

# Five Lessons

## About the Way People Treat People

**1 - First Important Lesson -Cleaning Lady.** During my second month of college, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one:

"What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?" Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50's, but how would I know her name? I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank.

Just before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade. "Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'hello'." I've never forgotten that lesson. I also learned her name was Dorothy.

**2 - Second Important Lesson - Pickup in the Rain.**

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African-American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride. Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960's. The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached. It read: "Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's bedside just before he passed away... God bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving

others. Sincerely, Mrs. Nat King Cole."

**3 - Third Important Lesson - Always remember those who serve.** In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him. "How much is an ice cream sundae?" he asked.

"Fifty cents," replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it. "Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?" he inquired. By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient.

"Thirty-five cents," she brusquely replied.

The little boy again counted his coins. "I'll have the plain ice cream," he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies.

You see, he couldn't have the sundae, because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

**4 - Fourth Important Lesson. - The obstacle in Our Path.** In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it. Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded.

After the peasant picked up his

load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway.

The peasant learned what many of us never understand!

Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

**5 - Fifth Important Lesson - Giving When it Counts.** Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at a hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare and serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.

The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister. I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Yes I'll do it if it will save her."

As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheek. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded. He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away?"

Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her.

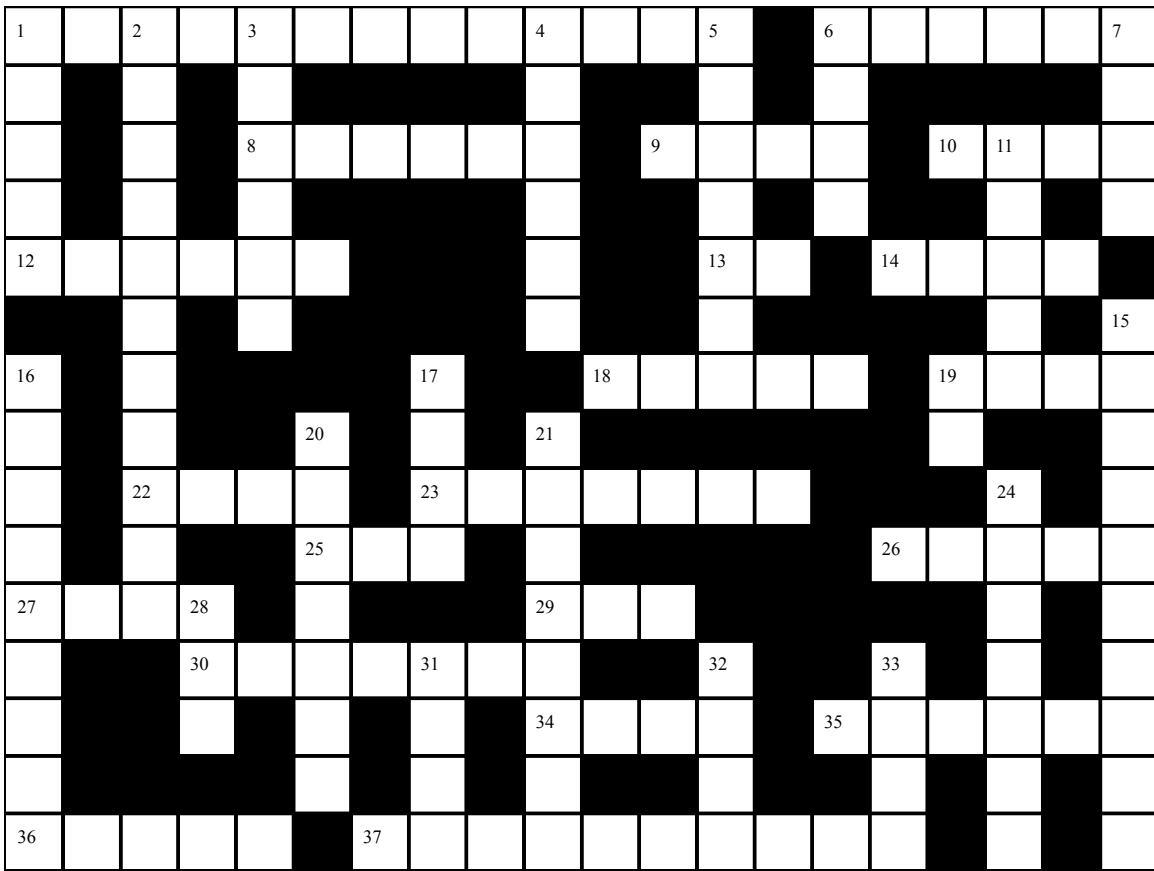
Have we learned all these important lessons?

- Take time to learn a person's name.
- Help strangers.
- Respect those who serve.
- Remove obstacles out of the path.
- Give when it counts.

# Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law." 6. "The wicked shall be \_\_\_\_\_ into hell, and all the nations that forget God." 8. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving \_\_\_\_\_ rather than silver and gold." 9. "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in \_\_\_\_\_ a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." 10. "And saith unto him, all these things will I give \_\_\_\_\_, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." 12. "And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these \_\_\_\_\_ be made bread." 13. "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, \_\_\_\_\_ is able to succour them that are tempted." 14. "And all the inhabitations of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and \_\_\_\_\_ can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" 18. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the \_\_\_\_\_, and the glory of them;" 19. "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to \_\_\_\_\_ it." 22. "And saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself \_\_\_\_\_: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." 23. "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten \_\_\_\_\_, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." 25. "Jesus said unto him, it is written again thou shalt not tempt \_\_\_\_\_ Lord thy God." 26. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and \_\_\_\_\_ shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas..." 27. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the \_\_\_\_\_, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." 29. "And when he had fasted forty days \_\_\_\_\_ forty nights, he was afterward an hungered." 30. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from \_\_\_\_\_ times the things that are not yet done, saying, my council shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." 34. "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered \_\_\_\_\_ him." 35. "Ye are all of God, \_\_\_\_\_ children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." 36. "Then the \_\_\_\_\_ taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple." 37. "For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also The Son of man be to this \_\_\_\_\_."



## DOWN

1. "This know also, that in the last days perilous \_\_\_\_\_ shall come." 2. "In all thy ways \_\_\_\_\_ him, and he shall direct thy paths." 3. "For It is better, If the will of God be So, that ye \_\_\_\_\_ for well doing, than for evil doing." 4. "And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it \_\_\_\_\_ up, because it had no depth of earth." 5. "There is none greater in this house than I; \_\_\_\_\_ hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" 6. "But of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." 7. "Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take \_\_\_\_\_ root, and it filled the land." 11. "Thus saith Jesus unto him, get thee \_\_\_\_\_, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." 15. "But he answered and said, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that \_\_\_\_\_ out of the mouth of God." 16. "Then when lust hath \_\_\_\_\_, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." 17. "If ye \_\_\_\_\_ me, keep my commandments." 19. "\_\_\_\_\_ faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac..." 20. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and \_\_\_\_\_." 21. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new \_\_\_\_\_: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 24. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be \_\_\_\_\_ of the devil." 28. "Let no man \_\_\_\_\_ when he is tempted, I am tempted of God:..." 31. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none \_\_\_\_\_; I am God, and there is none like me," 32. "But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no \_\_\_\_\_, it withered away." 33. "And this shall be a \_\_\_\_\_ unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

# Bible Reading Calendar for May

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	II Samuel 23,24	Luke 22:31-53
2	I Kings 1,2	Luke 22:54-71
3	I Kings 3,4,5	Luke 23:1-26
4	I Kings 6,7	Luke 23:39-56
5	I Kings 8,9	Luke 24:1-35
6	I Kings 10,11	Luke 24:36-53
7	I Kings 12,13	John 1:1-28
8	I Kings 14,15	John 1:29-51
9	I Kings 16,17,18	John 2
10	I Kings 19,20	John 3:1-21
11	I Kings 21,22	John 3:22-36
12	II Kings 1,2,3	John 4:1-30
13	II Kings 4,5	John :1-31-54
14	II Kings 6,7,8	John 5:1-24
15	II Kings 9,10,11	John 5:25-47

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	II Kings 12,13,14	John 6:1-21
17	II Kings 15,16,17	John 6:22-44
18	II Kings 18,19	John 6:45-71
19	II Kings 20,21,22	John 7:1-31
20	II Kings 23,24,25	John 7:32-53
21	I Chron. 1,2	John 8:1-20
22	I Chron. 3,4,5	John 8:21-36
23	I Chron. 6,7	John 8:37-59
24	I Chron. 8,9,10	John 9:1-23
25	I Chron. 11,12,13	John 9:24-41
26	I Chron. 14,15,16	John 10:1-21
27	I Chron. 17,18,19	John 10:22-42
28	I Chron. 20,21,22	John 11:1-17
29	I Chron. 23,24,25	John 11:18-46
30	I Chron. 26,27	John 11:47-57

**ANSWERS TO  
CROSSWORD  
PUZZLE  
APRIL 09**

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of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.” Proverbs 3:9-10a, “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty,” Exodus 25:2, “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” We

are to tithe to God a tenth of what we make...that is what God requires of us! Anything over that tenth is considered an offering. That’s why we call it tithes AND offerings. There are not the same thing, but two different concepts. I’ve heard people in debt tell me that they can’t afford to tithe. My thought is I can’t afford NOT to tithe. I understand

when someone is in debt not being able to make an offering, but a tithe (a tenth of their money) is a requirement. We shouldn’t tithe to get a blessing, but tithe with a willing heart to the Lord. Most often when you are hurting financially and you still tithe, you will see the greatest blessings coming from God... and thy barns will be filled with plenty!

\*To be continued...\*

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# Quotes You Should Know

(From our Founding Fathers and Forefathers)

## **John Adams**

Signer of the Declaration of Independence and 2nd President of the United States

“It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free constitution is pure virtue.” (1776)

## **John Quincy Adams**

6th President of the United States

“The highest glory of the American Revolution was this: it connected in one indissoluble bond the principles of civil government with the principles of Christianity.”

“The law given from Sinai was a civil and municipal as well as a moral and religious code; it contained many statutes...of universal application-laws essential to the existence of men in society, and most of which have been enacted by every nation which ever professed any code of laws...Vain, indeed, would be the search among the writings of profane antiquity...to find so broad, so complete and so solid a basis for morality as this Decalogue lays down.”

“The laws of nature...of course presupposes the existence of a God, the moral ruler of the universe, and a rule of right and wrong, of just and unjust, binding upon man, preceding all institutions of human society and government.”

## **Samuel Adams**

Signer of the Declaration of Independence  
THE TRUMPET OF TRUTH

dence

“Neither the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt.” (1749)

## **Benjamin Franklin**

Signer of the Constitution and Declaration of Independence

“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.” (1787)

## **John F. Kennedy**

35th President of the United States  
1961-1963

“The rights of man come not from the generosity of the state, but from the hand of God.”

## **John Witherspoon**

President of Princeton and signer of the Declaration

“The Ten Commandments...are the sum of the moral law.”

## **Noah Webster**

Founding Educator

“The moral principles and precepts found in the 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.”

## **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.”

## **Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore**

Former Chief Justice of Alabama

“The battle over the Ten Commandments monument I brought into Alabama’s Supreme Court is not about a monument and not about politics. The battle is not even about religion, a term defined by our founders as ‘the duty we owe to our creator and the manner for discharging it.’ Federal Judge Myron Thompson, who ordered the monument’s removal, and I are in perfect agreement on the fact that the issue in this case is: ‘Can the state acknowledge God?’”

# A Good Start with Good Works

*(Part Two)*

by Sis. Christy Bond  
Patterson, Georgia

In the last article, Part One, we covered four good works that we should be striving towards. They were: visit, be thankful, sing to the Lord, and be in God's house (church). In this article, I hope to add five more good works to our list. They are: pray, repent and turn, read God's Word, help the poor/ needy, and tithe. May God bless us to strive to live closer to Him each and every day.

Job 22:26b-27, "Lift up thy face unto God. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay thy vows." I Samuel 7:8a, "And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us," I Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing." James 5 :16b, "Pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Over and over in God's Word there are examples of prayers...prayers for help in time of need, for forgiveness, and for thankfulness. Many times you see children of God being persistent in their prayers and they would pray without ceasing. They would go to sleep praying, wake up praying, and pray all day long. We should be more diligent in our prayer life! We should be daily thanking the Lord for our blessings and then daily praying for our fellow brothers and sisters.

Matthew 3:2, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Proverbs 28:13, "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." II Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." There are times in our lives

when God will NOT hear our prayers. God says in Jeremiah 7:13-16, "Because ye have done all these works... and I spake unto you...but ye heard not; and I called you, but ye answered not; I will cast you out of my sight...neither make intercession to me: for I will not hear thee." We must repent and TURN from our wicked ways for God to hear our prayers. It's not enough to just confess our sins, but we must then TURN from those ungodly ways. True repentance is confessing and turning from sin. We must truly repent to enter into the kingdom of heaven and experience God's righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

John 5: 39a, "Search the scriptures;" Psalms 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Revelation 1:3, "Blessed is he that readeth (the Word of God), and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." We must spend time in the Word daily. It is written for us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. How will we know how to live if we aren't in the Word? It can be a light unto your path and can make decisions easier. If you are having a hard time understanding what you are reading, pray! Pray for God to open your eyes each and every time you are in His Word. It can also be encouraging to find a partner to study the Word with. When you have decisions to make, pray and read! Those good works are sure to help clear up any confusion in your life. It is very

comforting to hear God speak to me through His Word!

Proverbs 31:20, "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." James 2:15-17, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; not withstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." Mathew 6:3-4, "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." Most of us are so blessed financially. Compare what you have to what your grandparents and great-grandparents started out with years ago. We have so much more than just our needs! Most of our children have toys and more toys-indoor toys, outdoor toys, swing sets, bath toys, books, and more! We should be doing more for the needy. Proverbs 31 talks about the virtuous woman who did for her own home and then stretched out her hand to the poor and needy. We should all be doing that. Don't just tell someone you'll "pray" for them when you have something they need. Give to them and pray for them! God will bless you for your giving spirit. As with all good works, don't tell others about the good works you are doing. Do it in secret and out of love!

Malachi 3: 10a, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse," Genesis 28:22b, "And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Deuteronomy 14:22, "Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year." I Chronicles 29:14b, "For all things come

Covenant era or the New Covenant era. Yet in some ways he is set forth as a type of a New Covenant participant. The scripture says he heard the gospel. The key message in Romans 4 is that Abraham believed, and his faith was counted or imputed to him for righteousness. This passage is misunderstood by many because they do not put it in the context of the New Covenant. They think this passage is saying that Abraham's faith is that which fitted and qualified him for the eternal heaven. The passage means that God saw Abraham's faith, and accepted his faith as the righteousness required for Abraham to enjoy a timely relationship with God. In this way, Abraham is a type of a New Covenant saint. Abraham's experiential relationship with God was a conditional blessing based on the condition of his faith and the obedience produced by his faith. Verses 20 through 24 speak of the fact that the imputation of righteousness was conditional to his faith and these verses state that the imputation is also conditional to New Testament believers. The eternal heaven is not a conditional blessing.

**Romans 10: 5-9**

Read Romans 10:5-9. I don't think this passage can be understood outside the context of the New Covenant. The passage defines the righteousness required of New Covenant saints. It defines it as believing in and confessing Christ. The difficult language concerning ascending into heaven and going into the deep parallels it

to similar language in Deuteronomy 30:12-13. Deuteronomy is setting forth the requirements of the Old Covenant: keep the law. Romans 10:5-9 is describing the requirements of the New Covenant: believe and confess. The Deuteronomy 30 language "not in heaven" and "Neither is it beyond the sea" emphasizes the point that the Old Covenant requirement of law-keeping was clear. The Romans 10 language, "ascend into heaven" and "descend into the deep" emphasizes the point that the requirement of the New Covenant was equally clear, "confess with thy Mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead".

**Elect**

Old Covenant saints were chosen in Abraham. They were a chosen people. There are New Testament scriptures that speak of being elected to participate in the New Covenant and enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. This election does not include the entire family of God for whom Christ died.

Please study II Thessalonians 2: 13-14; John 6:37; John 6:37 & 65; Acts 13:48; John 10: 26-27.

**Eternal Life**

To view the New Covenant as experiential rather than a method of achieving entrance into the eternal heaven, it is necessary to see that the scriptural expression "eternal life" is often used to describe the quality of life that believers in Christ experience. Look carefully at John 17:3 and Acts 13:48.

**Parallels Between the**

**Two Major Covenants**

There are parallels between the two covenants that can best be seen by laying out the elements of each covenant side by side. In some ways the Old Covenants serves as a type or foreshadowing of the New Covenant.

**Old Covenant**

- Natural children of Abraham
- Chosen in Abraham
- Land of Israel
- Taught by law
- Justification by law
- Old earth
- Old heaven
- Law keeping

**New Covenant**

- Children of Abraham by faith in Christ
- Elect
- Kingdom of Heaven
- Taught by the Spirit of God
- Justification by faith
- New earth
- New heaven
- Faith in Christ

**Conclusion**

The benefits of the Old Covenant and the New Covenant are limited to their time frame, terms, and conditions. If the New Covenant requirement is essential to enter into the eternal heaven, then it seems to me it would be necessary for those who did not have an opportunity to participate in the New Covenant to be provided another method of gaining entrance; or else they would be eternally lost.

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*Answers to Grow In Knowledge*

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Terrible - Exodus 34:10       | 6. Voice - Joel 2:11             |
| 2. Great - Psalm 47:2            | 7. Mercy - Nehemiah 9:32         |
| 3. Power - Psalm 66:3            | 8. Looked - Isaiah 64:3          |
| 4. Affrighted - Deuteronomy 7:21 | 9. Famish - Zephaniah 2:11       |
| 5. Weather - Job 37:22           | 10. Persecutors - Jeremiah 20:11 |

Covenant era is the “ministration of the Spirit”. Every spiritual blessing New Testament saints have is through the Spirit. Knowing God has reference to the close fellowship that New Testament saints can have with the Lord.

Please read Deuteronomy 6:7-9; and I John 2:27.

Jeremiah 31: 34 further tells us that there would be forgiveness under the New Covenant. This also is “not according to” the Old Covenant.

New Covenant participants experience forgiveness in a way that Old Testament participants did not. The blood of Christ reaches back and covers the sins of God’s Old Testament children, but they did not have the benefit of experiencing the forgiveness provided to New Testament saints. New Testament saints experience forgiveness because the gospel is preached to them. They have the explicit message that their sins are covered by the blood of Christ, that they have been redeemed. Also, they have forgiveness, God has agreed to forgive their sins in an experiential way if they confess their sins and turn from them. They will feel in their hearts that these past sins will not prevent them from going forward serving God and feeling His presence with them. Again, it is the Spirit of God that applies this forgiveness to their minds and hearts.

Please read Acts 2:38 and 1st John 1:9.

### **Parties to the New Covenant**

Participants in the New Covenant are those who hear the gospel message and respond positively. They believe in Christ. They submit to water baptism. They are converted from a sinful way. They walk according to the laws of God. It is possible for them to fall away. If they fall away, they no longer experience the blessings provided to New Covenant participants.

Romans 10: 1-9; Matthew 7:21; Acts 2:38; Hebrews 6:4-6; 1st John 5:16; John 15:1-6.

### **Requirements of the New Covenant**

The requirement under the Old Covenant was that they keep the law.

The requirement of the New Covenant is “faith in Christ that works by love”. The laws of God that define moral living are still in effect, but the motivation for keeping God’s moral requirements is “faith in Christ that works by love”. The motivation for serving God by serving others is “faith in Christ that works by love”. Simply believing that Christ is the Son of God does not qualify a person to receive the benefits that the New Covenant provides. A true participant in the New Covenant must act on faith.

John 6:29; John 3:16; Romans 4; Romans 10:1-9; 1st John 3:22-24; 1st John 2: 7-8; Galatians 5:6.

### **Righteousness of the New Covenant**

Remember, any timely covenant that provides a relationship or fellowship with God requires righteousness on the part of participants in the covenant. The righteousness required is righteousness as defined by the terms and conditions of the covenant. Entering into the eternal heaven requires the righteousness of Christ as given to the family of God by His sacrifice. His righteousness is given to those for whom He died. Specifically, the righteousness required to receive the benefits of the New Covenant is “faith in Christ that works by love”.

Galatians 5:6; Romans 4; Romans 10: 4-10.

### **Benefits of the New Covenant**

The benefit of the New Covenant can be briefly described as dwelling in the Kingdom of Heaven. To understand the New Covenant, one must understand that the Kingdom of Heaven is not the same as the eternal heaven. The Kingdom of heaven is a blessing to New Covenant saints while they live in this world. It is described as “Righteousness, joy and peace, in the Holy Ghost”. It embraces all of the blessings and benefits that New Covenant saints receive. Citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven are those who keep the New Covenant requirement. The King and government is King Jesus. Under the Old Covenant the land was the old heaven and the old earth. Under the New Covenant the Kingdom of Heaven

is the new heaven and the new earth.

Matthew 7:21; Romans 14:17; Revelation 21:1.

### **Justification by Faith**

Under the Old Covenant arrangement justification was by law-keeping. Participants of the Old Covenant were justified in the limited way provided by that covenant. New Covenant saints are justified by faith. Because they hear the gospel message, they come to know that fundamentally (or eternally speaking) they stand just before God. New Covenant participants confess their faith and walk in it. Within the parameters of the New Covenant, God agrees to view them as just because of their faith. Justification by faith is not that which fits a person for the eternal heaven. Under the terms of the covenant, it is that which fits them to live in the kingdom of heaven. Old Covenant participants did not experience justification by faith in the way New Covenant participants experience justification by faith. The time frame, requirements, and benefits of a covenant are limited to the time frame, terms and conditions of the covenant.

### **Children of Abraham**

Both covenants are a fulfillment of God’s promises to Abraham. Heirs to the benefits of the Old Covenant were his natural descendants through the twelve sons of Jacob. Heirs to the benefits of the New Covenant are children of Abraham by virtue of having like faith as Abraham. It is necessary that God’s promises to Abraham were fulfilled. The Jews thought they had God “locked in” because of His promises to Abraham, but God fulfilled these promises to spiritual children of Abraham.

Please read Galatians 3:7, 25-29.

### **New Covenant Scriptures**

A basic understanding of the New Covenant sheds light on two passages of scripture that cannot be understood without a basic understanding of the covenants.

### **Romans Chapter 4**

Read Romans 4 before continuing. Abraham is a very special character in the Bible. He did not live in the Old

lish Old Covenant worship. The time frame has ended.

### **Conclusion**

The Old Covenant was limited to the time frame. It was limited by the ability of Israel to keep the requirement. It was limited to the benefits it was intended to provide. Righteousness, justification, fellowship, and forgiveness were limited.

### **The New Covenant**

#### **Introduction**

As already stated, it is my personal belief that the New Covenant is also experiential in nature. Eternity with God is real, and those who enter into the eternal heaven will do so by the blood of Christ. The timely benefits of the New Covenant are available because of the blood of Christ, but being a participant in the New Covenant is not a requirement for entering into the eternal heaven.

The parties to, terms of, and benefits of the New Covenant are not as quickly seen as those of the Old Covenant. However, after study of the scriptures, they are equally clear. It is difficult to know where to begin. We will examine the Jeremiah 31 prophecy of the New Covenant. Then we will proceed to see what New Testament scriptures say about the parties, terms and conditions, and benefits of the New Covenant.

#### **Jeremiah 31 Prophecy**

To me, studying the Jeremiah 31 prophecy of the New Covenant has proven to be a good initial approach to a study of the New Covenant. God, through the prophet, defined the characteristics that the New Covenant would have. It is important to read and comprehend what this passage is saying before proceeding with reading this article. A study of Jeremiah 31:31-34 provides a study of some of the characteristics of the New Covenant. Prayfully study Jeremiah 31: 31-34. Study this passage with a mind to receive the message this passage gives. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah"

(Jeremiah 31:31).

We can see from this verse that at the time Jeremiah wrote, the New Covenant had not been initiated. It was not in effect. If its purpose was to provide a method of achieving entrance into the eternal heaven, then that method was not available to those who lived before its beginning point. The fact that there would be a New Covenant tells us that the Old Covenant would be done away with. The verse states that the New Covenant would be with Israel and Judah. The New Covenant was first to the Jews and secondly to spiritual Jews (believers in Christ).

Acts 13:46 "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles."

"Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 31:32).

This verse tells us that the characteristics of the New Covenant that are described in verse 33 and 34 would be different from the provisions of the Old Covenant. It also gives us the reason God would annul the Old Covenant; because Israel did not keep the covenant.

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jeremiah 31:33).

The phrase "After those days" again tells us that the time was yet future when the New Covenant would begin. It would be "After those days" when God would put His law in their hearts. Under the Old Covenant, Israel wrote the law in visible places to constantly remind them of the requirements of the Law. It was written in prominent places to remind them that the covenant re-

quired them to keep the law. The New Covenant would be different in that God would write the law in the hearts of those who would be participants in this New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant dispensation, God was not writing His law in the hearts of Old Testament saints; at least not in the manner in which He writes His law in the hearts of New Testament saints.

I believe the expression, "writing His law in hearts", has reference to the fact that the New Testament is the "ministration of the Spirit". The Spirit of God was given to New Testament saints in a way that it was not given to Old Testament saints. New Testament saints are baptized by the Holy Spirit and filled with the Spirit in a way that Old Testament saints were not. Writing the law of God in hearts speaks of the fact that the Spirit of God guides participants in the New Covenant in the way of righteousness. When they are tempted to violate the law of God, the Spirit of God speaks to their hearts and tells them, "This way is not according to the law of God".

II Corinthians 4:6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34).

Under the Old Covenant, Israel knew the Lord by keeping the law. That is, they had limited fellowship with God by keeping the law. Under the Old covenant, men taught other men to know the Lord by teaching them the law. If man did not teach, who would teach men to know the Lord? We learn from the New Testament that God is the One who teaches men to know Him. Again, teaching men to know the Lord has reference to the fact that the New



that God made with Abraham, but it is a fulfillment of those promises. The parties to the covenant were God and the twelve tribes of Israel. It was not a covenant with the many nations that also existed at the time.

Deuteronomy 9:5 "Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

#### **Requirement of the Old Covenant**

The requirement of the Old Covenant was to keep the law, both the Ten Commandments and the ceremonial law. Please read Deuteronomy 30:11-16.

#### **Benefits of the Old Covenant**

Occupying the land was the benefit of the Old Covenant. The benefits of the land were not just the physical benefits of occupying the land. The true benefit was the fact that God was their God in a special way that He was not the God of the other nations. Through the Old Covenant, Israel could have God's protection and His approval, and they could have the benefit of the influence of His laws.

#### **Characteristics of the Old Covenant Provided Righteousness**

The Old Covenant provided the righteousness that was needed to have a national fellowship with God. On this point, consider Deuteronomy 6:25; "and it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us". Again, it is an important biblical point that any relationship with God requires righteousness. Therefore, any covenant between God and fallen man must address that requirement. Obviously, the righteousness of law keeping was not sinless perfection. It was limited by their ability and will to keep the commandments. Because of this limitation, their relationship with God was also limited.

Deuteronomy 6:25- "And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us."

#### **Teaching the Law was Important**

Because law-keeping was the requirement of the Old Covenant and law-keeping was that which provided righteousness, it was very important that the law was continually taught. It is important to remember that man could do the required teaching under the Old Covenant arrangement. Read the scriptures that emphasize this point.

Deuteronomy 6:7-9 "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

#### **Justification by Law**

Under the Old Covenant dispensation, justification was by law. If they kept the law, they would feel to be just before God. I suppose participants in the Old Covenant gained some limited sense of personal justification, but if they were honest before God and with themselves, they never felt they had achieved the sinless perfection that is required to stand before God.

By establishing law-keeping as the provision for the required righteousness, God agreed to view them as just on the basis of law-keeping. Again, justification under the law was limited to the Old Covenant arrangement and was not intended to achieve the perfection that God requires. It was limited to the time frame, and it was limited to the benefits that the Old Covenant could provide. Justification was limited by Israel's inability to keep the law perfectly. Apparently under the terms of the covenant, nationally, God would accept some level of law-keeping and allow them to continue to occupy the land and enjoy the benefits of the cov-

enant arrangement. Ultimately, the law was a "school master" to bring them to Christ. The law should have demonstrated to them their need of the righteousness that Christ provides.

Galatians 3:11; 5:4 "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.... Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

#### **Fellowship with God was Limited**

Fellowship with God under the Old Covenant was inferior to fellowship with God under the New Covenant. Since the gospel was not revealed, national Israel did not have a clear view of eternity with God. From an experiential viewpoint, they did not have eternal life. Fellowship was limited because the Spirit was not given. Consequently, they could not experience the quality of spiritual life that is possible under the New Covenant arrangement.

#### **Forgiveness was Limited**

Again, all the elements of the Old Covenant were limited to the provisions of the covenant. They were limited to the time frame of the covenant and to the benefits of the covenant. From an experiential viewpoint they could never feel that sins were truly forgiven. They could not feel truly forgiven because they did not know about the blood of Christ. The gospel was not revealed. They did not understand eternal redemption.

Hebrews 10:4 "For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins."

#### **End of the Old Covenant**

As the Old Covenant had a beginning point at Sinai, it had an ending point when God formally ended it. There was a transition from the preaching of John the Baptist to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. Jesus told the Jews, "Your house is left unto you desolate". Because of God's promises to Abraham, the gospel was preached to the Jews first, but they rejected it, and they rejected Christ. There is no biblical reason for the Jews to reestab-

# The Two Major Covenants

by Bro. Tony Jackson  
Tifton, Georgia

## Introduction

A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties that defines the terms and conditions of the relationship. The things God has created demonstrate that He does all things according to a plan. He is orderly in all his works. His relationship with his people is governed by defined covenants that set forth the conditions and benefits of the relationship. The scriptures teach that God has made two major covenants by which He entered into a relationship with this chosen people. The importance of these two covenants is shown by the fact that the scriptures are divided into two major sections that are referred to as the Old Testament and the New Testament. In this study, a testament is the same as a covenant.

I believe a broad view of the basic elements of the two covenants is a good approach to biblical doctrine because biblical doctrine fits clearly into the elements of the covenants. An isolated study of justification by faith, the kingdom of heaven, sanctification, salvation, etc. is more beneficial if we see that they fit into the covenants. It is easier to put a picture puzzle together if we first look at the picture on the box.

This is not an exhaustive study, but rather a brief summary. For purposes of brevity and clarity, I have purposely avoided trying to give biblical proof texts for every position stated. Also to be brief, I have assumed a certain level of biblical knowledge.

It is my belief that both covenants are experiential, that is, for the purpose of governing God's fellowship with His chosen people while they live here on earth. The covenants define the conditions whereby God has agreed to fellowship with His people in time. Most people have no problem with view-

ing the Old Covenant as experiential, but most see the New Covenant as a method of achieving entrance into the eternal heaven at one's death. It is my belief that participants in the New Covenant gain personal assurance of entering into the eternal heaven. It speaks of eternal concepts such as the blood of Christ that do secure eternity with God, but being a participant in the New Covenant relationship is not that which secures the eternal heaven.

## Background

In a study of the two major covenants, it is important to review the biblical background. God's relationship with mankind previous to either covenant helps us to understand the necessity of the covenants.

## Fall of Man

Man was created sinless, and in that sinless state he had a relationship with God. Adam as the representative of all mankind chose to end that relationship by disobeying. Man was no longer sinless. He was sinful. He was without righteousness. The relationship he had with God ended because he was unrighteous, and because God is righteous. According to biblical principle, righteousness cannot fellowship with unrighteousness. It is important to remember that any covenant between God and man must address this requirement of righteousness on the part of participants in the covenant.

## From Adam to Abraham

The period of time from the fall of Adam to the call of Abraham seems to teach that without God mankind will always sink into sin and rebellion against God. This is demonstrated in the wickedness of mankind that resulted in the biblical flood and in the tower of Babel event. The wickedness of this period also shows mankind's need to have fellowship with God. Hence the need for the covenants.

## Promises to Abraham

God's call of Abraham and the promises that God made to Abraham lay the foundation to both of the two major covenants. Both covenants were a fulfillment of these promises. Basically, God promised that Abraham would have descendants who would inherit and occupy the land which became the home country of national Israel. He promised that He would "be their God" in that land. He promised that all the nations of the world would be blessed through a descendant of Abraham. The promises were repeated and passed on to Isaac and to Jacob. The Old Covenant was a fulfillment of these promises to his natural descendants. The New Covenant was a fulfillment of these promises to his spiritual heirs, that is, those with faith like Abraham.

Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-8; Deuteronomy 9:5; Galatians 3:7-9; 3:14.

## Old Covenant

### Beginning of the Old Covenant

The Old Covenant was formally entered into at Sinai after the departure from Egypt. It is important to note that this covenant had a beginning point in time. It did not govern any relationships prior to the time it was made nor after it was ended. A covenant only governs relationships for the time it is in effect. This fact is important to remember with regard to both new and old covenants.

Deuteronomy 5:2-3- "The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day."

### Parties to the Old Covenant

It was a covenant between God and the twelve tribes of Israel. It is stated that the covenant was made because the twelve tribes were the heirs to the promises that God made to Abraham. The Old Covenant is not the covenant

# THE WICKED AND THE RIGHTEOUS CONTRASTED

The word of God often shows the difference in how God deals with the wicked versus the righteous. Usually, when the Scriptures are contrasting the wicked with the righteous, it is not contrasting those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ with those who are not redeemed. Rather, it is distinguishing between the difference in the way some of God's people live as opposed to the way other children of God live. Some are wise, some are foolish. Each of us usually fluctuates sometimes between being wise or foolish, righteous or unrighteous. When we are walking in the light, we are righteous; and when we are walking in darkness, we are unrighteous. The "righteous" and "unrighteous" are not determined by being redeemed, but rather by obedience and disobedience. "Our" righteousness does NOT get us into the eternal heaven! It is the righteousness of Jesus Christ alone, a fundamental righteousness, that enables us to enter the eternal heaven. But there is a practical righteousness that enables us to enter the kingdom of heaven. This practical righteousness is a result of us looking to God for the strength and grace we need each day to follow Him and resist the devil.

There is a major difference in the blessings the righteous receive as contrasted with the curses and chastening the wicked experience each day as they live. Please study some of the following passages to see whether you are receiving the blessings of the righteous or the cursings which are received by the wicked.

1. Psalm 1:1-6
2. Psalm 11:5-7 "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked

and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright."

3. Psalm 32:8-11 "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."

4. Psalm 37 especially verses 9-25 and 35-40!

5. Psalm 73

6. Psalm 75:10 "All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted." (The word "horns" figuratively means "power" according to Strong's Concordance.

7. Psalm 91:1-11

8. Psalm 125:1-5 They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever. For the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts. As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth with the

workers of iniquity: but peace shall be upon Israel."

9. Proverbs 10:6,9,21-32; Proverbs 11-15;

10. Proverbs 21:18

11. Proverbs 21:25,26 "The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not."

12. Proverbs 22:3-5 "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished. By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life. Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them."

13. Proverbs 28:1 "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion."

14. Proverbs 28:4-10

15. Isaiah 65:12-14 "Therefore will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit."

16. Malachi 3:13-18

17. Romans 2:7-10

18. Romans 11:21-23

19. Philippians 2:15

20. I John 1:5-10

WMM

In great love, He continues to knock until His bride is awakened. Though awakened, the bride is comfortable and reluctant to arise to open the door. "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" (Song of Solomon 5:3).

When she finally stirred herself from her comfortable bed, the bride discovered her "...beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." All that remained was "...sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock," tokens

of His love.

For a time the bride was made to wander in darkness, exposed to danger and persecution in search of her Beloved. All the while, she could have enjoyed blessed fellowship with Him, if she had only been more eager to open the door.

As Jesus Christ looks upon His churches throughout the world, He looks for a warm love toward Him and one another—a love that leads to devoted service, purity, and kindness.

He looks for steadfastness, a faithful continuance rather than a fluctuating state of devotion. He expects doctrinal purity, effective discipline, and a daily recommitment of ourselves to do His will. He also desires a zealous outreach and honest humility. These characteristics please the Lord Jesus. They are what the church, Christ's body, is to be today. And the church that does these things will make a solid impact for Christ in the community and around the world.

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# God Is All Powerful!

by Elder Don McWilliams  
Brownsburg, Indiana

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." (John 3:8).

We have once again come to the time of year referred to as the windy month. March usually seems to have stronger winds than most other months of the year. Not being schooled in weather patterns or weather trends, I cannot explain this phenomenon. Yet through years of past experience, we expect the same pattern to continue. There are certain things in God's universe that have continuing and very precise patterns. For instance, the orbits of sun, moon, stars, and planets have been set by God so that we expect them to be in a certain place at a certain time. Oh, what wonders God has wrought!

All physical things God has in His control, just as surely as He has ALL spiritual things. Just as Jesus explained to Nicodemus how the wind blows where it pleases, so is the Spirit

of God absolutely free to enter into the hearts of His people.

How can people make a statement that if you do not allow God into your heart, He can do nothing about it? Since when has puny man been able to resist the omnipotent power of Almighty God ??? God's Spirit can enter His children's hearts like a mighty wind blast, or as a gentle breeze that hardly seems to be felt by our natural senses. Each time I hear or feel natural wind, I think of His blessed Spirit.

Let's look back for a moment to the beginning account of God's creation. In Genesis 1:1 the Bible reads, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." According to Bible scholars, the word "created" in this verse carries the meaning of "out of nothing." It would be interesting to hear the explanation from the doubters how a God who is so powerful that, out of nothing, He can speak into existence the heavens and earth but still be incapable of entering the heart of one He has cho-

sen to bless with His Holy Spirit.

What blessings we rend from ourselves when we do not give God all the credit He is due. This was brought to my mind when reading the account of Moses and Israel as it grew closer to the time to enter the promised land. Israel had entered the desert of Zin and was at Kadesh. There was no water, and the people chided against Moses and Aaron. God told Moses to take his rod, go before the people, and speak unto the rock, and it would give water. But, Moses, in his anger, struck the rock, thus denying himself entry into Canaan. On different occasions, Jesus' disciples forgot about previous miracles that He had performed, not fully living in the knowledge of His almighty power.

God's Spirit moves where it wills; we can neither see, hear, nor stop His movements.

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

*It is a great deal easier to do that which God gives us to do,  
no matter how hard it is, than to face  
the consequences of not doing it.*

appreciation of His grace.

When a Christian is most aware of his own weakness, and most insecure in and distrustful of his own strength, then the power of Christ rests upon him, and he experiences divine strength coming in unto him. Christ fills none but the hungry, nor does he strengthen any but the weak. Only by going out of our strength, do we get His strength. When in an humble sense of our weaknesses we rest upon Christ, the power of Christ rests upon us.

The Lord Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees, "...They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick" (Luke 5:31). The word whole means to be in good health. Those the Lord addressed were far from being whole in the sense He intended, but like the Laodiceans, they were blind to their condition and would not seek the Physician.

These were the people that said, "...We have Abraham to our father" (Matthew 3:9). They believed that all of Abraham's race was to be saved, if all else were destroyed. One of their famous sayings was, "Abraham sits near the gates of hell, and suffers no Israelite to go down into it." It was a commonly held notion among the Jews that because they were Abraham's seed, they were in a state of salvation, in the favour of God, and had a right to all privileges of God's children. They trusted in, boasted of, and lived in assurance of this false idea.

The Jews also prided themselves as being Moses' disciples (John 9:28) and trusted in him. They trusted Moses' writings and the law delivered by him. They expected eternal life and salvation on account of their having it, and through their hearing it read every sabbath day, and by their supposed obedience to it.

While the Jews claimed to be looking for their Messiah and longing for His appearing, they in fact felt no need for Him. The Jews in Amos' day trusted in their prosperity and their political allies. They felt no real need of God. The Jews of Jesus' day trusted in their

race and their keeping of the law. They felt no need of God. The Christians at Laodicea trusted in their wealth. They felt no need of God. Many Christians in our day are built up in pride and self assurance and feel little true need for God. They are, therefore, lukewarm in their service to Him.

In his epistle, James called for repentance when he wrote, "But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:6-10).

The proud are those who have an inordinate self-esteem. They have a high and unreasonable conceit of their own excellence or importance. "God resisteth" the proud. Resisteth is a military term that means God sets himself, as in battle, against the proud, defying, beating down, exposing to contempt, and destroying them.

The proud are renounced throughout Scripture. (See Job 22:29; Psalm 138:6; Proverbs 3:34; 29:23; Matthew 23:12; Luke 1:52; 14:11; 18:14; 1 Peter 5:5, for example. Great blessings, on the other hand, are promised to the humble. "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12).

The church of Laodicea was warned that if they would not return to Christ in honest humility, they would be chastened. Why? Because Jesus loved them. He urged them, therefore, to swallow their pride and repent. He portrayed Himself as standing at the door and knocking. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:20).

Though they had erred greatly, the way of repentance and hope was not closed to them. Christ was still willing to be gracious, though their conduct had been repulsive to Him. To see the real force of this language, we must remember how offensive their conduct had been to Him. And yet He was willing, in spite of their past actions, to receive them to His favor.

Christ "knocks" by the preaching of His gospel, by His providence, and by His Holy Spirit. He comes to His children who have drifted away and offers to renew friendship and communion with them. When He knocks at the door, it becomes the responsibility of the hearer to open unto him. If the door is not opened, the opportunity for fellowship is lost. When the door is opened, the Lord Jesus promises, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

This is an image that pictures intimacy and friendship. Supper, in that society, was the principal social meal. The idea here is that between the Saviour and those who would open unto him, there would be the intimacy which is enjoyed by those who sit down to a friendly meal together. In all countries and times, to eat together, to break bread together, has been the symbol of friendship, and this is what the Saviour promises here. In love and mercy the Lord called upon them to be honest and humble, to admit their poverty, and to come to Him for spiritual wealth, raiment, and eye salve.

Christ's knocking at the door is reminiscent of Song of Solomon 5:2, "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." The bride, a picture of the church, is asleep, while the Bridegroom is without, seeking entrance. His "...head is filled with dew," and His "...locks with the drops of the night." This seems to indicate that He had been shut out for some time, long enough to be wet with the dew.

# True Humility

by Elder Greg Phillips  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

The seventh characteristic Jesus is looking for among His people is true humility. He called for this in His letter to the believers in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22). The members of this church may have been relatively wealthy materially, for they lived in a city that acquired great profit from the sale of textiles and a popular eye salve. The Lord Jesus, however, was not impressed with their prosperity. He addressed them as follows: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou were cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Revelation 3:15-20). The Lord Jesus saw the believers in Laodicea as being neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. This may mean that He would rather have them be unbelieving and hostile to the gospel than professing it without reality. The person who is openly antagonistic or completely unbelieving is often easier to win than someone who expresses agreement but remains indifferent.

This is not the only possible interpretation of the reference to their insipid lukewarmness. Robert Mounce points out that near Laodicea were hot springs

which provided healing for the sick, and cool springs that provided refreshment for the weary. Lukewarm water does neither. Because these believers were lukewarm, they offered neither healing for the spiritually ill nor refreshment to those who were weary under the load of their sin. In other words, they did not have the spiritual power to help anyone. Although they prided themselves on being "rich," and they looked upon themselves as not needing anything, they were actually poor, blind, and naked.

Because of their lukewarmness, the Lord said, "I will spue thee out of my mouth," referring to the fact that tepid water tends to produce sickness at the stomach, and an inclination to vomit. The image is intensely strong and denotes deep disgust and loathing at the indifference which prevailed in the church at Laodicea. If they did not repent they would be utterly rejected and cast off as a church. It should be noted that what was threatened to that church may be expected to occur to all churches, if they are in that condition. All professing Christians, individuals as well as churches, that are lukewarm should expect the same outcome.

It was this attitude, "... I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," that led to a lukewarm feeling toward the Lord. In the days of the prophet Amos, Israel had the same independent spirit that led them away from God. "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!" (Amos 6:1). Times of continued worldly prosperity led to their tendency to bring luxury, pride, and indifference to God's service. They vainly trusted in their own self-importance and thought their wealth and political

connections would secure them from the judgments threatened. Many were puffed up with pride and rocked asleep in carnal security by their privileges.

In the days of Amos, in the days of the church at Laodicea, and in our day, prosperity has often led to a spirit of pride and arrogance and a turning from God. When one is comfortable, he is usually satisfied and not very motivated to seek anything else. This is especially true in spiritual matters.

The Lord Jesus emphasized the necessity of relying on Him when He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). Our Saviour here has under consideration disciples who are branches of the True Vine. The branches must continually receive from Him the power to do good. The branch, however good it may be, however fruitful it may have been in the past, cannot bear fruit of itself. As the branch partakes of the nature of the tree, is nourished by its juice, and lives by its life, so must disciples be continually in fellowship with Christ in order to bear fruit.

The Apostle Paul said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (II Corinthians 12:10). The church of Laodicea apparently took pleasure in the comfort and wealth. They said, "...I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Paul, on the other hand, took pleasure in poverty afflictions and persecutions. Those experiences in themselves gave no pleasure, but what the experiences produced in Paul's life brought pleasure. In all his sufferings, Paul was brought to a closer relationship with the Lord and a greater

the question with an emphatic NO! So when temptation comes, no matter how beautiful and enticing its form may be, just remember that it took a lifetime to get your good name, and it could all be lost in a very few minutes.

Third, keep in mind that you will not be the only one affected. The consequences would be most severe if you had to pay the price alone, but others who love you and whom you care about will also have to pay the price. Satan never cares how many are hurt. It matters not to him how many suffer with you. If anything, the more who suffer, the more he likes it. When we yield to temptation and sin, then others who know and love us will probably be hurt. If we care for them, we must prevent this wide-spread pain. Remember when Achan sinned, he thought no one would find out, and no one else would be affected (Joshua 7:20). But when he was stoned to death by the people, his family was also stoned. Every sin we commit affects our blessings in life, and therefore affects those whose lives are bound to ours. Think about your loved ones the next time you are tempted to sin!

Fourth, we need to remember also that our sin robs us of the sweet fel-

lowship of our blessed Lord! He will not walk in close fellowship when our path is one of sin. In the beginning, it was sin that caused Adam and Eve to lose the fellowship of God in the cool of the day, as declared in Genesis 3:8 & 24. They were eventually driven from the comforts and blessings of the garden itself. God would have no part of their sins; and though Christ died for our sins, He will not partake with us in committing them. Not only do we lose fellowship with Him, but also we bring shame on His name because we profess it. We bring a black mark against His bride, the church. Instead of yielding to temptation, let us resist it and live a life that will glorify and honor God, one in which we will walk close to Him. Our hearts will be warmed by His sweet fellowship.

Let me close by saying that your temptations are really no different from any other person's. Yours come through your lust, theirs by their lust. Let us remember this important Scripture found in I Corinthians 10:13, and consider these revealing words: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with

the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Pray for God to lead you not into temptation, and also pray that when Satan does, you will have grace and strength to say no! Do it because you love God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and want to live as a devoted servant of God. Do it because you know deep down it is the right thing to do. Do it to make the world just a little better place. And do it because God has already provided you with an escape hatch that you may slip quietly away from Satan and into the arms of our loving Savior. He said we may show our love for Him by obeying His commandments. His exact words are, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15) I want to do that, don't you? Let us praise Him in our hearts and with our lives.

Do not let Satan use your past sins to discourage and defeat you. One reason we are called sinners is because we have all yielded to temptation and sin. We should repent to God for the past sins and rise up with renewed commitment to Him, to resist temptation, walk in the will of God, and glorify Him with holy living.

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## Grow in Knowledge

1. And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord; for it is a \_\_\_\_\_ thing that I will do with thee."

2. "For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a \_\_\_\_\_ King over all the earth."

3. "Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy \_\_\_\_\_ shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee."

4. "Thou shalt not be \_\_\_\_\_ at them: for the Lord thy God is among you, a mighty God and terrible."

5. "Fair \_\_\_\_\_ cometh out of the north: with God is terrible majesty."

6. "And the Lord shall utter his \_\_\_\_\_ before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"

7. "Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepest covenant and mercy, let not all the trouble seem little before thee, that hath come upon us;..."

8. "When thou didst terrible things which we \_\_\_\_\_ not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence."

9. "The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will \_\_\_\_\_ all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen."

10. "But the Lord is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my \_\_\_\_\_ shall stumble, and they shall not prevail:..."

more time. Three common temptations are (1.) lust of the flesh, (2.) lust of the eyes and (3.) pride of life according to 1 John 2: 16. They have worked on so many people that Satan tried these “favorite three” on our Lord; but they fell flat when it came to Christ. One reason they failed is simple, because He has no lust or pride. I am sure that Satan was surprised when they did not work on Jesus. After all, they had worked on Eve, and they have continued to work on humanity at large ever since.

We might say that the common denominator for all temptation is that it works on the “forbidden” principle. If you are not supposed to do it, then you may want to do it all the more. Remember that the first sin came through the “forbidden fruit.” God said to Adam, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” (Genesis 2:17). So Satan uses the forbidden (1.) appetite, (2.) money, (3.) ambition, and (4.) sex. These are not always forbidden, for when they are used in ways that please God and are in keeping with His will for us, there is no forbidden climate. God gave appetite and that makes food taste better, and that is alright most of the time. But when people who have an appetite for alcohol become drunk, take drugs to alter the mind, and eat foods that are harmful to them; it is sin. Money will pay our lawful debts, and they should be paid. It will also help support the church and honor God. Part of our money belongs to Him for His purposes. But when a person loves money to the point he will steal and lie and kill to get it, that is sin. Ambition can also be good if we try to pull ourselves up and do better. It is good when we try to become a better person. But when we will sell our souls, give up our principles, and forfeit our integrity in order to become a big name or star, we have sinned.

The last one mentioned is sex, and that is ordained by God to be enjoyed between husband and wife in the institution of marriage and in love for God

and each other. However, when men and women have sex before marriage or outside of marriage, or two men or two women together, it is a sin. Many today give in to their lust for the forbidden; and when Satan tempts them, they gladly yield and sin, and sin, and sin!

What happens when that occurs can be devastating. Many of the problems people have and much of the troubles which plague our society can be traced to sin and linked inseparably to this yielding to temptation. Let me list some of the perils to sin. I am not going to mention the obvious such as imprisonment for crimes or disease and death from sexually transmitted diseases. Yet there are some results that our society has not recognized, and our attention needs to be called to them. (1.) We may fall from our own steadfastness and lower ourselves before God and man, by yielding to temptation (II Peter 3:17). (2.) We make our bodies of its members to become instruments of unrighteousness, tools of wrongdoing and sin (Romans 6:13). (3.) From a personal standpoint, we may have to live with guilt haunting us everyday, for our tomorrows are linked to our past (Psalm 51:3). (4.) Most of all we are sinning against the God Who created us in His image; and if we are saved, we were saved by His Son, Jesus Christ (Psalm 51:4).

Whether the temptation comes from within or without, it displeases God when it becomes sin in our lives. The rampant sin must be an awesome burden for humanity to carry, since we must all pay the price in some measure. What affects one of us in some measure affects us all. When Adam sinned, humanity was plunged into sin, and all who have lived on earth have been touched by it.

Perhaps we will never, this side of heaven, be able to understand how deeply touched God is by all that is happening. Yet sin continues, repeated again and again throughout the ages. The paths of temptation are always crowded with people. The results

do not have to be sin; and thank God not everyone who is tempted does sin. Millions of temptations will be resisted today. Some lovers of God will find the strength to do right. Many will stand up and be counted on the side of righteousness. Paul reminds us that God has given us spiritual armor that can successfully defend us against Satan and his cunning temptations (Ephesians 6:10-17). But let me share with you some additional defences against temptation. First, we must recognize the importance of using the holy Scriptures in resisting temptation. It is perhaps one of the most effective ways. I know that because it is the way our Lord resisted the temptations of Satan in the wilderness. Each time Satan tempted Him, He used the Scriptures according to Matthew 4:4, 7, 10. Three times He was tempted, three times He used the Scriptures, and three times He resisted the temptation. How can we argue with such a success rate as that? When you and I are tempted, let us remember what the Scriptures command and, if necessary, tell Satan what they say. He does not like it when we have a “thus saith the Lord” and act in obedience to the word of God. May we have the courage to adhere to the teaching of the Bible; and when temptations come, say “NO thank you, Satan.”

Second, we must remember that yielding to temptation is sin, and sin will damage or destroy our good name and reputation! It is important to have a good name according to Proverbs 22: 1. It will do more for you than wealth and fame, yet many times it is destroyed by yielding to temptation and sinning. So many times a lifetime of good living has been destroyed by a careless and unguarded moment. After one act of indiscretion, the sin is soon widely known, and people’s lives are damaged. That damage can be irreparable as others may never see that person the same way again. Is it worth enjoying the pleasures of sin for a moment and paying the price for the rest of your life? Most people would answer



# Temptation and Sin

by Elder W. H. Durrence  
Thomaston, Georgia

We want to look at the Model Prayer of our Lord as recorded in Matthew 6:9-13. Look carefully at a statement made by our Lord in verse thirteen, when He said, **“Lead us not into temptation.”** As there are many lessons we need to learn and understand, the one before us is very important for it affects us all.

Our Lord said to ask that God not lead us into temptation. What does He mean by that statement? We know that he does not mean that God will “entice” us to commit sin. How can we be sure of that? Well, the Bible tells us so in James 1:13, when God says, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” It is clear that the kind of temptation under consideration is to entice to sin. If God did that, then He would be opposing Himself. Jesus said that would be true of Satan if he were cast out himself. He said, “And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?” (Matthew 12:26.)

There are times when God does “test” us to try our faith as in Genesis 22:1 when God did tempt Abraham. The word there means to be tried. It did not mean that God wanted him to sin, only to try his faith so that he (Abraham) would know his strength in the Lord. We are told in Hebrews 11:17 that Abraham was “tried.” God did not want him to kill his son; He even sent for an angel to stop him. It seems clear to me that this trying of our faith is embraced in the words of our Lord Jesus in the Model Prayer. It may well be that this is the “fiery trial” of which Peter spoke in I Peter 4:12. At any rate, we are to pray that we not be led into such times. It is true that some of the greatest blessings may come as the result of such trials, but unless we

are able to endure them, they would bring great difficulty. Therefore we are wise to pray for God not to lead us into these paths.

Though God will not lead us into the paths of sin, there is one who certainly will. Even when we pray the above prayer, and as we pray it, Satan will be looking for ways to tempt us and allure us into sinful paths. Satan is our adversary according to I Peter 5:8. God said, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:” He wants to destroy us, not only in eternity but also in time. He would like for us to be separated forever from the glorious fellowship of God. Since God by His grace, through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, has prevented that from happening to the elect, then Satan will try to draw us into sin and disrupt our fellowship with God as we live in the world. His method of getting us to sin is called temptation. Because God in us is greater than Satan in the world (I John 4:4), Satan cannot make us sin. If we sin it is because two things have happened. (1.) Satan has tempted us to sin and (2.) we have yielded to his temptation and engaged in the act. We need to understand that “temptation” is not sin, for Jesus was tempted according to Hebrews 2:18. The Bible says, “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” Not only did He not sin, but also He is able to help us resist sin. It is not in the temptation that wrong occurs, but in yielding to the temptation.

Two great examples help us to understand that temptation can and should be resisted and refused. In the Old Testament, Joseph was blessed of God to be overseer in the home of Potipher, the Egyptian. Potipher’s wife

tried to seduce Joseph, but he resisted because he would not displease his God. Genesis 39:9 says, “There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” Joseph is often considered to be a “type” of the Lord Jesus. In the resisting of sin, he certainly did hold true to the pattern in the wilderness temptation, Jesus was tempted by Satan three times, but each time He refused the temptation (Matthew 4:1-11.) None of God’s children can ever say that we could not help but sin, unless we deny the power of God. When we are tempted and call upon Him in prayer, He is able to strengthen us to be able to resist. It is when we do not resist that we commit the act of sin. In such times we have transgressed the law of God and that is sin. I John 3:4 says, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”

Why do we sin? The answer is really very simple, we refuse the strength of God and give in to the weakness of the flesh. We are tempted when we have lust and give in to it. James 1:14-15 says, “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” Satan is no dummy; he knows the weaknesses of everyone of us. No, he is not omniscient as God is, but he is a hard worker and does have a good memory. When he tempts us and finds it does not create lust, he will not use that temptation again. But when he tempts us and finds those things that cause lust, he will use them again and again. He will reshape them, paint them a different color (so to speak), and try one

# *Our American Heritage*

## *GEORGE WASHINGTON*

“It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible. Do not ever let anyone claim to be a true American patriot if they ever attempt to separate religion from politics.”

## *JOHN QUINCY ADAMS*

“The first and almost the only Book deserving of universal attention is the Bible.

## *ABRAHAM LINCOLN*

“All the good from the Saviour of the world is communicated through this Book; but for the Book we could not know right from wrong. All the things desirable to man are contained in it.”

## *CALVIN COOLIDGE*

“The foundations of our society and our government rest so much on the teachings of the Bible that it would be difficult to support them if faith in these teachings would cease to be practically universal in our country.”

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We are not only traitors to our founding fathers, but traitors to our Heavenly Father if we continue to allow the ungodly to rule our nation. It is imperative that we work together and stand together in every way humanly possible to restore the righteous principles upon which our nation was founded.

## *A PRAYER OF George Washington*

‘Almighty God; We make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep the United States in Thy holy protection; that Thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion, and without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.’