

# It's What You Scatter

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes.

Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

"Hello Barry, how are you today?"

"H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good."

"They are good, Barry. How's your Ma?"

"Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time."

"Good. Anything I can help you with?"

"No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas."

"Would you like to take some home?" asked Mr. Miller.

"No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with."

"Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?"

"All I got's my prize marble here."

"Is that right? Let me see it", said Miller.

"Here 'tis. She's a dandy."

"I can see that. Hmmmmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?" the store owner asked.

"Not zackley, but almost."

"Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let

me look at that red marble." Mr. Miller told the boy.

"Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller."

Mrs. Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me. With a smile she said, "There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever.

"When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store."

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho community and while I was there, learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts, all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket.

Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her, and moved on to the casket. Her misty, light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes.

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket. "Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about."

They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. "Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size, they came to pay their debt."

"We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world," she confided, 'but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho."

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

The Moral:

We will not be remembered by our words, but by our kind deeds. Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath.

**IT'S NOT WHAT YOU GATHER,  
BUT WHAT YOU SCATTER  
THAT TELLS WHAT KIND  
OF LIFE YOU HAVE LIVED!**

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JESUS HAD NO SERVANTS,  
YET THEY CALLED  
HIM MASTER.

HAD NO DEGREE,  
YET THEY CALLED HIM  
TEACHER.

HAD NO MEDICINES,

YET THEY CALLED HIM  
HEALER.

HAD NO ARMY,  
YET KINGS FEARED HIM.

HE WON NO MILITARY BATTLES,  
YET HE CONQUERED THE  
WORLD.

HE COMMITTED NO CRIME,  
YET THEY CRUCIFIED HIM.

HE WAS BURIED IN A TOMB,  
YET HE LIVES TODAY.

FEEL HONORED  
TO SERVE SUCH A LEADER  
WHO LOVES US.

# The Sovereignty of God

by Elder Lee Price  
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I would like to begin this article with the very important subject of God's sovereignty. This subject is one of great importance because in order to have a proper foundation to know God, we need to know as much about Him as possible. It will definitely help us to know that God is sovereign, meaning that He is superior to all others and is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

We need to consider first that God is omnipotent or has unlimited power. Did you know that the first verse in the Bible teaches that God is omnipotent? Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Think of the expression **God created!** Can man create? No, he cannot. Man can invent, but it is only an all-powerful God who can make something from nothing. That in itself tells us that God is omnipotent. Also the very name God in this Scripture speaks of His omnipotence. The word God in Genesis 1:1 is translated from the Hebrew word Elohym. A root word for Elohym is the Hebrew word El which is defined as one who is all-powerful.

In addition to God's omnipotence shown in creation, there are many other examples of His omnipotence in the Scriptures. In Genesis chapter 7, there is the account of the flood. There had been no rain up to that time, and God caused rain to fall for forty days and forty nights. During this time, all flesh was destroyed except the people and animals God saved with the ark that Noah built. His power is again shown in Genesis chapter 19 in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone from the sky. Abraham, at age 100, and Sarah, at age 90, could have only had a child at those ages with the blessings of an all-powerful God.

Think of the plagues in Egypt in the book of Exodus. The Nile River turned to blood. There were the frogs, lice and locusts. God sent hail that burned. With these and other plagues, God brought the strongest nation in that part of the world on its knees. That nation of Egypt, which kept the weakest nation (Israel) in bondage, had to let God's people go free.

As God the Father is omnipotent, so is God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. I John 5:7 tells us, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." This is one of the best Scriptures I know which teaches the doctrine of the trinity, or the three in one Godhead, which means God is three Persons and yet one God at the same time. It also teaches that what One is, the others are also, so we will look into the Scriptures a little deeper concerning the omnipotence of the Son and the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit.

The omnipotence of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is recorded a number of times in the New Testament, and especially in the four gospel records of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Note the power of Jesus in Mark 1:23-27: "And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him." Jesus is shown to have the power even to cast out His enemies

without a struggle. They simply submitted to One who is omnipotent! Jesus was God manifest in the flesh!

The power of the Lord Jesus is shown in a variety of miracles such as healing people with leprosy and paralysis, along with those who were blind and deaf. He also fed multitudes with very little food, but the greatest of all those miracles was when He raised the dead. One of those cases was the rising of Lazarus in John 11:43-44. "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go." I say this is the greatest of miracles because it is one for which man generally has seen no overturning. God has given men the knowledge and ability to heal with medicine, but man has never been able to raise the dead with his own power.

Jesus spoke of the omnipotence of the Holy Spirit when He said in John 3:8, "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 everyone that is born of the Spirit." He said that as man cannot control the wind, neither can we control the Spirit of God because He is all-powerful.

Now that we have examined some records of God's power, it would be well to look at the witness of some who experienced that awesome power. After being made to live and eat in the field as an animal for seven years, and then being restored to his throne, Nebuchadnezzar said in Daniel 4:34-35, "And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and

I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants 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 none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The king said in this passage that only God is all-powerful and that no one could even question Him!

King David was a man after God's own heart, meaning he wanted to know Him as well as he could. David said of Him in I Chronicles 29:10-12: "Wherefore David blessed the LORD with all the congregation: and David said, Blessed be thou, LORD God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatest, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." David the king said with God alone is the power to do all things.

The Psalmist said in Psalm 115:3, "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." God could do as He pleased because He is all-powerful. Men may have power to some degree and misuse the power they possess, but the power of God is totally consistent with His righteousness and will not be abused. With all the power God has, there are things He cannot do. God's word tells us in Hebrews 6:18, "That by two immutable things, in which it was **impossible for God to lie**, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." God cannot lie because He is so righteous.

God is also omniscient. This means He is an all-knowing God. He knows all, He always has and always will know all

things. The prophet Isaiah wrote that His omnipotence and omniscience are closely related in Isaiah 46:9-10. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In these two verses, He first spoke His omniscience in saying He foretells the future. He then spoke of His omnipotence by saying that His counsel would stand.

The disciples believed that omniscience was a quality of God. They told Jesus in John 16:30, "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." By this we can say that as God could not be God if He were not omnipotent, neither could He be God if He were not omniscient or all-knowing.

God is more than omnipotent and omniscient. He is also omnipresent. This means that God is always everywhere. God said in Isaiah 66:1, "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" He also said in Jeremiah 23:24, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD." These Scriptures indicate to us that God is indeed always everywhere.

The Psalmist David witnessed the same by saying in Psalm 139:1-10: "O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou has beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful

for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

David began with God's omniscience by saying that God knew all about him, and then wrote about His omnipresence by writing that wherever David might be, God would be there also. By this, he said that God's omniscience and omnipresence are inseparable. Since we saw earlier in Scripture that His omnipotence and omniscience are inseparable, we must conclude that His omnipotence and omnipresence are also inseparable. To put it in more common terms, He is all-powerful, all-knowing and always everywhere!

Since God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent, He is indeed God and one above all others. He is inerrant. This means He is without flaw. He is also unchangeable. The record of Scripture in Malachi 3:6 is, "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Why does God not change? Why do people change? They usually do it to improve themselves, although not all changes are for the better. God does not change, because He needs no improvement!

Since God is inerrant, or without flaws, it is also consistent to say that everything about Him is inerrant. One of those things we need to consider is His Word, or the Bible. The sixty-six books of the Bible are inerrant. It may seem strange to say that a book written over a long period of time by many different men could be inerrant, but while different men wrote it, they did it by the inspiration of God. Consider these words in II Peter 1:19-21: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that

no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but **holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.**"

Notice three things in this scripture. Number one, we have a sure word of prophecy because it was inspired by a sovereign God. Number two, it is of no, private interpretation. No one can believe it as he pleases. And number three, God's Spirit moved or inspired men to write it. Men could not write as they pleased because it is God's Word and is worthy of the same respect as God Himself.

We can say other things about the Bible. It is complete, will not be altered by God, and **should not be altered by man!** God has promised severe penalties in His Word for those who alter it. In Revelation 22:18-19, these words are written: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." If someone takes a book someone else has written and alters the words, that person can be in a lot of trouble. The Word of God deserves even more respect because **His** Word is greater.

God has said some things in His Word about His Word. We have already seen from II Peter 1:21 that the Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures are called profitable in 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, throughly furnished unto all good works." The Word of God is even compared to food in Deuteronomy 8:3. "And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers

know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live." It is food for our souls.

Possibly one of the most profound statements about the Word of God is, found in Psalm 119:89, which is, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." The word settled means it, stands firm and is unchangeable. Think about this. At the writing of this Psalm, none of the New Testament was written, and neither was some of the Old Testament. In spite of this, God's Word was settled in His mind forever. We may say, what was truth is truth and will always be truth. God's Word is so consistent, because God Himself is so consistent. Men may try to change it in a variety of ways, but truth in God's eyes will always be truth.

We have examined a few scriptures that deal with the authority of the Scriptures and their validity. How can we believe what the Scriptures say about themselves? Think of it in this way. The greatest subject ever known (God) is it explained by the best and most reliable source (God). There is another way, which is by faith. Notice what the Scriptures say about faith and belief in Hebrews 11:1-3, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." He said in this passage that we believe in creation because of faith. Think about this. No one has seen the creation, and so the only way we can believe it is by faith. This is also the only way we can truly believe in the divine inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures. By faith we have confidence in a sovereign God who is able to inspire men to write His Word and preserve it through the ages.

We worship a God who is dependable in **all things**. There are many passages of Scripture which exhort us to trust in Him, and they are there because He is trustworthy and dependable.

Notice the words of the wise man Solomon in Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." The first exhortation is to trust in the Lord with all we have and to not depend on our own wisdom. The second exhortation is that we should acknowledge Him first in all our ways. I say first because we should not wait until we are bogged down in something to seek God's blessings and leadership.

The first application of this is that we should seek His guidance in all we do. When we must make decisions in some matter, we should ask Him to bless us to know the right decision. Then we should ask Him to lead us in carrying out the decision. The only decisions we might not ask God for direction in making are those such as should we go to bed, should we get up, or should we sit down for a meal in our homes. And yet, even in those, we need to acknowledge God. When we go to bed at night, we should ask the Lord to give us a restful night, and watch over us and our households. When we arise the next morning, we should ask the Lord to lead and, bless us during the day. When we sit down to any meal, we should pray that God will bless the food to our good and us to His glory. I once saw a young lady sit down to eat something and watched as she bowed her head to give thanks. That young lady was thanking God for just a small package of M & M candy. A person who will thank the Lord for such a small amount is closer than many in acknowledging Him first in all ways.

We should also remember that with the exhortation God has given us a promise that He will direct our paths. Think of these things. One who is all powerful will direct those of little power such as we. One who is all-knowing will direct those of little knowledge such as we. One who is ever-present at all times will direct people such as we who have never seen many places. May God bless us to trust Him for

direction.

Consider the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 125:1-2: "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." The promise here is that they who trust in the Lord shall stand firm. They will be as mount Zion, which means immovable; and the reason is that the Lord shall be around them as mountains. Think of the symbolism which shows our being protected by

the Lord as a mountain being protected by mountains.

Consider the words of the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 1:12. "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Why did the Apostle Paul know Whom he had believed? He had walked with Him. Why was he willing to suffer? He knew there was the great God who loved him and would be with him and bless him with better blessings than

everything the world had to offer. Why was he persuaded that God was able to keep that which he had committed? He had experienced these things in his life, and knew them by those experiences. We would do well to keep these things in memory to help us always be aware of the fact that **God is most dependable!**

By these statements, we may be assured that God is indeed sovereign and superior to all others and, therefore, worthy of our worship and devotion.

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# Grow in Knowledge

1. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that \_\_\_\_\_ the will of my Father which is in heaven."
2. "And he trembling and \_\_\_\_\_ said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."
3. "And the \_\_\_\_\_ passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
4. "Now when they \_\_\_\_\_ this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"
5. "I can do all things through Christ which \_\_\_\_\_ me."

6. "But be ye doers of the word, And not \_\_\_\_\_ only, deceiving your own selves."
7. "Therefore to him that \_\_\_\_\_ to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
8. "But when thou doest \_\_\_\_\_, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."
9. "But he that doeth \_\_\_\_\_ cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."
10. "And whatsoever ye do, do it \_\_\_\_\_, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

## *A Christian's Pledge*

*I will do more than belong; I will participate.*

*I will do more than care; I will help.*

*I will do more than believe; I will practice.*

*I will do more than be fair; I will be kind.*

*I will do more than forgive; I will work.*

*I will do more than earn; I will enrich.*

*I will do more than teach; I will inspire.*

*I will do more than give; I will serve.*

*I will do more than live; I will grow.*

*I will do more than be friendly; I will be a friend!*

# Man's Free Will

by Elder W. A. Mullis  
(deceased)

In considering the subject of the freedom of the will of man, I would like for us to consider first of all, the freedom of the will of God. I do not suppose that there is any person who truly in his heart believes in the true and living God and who has any knowledge of the truth about the attributes of God, but what would agree without any reservation that **God is perfectly free!** "He doeth according to His will", "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will", etc. (Daniel 4:35; Ephesians 1:11). And yet, even though God is perfectly free, He cannot sin because God is a perfectly holy and righteous God. In Titus 1:2, Paul says that God cannot lie. He cannot lie because lying is sinning, and God cannot sin! "Whosoever is born of God doth not sin, for his seed (God's seed W.A.M.) remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (I John 3:9). So we see that God is free, and yet, He cannot sin. What I am trying to say is that God is free within the realm of His holy and righteous nature. All God can do is righteousness, holiness, and godliness.

Now let's look at man as God created him in the garden of Eden. If any man on this earth ever had a free will, it was Adam. He was created pure and clean, free of all sin, wickedness and ungodliness. In the midst of God's garden, there were two trees. One represented death and the other represented everlasting life. Adam was free to eat of all the trees of the garden, even of the tree of knowledge, which was the tree of death (Genesis 2:16-17).

When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they died in sin. They became sinners! Except for the grace of God, they and all their offspring (all the human race) would have been forever banished from the presence and communion of the right-

eous God of heaven and earth.

Immediately after Adam and Eve sinned, God drove them out of the garden. He did this for a particular reason! We find in Genesis 3:22b-24: "and now LEST he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever: Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." Please notice that the reason why God drove man out of the garden was not only because he had sinned, but "lest he put forth his hand, and eat, and live forever." God did not just drive him out and ask or tell him not to come back, but the Scripture says that God "placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Thus we know that when God placed man in the garden, he was clean, free of sin, and **free to choose** to eat of all the trees of the garden; but when God drove him out, he was dead in trespasses and sin, and that he was no longer a "FREE MAN" because he was in the bondage of sin. In II Peter 2:19, we find these words, "of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." Adam and Eve were overcome and brought into the bondage of the devil--so were all their offspring--the entire human race. In Romans 5:12, we find: "Wherefore as by one man (Adam..W.A.M.) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" Some men do not believe that Adam's sin passed upon all men, but please consider that between the time that God gave Adam the one commandment in the garden of Eden,

and the time that God gave the Mosaic law, approximately two thousand five hundred years later, **there was no law for men to transgress.** Yet, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. This is positive proof that all men sin, because they are sinners by the nature they receive from their father, Adam.

The word of God declares throughout the Bible that men are corrupt in mind, heart, and body. Listen to the following Scriptures: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Romans 8:7-8). "And God saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). "The heart is deceitful above all the things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, murders, drunkenness, etc." (Galatians 5:19-21). This is the horrible picture of truth that God's word gives of man in his bondage to sin. Surely man is free in this corrupt nature--**but he is only free to do what this nature allows him to do!** He is exactly as Jeremiah says in Jeremiah 13:23: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." It is just as impossible for the man by nature to do good in God's sight as it is for a black man to change the color of his skin or the leopard to change his spots, which is theirs by nature. Let God be true and every man a liar.

So we see on the one hand that God

in His holy and righteous nature is perfectly free within the realm of this nature, but it is impossible for Him to sin, for this is contrary to His nature. On the other hand, the nature of man is wicked and corrupt--mind, heart, and body-

and even though man is free within this corrupt nature, it is just as impossible for him to do good in God's sight, of his own free will, as it is for God to do evil.

grace, and love lifts man up out of the corruption of his nature and imparts a new heart and new spirit, he will forever be banished from the presence and communion of the righteous God of heaven and earth!

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# Take Heed!

by Elder T. L. Crumpton  
(deceased)

"Take heed that ye **do not your alms before men, to be seen of them:** otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 6:1). Not only did Jesus teach His apostles how to live, but He also taught them how not to live. The flesh seeks to be praised of men, especially men of wealth; and Jesus warns us against such self righteousness.

or to be seen of men, they are exalting themselves and shall be abased (Matthew 23:12a). Jesus told His disciples in plain words, and I repeat the text, "Take heed that ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." God is not going to bless one of His children who seeks to be praised of men, and that is what we are seeking when we give alms to be seen of men.

be seen of men in their giving, I cannot tell. Our life and eternal destination is in the hands of God, and man has nothing to do with it. Furthermore, there is no joy whatsoever in the heart in giving when it is to be seen of men. There is joy in the heart when we give out of the heart of love we have for God and help bear the burden of those in need.

When God's people give before men

Why God's people would want to

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## Answers to Grow In Knowledge

- 1. Doeth - Matthew 7:21
- 2. Astonished - Acts 9:6
- 3. World - I John 2:17

- 4. Heard - Acts 2:37
- 5. Strengtheneth - Philipians 4:13
- 6. Hearers - James 1:22

- 7. Knoweth - James 4:17
- 8. Alms - Matthew 6:3
- 9. Truth - John 3:21
- 10. Heartily - Colossians 3:23

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### SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND!!!!

Matthew 7:7-8 "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

I Chronicles 16:11 "Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually."

leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray" (Matthew 18:11-13).

### SEEK EARLY AND CONTINUALLY!!!!

Psalms 63:1-2 "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary."

### WHAT ARE SOME THINGS GOD SEEKS?

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him" (John 4:23).

### WHAT DOES SATAN SEEK?

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not

# Witnessing About the Eternal Heaven

by Elder William M. Mullis  
Waycross, Georgia

Whereas most of the Bible is about works and obedience required for us to enjoy fellowship with God in the kingdom of heaven, here on earth, the word of God also tells us about one day going to be with God in the eternal heaven when this time world is over.

## The Dwelling of God

The Bible does not concentrate on this eternal heaven but does tell us some about it. The eternal heaven is the dwelling place or home of the triune God. In Revelation 4 and 5, John describes his vision of the eternal heaven, and indeed it is glorious to behold. As Moses prayed for God to bless Israel, he cried, "Look down from **thy holy habitation**, from heaven..." (Deuteronomy 26:15). As Solomon prayed at the dedication of the temple, he said, "Hear thou in heaven **thy dwelling place**..." (I King 8:30). II Chronicles 30:27 says, "Then the priests the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to **his holy dwelling place**, even unto heaven." One of Job's three friends asked, "Is not God in the height of heaven?" (Job 22:12). The Psalmist said, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." (Psalm 73:25). And we read in Psalm 123: 1, "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens." Isaiah records the words of God as He says, "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool..." (Isaiah 66:1). When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He said we should pray, "Our Father, which art in heaven..." (Luke 11:2). And when Stephen was speaking, he quoted God as saying, "Heaven is my throne..." (Acts 7:49). Then, while Stephen was being stoned, the Scripture says, "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the

glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55, 56). From the above Scriptures, we plainly see that the eternal heaven is the eternal abode or dwelling place of the eternal God.

## Saints Desire to Go!

This eternal heaven is where all the family of God shall one day be forever, when this time world is over. We will be with God in His eternal home, not made with hands, where there will be no more sorrow, pain, afflictions; no more death; and no more sin! Oh how glorious it shall be, that perfect heaven which has no end. It is of this place to which David looked forward after the death of his son and said, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (II Samuel 12:23). The Apostle Paul was looking forward to this eternal heaven when he said, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain... For I am in a strait betwixt two, **having a desire to depart**, and to be with Christ; which is far better." (Philippians 1:21,23). When Paul wrote to the Church of God at Corinth, he spoke of this glorious eternal heaven and desire to be there when he said, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens... We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (II Corinthians 5: 1,8). He also spoke of the glory of the resurrection of the body when he said, "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." (I Corinthians 15:42-44). (Please read I Corinthians 15 completely). And Paul also said, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ

who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body..." (Philippians 3:20,21 ). The songwriter says, "Life here is grand, with friends I love so dear." There are so many blessings here in this time world. But we also have problems and troubles, persecutions and afflictions here in this life. When we enter the eternal heaven, however, everything good and wonderful in this time world will be as nothing compared to what we shall have there! And we will have none of the problems of this world. O what a happy day that will be!

## How Do We Enter the Eternal Heaven?

In studying about the kingdom of heaven (for God's obedient children now), the Scriptures plainly declare we must be **DOERS** of God's word to enter. God judges His people according to their works day by day as we live here. When we walk in the light and serve Him, we have peace and joy in the kingdom of heaven. (See Matthew 7:21; 16:27,28; Hebrews 10:30,31; Acts 14:22; Luke 16:16, etc.). **BUT, entering the eternal heaven is much different!** Our eternal salvation is not by our works, not according to our works, and not of our works. (See Romans 9:11; Ephesians 2:9; II Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5.+) We do not and cannot do enough good works to merit entering the eternal heaven. (See Romans 3:20). Entering the eternal heaven when this life is over is because of the amazing grace and work of God alone!

The Bible teaches that before the world began, God chose His people, a host so great no man can number, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. (See Ephesians 1:4; Romans 5:9; II Timothy 1:9). He predestinated those whom He chose "unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the



good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:5-6). As far as our eternal salvation is concerned, we do not accept Him, rather "HE hath made us accepted." Our eternal salvation from the eternal hell to the eternal heaven is a work God does completely by Himself without the aid or instrumentality of man in any way.

### **Redemption or Justification**

In order to enter the eternal heaven, we must be cleansed from our sinful condition. When Jesus Christ was coming into the world, the angel told Joseph, "that which is conceived in her (Mary) is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save His people from their sins." (See Matthew 1:20-21). Jesus Christ came to save His people from their sins! He did not try to save, or offer to save. He saved His people from their sins! If He had saved everyone from their sins, then everyone would be in the eternal heaven. But He accomplished what He came to do: He saved His people from their sins, thereby assuring that they would be in the eternal heaven. We were not redeemed with silver and gold, "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (I Peter 1:19). His blood was not shed for a few, but for many! Jesus said, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:28). The Apostle Paul said, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (See Romans 5:8-9). The Apostle John declared that Jesus "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." (Revelation 1:5). This eternal cleansing or redemption is not something we do, but something God has done for us! There is a washing and cleansing that we do to have fellowship with God now (see Revela-

tions 7:14, I John 1:9, and James 4:8), but the washing and cleansing which is necessary to get us into the eternal heaven was done by God!

### **The Effectual Call.**

#### **Quickening, Born Again**

Because of the sin of Adam, he died (not a physical death, but a spiritual or soul death); and every descendent is dead in trespasses and sins until God quickens them, or makes them alive spiritually, or calls them from death to life. God told Adam, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." He died (was separated from God) that very day when he ate, and we all died with him. "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). Those who were chosen and predestinated by God, and redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, are born again, quickened, called from death to life by the marvelous power of God. We are completely passive or inactive in bringing about this new birth or effectual call. Being dead in trespasses and sins, we have no love for God and no desire or ability to change our condition. We are touched by God and brought from death to life! "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). God calls us from death to life spiritually, just as He called Lazarus from death to life physically. Lazarus did not "come alive" by his own power, will, desire, or strength. He was DEAD until God called him to life, and, when God called him to life, he could not stay dead! Even so it is with us spiritually! The Scripture plainly says we were not born again by our own will, desire, or power, but by God! "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13). We do absolutely nothing to be born again, quickened, or called from death to life. It is the work of God!

#### **The Final**

#### **Resurrection (Glorification)**

Just as God is the only One Who

can bring about spiritual life, quicken us, cause us to be born again, He is the only One Who can raise the dead or bring our natural body out of the grave and take us to the eternal heaven. In the end of this time world (and God is the only One Who can bring it to an end), those who were chosen by God, predestinated by God, called by God from death to life spiritually, and redeemed from their sins by God, will be raised by God, be made absolutely perfect, and carried home by God to His eternal heaven. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (I Thessalonians 4:13-18). "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Corinthians 15:51-57).

## Conclusion

From start to finish, from beginning to end, our eternal salvation, step by step, is the work of God alone! To Him be glory! "And we know that all things work together for good to them that

love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover

whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:28-31).

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# STAND FIRM

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan: and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And **the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan**, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan" (Joshua 3:15-17).

There is a difference in being hard-headed and taking a firm Scriptural stand on a matter. As we journey through life, there are numerous situations where we must compromise, be willing to "give-and-take," and let others have their way. But there are also many circumstances where it is wrong to compromise, or agree to go along with a matter. If we fail to "STAND FIRM" on things God has declared is the right way, we will always suffer severe consequences. Just as there is "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Eccl. 3:7b), there is a time to sit down, and a time to stand up! May God help us all to know when to stand firm and unmovable, and when to be willing to compromise.

It is also important to know that when we ought to stand, we will often feel unable to stand. We will feel weak, want to run, and want to let others have their way. Notice the next two verses of Scripture to see if you can tell

how children of God are able to stand when they should. "...exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand" (I Peter 5:12). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2).

God's grace is that which enables us to stand when we should. Without Him, we cannot stand as the word of God teaches. His grace is sufficient!

Look carefully at Ephesians 6:10-14: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness." It is only in God's strength that we are able to stand against the wiles of the devil! We must put on the whole armor of God to be able to stand and withstand!

When God told Moses to go stand before Pharaoh, he felt weak and unable to do what God was telling him to do. "And the LORD said unto Moses, Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; lo, he cometh forth to the water; and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Let my people go, that they may serve me" (Exodus 8:20). How

do you think Esther stood before the king? John the Baptist before Herod? Stephen before the Sanhedrin Council? Paul before Festus; then before Agrippa? Jesus before Pilate? How can anyone really stand against evil?

How do you know the difference in unalterable positions and those which are not so important? "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (II Thessalonians 2:15). When the word of God has spoken, we must stand firm! When the rules or decisions we are making are merely determined by man's tradition, we must be willing to compromise! Jesus said, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? ... Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." (Matthew 15:3,6).

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, **be ye steadfast, unmovable**, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye **stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel**" (Philippians 1:27).

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved" (Philippians 4:1).

## CAUTION!!!!

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10:12).

# Why Pray

by Elder Edward McIntyre  
Fitzgerald, Georgia

## **The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much – James 5:16**

We know God is Almighty in power and does all things after His own counsel. Paul, in writing to the Ephesian Church, tells us that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Eph 1:11b). In the Book of Daniel we find these words: "And all the inhabitants 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 none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:35)

After considering the above verses and knowing of God's perfect sovereignty and power, the question might come to mind: should I even bother to pray? If God is always going to do His will, and His will is always perfect, why pray?

**The first** of many reasons is that we are commanded to pray. Matthew 6:6a

says: "But thou, when thou prayest", Paul instructed the Ephesian Church in this manner, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" In his writings to the Thessalonians," Paul says, "Pray without ceasing." James in the opening scripture exhorts us to be diligent in fervent prayer.

Therefore it is important to recognize that the answer as to why we should pray comes from the same God Who tells us that He "works all things after the counsel of His own will." This very same God informs us that effectual, fervent prayer on the part of His people **avails**, not just a little, **but much!**

How can this be? How can an immutable, all-knowing, sovereign, eternal God listen to our prayers and consider them to influence the outcome of events great and small? This is something that I do not understand and we may never know or understand. **But**

**this we do know:** God tells us that our prayers are heard and does have an impact.

So then, when we are troubled or burdened we should pray. We should respond to temptation or trial by praying. What should we do on behalf of the sick? Pray. What is our responsibility toward our civil authorities? Pray for them. How can we make a difference in our nation, our families, and our churches? Pray. What should we do when prayers are answered? Offer up a prayer of Thanksgiving!

**Why pray?** We are commanded to pray, and we have the assurance from God that we will be heard. Psalm 55:17, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and **He shall hear my voice.**"

Isaiah 65:24, "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, **I will hear.**"

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## **WILL YOU PLEASE HELP!**

There are many ways you can help spread the truth of salvation by Grace and the Sovereignty of God. First, we need more Scriptural articles every month. We need more ministers to write. If every minister would send a written message of some of the sermons God has given him to preach, it would be a blessing to thousands of God's dear children. Second, we need more personal testimonies about the ways God is blessing your life. Every reader, young and old, could tell about a special way God has protected, provided for, or guided your life. Will you please write today? Thirdly, we need more financial contributions if you are able to help in this way. Since we place numerous magazines in Nursing Homes, hospitals, doctor's offices, libraries, and businesses, it takes extra help financially from those who want to help share the truth with others. Fourth, we need more people to help distribute magazines in local communities. If you could place magazines in your community, there is a box on the back of each magazine to put the name and address of the local church, name and phone number of the pastor, and the times of worship services. In addition to the above, we need your prayers. Please pause right now, and ask God to help, guide, and bless this effort to share the truth with others. If we all work together, we can help many of God's children rejoice in His AMAZING GRACE!

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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](http://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.

# The Enemy

by Elder Steve Pearce  
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To be successful on the battlefield, one must be sure to never be surprised. Those who have been most successful spend time studying the tactics of their enemies. By knowing what to expect from the enemy, the soldier can be better prepared, and therefore more successful. God's people have an enemy with whom we must do battle every day. That enemy is Satan. Fortunately, the scripture describes his tactics. If we spend time studying those tactics, we are less likely to be surprised and more likely to be successful in temptation.

Genesis 3:1-6 depicts the temptation of the woman by Satan. First we are told that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field. That tells us that Satan is cunning, sly, and devious. All of these characteristics are evident as Satan tempted the woman. First, he engaged her in conversation by asking a question. He said, "Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Satan begins by asking what seems to be a benign question. However, Satan's tactic is to disarm the woman and get her to begin talking with him. Often, Satan begins his temptation with something that may seem harmless.

The woman answered that she could eat of every fruit of the trees of the garden except one. She said that "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die." Satan then does what he is famous for, he lies. He tells the woman, "Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan lies and tells the woman that she will not die and says that God does not want you to eat of the fruit because you will become like Him.

It is interesting that Satan does not

begin his temptation of the woman by presenting the fruit to her. Rather, he tempts her with something that appeals to her and convinces her that the way to get what she wants is through the forbidden fruit. Satan tempted the woman with power: she could become as gods by eating of the fruit. That same tactic is used by Satan today to tempt us with something that appeals to us. It might be pleasure, fortune, power, influence, or anything that appeals to us, and then convinces us that the way to attain what we want is through sin.

The woman then makes the fatal mistake. She begins to rationalize the sin. First, the tree is good for food. It might be true the tree was good for food, but there were enough trees in the garden that the woman would not have been hungry if she had not eaten the fruit of this one tree. Second, the tree was pleasant to the eyes. Although the tree was pleasant to the eyes, that is no reason to eat of the fruit. The woman could have enjoyed the beauty of the tree and the fruit without eating it. Finally, the tree was desired to make one wise. Satan's lie had convinced her that she would benefit from eating of the fruit of the tree.

Once we begin to rationalize sin, it becomes extremely difficult to turn back. We believe the lie that we will gain long-term pleasure and benefit from sin. Satan neglects to tell us of the tremendous pain associated with sin. We may have a short period of pleasure, but then comes the pain of sin that sometimes affects us for the rest of our lives.

I Peter 5:8 tells us to "Be sober, be vigilant because your adversary the devil as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may destroy." Satan is seeking us with the purpose of destroying us through sin. He looks for us when we are weak and tempts us in our most

vulnerable areas. Satan knows what kinds of things tempt us the most, and then uses his deviousness to convince us that we can get what we want through sin.

So, how can we be successful in the temptations we face? I Peter 5:8 tells us to "be sober" or serious about Satan! Too often the devil is portrayed in comical ways or as a mythical character. There is nothing funny about Satan, and he is all too real. We must remember that Satan is indeed the enemy; a formidable enemy who is seeking to destroy us. We are also to be vigilant or attentive, aware, and on guard. We must be attentive to the fact that Satan is around and seeking the best time to attack us. We must be aware of our weaknesses, and be making preparation before the attack to defend ourselves against those weaknesses. We must always be on guard because we never know when Satan will attack.

Jesus also gives us an example of how to fight against the temptation of Satan. Three times in the wilderness, Jesus was tempted by Satan. Each time Jesus rebuffed Satan by quoting scripture relevant to the temptation. When we are tempted, unlike the woman and like Jesus, we should not enter into dialog with Satan, but simply respond with the Word of God. Of course, we must be familiar with the scripture to be able to use it as a weapon against our enemy.

We can be successful in temptation. However, we must be prepared for the battle, reject the lies of Satan, take the devil seriously, and be vigilant. We must also realize that we cannot defeat Satan in our own strength, but must rely on the strength of God. When faced with temptation, we must turn to God for our strength in the battle through his Word and prayer, realizing we will only do so if we are sober and vigilant!

# God's Design For A Marriage

by Bro. Clay Gill  
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The world's ways are opposite God's ways. They always are. Wisdom is based on behavior and attitudes that are shaped by God's truth. Sin always rejects and scorns that truth. The truth always brings about a better, abundant life, while rejection of that truth brings pain and difficult consequences with long-lasting consequences.

The "Christian" marriage has gradually adopted the world's ways in the past several generations. "Christian" families are breaking apart left and right. They suffer because they are not living by the truth of God. But they can't somehow see that the judgment that is upon their lives is because of their rejection of God's ways. They don't know they have left Him, so they certainly don't look for a way back.

Now let me ask you a question. "Does a person need to know he is going against God's way in order to suffer consequences?" Certainly not. Moral laws are the same as physical laws. If a person jumps off a roof and breaks a leg, nobody is surprised. Does it make a difference if it is a child who hasn't learned about gravity? Will he break his leg even if he has not yet taken a course in physics? Of course! The laws are active even if we plead ignorant. That is why we have parents. That is why we have pastors. That is why we have the Bible. The same is true for marriage. If God's laws are not observed, it does not mean that the consequences are not relevant and real. Many people have found what they feel is an escape from those consequences, and they call it divorce. God has clearly taught us a pattern in the scriptures for what a marriage should look like, but very few couples observe it today.

I believe that within Ephesians 5:31-33, there are some essential truths that all "Christian" marriages must under-

stand and apply in order to live within God's design for marriage.

***For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband. Ephesians 5:31-33***

## **A Couple's Calling (Ephesians 5:31)**

***"For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh."***

It is important to first note what kind of unity this verse is talking about. The scriptures state that when a couple gets married, "They two shall become one flesh." Living a one-flesh marriage is one of the most often misunderstood concepts by couples. This passage does not merely talk about marriage on a physical level, but on an emotional and spiritual level as well. God does not say that they are "one" only when all is working out well, or only when they share a bed. Jesus amplified its meaning when He said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder" (Matthew 19:6). Marriages are special not because they take place in the church, but because they take place before God whether one believes in Him or not. All couples are accountable to God for their marriage.

If we believe God's truth about oneness, then we will have to accept that the husband and wife are to blend together in such a marvelous way that the two will be one. Who complains because he has two eyes that function as one? Who wishes they only had one hand rather than two. But they function

as one. They work together. The husband and wife functioning as one does not cause any drag on the relationship, but only brings extra support, strength and beauty. The two work together as one. This is harmony, and it is beautiful. It works when we follow God's pattern.

Oneness requires the husband and wife, male and female, to blend together as one under God's Lordship. If the husband and wife remain as two so that they retain their individualism and independence, then they will destroy their marriage and lives. Many "Christian" marriages are not "Christian" at all because they do not live as one, but two.

**The Husband is Commanded to Love his wife (Ephesians 5:33)**  
***"Love his own wife even as himself."***

The husband is called to love his own wife as himself. First of all, love is not an emotion. Love in this context is a verb, an action, a manifestation of behaviors which clearly communicate devotion to, stewardship over, admiration of, protection of, and more. The fruit of these behaviors of love is that the wife will then feel the emotion of being loved by the husband. When a husband loves his wife in words or emotions only (without the actions), then the wife quickly "falls out of love" and begins to seek that emotion through other people or things.

I also want to communicate to you that verse 33 is not a suggestion. It is a commandment without exception. The husband does not love his wife when she is lovable, or available, or easy to love. As a counselor, I often hear excuses about why the husband is not loving the wife. Some men tell me, 'She won't listen to me,' or 'If I were to lead this home, she would leave.' The truth is, there is no excuse acceptable

with God. The husband is commanded to love his wife even as himself, period, no exception. It is a choice on behalf of the husband to love his wife as Christ so loved the Church. It is then God's work to take that fruit and apply it in the heart of the wife. Men must trust that God is in control of the woman's heart as he, the husband, keeps this commandment of God.

**The Wife is Commanded to Reverence Her Husband (Ephesians 5:33)**  
***“and the wife [see] that she reverence [her] husband”***

The husband is to focus on one thing: loving his wife. By doing this, he will carry out his headship well. The wife is called to focus on one thing too: reverence her husband. The word reverence means respect, honor, or submit to.

The wife needs to cultivate an attitude of honor and respect for her husband so that it shapes how she responds to him. As a wife demonstrates godly honor and respect towards her husband, even when he does not “deserve” it, fruit is produced which God then uses to bring peace into the heart of the wife and conviction into the heart of her husband. Honor and respect demonstrate reverence in such a way that the husband's response will be

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to love the wife. This love and reverence between the husband and wife then creates a cycle which maintains the health of the marriage relationship. The lack of love and respect also creates a cycle which will destroy the marriage.

The role of the wife is very clear. Her calling in marriage is to reverence her husband. It is through this special calling she can become one flesh and live out a great marriage. The wife's part in the whole plan of marriage is critical. She needs to value her role and not despise it.

In conclusion, I would say to the husbands, if you are feeling disrespected in your marriage, it is probably because you are not doing your job of loving your wife the way you are called to in Ephesians 5:33. If you have this complaint about your marriage, then I challenge you to first love your wife. Love her even when she is disrespectful to you. Love her even when you don't feel like she deserves it. Only as you fulfill your responsibilities as a husband will you find the joy inside marriage that you are looking for. Your happiness inside the marriage does not come from your wife. It comes from God, and your obedience to his commandments.

Likewise, wives, if you do not feel loved by your husband, my counsel to you would be to reverence your husband. Offer him respect for his role in the family, his leadership, and his opinions. Remember, your happiness and fulfillment inside the marriage does not come from your husband. It comes from God who has called you to be obedient to His commandments

If we would earnestly apply the truths in this passage of scripture, then marriage inside the church would not look like the divorce and remarriage rates of the rest of the world! Boys and girls would grow up desiring to be in the same kind of marriages/relationships that they see modeled before them by their parents instead of being confused about what a Godly relationship is. It is because of so-called “Christian” marriages and our lack of obedience to Ephesians 5:31-33 that we are now experiencing a day and age where the definition of family is relative and the institution of marriage is seen as something to hate. Wake up husbands and wives! Live Ephesians 5:33. In doing so, God will be honored and glorified, and your home will be full of joy and peace!

## WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHERE ART THOU? AND WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

“And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?” (Genesis 3:9)

“And the angel of the LORD found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur. And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai” (Genesis 16:7,8).

In the above two passages of Scripture, we find three questions: 1)Where are you? 2)Where did you come from? 3)Where are you going? God knows

the answer to all questions He ever poses to His people, but when He asks a question, it should motivate us to examine ourselves and consider the answer very carefully. His questions often make us realize the mess our lives are in.

God knew where Adam was! He knew what Adam had done. God knows where we are, what we are doing, what we are thinking, where we have been, and where we are going!!! He knows more about us than we know about ourselves. He told people what they were going to do before they even did

it and denied they would ever do such a thing (Peter denying Christ).

Do you remember Hagar? When she ran from Sara and was in the wilderness thinking she would die there with her son, God sent an angel to her, communicated with her, and then Hagar said a great truth we need to remember: “Thou God seest me!” (Genesis 16:7-13) He sees right where you are and knows your every need and deed! God knows where you have been, where you are, and where you are going. Do you know that much about yourself?

**1. Whence comest thou?**  
WHERE DID YOU COME FROM?  
Where have you been?

First, remember where God brought you from!!! Where were you before God came to you and delivered you from the bondage of sin and death? (Ephesians 2:1)

Where were you before God helped you to get away from wickedness? Did you stay away from evil works once God helped you to flee evil?

Where were you last week? Where did you come from? Did you go somewhere you should not, or do something you should not have done? Where did you come from? Did you come from a week of walking in the wrong paths to walk different on Sunday, but then go back Monday to a different lifestyle?

God even asked Satan this question: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:7).

Did Satan tell the whole truth? His response about where he had been and what he had been doing was not totally true. Peter tells the rest of the story: "the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:" (I Peter 5:8).

When God asks you, "Where did you come from?" Do you tell part of the truth and a deceitful lie. Do you try to deceive others about where you came from? When you start to go to sleep at night, as you reflect on the day's activities, do you also think about the sins you committed and ask God to forgive you for being/going/doing things not pleasing to Him. Whence comest thou? Think about it! Think about it every day!

**2. Where are you?** Are you where you are supposed to be? Are you really where God would have you to be? Are you DOING what God would have you to be doing or are you doing some things you ought not to be doing?

Where are you in your spiritual de-

velopment? Are you where God would have you to be? Are you looking at yourself in the mirror of God's word, or comparing yourself to others? (Look at II Corinthians 10:12.)

The Church at Laodicea THOUGHT she was in pretty good shape. She thought she knew where she was. But she was wrong! There was a major difference in how she perceived herself and how God revealed her condition. "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:" (Revelation 3:17). Think about the difference in where this Church thought she was and where Jesus said she really was! We need to hear God asking us, our families, and the Church: WHERE ARE YOU? Self-evaluation using the word of God as our plumbline will help us see where we are, and where we need to go from here.

Did Peter know where he was when Jesus told the disciples they were all going to forsake Him? "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples" (Matthew 26:33-35). Peter thought his faith and allegiance to Jesus was much stronger than it really was. The same is true of most of us. Where are you in your spiritual walk and development? In your prayer life? In your knowledge of the word of God? In your love for God and the brethren?

**3. Where are you going?** Do you know what God would have you to be doing right now? For the rest of your life? Do you know WHY you are here and what you are supposed to be doing in the future? What are your goals, plans, objectives, purposes. Are they in harmony with what God would have you to do in the future, or carnal plans you have made for your life? Jesus came here to do the will of His Father. "I came

down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (John 6:38). He also declared, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world!" (John 18:37). He knew where He came from, where He was, and where he was going!

Do you know the Father's will for your life? The Apostle Paul in Philippians 3 declared where he came from (verses 5-6). He also knew where he was! And he knew where he was going: his goal and objective in life. He said, "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you" (Philippians 3:13-15). He was pressing on the upward way, new heights he was gaining every day! Where are you going? Are you moving forward and upward, staying still, or going backward?

May God help us all every day to examine ourselves to see where we came from that day (what have we been doing pleasing to God and/or grieving His Spirit?) Let us pray for God to help us see where we really are each day. And then as we honestly look at our spiritual assessment, may He bless us to set higher goals for the future, pleasing Him each day. At the close of our lives, may God help us to be able to say: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:" (II Timothy 4:7).

**WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?**

**WHERE ARE YOU?**

**WHERE ARE YOU GOING?**

# Bible Reading Calendar for October

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Isaiah 19,20,21	Eph. 2
2	Isaiah 22,23	Eph. 3
3	Isaiah 24,25,26	Eph. 4
4	Isaiah 27,28	Eph. 5
5	Isaiah 29,30	Eph. 6
6	Isaiah 31,32,33	Phil. 1
7	Isaiah 34,35,36	Phil. 2
8	Isaiah 37,38	Phil. 3
9	Isaiah 39,40	Phil. 4
10	Isaiah 41,42	Col. 1
11	Isaiah 43,44	Col. 2
12	Isaiah 45,46,47	Col. 3
13	Isaiah 48,49	Col. 4
14	Isaiah 50,51,52	I Thess. 1
15	Isaiah 53,54,55	I Thess. 2

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Isaiah 56,57,58	I Thess. 3
17	Isaiah 59,60,61	I Thess. 4
18	Isaiah 62,63,64	I Thess. 5
19	Isaiah 65,66	II Thess. 1
20	Jer. 1,2	II Thess. 2
21	Jer. 3,4	II Thess. 3
22	Jer. 5,6	I Tim. 1
23	Jer. 7,8	I Tim. 2
24	Jer. 9,10	I Tim. 3
25	Jer. 11,12,13	I Tim. 4
26	Jer. 14,15,16	I Tim. 5
27	Jer. 17,18,19	I Tim. 6
28	Jer. 20,21,22	II Tim. 1
29	Jer. 23,24	II Tim. 2
30	Jer. 25,26	II Tim. 3
31	Jer. 27,28	II Tim. 4

**ANSWERS TO  
CROSSWORD  
PUZZLE  
SEPTEMBER 09**

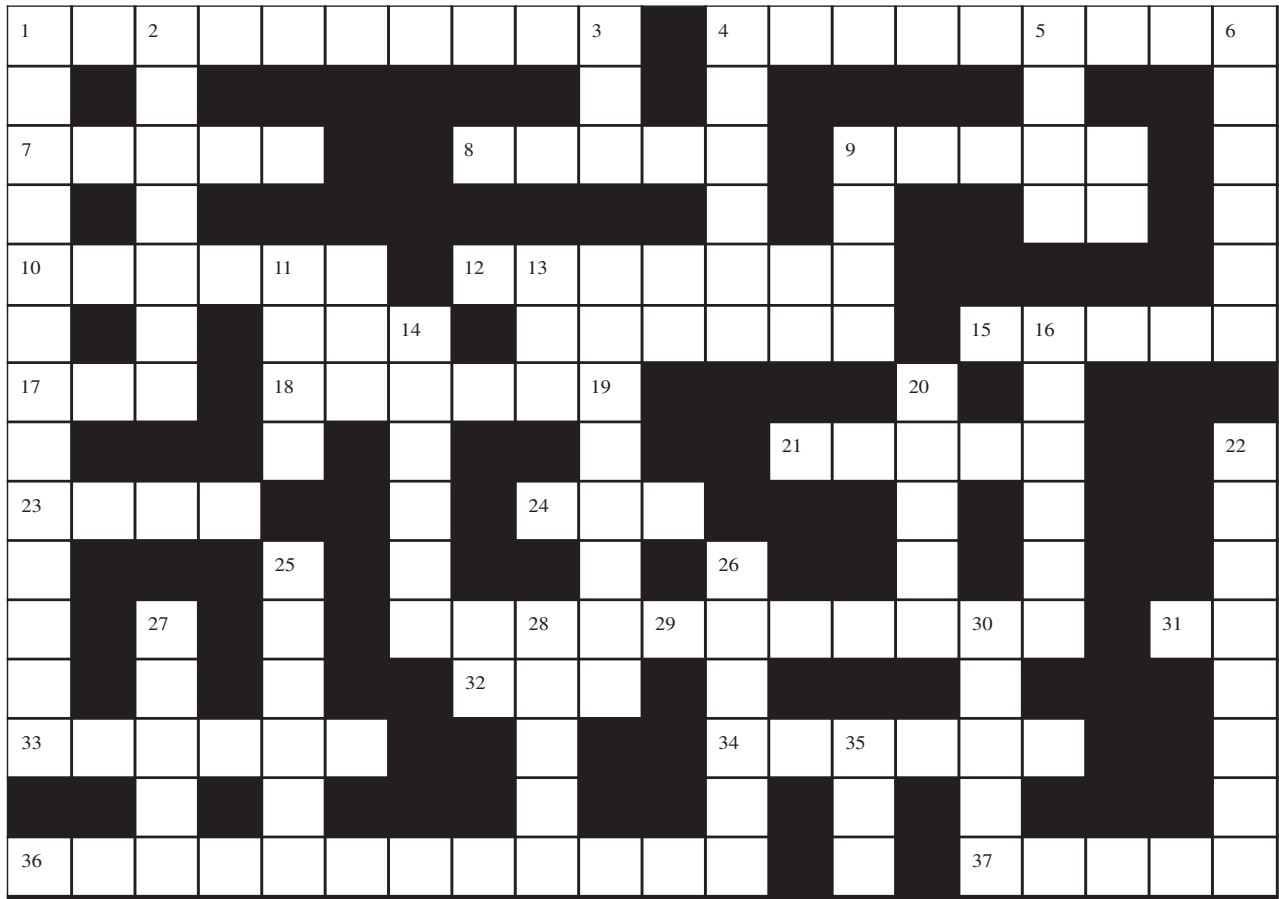
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# Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. "...vengeance belongeth unto me, I will \_\_\_\_\_, saith the Lord." 4. "But the natural man \_\_\_\_\_ not the things of the Spirit of God:..." 7. "Howbeit this kind \_\_\_\_\_ not out but by prayer and fasting." 8. "Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all \_\_\_\_\_, but we shall all be changed." 9. "Behold, a virgin shall be with \_\_\_\_\_, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." 10. "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in \_\_\_\_\_; but in deed and in truth." 12. "That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of \_\_\_\_\_ life." 15. "And the Lord smelled a \_\_\_\_\_ savor;..." 17. "Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with \_\_\_\_\_ accord," 18. "And the eyes of them both were \_\_\_\_\_, and they knew that they were naked;..." 21. "But with the \_\_\_\_\_ blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" 23. "Can the Ethiopian change his \_\_\_\_\_, or the leopard his spots?.." 24 "If we \_\_\_\_\_ that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 29. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine \_\_\_\_\_ to do it." 31. "And \_\_\_\_\_ know that all things work together for good to them that love God,..." 32. "... The Lord shall judge \_\_\_\_\_ people." 33. "For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a \_\_\_\_\_? ..." 34. "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath \_\_\_\_\_ the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 36. "For our \_\_\_\_\_ is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" 37. "...and so \_\_\_\_\_ passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"



## DOWN

1. "Not by works of \_\_\_\_\_ which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us,..." 2. "\_\_\_\_\_ your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." 3. "He that hath a bountiful \_\_\_\_\_ shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor." 4. "And saying, \_\_\_\_\_ ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 5. "Who shall change our \_\_\_\_\_ body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,..." 6. "Is not God in the \_\_\_\_\_ of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are!" 9. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt \_\_\_\_\_ his name Jesus. for he shall save his people from their sins." 11. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none \_\_\_\_\_ earth that I desire beside thee." 13. "But by \_\_\_\_\_ grace of God I am what I am:..." 14. "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his maker: but he that honoureth his hath \_\_\_\_\_ on the poor." 16. "But thanks be to God, \_\_\_\_\_ giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 19. "\_\_\_\_\_ nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..." 20. "Buy the truth, and \_\_\_\_\_ it not;..." 22. "The sting of death is sin; and the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin is the law." 25. "Thus saith the Lord, the heaven is my \_\_\_\_\_, and the earth is my footstool..." 26. "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the \_\_\_\_\_ thou mayest freely eat:..." 27. "\_\_\_\_\_, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:" 28. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he \_\_\_\_\_ be the firstborn among many brethren." 30. "For the Lord will \_\_\_\_\_ their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them." 35. "Set your affection on things above, \_\_\_\_\_ on things on the earth."

# Count Your Blessings

by Sis. Logan Lanier (11 years old)  
Waycross, Georgia

It all started about four months ago. We were pulling up in the parking lot of Trembling Earth Recreation Complex. My mom was telling my dad about her annual check-up. Normally, I wouldn't have listened, but I knew from past experiences that my mom's tone frightened me. She sounded scared, shocked, and sad. So I listened. I didn't exactly know what they were saying, but I knew that a cyst could mean cancer. My thoughts raced. No. I kept telling myself. No. My mom can't have cancer.

I got out of the car and my mom looked at me strangely. I suppose she knew that I knew what they had been talking about. I didn't answer when she

asked me what was wrong. Instead I raced up the concrete and headed toward the bathroom. By this time I had tears on my face. A short while later, my mom came in and told me what the doctor said.

My mom did indeed have surgery on Wednesday, May 20th, at 5:45 a.m. My mom went to the hospital. That day my mind was not at all on my schoolwork. I was running an errand for my teacher and was relieved to be able to call my dad. I was worried about what he might say, though. Instead of what my dad could have said, I tried to focus on seeing my mom at the end of the day. When I heard my dad's voice say that Mom was fine, I immediately

knew it was a blessing from God. I also knew that my mom's co-workers were just as worried as I was. I was thankful to know that I was not alone. Having friends care about you and your family is a blessing alone.

Today, four months later, my mom is on the road to recovery. Today, as I write these words I realize that I should open my eyes. I realize that I should count my blessings. I could have lost my mom, dad, and other family and friends that are very dear to me. We all have a lot to thank God for. We all need to count our blessings. Don't take them for granted. Name them one by one. It will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

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## A Beautiful Prayer

*Father, I ask you to bless my friends reading this right now. I am asking You to minister to their spirit at this very moment. Where there is pain, give them Your peace and mercy. Where there is self doubting, release a renewed confidence in Your ability to work through them. Where there is tiredness, or exhaustion, I ask You to give them understanding, patience, and strength as they learn submission to your leading. Where there is spiritual stagnation, I ask You to renew them by revealing Your nearness, and by drawing them into greater intimacy with You. Where there is fear, reveal Your love, and release to them Your courage. Where there is a sin blocking them, reveal it, and break its hold over my friend's life. Bless their finances, give them greater vision, and raise up leaders and friends to support and encourage them. Give each of them discernment to recognize the evil forces around them, and reveal to them the power they have in You to defeat it! I ask You to do these things in Jesus' name.*