

The Advocate of Truth

Isaiah's Vision

*Fruit-Bearing
Disciples*

*The Ministry
of Tears*

Murmuring

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"
Proverbs 22:6



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THE MINISTRY OF TEARS

Selected by Bond Tennant



"Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh" (Luke 6:21).

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Romans 12:15).

The Christian has peace and joy. But the Christian life is not all happiness. There are times of weeping and times of burdens and sorrows. There is a ministry of faith and love but also a ministry of tears. God's Word tells us of many kinds of tears. Let us consider some of them.

There are tears of hypocrisy and deception. Judges 14:16-17 states that Samson's wife wept. She wanted the answer to Samson's riddle. She wept seven days. The weeping, the tears following, finally did the work, and she deceived Samson.

Not all tears are sincere. "And this have ye done again, covering the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping, and with crying out, insomuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, or receiveth it with good will at your hand" (Malachi 2:13).

There are wasted tears. Hebrews 12:17 declares that Esau "...found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." He wasted those tears. He had waited too late.

David said in II Samuel 12:22-23, "...While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept...But now..." Tears of

repentance will not be wasted if shed in time.

Wasted Years

Two aged men met that had been foes for life.
Met by a grave and wept,
...and in those tears
They washed away the memory of their strife;
They wept again the loss of all those years.

--Tennyson

There are tears of petition. "And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the Agagite, and his device that he had devised against the Jews" (Esther 8:3).

"Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, And said, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. Then came the word of the LORD to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years"(Isaiah 38:2-5).

Hannah prayed and wept for a child. "And as he did

so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkannah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou?...and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore" (I Samuel 1:7-10). God granted her petition. "Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD" (verse 20).

Psalm 6:6 tells of David's cry for deliverance: "I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; I water my couch with my tears."

The father of a child with a dumb spirit which Jesus healed cried out with tears, "...Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24).

There are tears of thanksgiving. Luke 7:38 states that the woman "...stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head..." Jesus said, "...she hath washed my feet with tears..." (verse 44).

Someone has said, "The person that gives thanks can find comfort in everything, the person that complains can find comfort in nothing."

In Psalm 126:5-6 we read, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

There are tears of warning. In Acts 20:31 the Apostle Paul said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

In Philippians 3:18 we read, "(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.)"

There are tears of compassion. Jeremiah wept for his people. "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" (Jeremiah 9:1).

"And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters" (verse 18).

"But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD's flock is carried away captive" (Jeremiah 13:17).

Lamentations 2:18-19 reads, "Their heart cried unto the LORD, O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a river day and night: give thyself no rest; let not the apple of thine eye cease. Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the LORD: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children, that faint for hunger in the top of every street."

The shortest verse in the Bible tells us that "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it" (Luke 19:41).

Jesus displayed real compassion! "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:35-36).

There are tears of reconciliation and forgiveness. Genesis 33:1-4 tells about Jacob coming back home to meet Esau. "And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids. And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost. And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother. And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept." Especially notice verse four.

The story of Joseph and his brothers is an interesting one. "And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck. Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him" (Genesis 45:14-15).

The ministry of tears is powerful in its persuasion and effectiveness. Hypocritical and psychological tears cannot fool God. Jesus has pronounced a special blessing on those who "...weep now: for ye shall laugh" (Luke 6:21).

MURMURING



Murmuring is negative comments when one is jealous, irritated, disappointed, impatient, or stressed, or feels "left out," mistreated, insecure or hurt. A murmuring spirit often jumps to wrong conclusions, distorts good judgment, and left unchecked, often leads to rebellion.

It seems that the last person to recognize the faultfinder or murmurer is the faultfinder or murmurer. The Psalmist prayed, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23-24). He wanted God to search his heart for hidden sins that lead to death.

Let those who think that murmuring is not deadly for them and their families be reminded of the children of Israel! They even blamed God for their situation and made plans to return to Egypt. When Moses was a long time in the mountain, they murmured and made a golden calf to worship. The Lord commanded that every man put his sword on his side, and go throughout the camp killing his brother, companion, and neighbor: "...and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." See Exodus 32:1, 27-28). When Moses had sent men to spy out the land of Canaan, ten of them who had incited the rebellion against the Lord by spreading a discouraging report about the land were struck dead with a plague before the Lord. Please read Numbers 14:35-37.

Another time when the Israelites murmured, the cause was jealousy. We read, "Now Korah,...Dathan and Abiram,...took...two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly...And they gathered themselves together against

Moses and against Aaron," and complained. What was their problem? They were jealous and wanted a part of the leadership. In effect they said to Moses and Aaron, "Why are you ruling over these people? They are just as qualified as you are!" The Lord answered the question quickly and decisively: "...the ground clave asunder that was under them: 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. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation... And there came out a fire from the LORD, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense. "But the murmurers did not learn easily, because the very next morning, "...all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD." So the Lord sent a plague that destroyed 14,700 complainers. Please read Numbers 16:1-49.

Did they finally learn to stop murmuring? Hardly! Only a short while later "...the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread." And again the Lord sent punishment. Please read Numbers 21:5-6.

The Apostle Paul, speaking of the children of Israel who died for their murmuring warns us: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto

them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Corinthians 10:10-11).

Notice that both parents and children perished. Why? Was God unfair, or was the fault their own? When we murmur against our church, the church leaders, and the members of the church, what are we teaching our children? Can we expect our children to become responsible adults who respect their brothers and sisters in the church, the church leaders, or even God.

When we speak with disrespect about our brothers and sisters in Christ, we sow discord among the brotherhood and cause others to stumble. Death was the result of murmuring to all the Israelites who came out of Egypt, except for two loyal men, Joshua and Caleb. Will God

think differently toward the murmurer and complainer today?

Sometimes we murmur against others because we think they are not as good as we are. Perhaps they don't speak well. Or perhaps we think we could do a better job, or even think we have better ideas. Let us remember Moses' leadership and his complaining followers. This is what they thought, and their complaining destroyed them. "And Moses said, ...your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD" (Exodus 16:8).

What should be our attitude regarding the murmurer? If we take Paul's advice seriously, we will practice being thankful in place of being discontented and unsatisfied. Let us remember that God detested the murmurers and destroyed them!



Fruit-bearing Disciples

By David DeLong

Jesus told His disciples in John chapter 15, verses 1-8: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is

cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

Not only is it the Lord's will that His followers bear fruit, but they are to bear *much* fruit. This is the characteristic of a disciple of Jesus as implied by His statement in verse 8. God is glorified when much fruit is produced. Therefore, when only *some* fruit is produced, a purging

(pruning) must take place by the Father in heaven so that much fruit can be produced. Let it be emphasized, however, that bearing much fruit is a relative thing. We are not to compare the fruit that we are to bear with the fruit of someone else. Bearing fruit is related to the time, talents, resources, and health that an individual possesses. But, more than that, it relates to our “abiding” in Jesus, which we will come back to shortly.

When a pruning of the branches on a vine takes place, we know that certain parts are cut off. This may include some of the blossoms, or some of the “shoots” that grow out of the branches. Blossoms are very beautiful parts of a plant, and are necessary for fruit to be produced. However, too many blossoms can actually lessen the amount of fruit that is produced.

In our lives as well, there may be times when we produce “blossoms” instead of fruit. These blossoms, in themselves, may not be harmful. But too many can keep a believer from bearing the amount of fruit that is glorifying to the heavenly Father. An example of this may involve the use of our time. Sometimes a person gets caught up in a bustle of activities. It seems that the more one volunteers for these things--civic functions, charitable organizations, fund drives, even too many church meetings--the more he or she is called upon to volunteer. It is sometimes hard to say no to this volunteerism because, after all, we are supposed to be servants. Right?

However, this person may become exhausted and overtaxed by the amount of activities so that certain negative things take place. First, his relationship with the Lord may suffer because there is little time and energy to pray and study the Scriptures. Second, his relationship with family may suffer because of the same lack of time and energy. Third, his health may suffer. The interesting thing here is that when a person becomes sick due to stress, it just may be the Lord’s pruning back some of the person’s activities so that real fruit can be produced.

The Lord Jesus gives us a clue to producing much fruit in John 15. He said in the last part of verse 5, “He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” Now, please notice verse 7. “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” These two verses appear to be very closely related. The Greek word in these passages for “abideth” and “abide” is “meno”, and means: “to stay, abide, con-

tinue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry...” In other words, to “abide” refers to a continuous state of being.

We abide in Jesus by faith. He abides in us through the Holy Spirit and His words that we receive. Therefore, when the Lord abides in us, it always involves His words abiding in us as well. This is extremely important. Many say that they abide in Jesus by claiming Him as their Savior. But do His *words* abide in them? Listen to what rejecting Jesus really involves. “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). If a person does not follow the plain teachings (words) of Jesus, he or she is actually rejecting the Lord.

In Matthew 12:33, Jesus correlated a good tree with good fruit, and a corrupt tree with corrupt fruit, “...for the tree is known by his fruit.” Therefore, we see that fruit can either be righteous or evil, positive or negative. John the Baptist warned the multitude that came to him for baptism: “Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance...And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire” (Luke 3:8,9). Furthermore, our Savior taught about those who either become unfruitful or those who become very fruitful. He said: “And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred” (Mark 4:18-20).

Since the disciple is to bear *much* fruit; and the bearing of only *some* fruit will bring pruning from the Father; and the bearing of *no* fruit will bring an ax (and burning) to the unfruitful tree, and burning to the unfruitful branch, let us study further into this important subject of fruit-bearing.

Abiding in Jesus *and* His words abiding in us is a key to producing much fruit, as we have seen in this article. However, we also mentioned that producing much fruit is a relative thing, based upon a person’s time, talents, resources, and health. This seems to be suggested in the Parable of the ten pounds in Luke 19:11-27. Please see also Matthew 25:14,15.

Ten servants were each given a pound of money to produce a profit (fruit) with. The first servant gained 10 pounds with his one pound, the second servant gained 5 pounds with his one pound, and a third servant gained no profit from his one pound. The first two servants seem to have produced much fruit with their pounds, since neither one was chastised (pruned) for not producing enough. It is interesting, though, that each one was rewarded according to the amount produced: 10 pounds = 10 cities, and 5 pounds = 5 cities. But the third servant was punished for producing no profit. His fear was responsible for this. It would have been enough for him if he had only gained the interest from a bank's investment upon his pound.

Let's now examine some of the areas that the Bible classifies as fruit that disciples are to bear. First, and perhaps foremost, all disciples of Jesus must exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. This list is found in Galatians 5: 22,23 and reads: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

Jesus spoke of the first two parts of this fruit in John 15:9-12. "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." Jesus even explained that the two greatest commandments are love for God and love for our neighbor (please see Matthew 22:35-40).

The third part of this fruit was spoken of by our Lord in John 14:27 which says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Fear, as we recall, was what kept the third servant in the Parable of the pounds from producing fruit. It will keep us from doing the same.

All of the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit is essential in a believer's life, and is automatically present, to some degree, when the Holy Spirit is indwelt by the believer. However, as Jesus taught in the Parable of the sower (Mark 4), certain things can "choke the word" (and thus possibly grieve or quench the Spirit--Ephesians 4:30; I

Thessalonians 5:19) in a believer so that he becomes unfruitful. This involves the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and other lusts.

Another area of fruit-bearing is obeying God's truth as recorded in the Scriptures. This is clearly shown in Colossians 1:5,6,9,10. "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth...For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Striving to build and maintain a Christ-like character is also bearing fruit. This involves:

a.) holiness--"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22).

b.) righteousness--"That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God" (Philippians 1:10,11; please see also II Corinthians 9:10; Proverbs 8:18,19). Sometimes the Lord needs to chasten us (which may involve the pruning that we mentioned), so that we can have "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" (Hebrews 12:11).

c.) good words--"A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompense of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him" (Proverbs 12:14; please see also Isaiah 57:19).

d.) right thoughts--"Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it" (Jeremiah 6:19; please see also II Corinthians 10:5).

e.) wisdom--"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:17,18).

Giving an offering to help the poor may be classified as fruit. This is the way that the Apostle Paul termed it in

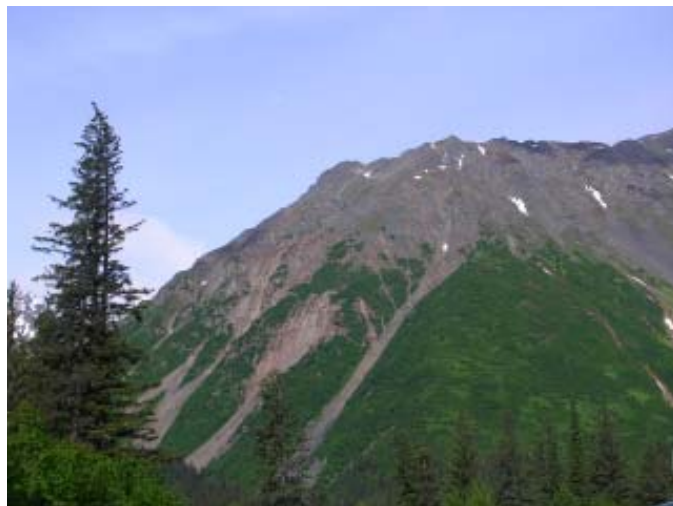
Romans 15:26-28. "For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain." In this particular case, the offering may have included actual fruit (of the vine or tree) that Paul took to the poor saints.

Soul-winning is also a type of fruit. In Proverbs 11:30 we read, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise." As a matter of fact, we sing the hymn, "Bringing in the Sheaves", which gives the thought of persons who are won for the Lord as being grain gathered in. Jesus also likens the redeemed to wheat in the Parable of the tares among the wheat (Matthew 13:30). Please notice how our Lord described soul-winning in John 4:35,36: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." (Please see also James 5:7; Romans 1:13; I Corinthians 16:15).

Included in fruit-bearing is the giving of praise and thanks to our Father in heaven. The writer of Hebrews said it like this: "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

The mark, and success, of a child of God is bearing much fruit, which also brings glory to the Father. The process of fruit-bearing can only come about when the disciple abides in Christ, and His words abide in the disciple. This situation brings wonderful results to prayer (John 15:7). Fruit-bearing is also to be contingent upon how much has been given to the disciple. When much has been given, much will be required (Luke 12:48). Finally, let us hear the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 92:12-14: "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing."

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT



It was for the special benefit of His apostles, and all those who would believe on Him through their word, that Jesus preached His well-known "Sermon on the Mount." This sermon is recorded by Matthew in chapters 5 through 7 of this book. There are probably millions of people today who know one or more of the "Beatitudes" which constitute the opening of this sermon (chapters 5:3-12).

Jesus did not intend this sermon to be a guide for the world in general. The fact is that even the professed Christian world has never shaped its policies according to the precepts of love and mercy set forth in this sermon. The sermon is intended for the true individual followers of the Master. The true followers of the Master have been guided by its principles, many times at the cost of misunderstanding and suffering.

Briefly, some of the principles of righteousness set forth in the Sermon on the Mount are: humility of spirit; purity of heart; mercy toward enemies; hatred of others is murder; sincerity in prayer; singleness of heart in serving the Lord; full trust in the Lord to supply food, shelter and clothing; and alertness against the deceptions of false teachers.

It is in this sermon that Jesus sets forth what is generally spoken of as "The Lord's Prayer." The first request in this prayer is, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Even in His instructions pertaining to prayer, Jesus sought to keep the minds and hearts of His disciples reminded of the kingdom which He would establish and in which they would share rulership.



FAITH-AN ESSENTIAL

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

The Scriptures declare, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17). Every saint must possess faith. Following are a few reasons why this is true:

THE SAINT OF GOD LIVES BY FAITH

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

"Now the just shall live by faith" (Hebrews 10:38).

THE SAINT NOT ONLY LIVES BY FAITH BUT STANDS BY FAITH

"Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear" (Romans 11:20).

Let us hear the Apostle Paul's admonition to the Corinthian church: "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand" (II Corinthians 1:24).

THE SAINT ALSO WALKS BY FAITH

"And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised" (Romans 4:12).

"(For we walk by faith, not by sight)" (II Corinthians 5:7).

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (I John 2:6).

THE SAINT LIVES, STANDS, AND WALKS BY FAITH THAT HE MAY OBTAIN A GOOD REPORT BY FAITH

"For by it the elders obtained a good report" (Hebrews 11:2).

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4).

THE SAINT OVERCOMES THE WORLD BY FAITH

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I John 5:4-5).

The saint must have faith in God and all His promises. Faith is overcoming power!

THE SAINT RESISTS THE DEVIL BY FAITH

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (I Peter 5:8-9).

Resist means to stand against, to withstand, to oppose. When the devil tries you, resist him, and "...he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

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

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (I Timothy 6:12).

The saint must stay sober and be vigilant, because his adversary is subtle and strong. He must seek God's help when combating him (the devil). The saint could never resist without Him.

THE SAINT IS MADE TO OVERCOME BY FAITH

The saint lives, stands, walks, obtains a good report, and resists by faith. Now we find that he is made to overcome by faith.

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16).

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father" (I John 2:13).

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Revelation 2:7).

Faith produces triumphant and victorious living for the saint. If the saint continues to live by faith until the end, Jesus has promised, "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Revelation 2:10).

I'VE LEARNED

that it takes years to build up trust,
and only seconds to destroy it.

that it's not what happens to you
but what you do with it that counts.

that you can get by on charm for about fifteen minutes.
After that, you'd better know something.

that you shouldn't compare yourself to others.

that your background and circumstances may have
influenced who you are, but you are responsible for
who you become.

that you can do something in an instant
that will give you heartache for life.

that you should always leave loved ones with loving
words.

It may be the last time you see them.

that you can keep going long after you can't.

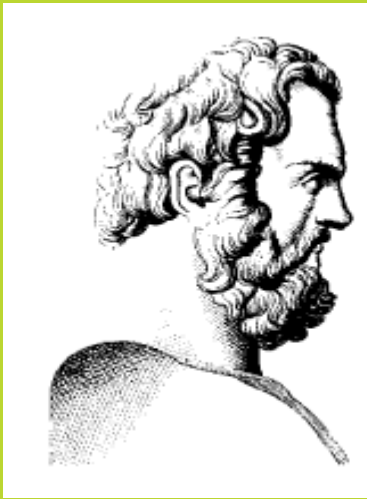
that you are responsible for what you do,
no matter how you feel.

that either you control your attitude or it controls you.

that heroes are the people who do what has to be done
when it needs to be done, regardless of consequences.

that maturity has more to do with what types of experi-
ences you've had and what you've learned from them,
and less to do with how many birthdays you've cel-
ebrated.

- Selected



ISAIAH'S VISION

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not" (Isaiah 6:1-9).

It was during a difficult time that Isaiah received this vision. The Northern Kingdom was on the brink of disaster because of her persistent backsliding. The same was true of the Southern Kingdom. God's house was neglected, and His Word was disregarded. God's will was flaunted.

The priesthood in the main, was not only silent and unprotesting, but many were participating in the sins of the nation. It is a dark day when ministers of God will not cry out against sin and idolatry, and darker still when they actually participate in it. In many ways, there is a parallel

between Isaiah's day and ours.

We, like Isaiah, have a work to do. We, like him, live in difficult times. And, like him, we need a vision.

Isaiah saw a vision of God. The question naturally arises, "How did Isaiah see Him?" Isaiah saw God in His holiness. He noted the seraphims and heard the theme of their song, "...Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts..." (verse 3). He saw the surrounding glory and was aware of the presence of an awful and solemn holiness. The seraphims covered their faces at the holiness of God (verse 2). It is only in the light of that holiness that we can realize the sinfulness of sin. In both the Old and New Testaments, God testified, "...Be ye holy; for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44; I Peter 1:16).

Isaiah saw God in His power. He saw Him "...high and lifted up..." (verse 1). Before we face a sinful world, we need to see God elevated and exalted, the all-powerful One. Our Lord stated, "...All power is given unto me..." (Matthew 28:18).

Isaiah saw God among His people. The text says, "...his train filled the temple" (verse 1). This signified God's presence in His house. Isaiah saw a God not far away but near at hand. Every person in the house of God felt His presence and experienced His manifestation.

Moses saw the presence of God (Exodus 3:2-7). Solomon saw God's glory at the dedication of the Temple (II Chronicles 7:1-5). The presence of God was real at Pentecost.

It is true that the church has its faults, but God is with us. He fills us, and He fills His church. He will never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

Isaiah saw God in His universality. The seraphims not

only said, "...Holy, holy, holy..., but "...the whole earth is full of his glory" (verse 3). Isaiah saw a God of all nations, all colors, and all tribes. The whole earth is God's footstool (Isaiah 66:1), and He gave His Son Jesus to bring salvation to all men, everywhere, that dwell upon it (John 3:16). God cannot be confined to one nation. We are "...[all] of one blood..." (Acts 17:26).

Isaiah saw a vision of himself; Isaiah saw Isaiah! The man who sees God best, sees himself best. The better he knows God, the better he knows himself.

Isaiah saw the impossibility of self. He said, "...Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips..." (verse 5). This was a humbling revelation! In the light of God's holiness and power, Isaiah no longer had a high opinion of himself. He no longer thought himself a paragon of virtue. He saw the real Isaiah. God can do little with us until we see our weaknesses, our helplessness, and our insufficiency.

Paul, like Isaiah, saw himself and said, "...I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (I Corinthians 2:3). We must always remember that "...We are unprofitable servants..." and that without Him "... [we] can do nothing" (Luke 17:10; John 15:5).

Isaiah saw the possibility of self. The statement "...Here am I; send me" (verse 8) is proof of it. To be able to say this, Isaiah must first have seen himself powerless in his own strength, for next he was touched with fire off the altar of the Lord. It is after these two things happen in our experience with the Lord that we can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

We become fully aware that God hath chosen the "foolish things," the "weak things," "base things," "despised" [things], and "things which are not" to carry out His work in the world. Why does He not choose "the wise" and "the mighty"? The answer is, "That no flesh should glory in his presence." Please read I Corinthians 1:27-29.

Isaiah saw a vision of others. God said, "...Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?..." (verse 8). He was calling for a volunteer to take His message to the people. Isaiah responded because he saw the need. Isaiah's answer was, "I see the need, Lord; if You can use me, here I am--send me." When we have a confrontation with God, we have a burden for others. The Apostle Paul said, "...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?..." (Acts 9:6).

Isaiah saw the people like Christ saw them: "...as sheep having no shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). He had compassion for them. Christ said to those He sent, "...The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38).

When we consider the lost people in this world, our prayer and dedication should be, "Send me" and "What wilt thou have me to do?" After this commitment is made, we can truthfully say, "For to me to live is Christ..." (Philippians 1:21).

Christians that take no compassion and concern of our Lord about the world harvest lightly, and do nothing to assist in the reaping, will face condemnation on that day. Proverbs 10:5 reads, "...he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm 126:5-6).



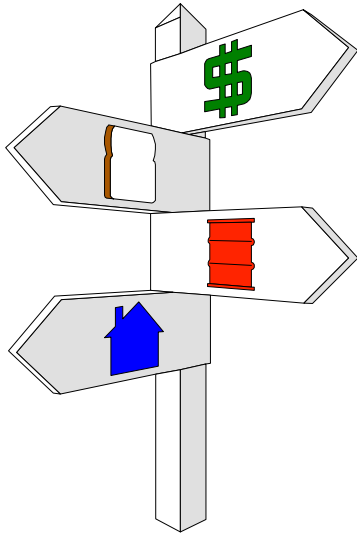
The book salesman tried to persuade the farmer to buy a set of books on scientific farming. The old man said, "No, I don't want those books."

"But, Mr. farmer, if you had these books you could be twice the farmer you are."

"Son," answered the farmer, "I don't farm half as good as I know how now."

Most of us have plenty of light, plenty of knowledge to make us twice the Christians we are. If we walk in the light we already have, we'll get more light. "To you that hear shall more be given."

"Pray for me that I'll get great light," urged the backslidden fellow. "No, I'll not pray for any such thing," answered the wise personal worker. "I pray you will walk in the light you already have."



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.

IS OPRAH TEACHING FALSE DOCTRINE?

By Pastor J-Lee

Actor, director, producer, C.E.O., talk show host, humanitarian, philanthropist, televangelist... Televangelist? Wait a minute, Oprah? "... Tell me it isn't so.

Oprah Winfrey emerges on the scene as "America's Next Top Televangelist"... What has the world come to when people look to the most renowned daytime talk show diva for spiritual guidance? How did Oprah Winfrey become the Wal-Mart of religion?

All of this sounds funny and innocent but beneath the surface of disguised entertainment is a very serious issue that the church is going to have to deal with one way or the other. With such a lack of sound doctrine being taught today, the average Oprah Winfrey viewer has not been properly equipped to discern such devious heresies that are covertly being fed to them. So just what is it that she's teaching and why is it so dangerous? I'm glad you asked.

The catch phrase for Oprah's online webcast "A New Earth" poses one rhetorical question. "Are You ready to be Awakened?" This question is intended to institute that the viewer has not yet obtained a so called higher state of consciousness or awareness known as a spiritual awakening or enlightenment that, by the way, has nothing to do with Christ. Her co-host, self proclaimed new-age spiritual leader Eckhart Tolle, is by no means a min-

ister of the Gospel that he so frequently quotes and twists just to find a common ground of connection with his audience.

So who is the Eckhart Tolle?

I thought you would never ask. Eckhart Tolle was born in Germany as Ulrich Tolle in 1948. Tolle spent most of his adolescent years in Spain where he lived with his father until he moved to England at the age of 19. From the age of 13 to 22 he refused to go to school although he did graduate from the University of London and also did research at Cambridge University. His areas of study were literature, languages, and philosophy.

In his late 20's, Eckhart suffered long periods of depression, and at the age of 29, he claims to have had a dramatic spiritual awakening. This transformation is what Eckhart attributes to his higher state of awareness and heightened sense of peace. The first texts he came in contact with after his awakening were the New Testament, the Bhagavad Gita, the Tao Teaching and the teachings of Buddha. From his experience and beliefs he has now authored four best-sellers that continue to falsely indoctrinate millions of people with teachings that embrace the ideologies of Mystical Islam, Sufism, and Zen Buddhism.

Eckhart's claims that his teachings are a collaboration and continuation of Jiddu Krishnamurti (Theosophical

occultist) and Ramana Maharshi (Hinduism teacher). He also contributes much of his deeper spiritual insight to Australian spiritual teacher and writer Barry Long. However, Eckhart claims no association with any particular religion or tradition. Interestingly enough, he believes that the New Testament Scriptures contain deep spiritual truth as well as distortions. Eckhart asserts that "those distortions are due to a misunderstanding of Jesus and are the false agendas of those who desire to make converts". However, Eckhart claims to offer what he believes to be the correct interpretation of Jesus and His teachings.

A New Earth

Every Monday, Pastor Winfrey and her Associate Pastor Eckhart Tolle broadcast a live interactive class session online in which millions of people log on and engage in an educational environment. The manual for the class is Eckhart's newest best-seller, "*A New Earth*" in which the class is named after. Without noticing, the viewer has now been turned into a student and is also given a personal workbook to record observations, questions, and important notes.

It doesn't take but a few minutes of viewing before one should realize that Oprah and Eckhart are ambassadors assiting the *new age* movement agenda under the offers of salvation apart from Jesus Christ. However, many fail to discern the cue words that should ring the "False Doctrine" alarm that every believer should be equipped with. Even in a country that claims to be predominately Christian, Eckhart says that "millions are now ready to awaken because spiritual awakening is not an option anymore, but a necessity if humanity and the planet are to survive." Eckhart's book, "*A New Earth*", continues to be a best-seller along with his other books in which three are in the top ten. His literature is quoted like Scripture as if it was divinely inspired by the Creator Himself. Even though the teachings that go forth from this show are in direct contradiction to Scripture, that audience has consistently continued to grow in a cult-like phenomenon sweeping the nation.

Can you see the danger?

Despite all of this, Oprah claims to be a Christian. She claims that she had "opened her mind and taken God out of the box, outside of a belief systems and the doctrine of the Church". She claims that Jesus Christ is just

"one of the many ways that a seeker can choose to take." She also accredits *Pierre Teilhard de Chardin*, a French philosopher, as having a major spiritual influence in her beliefs.

Oprah says that over the years she has " continued to find new ways of introducing the concept of spirit to a broad audience." She feels that "encouraging others to recognize the fullness of their potential through spiritual connection" is her " greatest purpose and calling in life." She says that this is why she has the magazine and continues to do the television show. But just what spirit is Oprah introducing to a broad audience? Just what is this "AHA!" MOMENT?

Oprah is also in preparation to launch her very own television network (The Oprah Winfrey Network) solely devoted to that purpose.

I say this with all sincerity and compassion, we are living in the last days, and the Bible says that "*the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*"

Sound doctrine is a necessity in these days. We must be equipped with the truths of Scripture so that we can discern false doctrine no matter how beautiful or eloquently it comes packaged. I know a lot of people love Oprah dearly, and that's fine, we should love everybody, but I challenge you to research everything that I have written about from the names of individuals, to the different terms that I have introduced to you, and then make a decision on if you would trust Oprah giving you spiritual advice.

The article appeared in *The Gospel Times* published in Houston Texas.

COMMENT

We had a short article about Oprah's teaching in a previous issue of *The Advocate of Truth*. Pastor J-Lee has hit the nail on its head!



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Are little things important?

ANSWER: Many times we daydream about some great plan or goal we set for ourselves, so we begin to make plans for a project we want to succeed in. Such dreams or plans encourage or persuade us to study and press on in other ways. A person without a goal in life is apt to coast along and therefore miss opportunities for advancement.

One thing we must remember is that constantly minding the big things in our plan may blind us to the little things which could be our downfall. Our failure to see them may cause us to miss out on building correctly toward the larger goal. Jesus warns us in Luke 14:25-33 that we must count the cost before undertaking a project, or else we might find ourselves beaten down by the little things.

Also we must remember that Satan is more worldly-wise and more subtle than we are. One of his methods of attack and deceit is to empty much of God's truth for persuasion, truth with which he blends a very small percentage of untold untruth. His lie, usually well concealed, is in the form of a small idea or an interjected word meant to catch unawares, to deceive the very elect if we are not alert.

Let us consider Satan's first lie recorded in the Bible. In Genesis chapter three we read of his tempting Eve to disobey God. Eve answered him by quoting God's

warning, "...*Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die*" (verse 3). But Satan said, "*Ye shall **not** surely die,*" and persuaded her that an egotistical God did not want her and Adam to be as wise as He was. That little three letter word "**not**" plus a temptation to lust, when it was acted on, brought the death curse to mankind.

Let us read now of a case of physical hunger which cost a man his rightful heritage. "*And Jacob sod pottage (made a soup): and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob*" (Genesis 25:29-33). Apparently a man of strong appetites, Esau thought of his present hunger with no regard to future consequences.

Moses was a strong principled man of God as he led the Israelites, under God's direction, forty years in the wilderness, waiting for the signal to enter Canaan, the promised land. "*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his*

water, ...And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; **must we** (Aaron and I) fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he **smote** the rock twice..." (Numbers 20:7-11).

The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 that Christ followed and provided for the Israelites, and He was that Spiritual Rock (in nature form) that opened a stream of water to furnish their needs. Because Moses, in his fit of anger at a rebellious group of people, took credit to himself and at the same time gave insult to Christ, God forbade him to enter the new land. Please see Numbers 20:12. God let him see from a distance what he would miss, then buried him in the wilderness.

"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" (I John 2:16). These three evil influences are death to a child of God if allowed to flourish from the point of temptation to desire and then fulfillment. Yet James tells us that the human tongue is perhaps more dangerous. Man might by dint of strong will power overcome some temptations and lead a more or less moral life. *"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:8).* James also tells us, *"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:6).*

Think of it! This **little** member of the body, created for the purpose of communication with God and our fellowman, works on impulse. The impulse so often catches us unaware as Satan sets a devilish flame to activate it. Without the intervention of the Spirit of God, these little jabs of passion, hate, jealousy, etc. will control the words we speak. When this occurs, we demean ourselves in the sight and hearing of others and with God. The "course of nature" (our natural reactions) is controlled by this same "fire of hell" unless we have the Spirit within us to quench it.

Think of the hurt we can give to others when we repeat a rumor (an unproved report) or carry on a tale about someone's indiscretion. Sometimes, in righteous honesty, we tell something in another's past. This tale may be true, but it may also be that the one concerned has already made his or her peace with the injured party and with

God. Taking up the report for the sake of "being honest" can only amount to scandal and social injury. Before we demean ourselves and hurt others by gossip, let us imagine our own hurt if someone would do the same to us. To illustrate how gossip can spread, throw a stone into the middle of a pond, and watch the ripples continue to move outward. Words of scandal also cannot be recovered or controlled. Let us be aware of these little impulses.

There are *little positives* as well as *little negatives*. We have considered a few *little negatives*. Let us now consider just one *little positive*.

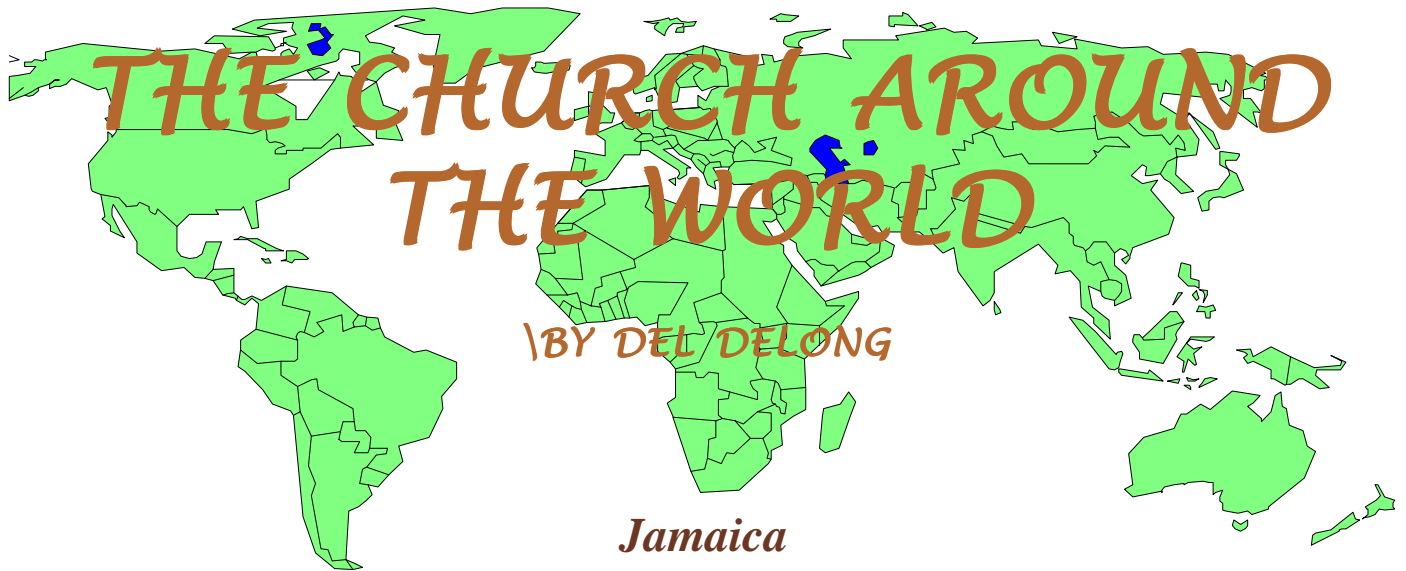
When David met Goliath, the great giant knew there was no way a boy's strength could match his, and in his arrogant pride he opened the face part of his armor. He was probably laughing at the thought of a "crazy" youngster daring to come near. But David knew whose victory it would be as he flung the stone. It was a **little** stone, but slung with faith that God would do the rest. Perhaps the stone was moved with a force that mere men could not exert to penetrate that huge skull. We can read the result in I Samuel 17:50, *"So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David."* Yes, little things are important!

QUESTION: What are your thoughts on Jesus' words found in Matthew 20:28 when He said, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many"?

ANSWER: This passage is the ultimate of the duty of every child of God. Of course Christ did come to earth to win all men to His service, but it was for their sakes rather than His own. To serve Him is necessary for salvation. It is sin that keeps one from allegiance to Him.

All the time He was in the flesh He gave rather than accepted service. He was moved by love, even when the people would have taken Him by force to make Him king. He would not accept it. Christ gave His body in humiliation and sacrifice.

The whole message of the New Testament is that Christ came to earth for the sake of mankind, not for His own sake. He taught by example the life of humility, self-sacrifice, and service which He wishes us to lead.



These photos were taken during the time of the youth retreat last year in Jamaica.





LESSON I**PAUL JOURNEYS TO JERUSALEM****Scripture Reading: Acts 21:1-17.****Golden Text: Acts 21:13 (last part).****"For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."**

NOTE: Paul is now traveling to Jerusalem and makes several stops on his way. Let us study about these different places.

1. Name four of the cities that Paul stopped at on his journey to Jerusalem. Acts 21:1-2.
2. Paul arrived at Tyre. How long was Paul at Tyre, and did the brethren want Paul to go to Jerusalem? Acts 21:3-4.
3. Who went with Paul to see him depart, and what did they do before he got on his ship? Acts 21:5-6.
4. After stopping at Ptolemais, where did Paul go next, and whose house did he visit? Acts 21:7-8.
5. Who came down from Judea to see Paul? Acts 21:10.
6. What did Agabus say and do? Acts 21:11.
7. Did the brethren try to persuade Paul not to go to Jerusalem, and what was his answer? Acts 21:12-13.
8. What did the brethren say when they could not persuade Paul to stay out of Jerusalem? Acts 21:14.
9. Who went to Jerusalem with Paul, and were the brethren in Jerusalem happy to see them? Acts 21:15-17.

LESSON II**PAUL IN THE TEMPLE IN JERUSALEM****Scripture Reading: Acts 21:26-40.****Golden Text: Acts 21:26 (first part).****"Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple."**

1. Where did Paul go while in Jerusalem? Acts 21:26.
2. What did the Jews from Asia do and say when they saw Paul in the temple? Acts 21:27-28.
3. What did the people of the city do in Acts 21:30?
4. The people were ready to kill Paul. What did the chief captain of the city do? Acts 21:31-33.
5. Why did the chief captain want to take Paul into the castle? Acts 21:34-36.
6. What did Paul say to the chief captain as he was being led into the castle? Acts 21:37.
7. What question did the chief captain ask Paul in Acts 21:38?
8. Paul told the captain who he is. Did the chief captain let Paul speak to the people? Acts 21:39-40.

NOTE: We will learn in our next lesson what Paul said to the people.

LESSON III**PAUL'S DEFENSE****Scripture Reading: Acts 22:1-30.****Golden Text: Acts 22:16.****"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."**

1. In what language did Paul speak to the people, and did they listen to what he said? Acts 22:1-2.

2. Name three things you learned about Paul in Acts 22:3.
3. Of what incident did Paul first tell about? Acts 22:4-5.
4. What was the second incident that Paul talked about? Acts 22:6-16.
5. Did God want Paul to stay in Jerusalem when he was first converted? Acts 22:17-21.
6. What was the reaction of the men toward Paul? Acts 22:22-23.
7. What did Paul say as they bound him? Acts 22:25.
8. What did the centurion and chief captain do when they heard that Paul was a Roman? Acts 22:26-28.
9. What was the reaction after it was known that Paul was a Roman, and what happened to him next? Acts 22:29-30.

LESSON IV

PAUL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

Scripture Reading: Acts 23:1-22.

Golden Text: Acts 23:1 (last part).

"I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

NOTE: The Sanhedrin is the council of the Jews that tried both religious and civil cases. This council consisted of high priests, scribes, and elders.

1. What was Paul able to say before the men? Acts 23:1.
2. Who was the high priest, and what did he command? Acts 23:2.
3. How did Paul respond to the high priest's order? Acts

23:3-5.

4. What were the two different groups of people present, and what were their differences? Acts 23:6-8

NOTE: The Pharisees and the Sadducees were two different Jewish parties that disagreed with each other on Jewish law.

5. What happened between these two groups after Paul had told them he was a Pharisee? Acts 23:9-10.
6. What did the Lord tell Paul that night? Acts 23:11.
7. What was the plan that a group of Jews had for Paul? Acts 23:12-15.
8. Who entered the castle to help Paul, and how did he help? Acts 23:16-21.
9. What did the chief captain tell this young man? Acts 23:22.

**THAT'S WHY
I LOVE HIM SO**

Let's thank God for the little hills,
For creeks and rivers, too;

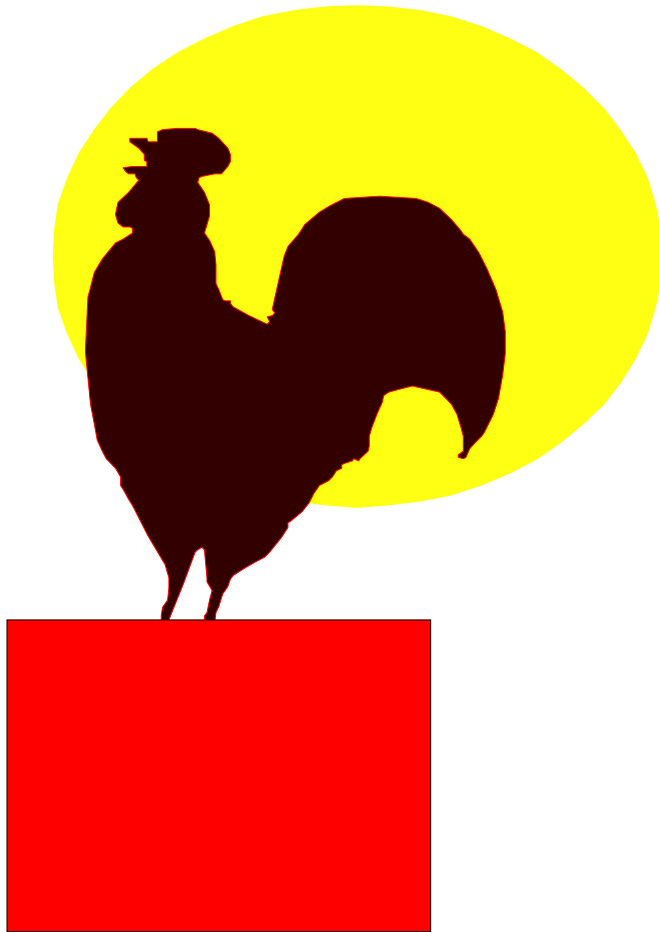
For trees to give us pleasant shade,
For skies of brightest blue.

Let's thank Him for the pretty flowers,
For animals and bees;

For fishes in the sparkling brook,
And birds up in the trees.

God loves the pretty things He's made,
He loves me, too, I know;

He gives me everything I need--
That's why I love Him so.



PETER'S LIE FORGIVEN

One night Jesus was eating supper with His friends in the Upper Room. He told them that all of them would leave Him, and He would be left alone. Peter at once began to boast "I am ready to go with You to prison or even to die for You."

"O Peter," said Jesus sadly, "before the rooster crows twice you will deny me three times and will even say that you do not know Me" (Mark 14:30).

That seemed impossible to Peter. But before long, trouble began. A crowd of wicked men came after Jesus and led Him away. All the friends of Jesus were afraid, and ran off into the darkness for fear the men would take them too. But Peter and John followed Jesus far enough

behind so that they would be safe.

When Jesus was taken into a ruler's house, Peter and John stood outside in the yard. It was a cold night. Soldiers and servants were standing about also, waiting to see what was to happen to Jesus. They built a fire to warm themselves. Peter sat down by the fire with them to try to keep warm. One of the young women noticed him. She came closer. She looked into his face. "This man was with Jesus," she said.

Peter was frightened. "I do not know Him," he said.

After a little while another servant noticed him. "You were one of those men with Jesus," he said.

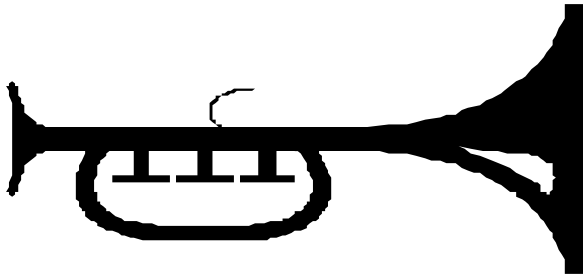
"I am not one of them," said Peter in a loud voice.

An hour later when Peter was standing about the fire talking with some of the soldiers, another servant pointed to him. "Truly this man was one of those with Jesus," he declared, "for he talks just like the others. I can tell."

Peter was afraid that they knew. He said crossly "I do not know what you are talking about." And just then he heard, "Cock-a-doodle-doo! Cock-a-doodle-doo!" The first rooster was crowing in the darkness to say that daylight would soon be coming. Jesus was being led from one house to another across the hallway. He looked down at Peter.

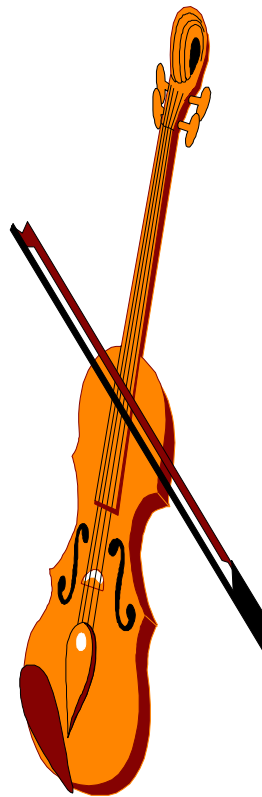
Suddenly Peter remembered! He remembered that Jesus had said, "O Peter, before the rooster crows for the new day you will three times say that you do not even know Me." And he had done it! He had three times said that he did not know Jesus, his best Friend! Peter felt as if he could never be happy again. He went outside in the cold where no one would see him. There he cried and cried. He wept bitterly. He thought he never could be happy again because of those three terrible lies he had told.

But we are glad the story does not end there. After cruel men put Jesus on the cross, He died and was buried for three days. But He came back to life again. And one of the very first persons He came to talk with was Peter! Jesus knew how sorry Peter felt, and Jesus forgave him. Ever after that, Peter was the best friend he could be to Jesus. He was always glad for a chance to say that he was Jesus' friend, no matter what people did to him. He was never afraid again.



*People of Bible times loved music.
They had many different musical instruments.
Fill in the blanks with twelve musical instruments
mentioned in the Bible. There is only one way in
which they will fit correctly.*

- Harp*
- Pipe*
- Viol*
- Flute*
- Organ*
- Cornet*
- Tabret*
- Cymbals*
- Trumpet*
- Dulcimer*
- Psaltery*
- Timbrels*



Clouds

By David DeLong

*Like rolls of smoke from the flaming sun,
Floating high upon an azure sea;
The clouds above are thence begun,
And they reflect God's purity.*

*Billowed bales of cotton candy,
Soft, as if to soothe, caress;
Or, as white as beaches, sandy,
Show to us God's loveliness.*

*Shapes of animals and things,
We watch as contours quickly change;
These windward hosts in wanderings,
Depict God's far-flung ether-range.*

*Darkened storm clouds, full of fury,
Bring about great strain and stress;
Being nature's judge and jury,
They display God's awesomeness.*

