessary to have a true living faith?

**Answer:** Those who have accepted the heavenly calling to joint heirship with Christ are thoroughly tested. Each must stand fast in the faith of God’s holy Word. I Corinthians 16:13 tells us, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.” If we display a proper degree of faith, it will manifest itself by bearing fruit. Those who have only a measure of faith have not progressed in the truth by making it a living faith. The Apostle James asks, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” (James 2:14) “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” (verses 17-18).

Our faith, and our whole being as individuals, is on trial now. We are thus exhorted by our Lord, “...be thou faithful unto death...” (Revelation 2:10). The faithfulness of each member of Christ’s body produces an inheritance with Him in glory. This is the greatest gift the saints could ever expect to receive, and it is worth striving to obtain and to prepare for. Our Lord asks for our faithfulness. He desires to purge out of His people everything in the nature of dross. This includes self-will and all the works of the flesh.

Works are essential. However, works without faith will not enable one to stand fast in the truth. “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (James 2:20). He whose life is not in harmony with his faith dishonors that faith, and that kind of faith is dead. James further wrote, “Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also” (verses 21-26).

If Abraham and other faith heroes had merely discussed their faith with one another, they would never have been faith heroes, or have obtained a good report through faith.



## Honduras, Part 2

A baptism taking place among the brethren in Honduras.





## LESSON I

## DAVID SPARES SAUL THE SECOND TIME

**Scripture Reading: I Samuel 26:1-12.**

**Golden Text: I Samuel 26:9.**

**"And David said to Abishai, Destroy him not: for who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed, and be guiltless?"**

**NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that David refused to kill Saul when he had the opportunity. In chapter 25 we read about the death of Samuel. David marries Abigail, who is a tactful and gracious woman. Now we are going to study chapter 26 which will tell us how David spares Saul's life for the second time.**

1. Saul heard that David was in the wilderness of Ziph. Did he again seek David? I Samuel 26:1-3.
2. What did David do in I Samuel 26:4?
3. What did David do when he learned that Saul was near? I Samuel 26:5.
4. Who volunteered to go when he learned that Saul was near? I Samuel 26:6.
5. David and Abishai went to Saul's camp by night. What did they do there? I Samuel 26:7-8.
6. Did David allow Abishai to destroy Saul? Why? I Samuel 26:9-11.
7. What did David take from Saul? Did any of Saul's camp know what David had done? I Samuel 26:12.

## LESSON II

## DAVID CONFRONTS ABNER AND SAUL

**Scripture Reading: I Samuel 26:13-25.**

**Golden Text: I Samuel 26:23 (last part).**

**"..., for the LORD delivered thee unto my hand**

**to day, but I would not stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed."**

**NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that David spared Saul's life for the second time. David took Saul's spear and cruse of water without anyone in the camp knowing of their presence. We will now learn what David has to say to Saul and Abner.**

1. After David left Saul's camp, what did he do? I Samuel 26:13.
  2. What did David say to Abner in I Samuel 26:14-16?
- NOTE: Abner is King Saul's first cousin and commander-in-chief of his army.**
3. Did Saul recognize David's voice? I Samuel 26:17.
  4. What question did David ask Saul? I Samuel 26:18.
  5. What did Saul again promise in I Samuel 26:21?
  6. What was David's answer to him in I Samuel 26:22-24?
  7. Did David go on his way and allow Saul to return to his place? I Samuel 26:25.

## LESSON III

## DAVID'S LACK OF FAITH

**Scripture Reading: I Samuel 27:1-12.**

**Golden Text: I Samuel 27:1 (first part).**

**"And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul..."**

**NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that Saul acknowledged that he had been a foolish person, but he kept right on being that way. David now seeks refuge among the Philistines.**

1. Why did David wish to flee to the land of the Philis-

- tines? I Samuel 27:1.
2. Where did David go, and who went with him? I Samuel 27:2-3.
  3. What request did David make of Achish? I Samuel 27:5.
  4. Did Achish grant his request? I Samuel 27:6.
  5. How long did David dwell in the country of the Philistines? I Samuel 27:7.
  6. What land did David and his men invade? I Samuel 27:8-10.
  7. Why did David destroy men, women and children in these different invasions? I Samuel 27:11.
  8. What did Achish believe and say in I Samuel 27:12?

**LESSON IV**

**SAUL CONSULTS THE WITCH OF EN-DOR  
(PART 1)**

**Scripture Reading: I Samuel 28:1-10.**

**Golden Text: I Samuel 28:7 (first part).**

**"Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and inquire of her..."**

**NOTE: David had been among the Philistines now for one year and four months. His faith became weak in the protection of the Lord, so he sought refuge among the Philistines. In this lesson, we are going to see why Saul seeks advice from the witch of Endor.**

1. David is still among the Philistines. Read I Samuel 28:1-2.
2. What did Saul do after the death of Samuel? I Samuel 28:3.

3. Was Saul afraid when he saw the host of the Philistines? I Samuel 28:4-5.
4. Did Saul seek the Lord, and did the Lord answer? I Samuel 28:6.
5. To whom did Saul turn when the Lord did not answer his pleas? I Samuel 28:7.
6. Did Saul disguise himself before going to the witch of Endor? I Samuel 28:8.
7. What did the woman say to Saul? I Samuel 28:9.
8. What did Saul promise her? I Samuel 28:10.

**LOOK ME UP**

Below you will find some familiar verses. See if you can find the book, chapter and verse where they are found.

1. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."
2. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time aren't worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."
3. "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?"

**SOMETHING FOR YOU TO DO**

We know that men should praise God. Psalm 148 says that all nature is praising God too. On a sheet of paper write, "ALL THINGS THAT PRAISE THE LORD!" Then make a list from Psalm 148 of things mentioned, like the sun, hills, trees, etc. See if you can find twenty-five.

- Answers from Enjoy!** 1. David I Samuel 6:21  
 2. Isaiah 11:8 3. Zechariah 8:5 4. Jesus Luke 15:25  
 5. The Hebrew people Exodus 32:6 6. Sarah Genesis 21:6  
 7. Paul Romans 12:15 8. Solomon Proverbs 17:22  
 9. Jesus Luke 6:21 10. James 5:13

## GOD THINKS ABOUT US

"But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God" (Psalm 40:17).

Often we little children ask our parents if God thinks about us. With so many people in the world, it is hard to imagine that He knows and cares about each and every one of us. Today, we want to look in our Bibles and learn some wonderful things about God's thoughts of us, and our thoughts of Him. The first to consider is what the text above tells us, that God thinks of us.

In Nehemiah 5:19 we read, "Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people." Nehemiah was building the wall at Jerusalem. His enemies were watching for a chance to destroy his work and possibly kill him. Nehemiah cried unto the Lord. The Lord did think upon him and watched over him. Nehemiah was saved from all harm.

At another time, when Jonah, one of God's ministers, was out in the sea, a great storm arose that threw the waves over the vessel. The shipmaster asked Jonah to call upon God so that He would think upon them so they would not perish (see Jonah 1:6)

It would be a beautiful prayer for many of us to say tonight. "Think upon me, O my God." It is always pleasant to have kind friends to say that they often think of us, but the best of all is to read from the Bible, "the Lord thinketh upon me." David thought it as wonderful that God who made all the stars and takes care of all the worlds should ever think about him. He sang with his beautiful harp: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psalm 8:4)

Job thought it was strange that God should think of him. He said, "What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?" (Job 7:17)

In Jeremiah 29:11, God says this to the children of Israel, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."

Many of God's loving thoughts are written in the Bible. The sweetest of all God's thoughts toward us is that thought of the heart which we call love. One of the most

precious messages in the Bible, and so short a thought that the smallest child can remember is, "God is Love."

We read in I John 4:19, "We love him, because he first loved us." If God first loved us, we ought to love Him. If he thinks loving thoughts of us, we ought not to think wicked thoughts of Him. We say God is everywhere, but a little boy once said: "There is one place where God is not." "Where?" "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts" (Psalm 10:4). If our hearts are full of wicked thoughts, God will not come in to dwell there as His temple. But God will know of our bad thoughts, for the Bible says, "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off" (Psalm 139:2).

When Solomon was about to have the crown put on his head to be a king, his dying father told him, "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever" (I Chronicles 28:9).

Jesus knew some people were thinking wicked things about him. "And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" (Matthew 9:4).

God wants us to give up all our wicked thoughts for loving ones about Him, such as He has about us. So He says: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

In Malachi 3:16 we read, "Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name."

Yes, God thinks about us. Let us, too, think on the Lord with loving thoughts. "...whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Enjoy! Enjoy!

Our faith was never meant to be grim. The Bible is filled with "good times," and God does want his people to enjoy life. Can you identify these people?

1. "I will make merry before the LORD."
2. "The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp."
3. "The streets...shall be full of boys and girls playing..."
4. "As he...drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing."
5. "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."
6. "God has laughter for me; every one who hears will laugh over me."
7. "Rejoice with those who rejoice."
8. "A cheerful heart is a good medicine."
9. "Blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh."
10. "Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise."

YOUNG DAVID  
ACROSS

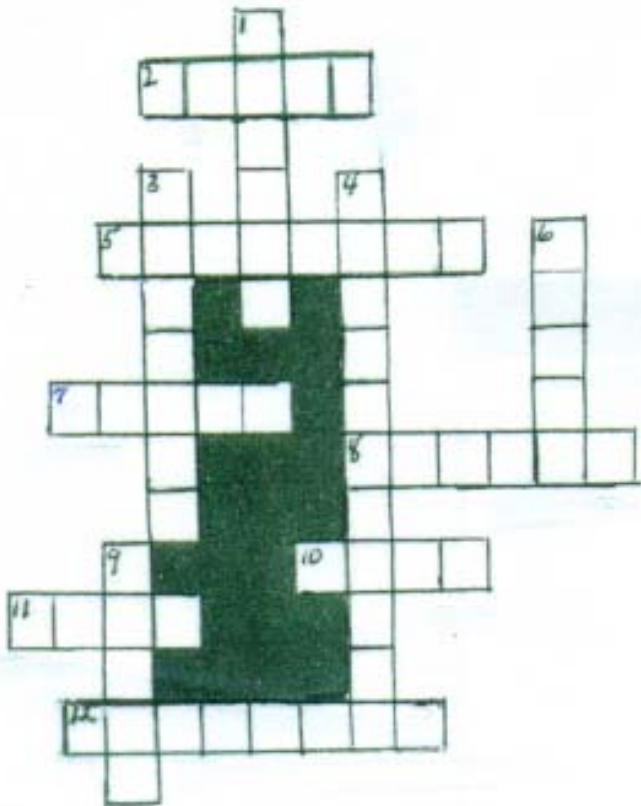
2. David killed the giant with this weapon. (I Samuel 17:50)
5. David's best friend. (I Samuel 19:2)
7. Goliath's armor was made from this metal. (I Samuel 17:5-6)
8. This man of God anointed David king. (I Samuel 16:13)
10. Number of stones David took to fight the giant with. (I Samuel 17:40)
11. Saul had David play this soothing instrument. (I Samuel 16:23)
12. David's rank among his brothers. (I Samuel 17:14)

DOWN

1. David married this daughter of Saul. (I Samuel 18:27)
3. Tall man from Gath who was champion for the Philistines. (I Samuel 17:4)
4. Group Israel was at war with. (I Samuel 17:3)
6. David's father. (I Samuel 17:12)
9. Saul offered this for David's protection. (I Samuel 17:38)

Channel 23 Psalm

The TV is my shepherd, my spiritual growth shall want. It makes me sit down and do nothing for the cause of Christ, because it requireth all my spare time. It keepeth me from doing my duty as a Christian, because it presented so many good programs that I must see. It restoreth my knowledge of the things of the world; it keepeth me from studying God's Word. It leadeth me in paths of failure to attend the worship services. Yea, though I live to be a hundred, I shall keep on viewing my TV as long as it will work. For my TV is my close companion; its sound and picture they comfort me. It presented entertainment before me, and keepeth me from doing important things with my family. It filleth my head with ideas which differ from those set forth in the Word of God. Surely no good thing will come of my life because of my TV, which offers me no time to do the will of God. And I will dwell in spiritual poverty forever.



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*"NEVER ALONE"*

*By George Buechner*

*I stand outside the Church, Unable to go in,  
I have nowhere to go and confess my pardonable sin;  
It is not just me that's holding me back,  
It's the CoronaVirus attack  
That came out of nowhere and changed everything.  
I cannot go to attend the church of my choice  
Even though others decided, I had no voice.  
I know its for my own good concerning my health,  
The Virus came here with such great stealth  
That nothing will ever be the same as before,  
As I stand beside the closed door.  
But have no fear, I still my heart  
That my love for Jesus will never depart.*



