

Thanksgiving

As Christians, usually when we hear the word "THANKSGIVING," we think about verbally giving thanks to God for His bountiful blessings in our lives. Certainly, that is one way of expressing our gratitude to God.

GIVING THANKS TO GOD WITH OUR VOICES:

1. "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9).
2. "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).
3. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing **by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6).

There is another way of giving thanks to God. It is Thanks GIVING! It is good to give thanks to God by the words of our mouths. However, it is much better to thank Him for His blessings by GIVING to others because we are thankful for what He has given to us. Just as the word of God teaches us to not simply love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth (see I John 3:18), our thanks-giving should not only be in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth! This might also be called Thanks LIVING! Thanks GIVING or Thanks LIVING might be broken down into two categories: Giving to God, and giving to men.

GIVING THANKS TO GOD IN OUR ACTIONS TOWARD HIM:

1. "Therefore if thou bring **thy gift** to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there **thy gift** before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer **thy gift**" (Matthew 5:23,24).
2. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you **lay by him in store**, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).
3. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, **so let him give**; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7).
4. "Honour the LORD **with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase**." (Proverbs 3:9).
5. "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they **offered willingly to the LORD**: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy" (I Chronicles 29:9).
6. "And he looked up, and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury. And he saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have **of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had**" (Luke 21:1-4).
7. "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).

(See also Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23.)

GIVING THANKS TO GOD BY GIVING TO OTHERS:

1. "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. **But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased**" (Hebrews 13:15,16).
 2. "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).
 3. "Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to **send relief unto the brethren** which dwelt in Judaea." (Acts 11:29).
 4. "**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**" (Luke 6:38).
 5. "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and **sell that thou hast, and give to the poor**, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21).
- (See also Matthew 6:1-4; 25:34-40; Luke 10:34,35; Acts 4:34,35.)

Thanks With Words

by Sis. Kylee Wheeler (9 years old)
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When we get a gift, what do we do? I think that most of us say, "Thank you." But maybe we need to go beyond that. I think we need to express thank you in writing or other ways.

What do I mean by that? I mean that we need to write a thank you

note. A thank you note is a note that expresses our thanks. A thank you note might make the person who is giving the gift feel better than us just saying, "Thank you."

When we get a gift, we should not only thank the person, but always remember to thank God. He

is the One who told the person to give something to you. Every good and perfect gift really comes from Him.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (I John 3:18).

Attacks On The Body Of Christ

by Elder Lavone Anderson
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The church in the world today is powerful, but its story began with what the world considered as defeat. "Why is this?" one may ask. The answer is, so Christ could bring eternal salvation and show His awesome power to overcome and be victorious.

In Matthew chapter 27, Pilate had brought Jesus before the people. He had just set down on the judgment seat when his wife sent word to him concerning Christ.

We read about her message, his trying to heed her message, and then the response of the people.

These things are recorded in Matthew 27:19-22. They read, "When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified."

This is an old historical account of the world persecuting and trying to destroy Christ. It is a story that had to be played out because it would lead to our salvation, but none the less it is a story which reveals the cruelty of the world against our Lord who was innocent of any wrong doing.

While it has its place in history as fact, yet in a spiritual way the world continues to try to destroy the body of Christ.

How can this possibly be? Well, in order for this to happen, we have to have a body that would represent Christ.

What body could this possibly be in that the Lord's body has already been resurrected and has gone back to heaven to be with His Father from whence He came. There is no grave in any graveyard anywhere in the world with the engraving, "Here Lies Jesus the Christ."

This is true, but this body that I am referring to is not to be found in a grave.

I will begin to explain in the following way. The body I am referring to was first recognized after the Lord's resurrection.

In Acts 11: 25-26 we read, "Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch, And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people, And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."

The reason that they were called Christians then, and the reason that Christians are called Christians today, is because they are Christ-like. The reason they were like Christ, and the reason we are like Christ, is because we are the spiritual body of Christ.

Romans 12: 4-5 reads, "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

We are in Christ and Christ is in us, which gives us spiritual life. Gal. 2: 20 reads, "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."

The world thought that they had destroyed the Lord's body but the body of Christ still lives.

Each member of the spiritual body of Christ being one of the other represents the body of Christ.

In this sense, the effort to destroy the body of Christ is acted out time and time again in the existence of the church.

What happens today is similar to what happened when Christ was brought before the people at the feast time. It was the custom for the people to choose a prisoner to be set free at the time of the Passover feast.

While the Jews were to choose a prisoner to be pardoned, in our times in a Democratic society, crowds gather to choose which person they would have to serve and lead them.

Thank the good Lord that we as a Democratic society have always had the privilege to choose those whom we want to lead us. Sometimes the choice is between good and not as good, and sometimes the choice is between good and not good at all according to godly principles. The best choice has to be made.

On that day long ago when Jesus was brought before the crowd and the question was asked by Pilate, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas."

The next question asked is recorded in Matthew 27: 22, "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified."

All of this proves that any time Christ and the world is presented to great crowds for a choice to be made, the world will cry out for the world, and the world will try to persecute and destroy the body of Christ, the church.

The world is doing this today by presenting all kinds of untruths in an effort to destroy the influence of the body of Christ.

When these times of choice are given we can always expect the world to cry out for its cause, but this is also a time for Godliness and the body of Christ to cry out for itself, or else the world will persecute it and try to destroy it.

In closing let me remind all of God's people what our responsibility is. It is recorded in Psalm 107:2, "Let the re-

deemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

Let us not be afraid or timid to speak out about the goodness of our Lord and what the Lord requires of us according to His commandments. Let us continue our spiritual warfare by being faithful to the Lord. By this I mean faith-

ful to attend Church, faithful to be not only hearers of the Word, but doers of the Word also, and faithful to seek the Lord in a time of need.

Today is a time of need! May God help us to make the right choice and encourage others to do the same!

Grow in Knowledge

1. "The _____ of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom..."
2. "The fear of the Lord is a foundation of life, to _____ from the snares of death.
3. "The fear of the Lord tendeth to _____..."
4. "In the Fear of the Lord is strong _____..."
5. "The fear of the Lord _____ days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened."
6. "The fear of the Lord is to _____ evil..."
7. "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day _____."
8. "And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is _____ and to depart from evil is understanding."
9. "The fear of the Lord is the _____ of wisdom; and before honour is humility."
10. "Better is _____ with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith."

SHARE WITH OTHERS!

There are many things we should share with others. We as parents often teach our children to share with others. As children of God, we need to all be sharing our blessings with others: share our time by helping others; share our material blessings with those less fortunate; and share the good news of God's mercy, grace, love and power being manifested in our lives. Please send your personal testimony. **SHARE WITH OTHERS!**

Mercy

by Elder W. H. Durrence
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Mercy is a concept which is often misunderstood and therefore ignored or forgotten, yet it is repeatedly emphasized in both the Old and New Testaments. Since mercy is manifested by God and commanded of us, we should give it serious thought. Mercy is not an inherent part of our human nature; it must therefore be cultivated as one of those spiritual values which lift us higher than the realm of nature. Man may react to a variety of stimuli and motives, but if mercy is not included, then we are lacking a quality which is divine in origin. Let us therefore study the subject with a desire to cultivate mercy as part of our daily life.

First, we must understand the meaning of mercy. It is often defined as affectionate pity for those who are in need. They may be suffering in mind or body; mercy means to show kindness to them. In the Bible mercy seems to possess a greater significance than it does in these modern times. Mercy as taught in the New Testament traces back to the mercy of the Old Testament, which conveyed the idea of getting inside the person to be able to see or feel as he does. You see, it was and is more than a wave of pity that reaches out from us to someone else; it is actually our coming to understand the situation of the other person to the point of empathy. We arrive at the point of understanding his feelings and motives; then acting to help him is mercy. Let me illustrate mercy by an experience in the life of Queen Victoria. When she lost Prince Albert in death, she experienced great sorrow. Later an acquaintance also lost her husband in death. Queen Victoria went to her, not as the Queen, but as one who understood what she was experiencing.

That act was an act of mercy! Mercy involves pity, but how can we pity a person until we understand what he is

experiencing?

Second, we must understand that mercy in the Bible deals with both the mercy of God toward us and our mercy toward one another. God has often shown mercy to us but in a much more remarkable way when it is associated with His grace. Paul was inspired to link these two spiritual companions together in Ephesians 2:4,5, saying, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)..." We experience God's grace because of His love, but we experience mercy because of His pity. This act of divine favor called mercy was formerly made manifest at the mercyseat atop the ark of the covenant, which represented God's presence among His people. On the day of atonement, the high priest carried the sacrificial blood and sprinkled it upon the mercyseat so that the sins of the people were rolled forward for another year. It was all symbolic of Christ our High Priest's (Heb. 3:1) carrying our sins to the cross and, by the sacrifice of Himself (Eph. 5:2), satisfying the righteous demands of God, not just for a year but forever. The people did not carry the blood for themselves since salvation is not by our works (Eph. 2:8,9). The high priest acted in their behalf even as Jesus did for us as He died for our sins; that makes salvation by grace. Grace is divine favor and generosity, but it does not encompass all that our loving Heavenly Father expresses toward His children. In cooperation with His grace, He acted by mercy to pardon our iniquity. Micah said, 'Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in mercy*' (Micah 7:18). Jeremiah also spoke of

God's mercy, saying, "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning..." (Lam. 3:22,23). The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), and if we received justice we should all drop dead. The fact that we are presently living is indisputable evidence of His mercy.

Thus far I have dealt with God's mercy in regard to our salvation from sin. In that connection keep in mind these words of Paul, "...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). Now, there is another aspect of God's mercy which demands our attention. It is mercy reaped from the law of harvest; as you sow ye shall reap (Gal. 6:7). If we show mercy, then we shall receive further mercies from God, beyond those aforementioned. If we refuse mercy to others, then God will refuse it to us. This idea is set forth in both the Old and New Testaments. In 2 Samuel 22:26 we read, "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright." Then Jesus taught in the Beatitudes these beautiful words, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Mt. 5:7). If we love mercy, we should show mercy. If we are unwilling to show mercy, we have no right to expect mercy.

Though mercy is received in the measure in which we dispense it, there is a far greater reason to manifest mercy. The noblest reason for mercy is that God has commanded it. By mercy we obey God; therefore it is good. Micah said, "He [God] hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).

Notice that Micah spoke first of doing justly, then of mercy, and finally of walking close to God. Justice, mercy, and fellowship with God are all here connected and therefore should be considered in relation to each other. People are not always just, for to be just is to recompense fairly according to the crime. Such has not always been the case. An example is this: a person was killed by a member of another family and the family of the deceased retaliated by killing the entire family of the one who murdered their loved one. Because many innocent people were needlessly killed in the retaliation, there was no justice. Justice demands an eye for an eye, a life for a life (Mt. 5:38,42), Ex. 21:23,25, Lev. 24:19,20, and Deut. 19:21). Justice cries out for fairness and just recompense. Even better than justice is mercy for it gives **less** than is just. When we go beyond justice and give less than is deserved (mercy), then we are getting closer to God. Such mercy makes us more like God and identifies us with Him. "Be ye

therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful (Luke 6:36).

There is another aspect of mercy which we need to consider. Mercy may be manifested both to those who have wronged us and to those with whom we have had no dealings. Sometimes we respond with mercy toward people we do not know. All we know about them is that heart-rending circumstance which grips them, and our heart goes out to them and so does our hand. They do not deserve our attention, for they never did anything to deserve it, yet we help because we are merciful. There are on the other hand, those individuals who have wronged us and therefore do not deserve our kindness. When tragedy strikes them, rather than ignoring them or being pleased with their misfortune, we should reach out to help. That my friend, is mercy. Part of the criticism which Jesus made against the Pharisees was that they exercised with great care the external practices of their religion, but they often neglected the internal affairs of the heart, such as

mercy (Mt. 23:23). May our religion affect both our actions and our feelings so that we will show mercy to people regardless of the circumstances. Remember that at some time in our varied experiences, we all need mercy.

This study has presented many of the teachings of the Word of God with regard to mercy. Hopefully this lesson will have a profound effect upon your life as you recognize the need for mercy, from God and others. May we also better understand the need for mercy to be shown to those with whom we daily come in contact. Paul wrote, "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long suffering..." (Col. 3:12). The word Paul used was mercies (plural). Many acts of mercy are to fill our lives. Put on this godly apparel of mercy. As you have already received mercy from God, even so manifest mercy to others. Do it for the glory of God, who designed and illustrated this wonderful concept of mercy.

WAITING ON THE LORD

Commands and exhortations to wait on the Lord

1. **"Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD"** (Psalm 27:14).
2. "Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; **on thee do I wait all the day"** (Psalm 25:5).
3. "My soul, **wait thou only upon God;** for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defence; I shall not be moved" (Psalm 62:5,6).
4. "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; **so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have**

- mercy upon us"** (Psalm 123:2).
5. "Say not thou, I will recompense evil; but **wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee"** (Proverbs 20:22).
6. "And I will **wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him"** (Isaiah 8:17).
7. "**But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint"** (Isaiah 40:31)

2. **Sacrifice provided - Genesis 22:8-14**
3. **Victory in battle - Joshua 6:12-20**
4. **Healing - Matthew 15:22-28**
5. **The gift of the Spirit - Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,5; Acts 2**
6. **Deliverance - Acts 12:5-7**
7. **Escape - Acts 27:20-44**

Divine delays

- James 5:7,8
- II Peter 3:9
- Psalm 69:3
- John 11:6,21

Examples of waiting on the Lord

1. **Birth of a son- Genesis 15:2-5; Genesis 21:2**

First Love

by Elder Greg Phillips
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Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." (Revelation 2:4)

What does Jesus Christ require of the church? Can the church serve Christ in any manner she chooses? Are there things that are absolutely essential? Found in the letters from the ascended Christ to the seven churches in Asia Minor, recorded in Revelation 2 and 3, are several "or else" statements. Christ, in effect, said "Repent or else..." Such language indicates that Christ has a standard for **His** church, and failure to meet that standard results in His judgment.

To examine all of Christ's standards for His church would fill volumes, because every word of instruction, every admonition, and every command in the Bible expresses His will for His people. Since they were produced under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they are just as authoritative as if they had come from the lips of Jesus Christ Himself.

The Bible tells the story of man's rebellion against God, God's mercy to the elect through Christ, and what the redeemed are to do because of God's mercy.

The risen Savior's messages to seven churches in Asia, recorded in Revelation 2 and 3, give some fundamentals that are absolutely essential for the church. Most of the churches had more than one failing, and Christ gave them more than one "requirement" each. We will, however, examine only one major topic in each message to the seven individual churches. These messages to the churches of Asia summarize Christ's expectations for every church in every age.

Perhaps the foremost requirement for the church is a constant, zealous love. Jesus expressed this in His let-

ter to the church in Ephesus recorded in Revelation 2:1-7. He commended the believers there for their many fine qualities, but then rebuked them for one serious failing: "because thou hast left thy first love." (v.4).

Notice that Jesus did not say, "You have lost your first love." He used the Greek word *aphiemi*, which means "to leave, to forsake, to abandon." The expression "your first love" may mean your love for God, your love for one another, or your love for God and one another. I believe the last option is correct.

Some scholars have suggested that the verbs used in the phrase "have left your first love," shows a continuous action; not a complete abandonment, but a process. "You are leaving your first love," is their interpretation.

Others say that the love for Christ has not been forsaken, but the zeal of the early love had been lost, that the first enthusiasm is gone.

Perhaps both meanings apply. The early, burning love the Ephesians had known may have been slowly cooling, and as a result, the enthusiasm of services had waned.

Let us, for a moment, examine ourselves in light of the message of Christ to the church at Ephesus. Have we, too, left our first love? I know of few, myself included, who would claim to have the same burning love for the Lord and His people as in their early relationship with the Savior. I know of few churches that have the same zeal to serve God that they once had. Christianity in general has left her first love.

At your next church assembly, pay special attention to the conversations taking place before and after the worship service. There will, no doubt, be talk of a social nature when we get "caught up" on the lives of our brethren since we last met. There will probably

be as well, discussions of the weather, sports, and politics. I would venture to say that few, if any, of these conversations would indicate that we have come to meet the supreme love of our life, or that we have been in His presence. Some of those conversations would reveal our true love to be some one or some thing other than Jesus Christ.

In his Commentary on Revelation, the late Elder Charles Taylor wrote:

"The first love of the Church is that which is 'foremost in time, place, order or importance.' It is the beginning of her affection. The word which sets this love apart from any other specifies it in the Greek language as *agape*. We find this love couched in the letter from Paul to the Ephesian brethren, 'According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love' (Ephesians 1:4). This love (*agape*) expresses the deepest kind of love. It was the chief concern of God in electing His children in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Through this deep love He drew us to Himself while we were afar off. He placed a new heart within us and gave us the capability of loving Him above all else. This was the first love of the Church at Ephesus.

Peter wrote of a secondary love and the result of that love; 'Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing' (1 Peter 3:8, 9). This expression of love (*philadelphos*) is fraternal in nature. It is not of the same depth as *agape* which is expressed as being astonished, awestruck, dumbfounded, overwhelmed, gaping. While a fraternal (brotherly) love gives us affection,

devotion, friendship, kindness toward our brothers and sisters, it can never cause us to be awestruck, dumbfounded, overwhelmed, as does the love of God toward Himself and His Son Jesus Christ.

There is another kind of love which in the Greek is termed eros and relates to things called erotic such as amorous, passionate, sexual, carnal, or concupiscent. Again this can never be used in connection with the church which God has purchased by His own blood. This kind of love (eros) always demands and never gives.

The expression, 'thou hast left thy first love,' relates to coldness which creeps into the lives of those composing the church and robs them of the joy of that first relationship which they enjoyed with God and with Christ. They still declare their hatred for all evil, and still judge all who 'say they are apostles and are not.' They cannot see their own condition of a fallen state. A friendly love for the brethren (philadelphos) may still exist. Yet that overwhelming love (agape) for God, His Son Jesus Christ, and the Church has escaped them. The reason for this is that worldly love (eros) has invaded their lives and taken them captive."

I have often heard preachers say, "We must love Christ more than the world." The Bible, however, says that we must Love Christ to the exclusion of the world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:15-17). Note John's very strong statement, "...If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (emphasis added). He did not say, "If any man love the world more than Christ," but simply, "If any man love the world."

There are other loves that the Bible not only approves, but commands. We

are to love our spouse, our children, and our brothers and sisters in Christ. Those loves, however, must be subordinate to the love of Christ. For example, I am commanded to love my wife. I must love her because I love Christ and desire to be obedient to Him, and His word says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). Further, I must love her in the manner that He has commanded. The same principle applies to my love for my children, my brethren, and all that I love.

The Ephesian church was a great church. It was doctrinally solid. The people were busy unmasking false teachers and disciplining those who were sinning. The church was a hard-working church. In verse 2 Christ says, "I know thy works, and thy labor." The Greek language indicates that their work was the kind that would make one sweat. But they had one fatal flaw.

In Revelation 1:14 Christ's eyes are described as "a flame of fire." The searching, penetrating eyes of Jesus Christ found a fatal flaw: "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). Love lost its fire in the church at Ephesus. It had orthodoxy and activity without love. The church's definition of love didn't match God's. It missed the one basic thing that Jesus repeated three times to Peter, "...lovest thou me?" Jesus essentially said to Peter, "Before I ask you to feed My sheep, I have to ask you one thing: Do you love Me? If you say yes, then feed My sheep" (John 21:15-17). Why did Jesus ask that? Because no one can be effective for God apart from loving the Lord with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength.

How can a church leave her first love? While scripture does not answer that question directly, we can assume that somewhere along the line, this church failed to follow the admonitions given in scripture. It is unlikely that this happened suddenly. Rather, it was probably a very slow, almost unnoticeable process. In fact, the church

apparently did not realize their own condition.

The Apostle Paul warned, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Galatians 6:9. See also II Thessalonians 3:13.) Perhaps over time the church had grown weary to the point of failure to keep the fires of love burning warmly. In the midst of all the ungodliness in the city of Ephesus, the church must have faced a constant attack from the enemy. Under constant attack, it would be very easy to lose sight of their first love.

In our initial experience everything was new and surprising and wonderful and clear. At this stage we were constantly making new discoveries which never seemed to come to an end. But suddenly we are conscious of the fact that they do seem to have come to an end, and now we have become accustomed to the Christian life. No longer are we surprised at things, as we were at the beginning, because we are familiar with them and know about them. So that all that thrill of new discovery which animated us in the early stages suddenly seems to have gone. Nothing seems to be happening; there does not seem to be any change or advance or development. Now this may be true of us individually, it may be true of our work, it may be true of our church, it may be true of a whole collection of people, it may be true of a country, or of society. It is something that always tends to happen when we have got over the newness and the thrill and excitement of doing something that we have never done before, and we settle down into our routine, doing the same thing day after day. Then this trial arises, and we are no longer carried over it by that initial momentum which seemed to take us through it all in the early stages at the beginning.

This is the condition with which the apostle deals here. Perhaps, to make it all worse, there may be troubles and difficulties, caused by other people, which may add to our troubles. They may do things they should not do

and offend in various ways. As the result of such trials and difficulties and troubles at a time when we ourselves are in this critical period, we become weary in well doing. Thus, frequently, there comes a point at which develop-

ment and advance seem to have come to an end and we are in some kind of doldrums when it is difficult to know whether the work is moving at all, either backwards or forwards. All seems to be at a standstill and nothing seems

to be taking place. Almost without notice, we have left our first love.

To be continued.

Words Are Important!

by Elder Don McWilliams
Brownsburg, Indiana

There's this wonderful story of baseball's great player, Lou Gehrig. Lou came to bat with two outs in the ninth inning with the winning runs on second and third bases. New York was one run behind and a hit meant a win. The count went to three balls and two strikes. The grandstand was in an uproar. The pitcher wound up and the ball came smoking in -straight over the middle of the plate. The umpire called, "Strike three!" Lou hadn't moved his bat. Very slowly he turned and spoke to the umpire. At this the crowd went wild, for no one had ever heard Lou argue with an umpire. The reporters piled over the seats and right out onto the field. Swarming around the umpire, they asked, "What did Lou say to you?" They knew that whatever it was would make big headlines on the sports page.

The umpire smiled and yelled for Lou to come over. "Lou," he said, "tell the boys what you said when I called that third strike." Lou, looking bewildered, said, "Mister Ump, I would give ten dollars to have that one back."

There have been so many times in

my own life that I wish I had that one back. Whether it was a word I had spoken in haste, a thought which I knew was wrong, or yet even worse, an opportunity I had let slip by to tell someone of God's great and amazing grace and how much He loved His people in giving His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus.

There are times in everyone's life when they would give just about anything to take back the words they said in haste, usually to someone they truly love.

In Proverbs 15:1,2, we find these words: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger. The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness."

Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones."

Proverbs 25:11 says, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

There are many opportunities we let slip from us to speak those fitly spoken words. When we have family, friends,

members of our churches, a neighbor, or those in pain and sorrow, how often we neglect to give words of comfort and support!

I recently read an account of a minister who tried to deliver his sermon and could not because his thoughts escaped him. He was humiliated and heartbroken, but his deacons and members came to him, put their arms around him, thereby comforting him with words of love and encouragement.

We should never let an opportunity go by when we can speak words of comfort and encouragement. It can be to our own family, our neighbors, our elderly friends, or anyone who is discouraged and lonely.

The question was asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Who is your mother or brother or sister? Jesus said, "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

May we always be ready to give words of comfort and encouragement, never having to regret that we let the opportunity slip by.

"... think on these things." Philippians 4:8.

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● **TO EVERY PASTOR:** We would appreciate Scriptural articles from every pastor. If you are a pastor, please take the time to share some of the messages God has give you to speak to His people. There are many hungry lambs and sheep who want to feed on God's word! Please write today. Thank you!
● Editors
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Renewing and Increasing Love

(in the home)

by Elder William M. Mullis
Waycross, Georgia

LOVE is one of the greatest blessings we have from God. As we read the scriptures, we find that God has manifested His love toward us as His people in many ways. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us!**" (Roman 5:8). Probably the most often-quoted scripture, John 3: 16, again expresses to us the love of God and how it is manifested: "For God SO LOVED the world, that **He gave His only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There is no way we can begin to comprehend the magnitude or the perfection of the love of God. We do not begin to understand all that God has done, IS DOING, and shall do for us in the future because of His love for His people. And we have a peace that passeth all understanding in knowing that NOTHING can separate us from the love of God!

In His amazing grace, God has loved us, and has now given US the ability to LOVE Him and to love others! If all we do is talk about the ways God LOVES, we will not develop the love we should be showing toward God and His people. Always remember, "WE LOVE HIM BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US!" (I John 4:19).

In this article, let us first consider ways to renew and increase love in the home, and then concentrate on love in the Church. As we look at the word of God on the subject of love in the home and in the Church, let us be careful to remember that we should be DOERS of God's word and not hearers only! We all need to be manifesting more love! Though the love of God is perfect, and does not increase or decrease, we find that our love is different. Our love for some people today is much greater than it was five years ago, while our

love for others has grown cold. Can you think of someone that you love more today than you did last year? Is there someone you do not show love for today that you did last year? Can you see that your love fluctuates and varies? What do you think brings about a change in your feelings for other people? Do you think your love for your companion, your children, or your parents could improve? May God help us all to renew and improve our love in the home! Satan will do everything he possibly can to destroy your home. His most effective device is to bring about events which effect your love for your family. "And because iniquity shall abound, the LOVE of many shall **wax cold!**" (Matthew 24:12).

The divorce rate in America is at an all-time high. Juvenile delinquency (which is a result of parent delinquency) is soaring. Children are showing little or no respect for parents. Parents are spending very little time really communicating with children, and are seldom spending the necessary time with children to train them in the way they should go. WHY??? One reason is because the love in the home has grown cold! A failure to recognize this problem will lead to the failure of the home, and every member of the family will experience heartbreak! You may think that your home is perfect and that you have no problem. If you feel that way, Satan has you right where he wants you. YOU NEED to renew and increase love in your home! We all need to work on this problem continuously!

God has set up in His word the prescription for a successful, happy, loving home! LOVE is the central ingredient! GOD IS LOVE, and He must be the Supreme Head of the home. He has established that the husband is to be the head of the woman. (I Corinthians

11 :3). As the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints at Ephesus, he explained that the relationship between the husband and wife must follow God's order. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and He is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it!" (See Ephesians 5:21-33). The comparison is being made between the husband-wife relationship and the Christ-church relationship. Christ loves the Church so much that He gave Himself for it. That is the way a husband is to love the wife! A husband is to treat his wife with tremendous love and respect, showing her privately and publicly that his love for her is real. In word and actions, the husband is to show more love for his wife than for any other woman. Sometimes, we husbands give more compliments to other ladies about their hair or clothes than we do to our own wives. This is not right. Husbands, renew and increase the ways you show your love to your wife! Express your appreciation for all she is doing for you. By your actions, let her know that she IS the most important woman in the world to you! Are you showing your wife as much love today as you did when you married her? Have you let time gradually wear-away at the things you do to **show** your love? Do you still open doors for her, surprise her with gifts, take her out for a meal occasionally, and talk to her? Do you sit down every day for some "quality time" together where you are just sharing with each other some of your burdens and joys of the day. Do you really listen to your wife any more?

You can think of ways to renew and increase the LOVE for your wife. Make a list of things you feel would make your wife KNOW that your love for her is growing, and start doing those things today! Other than Jesus Christ, your wife should be the very best friend you have! If you want her to be your friend and show you the love and respect the Bible commands her to show, you are going to have to keep manifesting the love you feel in your heart for her. When you do, it will be easy for her to be submissive to you!

Much more could be said about the husband-wife relationship but space will not permit an exhaustive study of this and all other subjects relative to renewing and increasing love in the home and in the Church. For a few related scriptures to begin your study of this subject, please read: Ephesians 5: 18-33; Colossians 3:12-21; Proverbs 31:10-31; Genesis 2:18,21-24; 3:16-19; Proverbs 19:14; I Peter 3:1-11; I Corinthians 7:3-5, 10, 11. May God help us all to work hard to keep love from waxing cold. If it has already "waxed cold" in your home, then work hard to re-ignite the flames of love, and keep the fire burning!

Next, in the home, let us consider briefly the parent-child relationship. First of all, it should be emphasized that it is not just the responsibility of mothers to raise the children. It took both parents to conceive, and both parents have the responsibility to raise the child! In fact, contrary to modern-day actions, FATHERS are specifically commanded to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:4).

Training children is probably the most difficult task we adults ever face. There is no easy way to be successful. It takes much prayer, hard work, more prayer, MUCH LOVE, more prayer, more hard work, and continuous blessings from God to train a child in the way he should go. From even before the child is ever born, we parents begin to influence the rest of that person's life. Children are VERY sensitive, even while in

the mother's womb. Arguing, fussing, yelling, fighting, and screaming (which are sometimes a part of the first year of marriage) will lead to problems in the proper development of the unborn child. In fact, that same arguing, fussing, and yelling will ultimately lead to love waxing cold between the parents, and will also have a "cooling" effect on the love between parent and child. We all need to develop a greater appreciation for each member of the family. Every member of the family needs to feel loved and respected. All members of the family must work to show love toward each other. Parents should be leaders in developing good relations with the children all through life. As the children grow older, parents must repeatedly look for signs of development problems. When children begin to "go into a shell," stop communicating, or show other signs of withdrawing, these are danger signals which are sometimes hard to detect until the problem is serious. It is not unusual for a child to feel unloved. Buying toys and other items will not fill the longing for love which is felt by far too many children today. Rocking a child, talking with a child, reading to a child, playing with a child, and listening to a child are all important elements which are necessary to train up a child in the way he should go. The home should be a place where LOVE is abundant! Your home must radiate with love in order for your children to grow properly.

It is the responsibility of parents (BOTH PARENTS) to teach their children the word of God. We are so blessed to have Bibles in such abundance in America. How sad it is that ignorance of the word of God is abounding. One reason there is so much ignorance of the word of God is because parents are failing to teach their children as God's word commands us to. (Please carefully read Deuteronomy 6:4-9!) It is the responsibility of parents to DAILY teach God's word to their children. God did NOT give this job to the Church, and the Church cannot fulfill the work of teaching the scriptures to

the children! Your LOVE for your children, your companion, and your parents will increase as you read, study, and obey the various teachings in the word of God.

The teenage years can be very trying and difficult for parents and children if the home has not been following what the scriptures teach for the early, developing years! Even then, if parents HAVE been following God's word, there will be difficult and trying times. But with God's help (and He will help if we diligently are looking to Him each and every day, praying for Him to help us renew and increase in love for each member of the family), we can overcome every stormy time in the home! Satan is as a roaring lion, working continuously to bring about division, turmoil, strife, and ill-will in the home. Children may resent discipline, but they need to experience it all through life! LOVE AND DISCIPLINE ARE IN-SEPARABLE! (See Hebrews 12:5-11; Revelation 3: 19; Proverbs 13:24; 19: 18, 22:15; 23:13, 14). The devil has done a marvelous job of distorting the true meaning of love today, and has many parents believing that it is wrong to spank children. Brethren, let God be true and every man a liar! Read and study the word of God and you will find that discipline is a part of true, godly love! It is a difficult task to keep love from waxing cold in the home. But failing to discipline children is one sure way to kill LOVE.

May God bless every parent to search God's way to better understand the way our Heavenly Father says we should work to keep love strong in the home! (For other related scriptures concerning parent-child relationships, please read and study Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:1-4; II Corinthians 12:14; Colossians 3:20,21; and Proverbs 31:10-31.) May every father work and strive to be the kind of daddy he should be to EVERYONE of his children, without showing partiality! Let every mother leave other vocations to fulfill the greatest vocation of any mother --to train up her children in the way they

should go! That is a full-time job! Be a good mother! You are blessed to have children! They will soon be grown, and your time for training them will soon be gone. Work hard NOW with your precious children. The word of God tells us women should be keepers at home. (Titus 2:5). And to the children, be thankful that you have parents who love you! Work hard to show that you love them!

May God bless every member of the home to renew and increase in love toward every other member of your family! Even brothers and sisters can truly love each other and show that love!!! Will you work hard to make your home a place where love is abounding?

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

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 11:2:16
 Mark 5:23
 Mark 9:24

Satan encourages the attitude of feeling that problems in the home are unsolvable. He says that it is useless to talk about the problem or work toward correcting it; Satan says it is easier just to live with the problem rather than going through all the hassle and fuss of trying to correct it.

One of the most common problems in a home is that every member of the home expects perfection (from everyone except him/herself.)

Wrongs will be committed, therefore forgiveness is essential! (Remember Ephesians 4:26 and Philippians 4:13.)

Charity must abound in the home if it is to be happy! (Please carefully read I Corinthians 13, especially vs. 4,5.)

Good communication insures a better understanding and respect by everyone. Have Bible-reading, prayer, and share time every day!

Make a list of changes You need to make in the home in order to have a happier, more Christian home!

DEVICES OF THE DEVIL IN THE HOME

A. Conflicts and divisions between husbands and wives -Genesis 27:6-13; Job 2:9,10; I Kings 21; Esther 1:10-22; II Samuel 6:16-23; I Samuel 25:2-19

Admonitions - Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:22-33; I Peter 3:1-7; Ecclesiastes 9: 11 ; Colossians 3: 19; Titus 2:4,5; Romans 7:1-3; I Corinthians 7:1-5.

B. Conflicts and divisions between parents and children - Examples: Genesis 37; Luke 15:11-32; II Samuel 15, 16; I Samuel 3:11-14

Admonitions - Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Joel 1:3; Proverbs 23:13, 14; Titus 2:4,5; Deuteronomy 31:12, 13; Proverbs 13:24; II Corinthians 12:14; Exodus 20:12; Psalms 34:11; Proverbs 19:18; Ephesians 6:1-4; Psalms 78:1-8; Proverbs 22:15; Colossians 3:21

C. Conflicts and divisions between natural brothers and sisters -Genesis 4:8 and I John 3: 12; Luke 15:22-32; Genesis 37:5-36; Genesis 25:25-34; Numbers 12

Please spend time prayerfully studying all the above scriptures as well as other related passages. With God's help we all can renew and increase love in every home. Please start today in your home!

Answers to Grow In Knowledge

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Fear - Psalm 111:10 | 6. Hate - Proverbs 8:13 |
| 2. Depart - Proverbs 14:27 | 7. Long - Proverbs 23:17 |
| 3. Life - Proverbs 19:23 | 8. Wisdom - Job 28:28 |
| 4. Confidence - Proverbs 14:26 | 9. Instruction - Proverbs 15:33 |
| 5. Prolongeth - Proverbs 10:27 | 10. Little - Proverbs 15:16 |

A Consideration of Our Thoughts

by Elder Berley Welch
(deceased)

"Be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your **mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you not to **think** of himself more highly than he ought to **think**; but to **think** soberly." (Romans 12:2,3).

One of the greatest needs of the Lord's people is the ability to control their **thinking**. Solomon said "As he thinketh in his heart so is he." (Proverbs 23:7). What we see or hear of a man does not necessarily tell us what he is. He may say one thing and think another. He may preach one thing and think another. This is deceit in disguise, and no child of God should be satisfied with self when they are living deceitfully!

Perhaps we should mention first the impossibility of a man thinking spiritually who does not have spiritual life. A man without spiritual life has only one mind with which to think, and that is a carnal (natural) mind which is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. In order for one to please God in his thinking, he must first be given, "The mind of Christ." Paul put it this way: "You that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." It is by God's eternal grace that we have the mind of Christ. This is by promise and not by good deeds, or any thoughts of the carnal mind. God has promised that He would put His laws in our mind and write them in our hearts. The man of the Gadarenes is a beautiful example of what I am saying. We first see him as an insane man, dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind, no, not with chains. After

a while we see him again, clothed and IN HIS RIGHT MIND, sitting at the feet of Jesus. The apostle Paul says that we were all in this condition: "Among whom also we had our conversation in times past in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." (Ephesians 2:3-5).

Now, by the grace of God, we have a new mind with which to think, and are admonished to follow after the Spirit, and not after the flesh. All the disciples and followers of the Lord Jesus Christ should be a nonconformist to the world, for they are mutable, but we are to, "Delight in the law of God after the inward man." We are to bring our bodies (even our minds) under subjection so as to think upon heavenly things, for a man cannot think upon carnal things and worship God in Spirit and truth. We should present our bodies a living sacrifice unto God, even our mind. The apostle Paul says, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." God has given us a "right mind", and it is up to us how we use it.

I once saw a sign which read, "YOU ARE NOT WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE, BUT WHAT YOU THINK." What a world of truth is revealed here, for we are in the eyes of God what we think; for God knows all our thoughts. The prophet Ezekiel says, "The spirit of the Lord fell upon me and said unto me, speak; thus saith the Lord, for I knew the things that come into your mind, EVERYONE OF THEM." Yes, God knows all our thoughts, and by our thoughts, we, as His dear children, are judged. Jesus said: "Ye have heard that it was said

by them of old times, thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Again, we find in Mark 7:21 these words of our Saviour: "Out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these evil things come from within, and defile the man." What a fearful thing to realize that God knows our every thought. Therefore, what we are afraid to do before men we should be afraid to think before God. Our thinking is what molds our character. Jesus said: "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." No wonder David would say, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight." He knew his words would not be pleasing to God unless his thoughts were of the right kind.

Thought is the seed that produces action, and action is no more the second form than thought is the first. Our thoughts tend to work their way out into our life and deeds; and all that a man does outwardly is but an expression and completion of his inward thoughts. To work effectually, one must think clearly; to act nobly, one must think nobly. Actors often think of themselves as the character they are to portray, and the more thought they put into it, the better they play the part. If one is to be an electrician, mechanic, surgeon, they are to think in these channels; even so, if we are to be the kind of disciples that we should be, we must do as the apostle admonishes: "**Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.**" When we have the mind of Christ, we will find in our life love, Humility, forgiveness, and all the other parts of the

“fruit of the spirit” working their way out into everyday life; but if we think upon low, vulgar and vicious things, we need not be surprised if we find them working their way out into our character.

A cup that is full will hold no more; so, let us keep our mind filled with good thoughts, and bad ones will find no room. David said: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee. POND-ER the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.” Again the sweet singer of Israel said: “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly ...but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. ...therefore he shall be as a tree planted by the water.”

If a man meditates day and night on the laws of the Lord, there will not be room for trash to enter in.

We could never over emphasize the importance of our thinking, for if men could be induced to **think** aright, most of the world’s problems would be solved. The apostle Peter realized the importance of stirring up our pure minds in way of remembrance, and if this could be accomplished in the church, the problems of the church could be solved. The apostle Paul admonished the church at Ephesus to, “Put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lust; and be renewed in the spirit of your **mind**; and that you put on the new man, which

after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” We are not to think as children, but to think soberly, not serving two masters. When members of the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ present their bodies a living sacrifice, and meditate day and night on the good and righteous things, our mind filled with the fruit of the spirit, then will Zion again rejoice.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **THINK ON THESE THINGS.**” (Philippians 4:8).

INTERCESSORY PRAYER (PRAYING FOR OTHERS)

Sometimes, we are so busy praying about our own needs and problems that we fail to spend important time praying for others. The second great commandment is to **love our neighbor as ourselves**. If we love them as ourselves, we will be praying for them like we pray for ourselves. “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:4).

In considering our love for others, there are at least two important matters to think about. First, when we see others in need we should personally **do anything we can to relieve their problems**. Remember Matthew 25:34-46!

Our religion is vain if we are not visiting and helping those who are in need (James 1:27; 2:15-18). There are serious judgments from God if we

are not doing what we can to help others (Proverbs 21:13; 28:27; Matthew 25:41-46).

But, after we have done all we can do personally (in fact while we are doing what we can), we should also be in much prayer for God to help those in need. James 5:16 says, “Confess your faults one to another, and **pray one for another**, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” God commands us to pray one for another. If we love each other as we should, praying for one another will be an outgrowth of that love. Jesus repeatedly prayed for others while here on the earth. The Holy Spirit is making intercession for us now! If we are disciples of Jesus, we will be in much prayer for others!

Look at some of the examples in God’s word of those who prayed for others.

1. Moses repeatedly prayed for the children of Israel: Exodus 32:32; Numbers 14:17; Deuteronomy 9:26.

2. Moses prayed for Miriam- Numbers 12:13

3. Samuel prayed for Israel- I Samuel 7:5

4. David prayed for Israel- I Chronicles 21:17

5. Hezekiah prayed for the people- II Chronicles 30:18

6. Job prayed for his friends- Job 42:10

7. Paul prayed for the saints at Ephesus- Ephesians 1:16

8. Stephen prayed for those who were stoning him to death- Acts 7:60

9. Jesus prayed for His disciples and us- John 17

10. Jesus prayed for those who crucified Him- Luke 23:34

The greatest knowledge is to know the will of God.

The greatest endeavor is to do it.

He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2:17

Let Us Give Thanks



"When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord, thy God for the good land which He hath given thee." (Deuteronomy 8: 10).

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name." (Psalm 100:4).

"And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare His works with rejoicing." (Psalm 107:22).

"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:" (Colossians 1:12).

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful." (Colossians 3:15).

"In EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thessalonians 5:18).

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most high:" (Psalm 92:1).

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 5:20).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:6).

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him." (Colossians 3:17).

"Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most high:" (Psalm 50:14).

Fear God and Keep His Commandments!

by Bro. Robert Varn
Jacksonville, Florida

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon tells how he had acquired great wealth. He had glorious houses, gardens, vineyards, orchards, pools of water, servants, cattle, gold, and silver. The great singers of the day performed for him. He could have anything his heart desired. However, he came to understand that all the worldly riches and goods without fellowship with God, is nothing but vanity!

Many times, we as Christians fail to take heed to the warnings in the word of God. Solomon had tried it all and found it to be to no avail! How often today are we seeking things of the earth, thinking they will bring us joy and peace? We think, "If I could just get that new house (or car...or person...or job...or whatever you think is your key to happiness), THEN I WILL BE SATISFIED!" But can you look back over

your life and see that every time you obtain what you want, it soon loses its luster and pales in its attraction?

Though reading the book of Ecclesiastes is somewhat depressing, we can see and realize the truth that all the world, and the things that are in this world, are vanity.

Then, we come to the last two verses of the book and see the key, the bright spot, the point of truth which will make us rejoice if we understand it: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13,14).

The wise man Solomon realized that material things do not really make people happy. Fearing God and keep-

ing His commandments, serving Him by serving His people, and setting our affection on things above rather than on things of the earth are the goals of those who find true joy and peace as they live in this world.

God can use you for the good of His people and for His honor and glory wherever you are! Visit the nursing homes regularly and see how you feel. Work in the church and find ways to improve your community. Become a servant of Jesus Christ. Do things to make your family stronger and closer.

Stand up for the life of the unborn by working with Right to Life, or Birthright, or your crisis pregnancy center. Help the poor who are working at minimum wage. Find some needy elderly homeowners and do things to help clean their home and yards. Serving God's people is the way to real joy!

THE TRUMPET OF TRUTH WEB SITE

If you would like to look at the magazine on our web-site, read other articles, hear sermons, or share the truth with others who have a computer, please go to www.trumpetoftruth.org to view numerous articles as well as old magazines. We are trying to get an index of all past issues, organizing the information in such a way as to be able to find articles by particular ministers, or by subject. Please pray for us as we work on this project which we feel will be valuable to God's children.

FINANCIAL HELP

We greatly appreciate all the churches, individuals, and businesses which have made contributions to help us in spreading the truth of SALVATION BY GRACE. While we are now out of the "red," we still need your donations to help defray the monthly costs. Please continue to help, and ask the church of your membership to make a monthly contribution so we can share the truth with others! Thank you for joining with us in this ministry of providing spiritual food to God's children around the world.

SHARE THE TRUTH WITH OTHERS

The box on the back of each magazine is for you to put the name, address, hours of worship, phone number, etc. of the church you attend, then distribute them in your community. Put them in doctors' offices, nursing homes, barber shops, libraries, convenience stores, laundromats, etc. You will be amazed at the positive response!

Bible Reading Calendar for November

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Jer. 29,30	Titus 1
2	Jer. 31,32	Titus 2
3	Jer. 33,34,35	Titus 3
4	Jer. 36,37	Philem. 19
5	Jer. 38,39	Heb. 1
6	Jer. 40,41,42	Heb. 2
7	Jer. 43,44,45	Heb. 3
8	Jer. 46,47,48	Heb. 4
9	Jer. 49,50	Heb. 5
10	Jer. 51,52	Heb. 6
11	Lam. 1,2	Heb. 7
12	Lam. 3,4,5	Heb. 8
13	Ezek. 1,2,3	Heb. 9
14	Ezek. 4,5,6	Heb. 10:1-23
15	Ezek. 7,8,9	Heb. 10:24-39

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Ezek. 10,11,12	Heb. 11:1-19
17	Ezek. 13,14,15	Heb. 11:20-40
18	Ezek. 16	Heb. 12
19	Ezek. 17,18,19	Heb. 13
20	Ezek. 20,21	Jas. 1
21	Ezek. 22,23	Jas. 2
22	Ezek. 24,25,26	Jas. 3
23	Ezek. 27,28	Jas. 4
24	Ezek. 29,30,31	Jas. 5
25	Ezek. 32,33	I Pet. 1
26	Ezek. 34,35	I Pet. 2
27	Ezek. 36,37	I Pet. 3
28	Ezek. 38,39	I Pet. 4
29	Ezek. 40	I Pet. 5
30	Ezek. 41,42	II Pet. 1

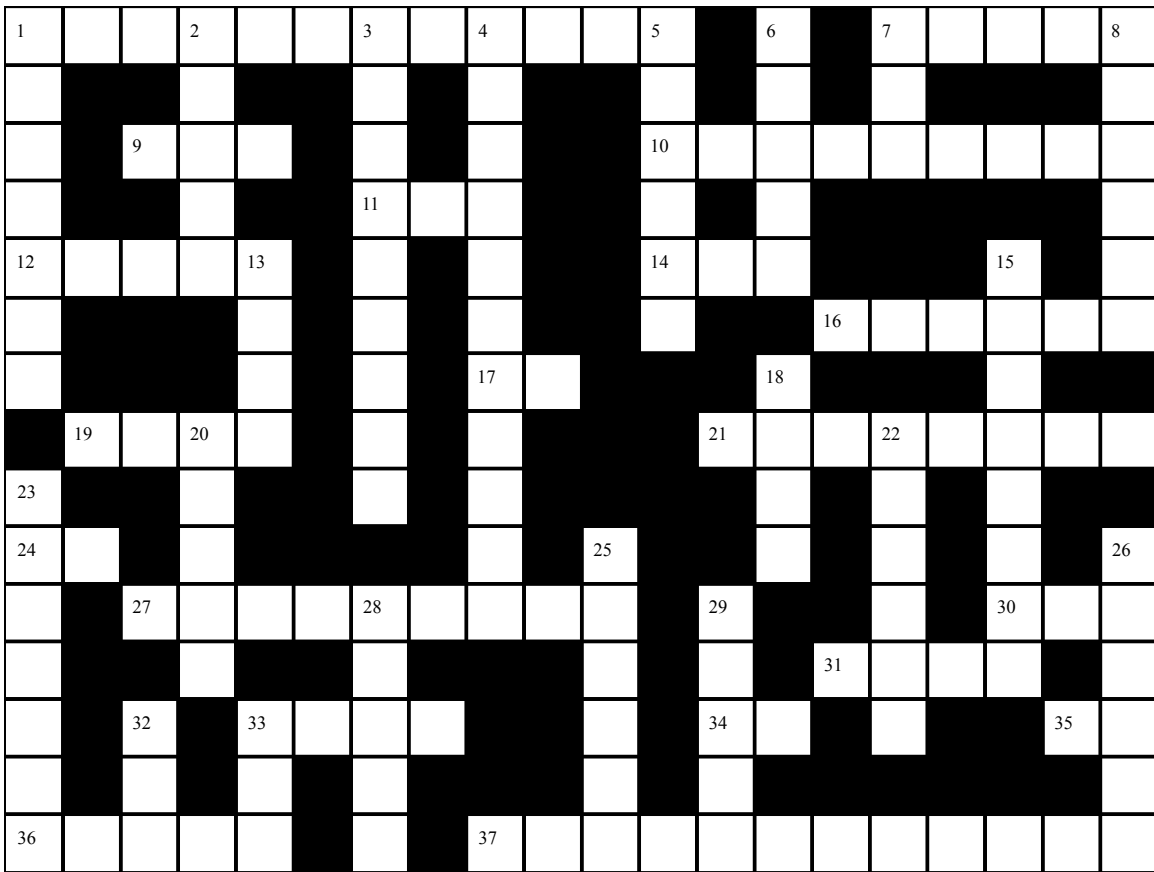
**ANSWERS TO
CROSSWORD
PUZZLE
OCTOBER 08**

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Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "Among whom also we all had our _____ in time past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." 7. "_____ ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." 9. "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of _____." 10. "For the Lord knoweth the way of the _____: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." 11. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall _____, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." 12. "Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, _____ to the soul, and health to the bones." 14. "For the Lord giveth wisdom: _____ of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." 16. "For I say unto you, That _____ your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case into the kingdom of heaven." 17. "Then shalt thou understand the fear _____ the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." 19. "And this is _____ eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." 21. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the _____ wherewith ye are called," 24. "But let him ask _____ faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." 27. "The tongue of the wise useth _____ aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." 30. "For I delight in the law of God after _____ inward man:" 31. "Even when we _____ dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" 33. "The ungodly are not so:" but are like the chaff which the wind driveth _____." 34. "Wherefore seeing _____ also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us," 35. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, _____ a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" 36. "But God, who is rich in _____, for his great love wherewith he loved us," 37. "Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgement, nor sinners in the _____ of the righteous.



DOWN

1. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the _____ of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." 2. "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy _____ for understanding;" 3. "If thou seekest her as silver, and _____ for her as for hid treasures;" 4. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye _____ by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." 5. "Because strait is the gate, and _____ is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." 6. "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he _____ to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." 7. "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: _____ and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee." 8. "Whom _____ steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." 13. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that _____ the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." 15. "But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he _____ day and night." 18. "A _____ answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger." 20. "Even the youths shall _____ and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:" 22. "A word fitly spoken is like _____ of gold in picture of silver." 23. "For the _____ of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." 25. "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of _____; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven." 26. "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his _____; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." 28. "And the king shall answer and say unto the _____ of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." 29. "He giveth _____ to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." 32. "(_____ the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)" 33. "If _____ of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

SLOW TO WRATH

(Self Control of spirit and tongue)

1. James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
2. Luke 21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.
3. Proverbs 14:29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
4. Proverbs 15:18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
5. Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.
6. Psalm 34:13 Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.
7. Proverbs 13:3 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.
8. Proverbs 21:23 Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.
9. James 1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

HASTY

1. Psalm 116:11 I said in my haste, All men are liars.
2. Proverbs 14:29 He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
3. Proverbs 19:2 ...he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.
4. Proverbs 21:5 The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want.
5. Proverbs 25:8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.
6. Proverbs 29:20 Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.
7. Ecclesiastes 5:2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.
8. Ecclesiastes 7:9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.
