

Study Your Bible

Please sit down with your family each day to read God's Holy Word. Following are some brief scriptures to help you get started.

DUTIES OF HUSBANDS:

Genesis 2:23-24
Ephesians 5:25, 28, 31, 33
I Peter 3:7
I Timothy 5:8
Colossians 3:19

DUTIES OF WIVES:

Genesis 3:16
Proverbs 31:10-31
Ephesians 5:22-33
Colossians 3:18
I Peter 3:1-6

DUTIES OF PARENTS TO CHILDREN:

TO TEACH - Deuteronomy 6:7, 20
TO TRAIN - Proverbs 22:6, Isaiah 38:19
TO PROVIDE FOR - II Corinthians 12:14
TO NURTURE - Ephesians 6:4, Colossians 3:21
TO CONTROL - I Timothy 3:4,12
TO LOVE - Titus 2:4
TO CHASTEN or CORRECT - Proverbs 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Hebrews 12:5-11

EXAMPLES OF PARENTS WHO FAILED TO FULFILL THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES:

I Samuel 2:22-25; I Samuel 3:11-18; I Samuel 8:1-5; I Kings 1:5-6
II Chronicles 22:3; Jeremiah 9:14; Ezekiel 20:18; Amos 2:4; Matthew 14:8

EXAMPLES OF MOTHER'S LOVE:

Genesis 21:16
I Samuel 2:19
II Samuel 21:9-10
I Kings 3:26
II Kings 4:20
Isaiah 49:15
Matthew 15:22
John 19:25

EXAMPLES OF FATHER'S LOVE:

Genesis 31:28
Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 46:30
II Samuel 12:16
Mark 5:23
Mark 9:24
Luke 15:20

God Can Fill Us!

by Elder Don McWilliams
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“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.” (Isaiah 55:1)

In Matthew 5:6, we find Jesus teaching in the sermon on the mount, “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.” In our daily walk of life, God has promised to fill all our needs. He makes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. He tells us, “Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet **your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?**” (Matthew 6:25-26)

Again, in Isaiah 55:2, it states, “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.”

Too often in life, people try to use Scripture as an excuse for not laboring in God’s kingdom, perhaps using these verses which say that no labor is needed, everything is free. Some have the attitude that if it is free, it’s for me. In relation to our eternal salvation, there is nothing any freer, although it cost God the most precious thing He had, the life of His dear Son. There is, however, a great amount of labor and service which we can do here in this life in the name of Christ. We can always be busy laboring in God’s kingdom, helping others, tending to the needs of the less fortunate, being a good example

to a young child, helping the elderly. All these things may take our time and effort, yet they are the things that fill the soul to overflowing when done in the name of Christ. Christ, our great example, lived a life of giving! Even in death, He gave; and that gift is our hope of glory through sacrifice.

What greater, everflowing, refreshing fountain could we ask for than our Savior? His children can come to Him and receive spiritual food and drink that do not cost money, for the gift of God is eternal life which God has given us. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” (Titus 3:5)

Do the things of the world fail to fill you with joy, happiness, and peace? There is no greater food than Christ to fill all your needs!

Deal with doubtful things by figuring out what is right with them, not by trying to figure out exactly what is wrong!

If there be virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Phillipians 4:8

Changes I Have Seen

Doctrine: Gospel Means

by Elder McKinley Wright
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By the time anyone reads this, I shall have celebrated my eightyseventh birthday. Maybe it is normal for people of my age to remember the "Good Old Days." Maybe it is normal for us to think of them in terms of being the "good old days" even when we did not think of them as being so good at the time. Anyway, as the saying goes a lot of water has flowed under the bridge in that time, so there is a lot to remember.

I was ordained to preach the gospel in November of 1949; and have been active in pastoring churches during most of the time since then. I served churches mostly in the Echeconnee Union in middle Georgia and the Ochlochnee Association which has churches in Georgia and Florida. I was recently asked about some of the changes that have taken place among the Primitive Baptists in recent years. This question set me to thinking. Maybe my looking at these things and publishing my experience would be interesting and instructive to others. That is my motive for this writing.

During my fifty-eight years of ministry, there have been many changes. In my opinion some of them have been good while others have been not so good. These changes have involved our understanding of the fundamental doctrines taught in the Bible and the practices being carried out in the churches and in the lives of church members.

To me, the most notable change that has taken place among us is our understanding of the fundamental doctrines of the church. I am thinking particularly about the question of whether or not God uses the gospel as a means to bring about the New Birth when one of

His children is born again.

I think that if our people were agreed on the subjects of the Sovereignty of God and the Depravity of Man, there would be no disagreement on the subject of "gospel means." When I began preaching, our ministers were without exception agreed that God does not use the gospel in any way to bring about the New Birth in His children. After I began preaching, I learned that there had been an old preacher who believed that God uses the gospel to bring about the New Birth. When he began preaching he taught that doctrine and was met with such fierce unanimity against his position that he agreed to not teach it publicly anymore. He made this promise to avoid being ostracized by the other preachers and the churches. As he said it, he kept his promise. He had already died before I began preaching.

About the time this brother died, another brother (Elder W. B. Screws) was ordained. Soon he began publishing a church paper. Before long he wrote in his paper that God uses the gospel to bring about the New Birth. Elder William H. Crouse published THE BANNER HERALD. When Elder Screws taught the doctrine of "Gospel Means," Elder Crouse challenged him immediately in his paper. Elder Screws responded to the challenge and Elder Crouse responded to Elder Screws' answer. They must have debated the point for two or three years; because when the debate ended Elder Crouse gathered their articles and published them in a book. In his last article in the discussion Elder Screws acknowledged that the position being advocated by Elder Crouse is the teaching

of the Bible. This had happened within about fifteen or twenty years of the beginning of my ministry.

When I began preaching, none of our preachers taught the "gospel means" idea. And most of our laymen understood that God does not use the gospel as a means to bring about the New Birth in His children. At the time, if a preacher in his sermon mentioned the gospel, he would usually stop and say that the gospel does not play any part in whether or not a person is born again. But over the years; we began to stop making this point. Our rationale was that our people already knew it, so we did not need to emphasize it any more. But the incessant drumming of other denominations on the idea that God uses the gospel to bring a person to the point of being born again has caused our people to waver in their assurance concerning the idea. People are beginning to say things that are consistent with that teaching. This is why this article is needed.

Most Baptists of all kinds claim to believe in the doctrine of TOTAL DEPRAVITY. But when most of them discuss individuals, they have a tendency to consider unregenerate people less than totally depraved. The totally depraved person is described in Ephesians 2:1 as "dead in trespasses and sins." There is nothing that is anymore helpless or hopeless than something that is dead. One day, a group of people was gathered at a tomb where a man named Lazarus had been buried for three days. No doubt his sisters, Mary and Martha, were weeping, but Lazarus could not hear them. He was dead. No doubt others were talking. Still others might have been praying.

But he could not hear them either. The only person in that gathering that Lazarus could hear was JESUS. When Jesus called him to "come forth," Lazarus came forth! He had been made alive. Lazarus did not hear Jesus through his mind or intellect. He heard Him through his spirit. That is how it is when one is born again (quicken in Ephesians 2:1). The Holy Spirit speaks to his/her spirit and changes that spirit from one who is dead in trespasses and sins into one who is alive in Christ. Personally, I am glad that it is this way. If I felt that my being born again depended in the least upon my response to a call from God, I would be miserable, wondering if my response had been sufficient. But I can look back in my experience and can see that there was a time when the sovereign God spoke life into my spirit, and find therein a promise that one day I shall be with Him in glory.

Let us look at some of the reasons that Primitive Baptists hold to the idea that God does not use the gospel in bringing about the New Birth. Let me say first that there is a purpose for the gospel in the lives of God's children. It might be that the emphasis that we once put on the point that the gospel plays no part in the New Birth (without describing its real purpose) has left the idea in people's minds that it isn't worth very much. If God's children do not hear the gospel, they will never have more than a "smattering" of the blessings that can be theirs because they are God's people. They can fail to hear the gospel because of the failure of those who know the truth to declare it. They can miss out on the blessings by failing (refusing) to obey the gospel when they hear it. God told Abraham to take Isaac to a mountain top and offer him as a burnt offering. If Abraham had told God when he started up the mountain, "Lord, I know that when I slay Isaac you will raise him from the dead and we'll come back down the mountain, so I'll just not go to the trouble of climbing it," he would never have seen the ram caught in the thicket by

his horns. How many times have we missed blessings that God has for us by not doing what He told us to do? We only understand the meaning of our everyday experiences by the ministration of the gospel in our lives. But that is not what this article is about. I repeat that it is about whether or not God uses the gospel to bring about the regeneration (New Birth) of His children, and the declaration that He doesn't! First I shall use logic to suggest that He doesn't use the gospel (or any other "means") for this purpose.

God is Spirit. As such, He is not limited in any way. He can be in all places at the same time. For Him to depend on "means" to achieve the goal that He desires to achieve would not be consistent with who He is. He predestinated that His children be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29). His predestination makes certain the achievement of that goal. He used "means." Most people who believe in a "means" doctrine understand that the "means" is usually the gospel being taught in some way. For God to predestinate that someone would preach the gospel to some individual whom He was reaching in the New Birth without designating in His own mind who that someone is, does not make sense. Surely if He predestinated that someone would be in a certain place to declare the gospel to a certain individual, it makes sense that He predestinated who that someone would be. When we begin thinking in terms of God predestinating some of the acts of individual persons, how can we draw a line between which acts of the individual He predestinated, and which ones He did not predestinate? The scriptures do not draw such a line. Neither should we! God did not predestinate the actions of individuals. If He had, He could not then hold them accountable for their actions. For God to judge someone for some action that He caused them to do, would violate His justice. God cannot violate His justice. When Jesus and His disciples gathered around Lazarus' tomb, Jesus

did not tell the disciples to say anything for Lazarus to hear so he could receive a second giving of life. If he had done so, Lazarus would not have heard a word they said. The only person in that gathering whom Lazarus could hear was Jesus. And the only one whom a person who has not been born again can hear is the Holy Ghost. Someone who has not been born again is just as dead (Ephesians 2:1) as Lazarus was! The unregenerate person cannot hear a gospel teacher because he does not have spiritual ears yet.

If God uses the gospel to bring the New Birth in His children, there will be no babies in heaven who die in infancy. Babies are incapable of understanding that there is such a thing as sin. They cannot understand anything else that the gospel teaches. If they must be operated on by the gospel before being born again, they cannot be born again. They are excluded from Heaven simply because they died before being able to hear, believe and obey the gospel. Arminians try to get around this problem by assuming an "age of accountability" below which a baby who dies automatically goes to heaven. But there is no such concept taught anywhere in the Bible. The only way a baby can be born again is by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost upon its spirit.

Jesus described the New Birth in John 3:8. He said, "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." The "punch line" of the passage is "in the same way" in everyday English. We shall come back to this passage later. Jesus describes the wind as blowing where it listeth. This language is equivalent to our language "where it pleases." Jesus is expressing the helplessness of humans as far as the blowing of the wind is concerned. He was not suggesting that the wind operates independently of God. He was not suggesting that the

wind operates independently of God. He was emphasizing that it operates independently of human beings. Individuals can tell where the wind came from an instant ago. They can guess where it will probably come from during the next instant by looking at where it came from before, but that is only an educated guess. Mankind cannot control the wind and make it come from some other direction. Only God can do that! The wind always does what God tells it to do. In the scripture that

we are citing, God controls the wind and causes it to blow wherever He desires. Even so the Holy Spirit follows only the will of God in going in individuals for the purposing of bringing about the New Birth in them. To accomplish this, the Holy Ghost speaks directly to the spirit of the individual who is being born again. He (the Holy Ghost) can reach infants. He can reach them before they are born (John the Baptist is an example). He can reach individuals who live in places where the gos-

pel has never been declared. Who He reaches is limited only by who He wants to reach. And His call is irresistible (cannot be resisted).

This article began with the idea of discussing recent changes among our people. The discussion of this change became so involved that instead of one article covering several changes, there will be several articles on the same general subject.

Grow in Knowledge

1. "For the Lord is a _____ God, and a great King above all gods."
2. "Thy way, O God is in the sanctuary: who is so great a _____ as our God?"
3. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be _____; and his greatness is unsearchable."
4. "Great is our Lord, and of great _____: His understanding is infinite."
5. "For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is _____ all gods."
6. "The great God that _____ all things both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors."
7. "For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a _____, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:"
8. "... come and gather yourselves _____ unto the supper of the great God;"
9. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the _____ of our God, in the mountain of his holiness."
10. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the _____ appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Hear and Obey God!

There once was a man who had nothing for his family to eat. He had an old shotgun and three bullets. So, he decided that he would go out and kill something for dinner.

As he went down the road, he saw a rabbit and he shot at the rabbit and missed it. Then he saw a squirrel and fired a shot at the squirrel and missed it. As he went further, he saw a wild turkey in the tree and he had only one bullet, but a voice came to him and said, "Pray first, aim high and stay focused."

However, at the same time, he saw a deer which was a better kill. He brought the gun down and aimed at the deer. But, then he saw a rattle snake between his legs about to bite him, so he naturally brought the gun down further to shoot the rattle snake.

Still, the voice said again to him, "I said 'pray, aim high and stay focused.'" So, the man decided to listen to the voice. He prayed, then aimed the gun high up in the tree and shot the wild turkey. The bullet bounced off the turkey and killed the deer. The handle

fell off the gun and hit the snake in the head and killed it.

And, when the gun had gone off, it knocked him into a pond. When he stood to look around, he had fish in all his pockets, a dead deer and a turkey to eat. The snake (Satan) was dead simply because the man listened to God.

Author Unknown

Purposes of the Gospel That Your Joy May Be Full!

by Elder William M. Mullis
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(4th in a series)

“And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” I John 1:4.

We have a wonderful Heavenly Father who is pleased for us to be full of joy. We sometimes sing, “There’ll be joy in heaven when we all get home.” Surely, all of the people of God will be full of joy in the eternal heaven. But God is gracious to allow us to be full of joy now in this world. In fact, the kingdom of heaven (which God’s obedient children can enjoy while they live here in this world) is defined as “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” Romans 14:17.

One of the reasons God has given us His Holy word, is for us to know what He requires of us in order to be full of joy. Though we do nothing to experience joy in the eternal heaven, we do have to obey God to have fullness of joy in the kingdom of heaven. In John 15:11, Jesus says, “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” Please study John 15:1-15. Look carefully at the illustration Jesus gives about the vine and the branches. There are branches in Christ (children of God) who do not bring forth fruit (see verse 2.). They are always in Christ fundamentally, because they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Nothing can separate them from the love of God fundamentally, but they can be separated from feeling His love and fellowship. They can be cut off from the vine...lose His support, strength and nourishment. Our “relationship” to God can never be broken (He will always be our Father), but our fellowship (or friendship) with Him is very fragile and depends on us looking to Him for

the grace we need to keep His commandments! Jesus says, “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I have commanded you” John 15:14. Though we are the redeemed children of God, part of the family of God because of what He has done for us, we are His friends when we do what we are supposed to do. We cannot bring forth much fruit without abiding in Christ, dwelling with Him, walking with Him, keeping His commandments, walking in the light as He is in the light.

We can be separated from being “in Christ” (having fellowship with Him, being full of joy, being in the kingdom of heaven) while we live here in this world. Though we will not go to eternal hell, we can experience a hell on earth, be cut off from His intimate fellowship. David was experiencing this when he cried out, “Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation” Psalm 51. Because David had disobeyed God, he had lost the JOY of God’s salvation. He did not lose His salvation, but he did lose the JOY of his salvation. God has given us His Holy word to teach us how to live so we can be full of joy! “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” John 15:11. “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” I John 1:4.

Look carefully at the parable of the talents. The word of God here is NOT talking about going to the eternal heaven when we die, but entering the kingdom of heaven while we live here: “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods” Matthew 25:14. This parable is concentrating on what God’s people must DO in order to have great

joy. All three of these “servants” represent children of God. They were each given “talents”. They were judged according to their works! God judges His people according to their works while they live here in this world. We do not enter the eternal heaven based on our works. Our eternal salvation is not of our works, not by our works, and not according to our works (see II Timothy 1:9; Romans 9:11; Titus 3:5; and Ephesians 2:9). But our works do determine whether or not we enter the kingdom of heaven, have fullness of joy here in this life!

Those two servants who pleased their master received great reward in the kingdom of heaven. Their master (representing Jesus Christ) said, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord” Matthew 25:21,23. Why were these two servants allowed to enter the joy of their lord? Because they were zealous in laboring for their lord!

We likewise have great joy, fullness of joy, when we obey the word of God. Do you want to please your Lord and Master? Then do what his word says and you will be full of JOY! One of the reasons God has given us His word, one of the purposes of the preaching of the gospel, is “that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16,17). He tells us what to do. When we are doers of His word, and not hearers only, He will bless us to be full of joy! When we obey His word, we are in His presence! “In thy presence is fullness of joy.” (Ps. 16:11).

In another parable about the kingdom of heaven, Jesus said, “Again,

the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" Matthew 13:44. Because of the joy found in the kingdom of heaven, the people of God are often willing to make great sacrifices to enter into this "heaven on earth" for God's obedient children. There is

no joy in the world that compares to the joy found in the kingdom of heaven! Praise God for giving us His word, teaching us how to live to have this fullness of joy!

Please study the following Scriptures to see that one of the reasons God has given us His word, one of the purposes of the gospel, is that our joy might be full!

**GOD HAS GIVEN US HIS WORD
FOR US TO BE FULL OF JOY:**

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Matthew 13:44 | John 16:22-24 |
| Matthew 25:21,23 | John 17:13 |
| Luke 8:13 | Acts 2:28 |
| Luke 10:17 | Acts 8:6-8,12 |
| Luke 15:7,10 | Acts 13:52 |
| John 3:29 | Acts 20:22-27 |
| John 15:11 | I Peter 4:12-14 |

PRAY FOR RAIN

by Bro. Robert Varn
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God's word says in Amos 4:7, "And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months t the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered." God's word tells us here that God withheld the rain! Though there are many people who do not believe our God would do such a thing as that, His word clearly tells us He causes it to rain upon one place, and causes it not to rain upon another place.

Recently in Georgia, there has been a drought. I am thankful Georgia's governor Sonny Perdue was humble enough to ask God's people to join together at the capitol to fervently pray for rain. I am thankful he knows who sends the rain and who withholds the rain! Many of God's people joined with the governor on the steps of the capitol to pray for rain. The very next day, God caused it to rain in the very area which had been most affected by the drought! Thank you, God!!!

While the people of God were gathered that day for prayer, there were those who opposed such a thing as this, and they gathered at the capitol yelling, "Separation of Church and state!" They claimed "Separation of Church and state" was in the constitution. They did not know such a statement is not in the constitution. When Thomas Jefferson spoke of separation of church and sate, he was speaking out against a state church. Today, many ungodly people have perverted this to mean separation of God from country. This has led to the removal of prayer and Bible reading from schools, and now a concerted effort to remove any mention of God from any public building. What is the result of a nation that turns her back on God? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psalm 9:17). The droughts we are having are not a result of something called "global warming" but rather are a result of God withholding the rain because of our turning our backs on Him.

California as well as Georgia needs

rain. I hope the people of God across our nation will all realize the serious condition we are in because we have ceased to be a Christian nation, ceased to be a godly nation, and have become an anti-Christian and anti-God nation. We have gone so far as to legalize the murder of unborn children through abortion, and legalize the sin of homosexuality. May God help us all to repent of keeping silence. May we begin to stand up for the righteous principles upon which our nation was founded! May we return to the old paths set forth in the word of God. Please prayerfully read Jeremiah 6:8-30 and Proverbs 1:24-33.

I want to thank God for His mercy and grace, and well as Him being long-suffering with our nation. But I know His judgments will not be withheld forever. I am going to continue trying to improve my life and try to be more honoring to God. Let us all return unto the Lord and His ways that He may send showers of blessings on our land and lives.

**All trials and afflictions have passed the judgment bar of God
before they are allowed to enter our lives.**

*"The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away;
blessed be the name of the LORD." Job 1:21*

Peace

by Elder W. H. Durrence
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Peace is a word with many definitions. Therefore; it may convey to your mind a different idea from that which is conveyed to mine. While we may have different thoughts about peace, most of us are in agreement with regard to the need for more peace in this troubled world in which we live. In this study, let us approach peace from a Biblical perspective. First, we shall consider peace as it exists between God and man. Second, we shall look at the peace which exists between individuals. Third, let us consider that very important aspect of peace: peace within.

In John Bunyan's **Pilgrims Progress**, the Pilgrim was laid in a large upper chamber which faced the rising sun, and the name of that chamber was Peace. Most people feel both a desire and an urgent need to live and die in peace. Hopefully, in this study we shall seek to attain more of it. As previously outlined, we shall first consider the idea of peace with God. If we do not possess this peace, all other forms of peace will probably prove to be meaningless. The reason we need peace with God is simply that we were all born into this world with a depraved nature and as such we are all sinners (Rom. 5:12). Because of our depraved nature and sinful condition, we were the enemies of God. Paul said, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life" (Rom. 5:10). When enemies of God, we were dead in our sin (Eph. 2:1) and could not make peace with God; therefore, Jesus interceded in our behalf. For this reason, salvation must be by God's grace and not by human endeavors. By God's work of grace, we were saved and thereby brought to a peaceful relation with Him.

This peace with God came to us

through the person of the Son of God. Jesus Christ died for our sins and, removing them, established peace between God and the sinner. The angels said, "...Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). When Jesus left heaven and came to this earth in the form of an infant, God's peace was then on earth. As He grew to manhood and died for our sins (Mt. 1:21), He made peace. Paul said, "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace..." (Eph. 2:14,15). It was this peace of which Isaiah said, "Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us" (Is. 26:12). This is the peace which Paul described, saying, "... We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Rom. 5:1). We experienced this peace as the fruit of the new birth (Gal. 5:22). Our peace with God through Christ is the great message of the gospel (Acts 10:36). Let us be thankful daily for the peace He has made with us and made known to us through the gospel.

Having peace with God, we should more diligently endeavor to establish peaceful relationships with our fellowmen. Achieving this will necessitate doing more than merely speaking the words "Peace, Peace" (Jer. 6:14). While we may have little or no control on effecting a peaceful relation with other nations, we have ample control over the peace which exists between us and those about us. Conflicts between individuals like those between nations will continue as long as we speak of peace but harbor mischief and malice in our hearts (Ps. 28:3).

Since peace does not just happen, it should be sought by every born again person. David said, "Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it" (Ps. 34:14). Peter used almost the exact wording in the New Testament, saying, "...Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it" (1 Peter 3:11). It is evident then that we must seek peace as a hidden treasure and that we must pursue it as the desired game in the hunt. When people argue and strive over insignificant matters, it is obvious that they are not willing to try very hard to find peace. Even among some church members, an unimportant project may generate strife and confusion; it ought not to be so. Paul said, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace: and the God of love and peace shall be with you:" (2 Cor. 13:11). If anyone in all the world should be able to work together and live in peace, church people should. Although denominational lines are drawn because of various beliefs, we should still be able to have peace within the family of God. Total agreement is not necessary for peace to exist. If we love one another, then we shall be able to disagree without conflict and still enjoy peace.

It is our Christian duty not only to live at peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ, but also to live at peace with all men whenever it is possible. The Bible says, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom.12:18). God Himself acknowledged that some people will not cooperate and they thereby destroy all hopes for peace. But if peace is to exist in this world, there are some things which must be done. First, we must make a personal commitment to pursue the path of peace. We must be willing to follow peace with all men

(Heb 12:14). Paul said, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14: 19). We must carefully guard our words and deeds that they not be contentious. Second, we must be willing to become instrumental in establishing peace between others who are now in conflict. We must be so firmly committed to the pursuit of peace that we become counsellors of peace (Prov. 12:20). Did not our Lord Jesus bring peace between us and God the Father? Jesus also commands us to do the same, for He said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Mt. 5:9). We are also to make peace with those with whom we have differences. We must not take the position, "They caused it; they must mend it." Jesus said, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Mt. 18:15). We must take the initiative in establishing peace if we are to become peace makers. Even when there is an impasse of minds, a peaceful spirit can prevail.

Third, we are to pray for peace. David said, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (Ps. 122:6). When we have done all that is humanly possible to establish peaceful relations, then we should pray that God will intervene and bring peace again. We should walk daily in the pathway of peace with the prayer of peace ever upon our hearts (1 Thes. 5:17).

Once we have peace with God and men, we can look forward to the enjoyment of wonderful peace within. It is an internal peace which seems to emerge from a dual source: the doctrine of grace and deeds of godliness. Without either, this inward peace cannot be fully experienced. On one hand, we have peace through the doctrines of God's sovereign saving grace. If we cannot be sure of salvation, the doubts and fears will daily rob us of this peace. The introductory remarks of the Epistles of Paul repeatedly make the connection between grace and peace. He wrote, "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:7).

On the other hand, even though we may embrace the doctrines of grace, if we fail to live as we should, a troubled conscience will rob us of part of this peace. Notice Proverbs 3:1,2, "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." How could we possibly expect to receive this blessing of peace (Ps. 29: 11) if we live our lives in disobedience to God and His Laws? Yet those who are humble before God and submissive to His will shall have it in abundance. David said, "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace" (Ps. 37:11). Those who love God's Laws and live by them are sure to gain this indwelling peace. Psalm 119: 165 says, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." In the New Testament this peace within is said to be enjoyed by those who are spiritually-minded (Rom. 8:6) and is further described as a peace which surpasses understanding (Phil. 4: 7). By believing God's truth and living as God prescribed, we can enjoy this internal peace. (Ps. 4:8).

Teach the Word

By Sis. Logan Lanier (9 years old)
Waycross, Georgia

How would you react if you went to church and the preacher didn't preach out of God's word? Would you just sit there and act like you're interested?

Exodus 24:12 says: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there, and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law that I have written; that thou mayest teach

them."

God told Moses to teach the law or commandments that were written by God on two tables of stone. It doesn't exactly say two tables in Exodus 24:12, but in Exodus 32: 15, it tells you.

Now how can we teach the word when we don't know it? You might teach the wrong thing. That's why we

should study his word. Teach your kids too, if you have any. For kids, start with scriptures like Gen 1:1, John 3:16, Phil. 4:13, and Rev 3:8. These are just some of the verses you could teach your kids.

It might be hard to teach your kids on week days, but at night maybe before their bedtime. Weekends are sometimes easier.

*Let's not be guilty of practicing loveless truth or truthless love.
"...speaking the truth in love." Ephesians 4:15*

Things to Remember

by Elder William M. Mullis
Waycross, Georgia

"Remember...It Is More Blessed To Give Than to Receive!"

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS, HOW HE SAID, **IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!**" (Acts 20:35).

The Apostle Paul was here speaking to the elders at Ephesus. It was his final message to them, for he says in verse 25, "I know that ye all shall see my face no more."

The final words of a person always seem to have a special meaning and touch of affection. It would be beneficial to do a study of the last words recorded by men to certain people, and I encourage you to later read Acts 20: 17-38. This contains his speech to those elders.

And the **very last** words of this **last message** from Paul to those servants of God is found in verse 35, that we will, the Lord willing, now consider prayerfully.

"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to **REMEMBER** the words of the Lord Jesus, **HOW HE SAID, IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!**"

The portion of this verse that I ask you to commit to memory is the latter portion of the verse: **REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS, HOW HE SAID, IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!**"

Oh, how we cherish, or should cherish, the Holy Scriptures! I Samuel 3:1 says, "**The Word of the Lord** was **PRECIOUS IN THOSE DAYS!**" And it hath been precious to some of God's people (in every generation! To some, God's word is valued, read fervently, studied, and highly esteemed!) As the

Psalmist said, "THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH... I LOVE THY COMMANDMENTS ABOVE GOLD: YEA ABOVE FINE GOLD! THY WORD HAVE I HID IN MY HEART, THAT I MIGHT NOT SIN AGAINST THEE! I WILL NOT FORGET THY WORD" (Please see Psalm 119: 11, 16, 105, 127).

And now in the text, the closing words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "**It is more blessed to give than to receive!**"

Because Jesus said it, we know it is truth! And when we **give** in the right spirit, we know indeed BY EXPERIENCE that **IT IS** more blessed to give than to receive.

Specifically here, Paul is speaking about helping the weak, helping those who were **TRULY** in **NEED** of assistance. In other places, the Apostle Paul makes it clear **those who refuse to work should not eat** (II Thessalonians 3:10)! And in another place, as Paul wrote to Timothy (I Timothy 5:8), he states, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel!" There are people who are to be helped, and there are those that **GOD'S WORD COMMANDS SHOULD NOT BE HELPED! Indiscriminate giving is not taught in the Bible!** The depth of this subject of giving cannot be covered in this writing, but please study God's word carefully and pray for spiritual wisdom **to know** WHERE, and WHEN, and HOW TO GIVE.

Listen again to the text: "**REMEMBER THE WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS, HOW HE SAID, IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!**" Before we go into the study of giving, let me

just briefly say that if **you have ever been in great need of receiving**, you **KNOW** THAT IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO **RECEIVE!** When you are really down and out, you know help is desperately needed, but there is such a feeling of unworthiness to receive help. Many people have refused help over and over because of this feeling of unworthiness. But then finally the head is bowed and the **receiver** humbly accepts the gift.

Now let us go on to the positive portion of the text: "**IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE.**" The word "blessed" in the Scriptures has various meanings and application. Here, the word means, "supremely blest, fortunate, and happy." As we GIVE in the right spirit, we know by experience that **IT IS more wonderful**, and **there IS more joy** found in **GIVING** than in receiving!

First, let us see, know, understand, and REMEMBER that it is a blessing to HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE! If we are speaking about giving in a material way, such as food, clothing, money, or furniture, should we not be thankful that God has blessed us with the item such that **we are able** to GIVE! Whether we consider giving in the form of a tithe, or giving to individuals as opportunity arises, **GOD has given us the object in the beginning.**

David expresses this thought beautifully as we read in I Chronicles 29:9-14:

v.9. "Then the people **rejoiced**, for that they offered **willingly**, because that with perfect heart they **offered willingly** to the Lord: and DAVID the king also rejoiced with great joy!

v. 10. "Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation:

and David said, **Blessed be thou**, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and ever.

v. 11. "**Thine**, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and: the victory, and the majesty: **for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is THINE**; THINE IS THE KINGDOM, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head, above all.

v. 12. "**Both riches and honor come of THEE**, and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and **to give** strength unto all.

v. 13. "Now, therefore, our GOD WE THANK THEE and PRAISE THY GLORIOUS NAME!

v. 14. "**BUT WHO AM I, AND WHAT IS MY PEOPLE, THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO OFFER SO WILLINGLY AFTER THIS SORT? FOR ALL THINGS COME OF THEE, AND OF THINE OWN HAVE WE GIVEN THEE!**"

See the great blessing and joy of the people! The people rejoiced and David, their king, rejoiced in GIVING! Then, David seems to halt everything as we hear him say in verse 14, "But who am I and what is my people that WE should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? FOR ALL THINGS COME OF THEE, and OF THINE OWN HAVE WE GIVEN THEE." Do we ever glory in having GIVEN? WHO IS IT THAT MAKETH US TO DIFFER FROM ANOTHER? AND what **do we have** to give, that we did not receive? And if we received it from GOD, why do we glory as if **we** had not received it! (Please see I Corinthians 4:7). **So there is no room for boasting in giving!** Too often, items are "GIVEN" for show, for self-esteem, or self-glory!

The method or manner of giving is of utmost importance if we are to be blessed by GOD!!! In the sermon on the mount Jesus Christ emphasized that we: Can GIVE, and **not honor** God one bit! Listen to HIS words, as recorded in Matthew 6:1-4: v. 1 "TAKE HEED THAT YE DO NOT YOUR ALMS BEFORE MEN, TO BE SEEN OF

THEM: OTHERWISE YE HAVE NO REWARD OF YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN." v. 2 "Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have GLORY OF MEN, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD!" v. 3 "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: v.4. That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself **SHALL** reward thee openly."

Let us examine ourselves to determine the MANNER in which we give! We should be **GIVING** quietly and humbly to the honor and glory of God! And HE has promised that as HE sees in secret, He will reward us openly! And let me hasten to warn that IF the **purpose** of GIVING is to be REWARDED OPENLY, we are yet serving and exalting self! **GIVE!** And let not the left hand know what thy right hand doeth.

And as long as we are only giving: small, insignificant, surplus items, it is much easier to be quiet about GIVING. But it seems that when we are REALLY MOVED to greater and more liberal GIVING, the devil is right there to help us blow our horn!!! And people want to be recognized by MEN for their contribution! As long as we are carnal minded, we will want plaques made to **commemorate** our GIVING! Or we will "Offhandedly" give a personal example of what **WE** have done. Oh, brethren! REMEMBER.. IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE! But it **MUST BE GIVEN SECRETLY** and **SILENTLY** and **HUMBLY** to be acceptable with God!

In addition to stressing the importance of the **MANNER** in which we give, the Bible also tells us that we must give WILLINGLY and LIBERALLY! (See II Corinthians 9:7). We can be coerced to GIVE, but that is not acceptable with God. "FOR IF THERE BE **FIRST A WILLING MIND**, IT IS ACCEPTED according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not!" (II Corinthians 8: 12). It is a **blessed privilege**

that God has given us many ways to serve HIM and shew our gratitude for HIS AMAZING GRACE that has been shed abroad in our unworthy lives! If we think about what God has done for us, **we will want to GIVE**, and we will want to give LIBERALLY and FREELY! Listen to four conditions that Paul tells Timothy will be found "IN THE LAST DAYS." He says, "MEN SHALL BE LOVERS OF THEIR OWN SELVES, COVETOUS, ..UNTHANKFUL, ..LOVERS OF PLEASURES MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD!" (See II Timothy 3:1-5). We know that our own nation is in its last days, and many of our churches are in the last days because THOSE CONDITIONS are manifest abundantly by the people of God in our **NATION AND IN THE CHURCHES!**

What keeps us from GIVING FREELY? **WHAT KEEPS US FROM GIVING WILLINGLY AND LIBERALLY? GREED! COVETOUSNESS! UNTHANKFULNESS! LOVERS OF PLEASURES MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD!**

In Luke 6:38, Jesus Christ says, "**GIVE**, and it shall be given unto you; **GOOD MEASURE, PRESSED DOWN, AND SHAKEN TOGETHER, AND RUNNING OVER** shall men GIVE into your bosom! **FOR WITH THE SAME MEASURE THAT YE METE WITHAL IT SHALL BE MEASURED TO YOU AGAIN.**"

And as Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, he exhorted them to give LIBERALLY, for we read, "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly **shall** reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully **shall** reap also bountifully" (II Corinthians 9:6)!

REMEMBER ...IT IS MORE BLESSED TO **GIVE** THAN TO RECEIVE! The Word of God tells us the RESPONSIBILITY we have to GIVE! It tells us the manner in which we are to give, and that we are to GIVE LIBERALLY AND WILLINGLY! And the Word of God tells us of the JOY OF GIVING! How much do we BELIEVE GOD and HIS HOLY WORD? HOW MUCH DO WE LOVE HIM?

In closing, please consider what YOU have to GIVE! You have money, and a portion of whatever you have been blessed to have materially is **required** by God to be **brought** to His House each week! **MORE than what is required will be given willingly** by those who are thankful for God's blessings!

You have time to GIVE! Each day is a day added to your life by God! GIVE time each day to **PRAY FERVENTLY** (not just mumbling words), **TO STUDY**

HIS WORD (not just read quickly), to **VISIT** (if you are physically able), and **SERVE OTHERS!**

The summary is THIS: GIVE YOURSELF COMPLETELY IN DILIGENT CONSECRATED DAILY SERVICE TO GOD! "I BESEECH you THEREFORE, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye **present your bodies a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1)!

The LIBERALITY of GIVING by the

Churches of Macedonia is declared by God in His Holy Word! And He blessed them **beyond measure!** What did they GIVE? "They GAVE THEIR OWN SELVES!" (Please carefully read II Corinthians 8:1-5).

When we truly GIVE OURSELVES, we will be GIVING the way the Word of God teaches. Then we will KNOW:

IT IS MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN TO RECEIVE!!!

Abraham Lincoln

16th President of the United States

"It is the duty of nations, as well as of men, to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Holy Scriptures, and prove by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Harry S. Truman

33rd President of the United States

"The fundamental basis of this nations' law was given to Moses on the mount. The fundamental basis of our bill of Rights comes from the teaching which we get from Exodus and St. Matthew, from Isaiah and St. Paul...If we don't have the proper fundamental moral background, we will finally wind up with a totalitarian government which does not believe in rights for anybody except the state."

Noah Webster

Founding Educator

"The moral principles and precepts found in scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible."

John Witherspoon

Persident of Princeton and signer of the Declaration of Independence.

"The Ten Commandments... are the sum of the moral law."

Answers to Grow In Knowledge

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Great - Psalm 95:3 | 6. Formed - Proverbs 26:10 |
| 2. God - Psalm 77:13 | 7. Mighty - Deuteronomy 10:17 |
| 3. Praised - Psalm 145:3 | 8. Together - Revelation 19:17 |
| 4. Power - Psalm 147:5 | 9. City - Psalm 48:1 |
| 5. Above - Psalm 135:5 | 10. Glorious - Titus 2:13 |

God Gives Power To Serve!

by Elder W. A. Mullis
(deceased)

The entire Bible teaches that God in all ages of the world has saved His elect people from the bondage of sin and death. In the process of doing that, He also prepares them in every needed way to serve and honor Him in this world. Surely God, the great Triune God, is worthy of all the praise, honor and glory His people can give Him in the world as well as in the eternal glory world which is to come. Too many of our people in the household of faith to which I belong have shown evidences that they believe God saves His elect in this world just to praise and honor Him in the glory world to come. This writer believes this condition exists among our people because of the failure of the preachers to preach the whole counsel of the truth of God.

With the help of God, I would like to show that when God saves His people from the bondage of sin, He does also fully and completely prepare each of them individually to serve and honor Him an hundredfold in this world. Every individual child of God has just as much ability to bring forth fruit an hundredfold in their lives with their respective gifts as every other child of God. There are indeed diversities of Spiritual gifts, as we find recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:4-7: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the SAME SPIRIT. And there are differences of administrations, but the SAME LORD. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh ALL IN ALL. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal" (that is the whole body of Christ). Let me impress upon your hearts right here that God is no respecter of persons. This is truth in any way you look at it. God does just as much in preparing and qualifying His elect to use their talent or Spiritual gift that He has given them as He does for the other. Remember that God is no

"respecter of persons" (see Acts 10:34 and Romans 2:11)

It is for this reason that when God has saved His elect from the bondage of sin and has qualified them to serve and honor Him in this world, He lays the same responsibility upon each of them individually. God has saved each of His elect and qualified them to serve Him! When they have come to a knowledge of the truth and they fail to serve and honor Him in that truth, He lays the same rod of correction upon them for their disobedience. This does not mean that God uses the same method of His rod of correction upon each child of His, but the words of Christ in Luke 12:47-48 explain what I am saying; "And that servant, which knew His Lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, SHALL be beaten with many stripes. But **he that knew not** and did commit things worthy of stripes SHALL be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." God is no respecter of persons in such cases because both of them have been prepared and qualified by God to use His truth in their lives to the glory of His name.

Now, let's consider specific Scriptural authority for the fact that God does prepare and qualify His elect to serve and honor Him in this world. We go first to some of the Old Testament saints. In Hebrews 11:4-8, Paul spoke of four men who lived in this world hundreds of years before the first word of the Bible was written. They all accomplished great things in their respective lives in the service of God. They all accomplished what they did to the glory of God because they took that which God had given them in regeneration and used it in their lives. They were all greatly blessed of God in their faithful service to Him. They all had FAITH, and it was

"BY FAITH" they did what they did in the service of God. Where did they get their "FAITH"? Remember they lived hundreds of years: before the first word of the Bible was written, so **they DID NOT have the faith that cometh by hearing the word of God that is taught in Romans 10:17!**

They had that "FAITH" that is the gift of God and that is the fruit of the Spirit of God as taught in Galatians 5:22. God gave them their faith when they were born of the Spirit of God. They took this faith and used it in their lives in His service. This faith was anchored in God. They showed their faith in God by their WORKS. Not just any kind of works and certainly not those works that are done to please the fancy of men which so many of our people seem to be swallowed up in today. They showed their faith in God by doing those works that God said to do! BY FAITH they believed and they OBEYED the word of God. Study this eleventh chapter of Hebrews and see how vividly it declares those saints did what God said to do. Faith without the works that God has ordained for His people to do is dead; and works done in the name of religion that are not taught in God's world are "dead works". BY FAITH, Enoch walked with God by walking God's way; BY FAITH, Noah moved with fear and prepared an ark to the saving of His house. He prepared the ark exactly as God commanded him. He followed God's directions! BY FAITH, Abraham went, out from His own country, not knowing where he went but knowing that God had told him to go. Some people would say he was crazy. By doing those things God told him to do, his faith was made perfect in measure. It increased and grew stronger! BY FAITH, the children of Israel took the city of Jericho, and the only weapons they had were faith and the trumpets of the priests. They

took the city of Jericho ONLY because they had enough faith in God to do exactly what God said to do, and they did it exactly as God said to do it. All of this is found in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the second chapter of James, and the sixth chapter of Joshua. (Please study these chapters.)

Galatians 5:22 says: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Some of the children of God seem to have more fruit of the Spirit than others, but this is because they have exercised themselves in the service of God, and used what God gave them, thus increasing or growing in measure. We cannot use up what comes from God because God is inexhaustible. This faith (and the other parts of the FRUIT of God's Spirit that He gives each of His elect in regeneration) is a part of God's work in preparing us for His service. Every child of God has the same "FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT" in his heart as every other child of God, but some use **it more and manifest it more** than others do!

Surely God has always prepared and qualified His people to serve and honor Him as they live in this world. When Jesus said in John 3:7: "Ye must be born again", this did not just begin to be truth at that time. It had been truth through all ages of the world, but had never been revealed before.

Now let's look at the children of Israel or the Hebrew nation whom God "chose to be a special people unto Himself above all people that are upon the face of the earth". (Deuteronomy 7:6). God's dealings with Israel as a nation of people is a type of His dealings with His Spiritual people in all ages of the world. Israel was in the bondage of the Egyptians. Remember they were in bondage, and that which is in bondage cannot deliver itself from that bondage. God delivered His people from the bondage of the Egyptians. They were His people before Moses ever went down into Egypt (Exodus 3:7-10). God had a place in the world (Canaan land) for them to serve Him. He delivered

them, and brought them across the Red Sea by His mighty power. He did this so that they could **serve Him!** (See Exodus 4:22-23, 7:16; 8:1, 20). They could not serve God as long as they were in bondage to the Egyptians.

They knew God as the great "I AM". (Exodus 3:14). They knew Him because He had revealed Himself to them. This was not a responsibility of Moses. God had shown them His almighty power in the plagues and in their deliverance. He had shown them that he made a difference between them and the Egyptians, and that He was constantly with them in a pillar of cloud by day, and by night in a pillar of fire. (See Exodus 13:21-22). He had shown them that He had a special love for them as a people. Then in the wilderness, He gave them His law, and it was given to no other people in the world, but to Israel. (see Deuteronomy 4:1-8)

God fully prepared and qualified His people, Israel, to serve Him and then gave them the land of Canaan which they could **POSSESS ONLY by hearing and observing and keeping the commandments of God!** (see Numbers 13:30; 33:53; Deuteronomy 1:21, 4:1-2). In I Chronicles 28:8, Israel was commanded to "keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God; **that ye may possess this good land and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever.**"

In Isaiah 5:1-7, God gave us another beautiful picture of His work in preparing Israel to serve and honor Him. Listen please to these words: "Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the CHOICEST VINE, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth WILD GRAPES. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. **WHAT COULD HAVE**

BEEN DONE MORE to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Surely we cannot blame our failures upon God, because He does a perfect work in preparing His people to serve and honor Him in this world of sin and sorrow! When God prepares and qualifies His people to serve and honor Him, He also lays a **responsibility upon us!** When we fail in our responsibility, **He also lays His judgements upon us for our failure! God does judge His people here in this world!**

Now lets look at some of the Scriptural authority of the new Testament that God fully prepares and qualifies His people to serve Him. Part of the New Testament proof was given in the beginning of this article from Hebrews 11. Remember please that God is infinitely wise. He is an all wise God! As such, He would never command His people to do something they were not capable of doing. He has perfect knowledge of our individual capacity because it is He who hath prepared us! Our excuses, whatever they may be, are to no avail before God! Many times we deceive our own selves with our excuses, and are deceived by that roaring lion that walks to and fro seeking whom he may devour.

In John 1:12-13, we find these words: "But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God". The expression "to as many as received him" are described by God as those which were "born of God". "As many as were born of God" without any exception were given the **power** to become the sons of God. Those who are born of God are His sons or children already; but when we are born of the Spirit of God, He gives us **POWER to become His sons in a manifest sense!** He gives us POWER to show forth to the world that we are the sons of God. How can the sons of God know or recognize

one another in this world except we see the power of Christ and of God in one another's lives? Not only this, but the sons of God have the POWER of God in them to make their calling and election sure to themselves. They can make their calling and election sure to themselves as taught in II Peter 1 :3-11, ONLY by exercising and using the gifts and power that God has given to us in regeneration. There is no other way.

How great is that power that God gives to each of His children individually? It is the power of God Himself for God dwells in us! Time and again Paul impressed upon the saints at Corinth that they were the temple of God: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19-20). In II Timothy 3:5, Paul spoke of a people who had a form of godliness but were denying the power thereof. I am persuaded that many of our own people fit into this category. Brothers and Sisters, if you are God's child, God dwells in you and He has given you **power to show to the world that you belong to Him!**

This POWER of God makes us new creatures. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new." (II Corinthians 5:17). Where we were dead in sin, we now are **DEAD TO SIN** as Paul declares in Romans 6:2: "How shall we that are dead in sin, live any longer therein?" This power of God causes us to become dead to the love of sin, and dead to the power and dominion of sin. It is power for the people of God to exercise in their lives in crucifying and mortifying the deeds of the flesh, in bringing it under subjection to the Spirit of God that dwells within us; power to prevent sin from reigning

in our mortal bodies as Paul also says in Romans 6: 12-13: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: BUT YIELD YOURSELVES unto GOD as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God".

In Ephesians 4:7, Paul said to the saints at Ephesus: "Unto EVERYONE of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Unto everyone of us includes the saints to whom Paul was writing and every other child of God in this world. God gives us grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, or according to the size talent He has given us to use in our lives. To some He gives one talent, to some He gives two talents, to some He gives five talents, BUT to EVERYONE OF US **he gives grace to use what He has given us!** This is SERVING GRACE or the grace we need whereby we may serve Him ACCEPTABLE (Hebrews 11:28). It is GRACE for GRACE as stated in John 1:16: "And of HIS FULLNESS have all we received, and grace for grace". How beautiful this is! The "all we" are all who are born of the Spirit of God. God has done just as much for you as He has done for every other child of His, so we are without excuse. He gives us all serving grace because He has saved us all by His AMAZING SAVING GRACE.

He not only does this for us when we are born of His Spirit, but He also gives us a throne of Grace to which we can go at any time of the day or night. "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalms 121:4). We have a throne of grace to which we can go constantly through our Lord

and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we may "obtain mercy and find grace to HELP in time of need". (Hebrews 4: 16). WE have a throne of grace to which we may go for special supplies when we feel an abundant need of grace "that we may serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire". (Hebrews 12:28-29).

"O Lord give me grace to feel the need of thy grace; give me grace to ask for thy grace; and when in thy grace thou hast given me; give me GRACE to **use THY GRACE**". May this be our fervent prayer, for Christ's sake.

In closing, I would like to add just one more Scripture as a foundation to the glorious fact that God does prepare and qualify His people to serve and honor Him. Romans 8:14 says: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". From this we know that every child of God is LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD, and the ONLY way the Spirit of God will lead us is in the paths of righteousness that are taught in the Scriptures written by holy men who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The same Spirit of God that leads every child of God is the same Spirit that moved holy men to write God's word. That Spirit of God WILL NEVER lead you or me contrary to the teachings of the word of God! We have the responsibility to "try the spirits whether they are of God" as taught in I John 4:1. Remember that the devil is also a spirit, and he will lead you and me just as far away from the truth of God as he can get us, because the truth of God is all we can possess in our lives that will be to the glory of God's grace.

May God bless His word to our hearts and lives is my fervent prayer.

Prayerlessness is an indication of our feeling of self-sufficiency.

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

Ephesians 6:18

BEGINNING A NEW YEAR

We are all on the verge of beginning a new year. Only God knows what tomorrow will hold, much less the whole year. May God be with you all, and us, each day.

A part of each day in 2008 should be spent in God's Holy Word. To help you read the entire Bible during the year we plan to include a daily guide which will give you a passage of scripture from the Old Testament each morning and a passage from the New Testament each evening. We hope this will help you read the Bible completely during 2008.

BEGIN READING YOUR BIBLE EVERY DAY! BY FOLLOWING THE DAILY GUIDE IN THE TRUMPET OF TRUTH, YOU CAN READ THE WHOLE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR.

BIBLE READING CALENDAR FOR JANUARY

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Gen. 1,2	Matt. 1
2	Gen. 3,4,5	Matt. 2
3	Gen. 6,7,8	Matt. 3
4	Gen. 9,10,11	Matt. 4
5	Gen. 12,13,14	Matt. 5:1-26
6	Gen. 15,16,17	Matt. 5:27-48
7	Gen. 18,19	Matt. 6
8	Gen. 20,21,22	Matt. 7
9	Gen. 23,24	Matt. 8
10	Gen. 25,26	Matt. 9:1-17
11	Gen. 27,28	Matt. -:18-38
12	Gen. 29,30	Matt. 10:1-23
13	Gen. 31,32	Matt. 10:24-42
14	Gen. 33,34,35	Matt. 11
15	Gen. 36,37	Matt. 12:1-21

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Gen. 38,39,40	Matt. 12:22-50
17	Gen. 41	Matt. 13:1-32
18	Gen. 42,43	Matt. 13:33-58
19	Gen. 44,45	Matt. 14:1-21
20	Gen. 46,47,48	Matt. 14:22-36
21	Gen. 49,50	Matt. 15:1-20
22	Exod. 1,2,3	Matt. 15:21-39
23	Exod. 4,5,6	Matt. 16
24	Exod. 7,8	Matt. 17
25	Exod. 9,10	Matt. 18:1-20
26	Exod. 11,12	Matt. 18:21-35
27	Exod. 13,14,15	Matt. 19:1-15
28	Exod. 16,17,18	Matt. 19:16-30
29	Exod. 19,20,21	Matt. 20:1-16
30	Exod. 22,23,24	Matt. 20:17-34
31	Exod. 25,26	Matt. 21:1-22

All things work together for good...

Just as an oak tree got strong by weathering
heat, cold, storm, rain, and hail,
the Christian becomes strong with
sorrow, joy, success and failure.

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,
to them who are called according to His purpose.*

Romans 8:28

Sweet Dreams

by Sis. Louise A. Allen
Waycross, Georgia

On December 29th, 2006, I had a dream that **truly** revealed the meaning of Christmas! I woke up singing!

I had been so concerned before Christmas about comments I heard such as, "I'll be glad when it's over", "I'm so tired of shopping, and the crowds!", "It's so expensive." "You have so many to shop for...", "Traffic is so crowded.", "I've got to hurry and put up the tree."

Since I am a resident of a nursing home and have one-half of a room (shared with a lovely lady who means so much to me and is truly a blessing in my life), I asked one complainer, "Would you like to swap places with me? I don't have shopping, cooking, crowds and entertaining or expenses

to worry about." No one offered to trade.

I am grateful for the care and love of a sweet group of people. It is peaceful and all my including my spiritual needs are met. All my girls at the nursing home are sweet and loving, and so is my small family.

My dream: I dreamed I was at my little home and preparing for the dinner for my "crowd", my family and friends! Little kids were running around. The men were cluttering up the yard working on cars, etc. I thought, I am so glad to have my dinner all ready and my house clean!" I realized the men were cluttering up the yard I had cleaned; little ones were running all over. Then little arms circled my knees. I got sweet

kisses, sweet smiles, and I love you. The men cleaned up, came in loving, looking forward to dinner. I truly realized this is Christmas and I was so happy. Then I heard the sweetest, most melodious voice singing, "It was love, pure love. Holiness complete and I woke singing. (Of course, I do not have that sweet voice.) " And I fell down at His feet." "It is love, pure love, Holiness, Holiness, Holiness complete. It was Love, Pure love, Holiness, Holiness, yes Holiness complete." I know what Christmas is. It was shown to me clearly.

I had always enjoyed preparing for my loved ones at that special time. I can't cook, clean, and make ready, but truly my Heart is ready. God bless each of you!

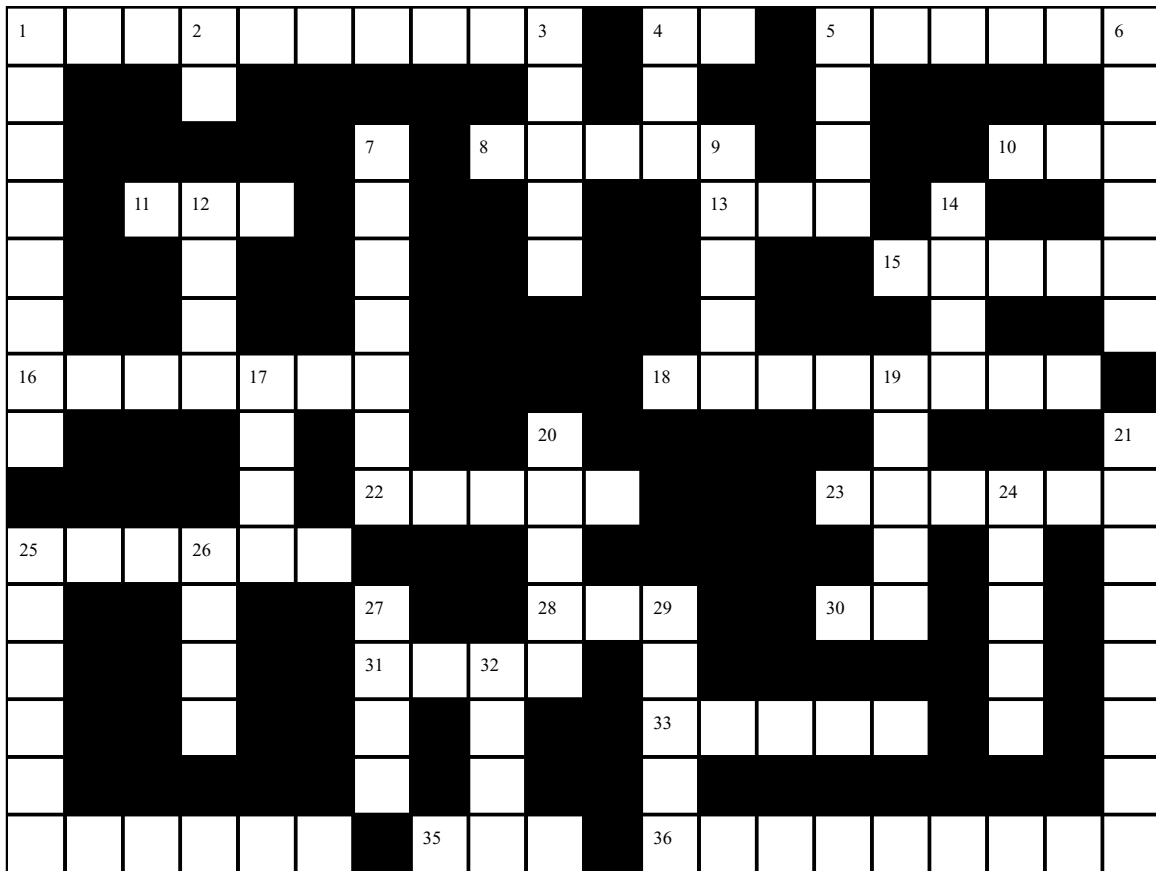
**ANSWERS TO
CROSSWORD
PUZZLE VOLUME
XXV DECEMBER
2007**

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28	D	E	V	I	S	E													29	C	I	R	C	U	M	C	I	S	I	O	N

Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "And the child Samuel _____ unto the Lord before Eli..." 4. "And the word _____ the Lord was precious in those days;..." 5. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the _____ of lights;..." 8. "Then the people rejoiced, or that they offered willingly, because with perfect _____ they offered willingly to the Lord;..." 10. "But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with _____ stripes..." 11. "For men shall be lovers of their _____ selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemous disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy," 13. "...For unto whomsoever much is given, of _____ shall be much required:..." 15. "...for God loveth a cheerful _____." 16. "...thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art _____ as head above all." 18. "Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou _____ overall;..." 22. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a _____ unto my path." 23. "For who maketh thee _____ to from another?..." 25. "...thy Father which seeth in _____ himself shall reward thee openly." 28. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so _____ him give;..." 30. "Give, and it shall _____ given unto you;..." 31. "_____ the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." 33. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I _____ not sin against thee." 34. "... for all that is in the _____ and in the earth is thine;..." 35. "... and to whom men have committed much, of him they will _____ the more." 36. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living _____, ..."



DOWN

1. "... For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be _____ be you again." 2. "...It _____ more blessed to give than to receive." 3. "Therefore when thou _____ thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men..." 4. "Now therefore, _____ God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name." 5. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: _____ such turn away." 6. "... verily I say unto you, they have their _____." 7. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an _____." 9. "_____, O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:..." 12. "I _____ delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word." 14. "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above _____ gold." 17. "Simon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to _____ out of them a people for his name." 19. "Make a joyful _____ unto the Lord, all ye lands." 20. "The Lord is my shepherd; I _____ not want." 21. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new _____:..." 24. "For if there be _____ a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." 25. "...and he which _____ bountifully shall reap also bountifully ." 26. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall _____ also sparingly;..." 27. "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of _____:..." 29. "This know also, that in the last days perilous _____ shall come." 32. "But when thou doest _____, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."