

Divorce and Re-Marriage

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It is suggested that before reading this article, the reader should refresh his/her memory by reading Matthew 5:31-32; Matthew 19:3-12 and I Corinthians 7:1-17. These scriptures set out in no uncertain terms the standard that God has established for His children to follow with reference to this subject. Please notice that these scriptures do not mention any exceptions to the rule. In fact, the emphatic nature of their language implies that there are no exceptions!

This subject is probably the most neglected subject that is taught in the Bible. The writer served as pastor for more than sixty years, and he doesn't remember a single time when he preached on this subject. While at the first church that he served, he began at the beginning of the Book of Matthew and preached through the Book. No doubt he touched on the subject during that series, but he doesn't remember doing so. The subject and its neglect is important because the writer recently heard someone allege that among the Progressive Primitive Baptists, over half of the ministers have been divorced. If that allegation is true (and the one making the allegation seemed certain of what he said), the situation needs to be addressed right away. Let us now look at the cited scriptures. Surely they mean what they say.

Matthew 5:31-32 is about the seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." In this Commandment, the word "adultery" involves any sexual activity except that between a husband and his wife, and/or a wife and her husband. That is what this Commandment says. That is what this Commandment means. Almost immediately after God gave this Commandment, the Jews began fabricating exceptions to it. These exceptions

probably began with individuals deliberately ignoring what God said, and then the exception being adopted by the people generally. So many of these exceptions were adopted as a way of life that one writer said that by the time of Christ, if a wife burned the toast, her husband could put her away (divorce her).

Moses seemed to agree to some of these exceptions, so the people began assuming that it was alright with God for them to be the Rule. That is what Jesus meant by the expression, "It hath been said" in verse 31. Many of their traditions went all the way back to Moses, therefore they seemed valid to the people. In The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus sets forth the principles that underlie the new way of worship and living. The principle set forth here is that the only valid excuse for divorce is adultery by one of the spouses. In that society, if the husband strayed, all the wife could do was put up with it. Someone said that a man's donkey had more rights than his wife. That is why Jesus spoke only in terms of the husband divorcing her. But in our society, both spouses have the same rights.

Consider Matthew 19:3-9 carefully. Jesus' entire life was spent in Judea (modern Palestine) except a short interval while He was a baby when Joseph took Him and His mother to Egypt to escape Herod's efforts to kill Him. His Primary Mission in the earth was to accomplish Redemption for His Children in every nation and in every age. But He had another mission which was secondary. That mission was to change the prescribed way of worship from worship in a physical Temple (the Old Testament model) to worship in the Temple of a person's soul (the New Testament model). His Ministry among the Jews was mostly exhorting them to

examine themselves and change their behavior to that which is more consistent with the new way of worship and living. They could have had a part in the new way if they had been willing. Individual Jews can still have a part in it if they are willing. As He labored in carrying out this mission, He met very much opposition.

This passage tells of opposition by the Pharisees that He faced. They asked Him a question, not because they wanted to know something that would enable them to worship and serve God in a better way, but they wanted Him to say something that they could distort as they tried to persuade the common people to not follow Him. Jesus answered their question by reminding them of the sanctity of Marriage. God had ordained that the relationship between a husband and wife is special; that in reality they become one flesh, not just two individuals living side by side. When one of them does anything, it must be done with the realization that the other is involved also. He reminded them that when a man and woman marry, God joins them together and no one (not even one of them) has the right to cut them apart. There was nothing in His answer that they could distort to achieve their own desired end. What He said was well documented in the Bible. Through the years since the Exodus, Moses' reputation had been growing more and more. During their journey from Egypt to Canaan, much that Moses told them to do was disputed. But by the time of Christ, many (some people would say "most") Jews considered him to be infallible (never making a mistake). When the Pharisees could not argue with Jesus' answer to their first question, they asked Him why Moses agreed to their departures from what God had said at first. They were ap-

pealing to Moses' supposed infallibility. Their line of reasoning was that if Moses who was infallible had changed his mind, his doing so shows that God had changed His mind. Jesus told them that Moses did not change his position because God had changed, but that he changed his position because of the hardness of their hearts. Their hard hearts would lead to a husband abusing his wife who had displeased him (by doing something insignificant like burning the toast). Therefore, Moses allowed them to be divorced. But Jesus emphatically said that from the beginning, this was not God's Way!!! In other words, He was saying that God had NOT (and still hasn't) changed His position! We need to remember that Jesus' message to the Jews was that they needed to examine themselves to detect departures that they had made, and that they should then change their ways, getting back to God's standard. This exhortation is applicable to us also. We should continually examine ourselves with regard to every aspect of our lives. The standard is in His Word, the Bible.

In Matthew 19:9, Jesus says that the only valid reason for a man to put away (divorce) his wife is that she is guilty of fornication (sexual relations with someone besides her husband). As we study this ninth verse, we need to remember that in that society a man's wife had almost no rights. That is why Jesus spoke only in terms of a man putting away his wife. She didn't have the right to put him away no matter how much fornicating he did. In our society things are different. In our society, the rights of a husband and wife are about equal. Either of them can put the other away. But the only reason for doing so that God will recognize by severing their "one flesh" relationship is that the one being put away is guilty of fornication.

In this ninth verse, Jesus goes on to establish another principle. He speaks in terms of the husband putting away his wife. If he puts her away for any reason (other than fornication), and both

of them remain unmarried and do not have sexual relations with anyone, neither of them commit adultery. If they remarry each other, it is as though their marriage was not interrupted. Neither of them is committing adultery. If he puts her away because of her fornication, and he marries someone else, he does not commit adultery. Even though she marries someone else, or has sexual relations, she does commit adultery. Her new husband is also committing adultery, even if he has not been married before.

When Paul, the Apostle, began preaching the gospel of Christ, instead of confining his efforts to the Roman province of Judea like the other apostles, he began to look outward, preaching to anyone who would listen in the outlying parts of the Empire. Usually, when he would go to a new town, he would first go to the Jewish synagogue. There he would tell the Jews about Jesus, Who He was, and what He had done. When he wasn't at the synagogue, he would share the good news of the gospel with anyone who would listen. If people showed interest in what he said, he would often constitute a church. When the church grew to the point that he felt she could carry on without his immediate presence, he would turn their pastoral care over to someone else and he would move on to another location. But he would stay in touch with them by letters from and to them in which he would help them find scriptural solutions for their problems. Some of these letters have been preserved by God. We know some of them as Books in the New Testament. Usually, when he would write a letter to a church, he would direct them to share it with other nearby churches.

When Paul arrived in Greece, he found a people who thought of themselves as "cultured". Every civilization goes through stages. First the people are industrious and self-disciplined, following God's word and way. These attributes lead to God's blessings and a high level of prosperity. The Greeks had reached the stage of the rich get-

ting richer and the poor getting poorer. The hallmark of this stage is loose morals and lascivious living. One of the most prevalent marks of this life-style is marriages that don't last. As these Greeks would come into the Church, they wanted to bring that life-style with them. No doubt, while Paul was with them, he taught them God's Way. They probably followed that way while he was there. But after he went somewhere else, they became so "spiritual" that they could follow the "spirit" of a rule (they said), without following its letter. And they could convince themselves that they were living on a higher plane than the rest of the true followers of God. Loose morals and lasciviousness were increasing in the church at Corinth. Paul wrote them a letter (I Corinthians) in which he addressed one by one the allegations that he had heard against them. His discussion of the subject of acceptable marriage and divorce and his argument is recorded in I Corinthians 7:1-7. To go through these scriptures in detail would be repetitive. Paul's argument with those wanting to go back to their old way of life was the same as Jesus' argument with the Pharisees as He exhorted them to return to God's Way.

Paul did, however, inject an idea that Jesus hadn't mentioned: the situation of believers being married to unbelievers and where that situation might lead. In his discussion, Paul used several verses to reiterate what Jesus had taught on the subject. As he was getting ready to approach this new idea, he emphasized that the things he had just said were what God said. "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord:." In other words, the Lord had said those things he had already said. But this new idea was something that the Lord had not said. Paul was saying, "God didn't say this, but based on my understanding of the kind of person He is, if He had addressed the situation of problems that might arise out of the condition of a marriage between a believer and an unbeliever, this is what I think He would have said." Then Paul

taught that if a husband believed in Jesus as Redeemer, but his wife wasn't a believer or a wife was a believer and the husband was not, the believing person could not use the fact that the other did not believe as a reason to terminate the marriage. Paul gave two reasons for the believer to continue in the marriage. (1) His/her godly life (especially the change in behavior when he/she became a believer) might encourage the other to become a believer also! (2) The fact that one parent is a believer makes their children holy.

Among people who claim to be believers in Jesus as The Christ, there is a wide diversity of opinions with reference to the idea expressed by Paul (if the unbeliever leaves the marriage be-

cause he/she cannot live with one who believes in Christ, the believer is free to marry someone else). Of course, there are some who have adopted the World's standard (a divorce granted by a court of law gives both parties the privilege of marrying someone else). These just don't consider what God says as they behave. And some of them even take the position that if God says something, they are going to do the opposite. But among those who take the word of God seriously, some of them feel that Paul's conclusion that the departure of the unbeliever from the marriage leaves the believer free to marry someone else. Others take the opposite position. During his lifetime, the writer has held (at the time) both

positions. When he was young, he believed that the departure of the unbeliever left the believer free to re-marry. He no longer holds to that position. He was never involved in the situation.

The writer is now convinced that re-marriage is permissible in scripture ONLY when the one who was put away is guilty of fornication. He is also convinced that the guilty party is not free to remarry.

If a church draws the line between acceptable behavior and unacceptable behavior at any other point than the one identified in the Bible, she dishonors God who drew the line at that point, and the consequences of her action will be unpleasant.

Scriptures Concerning Divorce & Re-Marriage

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery. **Matthew 5:31-32**

The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery. **Matthew 19:3-9**

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. **Romans 7:2-4**



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The Incorruptible Seed!

(continued from last month)

by Elder W. A. Mullis
(deceased)

In I Peter 1:23, God said to His elect (1:2) who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ (1:18-20): "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

The truth of God contained in this verse of scripture has been truth through all ages of the world, but had never been revealed to the people of God in the first four thousand years of the world, from Adam until the day of Christ and His apostles. (See Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:1-5 and Colossians 1:25-26). The truth revealed by God in John 3:6-7-8 about being "born again" with every other mystery of truth revealed in the New Testament had also been hidden from ages and generations as stated in Ephesians 3:5; "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit."

God has in all ages and generations of the world been causing His elect to be "born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Even though the scriptures teach that God is sovereign and that "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" (Daniel 4:35), it also teaches: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no VARIABleness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17). The words "sovereign grace" as used by some men can be a deceitful expression. Some men use that expression to teach that since God is sovereign, if He desires to use the preached word to call some of His elect in regeneration

and use Christ the living word to call others of His elect in regeneration, He is still sovereign in doing this since "He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth." But we must remember that God does not do anything contrary to the teachings of His inspired word, and we must remember the basic teachings of the word of God that man by nature since the first man, Adam, is "dead in trespasses and sins." He is by nature the enemy of God and all that is godly. He is dead to spiritual things. (I Corinthians 2:9-14).

Every one of the elect of God in all ages of the world has been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Right here we want to show by the scriptures that the "corruptible seed" is the inspired word of God. Remember that Peter said: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed" and this rules out that the scriptures or inspired word of God has anything to do with our "being born again." Neither does the expression: "being born again, not of corruptible seed: have anything to do with the first birth. Man by nature is "corrupt." He is as David said: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." (Psalm 51:5). In Ephesians 4:22, Paul spoke of "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." Men - all men - are by nature corrupt from the top of the head to the sole of their feet. They do not become that way after they sin, but they are born that way in their first birth.

In Matthew 13:1-23; Mark 4:3-20 and Luke 8:4-15, Christ gave a parable commonly known as the "seed sower." Christ Himself gave the interpretation of this parable of the seed sower. The sower of the seed is the preacher. The

"seed" that he sows is the "word of the kingdom," (Matthew 13:19) and the "word of God" as shown in Luke 8:11. This preached "word of God" can be and is sometimes "caught away" or "taken away" from the hearts of the people of God by the devil. In Matthew 13:19 Christ said: "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in His heart." See also Mark 4:15 and Luke 8:12. The only way the "inspired word of God" can ever get to the "heart" of any person is for them to have "ears to hear" the inspired word of God. The preached word of God will never get to the "heart" of one not born of the spirit of God. They are "dead" to spiritual things!

In the garden of Eden, the devil took a lie and made it look so beautiful to Eve, he deceived her into believing his lie more than the truth of God. God said: "thou shalt surely die," and the devil said: "Ye shall not surely die." (Genesis 2:17 and 3:4). The devil deceived Eve (I Timothy 2:13-14) into believing his lie more than she believed the word of God. In doing this, he took away the word of God from her. The devil will lead the people of God just as far away from the truth as he can.

The seed of the inspired word can be taken from the hearts of the people of God and it can be corrupted. It is an unmistakable fact recorded in these three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, that Christ likens the preaching of the inspired word of God to the sowing of seed.

Then in II Corinthians 2:17; Paul said: "We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." There were evidently "many" in the day of apostles

who "corrupted the word of God." Remember that the word of God is "pure" and "clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Revelation 22:1); but remember that it is corrupted by men who use it deceitfully. It is the "corruptible seed" that God does not use to cause His elect to be "born again."

In II Corinthians 4:2, Paul said: "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." There were those in the day of the apostles of Christ who "handle the word of God deceitfully" and with "cunning craftiness they lie in wait to deceive." (See II Corinthians 4:2 and Ephesians 4:14).

Consider this please, that the Scriptures teach that the preached "word of God" is as the sowing of seed. The pure word of God can be "taken away" from the hearts of the people of God, and it is corruptible because men corrupt it. But, thank God that the "incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever can never be removed from the heart of one in whom God sends the spirit of His Son. Neither can He ever be corrupted because He is "incorruptible!"

He, Christ, is the "incorruptible seed" by which God has in all ages caused His elect to be "born again."

JESUS CHRIST is the "incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever." (I Peter 1:23). He is the "Word" which by the gospel is preached to the elect of God.

In Galatians 3:16, we find these words: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of

one: and to thy seed, which is Christ." Jesus Christ is the Son of man because He was born of the virgin Mary, but He is the Son of God because He was conceived in the womb of Mary by the Holy Ghost. He was "God manifest in the flesh." (Matthew 1:20-23; Luke 1:35).

Then in I John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his SEED remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The "seed" that "remains" in one who is born of the spirit of God is Christ, "the incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth forever."

In Colossians 1:27, we find these words: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory!" The deceitful work of the devil and his preachers (II Corinthians 11:13-15) can take away the inspired word of God from the hearts of the people of God, and they can corrupt it, but they can never remove Christ, the omnipotent, incorruptible Seed of God from the heart of one of the elect family of God. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day," are the words of Christ our Lord in John 6:39.

In Revelation 1:17b and 18, Christ said to John "Fear not; I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." In Hebrews 13:8, the scriptures declare: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." Every word of truth about Jesus Christ is truth from eternity to eternity; that is: "Yesterday, and to day and for ever."

Every one of the elect family of God from Adam to Christ and from Christ to the end of this time world, in every nation, kindred, tongue and tribe; at some point of time in their life will have been "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the WORD of God, which liveth and abideth forever." "And this is the WORD which by the gospel is preached unto you." (I Peter 1:25b).

All the elect of God who went before Him, "did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." All the elect of God who went before Him and who are born after Him "have eaten the same spiritual meat; and have all drank the same spiritual drink" because He is the one by whom they have ALL been "born again." This is the most beautiful doctrine in the world because it is God's doctrine. It is in this doctrine of the inspired word of God that we can "behold the beauty of the Lord" that David speaks of in Psalms 27:4!

David said: "One thing have I desired of the Lord and that will I seek after; **that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to BEHOLD THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD** and to enquire in his temple!"

It is such great truths as I Peter 1:23, taught in the house of God, "which is the pillar and ground of the truth," that enables the people of God who are the "inhabitants of Zion" to see the "beauty of the Lord Jesus Christ," who is indeed the incorruptible Seed of God by whom all the elect of God have been "born again."

May God bless His word to our hearts!

"...beware lest ye also, being led away
with the error of the wicked,
fall from your own steadfastness." II Peter 3:17

"Sir, Thou Knowest"

by Elder William M. Mullis
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"What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, **Sir, thou knowest.**" (Revelation 7:13, 14).

As the Apostle John saw a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and having palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice and saying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," one of the twenty-four elders asked John what those were which were arrayed in white robes, and where they came from. It was a difficult question. Evidently, John did not know the answer. Therefore, he responded, "SIR, THOU KNOWEST!"

In our lives, we have many questions: "Why was this man born blind?" "Why can't this couple have children?" "Why did these two dear saints have to lose both of their fine sons in death?" "Why would God allow that dear saint to be murdered?" Each reader occasionally has his own questions. Sometimes, we think we have all the answers, especially when it concerns the lives of other people. "And if any man think that he knoweth any thing he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." (I Corinthians 8:2).

Job had some good friends. Seriously! Being friends of Job, and knowing the kind of man Job was (Job 1:1), his friends must have also been spiritual. When Job lost all his possessions, lost all ten of his children in a tragedy, and was afflicted with boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, his friends made their journeys to Job. They were good friends! The scripture says they came "to mourn with him and to comfort him." (Job 2:11). They wept for him. "They rent

everyone his mantle, and sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven. So they sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great" (Job 2:12,13). Have you ever sat for seven days in a row with a friend who needed you? Have you ever gone seven days without saying a word because you were mourning with your friend? **Job had some very good friends!**

Chapter 3 makes it clear that Job was the one who broke the seven day silence. His grief, depression and anger began to be expressed. When Job's friends began to speak, there was much wisdom and truth in what they said. "They that plow iniquity and sow wickedness, reap the same." (Job 4:8). That's the same truth as Galatians 6:7,8. Then, his friend continued speaking to Job and said, "Happy is the man whom God correcteth: Therefore, despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty" (Job 5:17). Aha! Job's friend thinks he knows **WHY** Job is suffering. He and the other friends think they have the answer. Their answer is not unreasonable! God **DOES** chasten His people whom He loves! (See Hebrews 12:6-8). And in the scripture, God warns that when His people turn away from Him and disobey Him, one possible judgement is, "The Lord shall smite thee... with a sore botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of thy foot unto the top of thy head." (Deuteronomy 28:35). Job had "sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown." (Job 2:7). To Job's friends, it was **POSSIBLE** that Job's suffering was the Lord chastening him. The Lord does sometimes bring severe suffering into the lives of His children because of their disobedience. When

king David's child died, was it just a trial of his faith, or **was the Lord chastening him?** (See II Samuel 12:11-14). The Lord severely chastened David the rest of his life because of his sin. God does not change. He will do the same today! We need to behold "the goodness and severity of God." (Romans 11:22). Look how the Jews have suffered for the past 2,000 years under the chastening hand of God! Is He about to bring His judgement upon the Gentiles just as He did upon the Jews? But we, just like the Jews, think God would not do that to us! Many of God's children, even preachers, do not know about the severity of God chastening His people. "The Lord shall judge His people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (Hebrews 10:30,31). The Lord judges His people according to their works while they live here on the earth! We are **NOT** going to be judged in the final resurrection according to our works. We will **NOT** be in the eternal heaven because of our good works! We will be in the eternal heaven when we leave this world because of the **AMAZING GRACE** of **GOD!** (Not of works; Not by works; Not according to our works! See Romans 9:11, Ephesians 2:9, II Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:5). **BUT**, while living in this world, the Lord Jesus judges us according to our works! **If** Job had been walking ungodly, **IF** he had been walking the broad way; **IF** he had not been fearing God and eschewing`evil, **THEN** everything he experienced **could have been** the chastening hand of God in his life. **WHY** was Job suffering? Was the Lord chastening him, or was it a trial of his faith? Since God has clearly explained it in His word, we can look back, and we know the answer. **BUT** when we see tragedies come in the lives of God's people today, **DO WE KNOW**

WHY? Is there a single answer? **God knows the answers**, but men do not always know! "Sir, THOU KNOWEST!"

When Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him, Peter said, "**Lord, thou knowest all things**, thou knowest that I love thee" (John 21:17). The Lord knows the hearts of all men. (See Acts 1:24). Nothing is hid from God. He knows everything that is happening and He knows "WHY" everything is happening. But men do not. Some things **are** revealed to us. Some things we **do** know. Sometimes, we can answer the "WHY's" life. But some things we shall never know this side of heaven. Some "WHY's" are not known to man. "**The secret things belong unto the Lord our God**: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever..." (Deuteronomy 29:29). Jesus said, "But of that day and hour **knoweth no man**, no, not the angels of heaven, but **my Father only**." (Matthew 24:36). There have been many "**UNKNOWN**s" in every generation. There have always been

questions that even the wisest of men could not answer. But those who are truly wise know the ONE who knows all things! And when we have questions we cannot answer, there is a peace in just knowing that GOD does know. "**Sir, THOU KNOWEST!**"

Just as John the Apostle saw marvelous visions in the book of Revelation, Ezekiel saw visions. In Ezekiel 37, the word of God describes how Ezekiel was carried out in the spirit of the Lord, and was set down in the midst of the valley which was full of dry bones very many bones very dry bones. "And he said unto me, Son of man, **can these bones live?** And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest" (Ezekiel 37:3). Ezekiel did not know if those bones could live! But he declared a great truth about the omniscient God, and he gave Him glory and honored Him when he said, "**O Lord God, THOU KNOWEST.**"

In Ezekiel's day, GOD was able to make those dry bones live!

In John the Baptist's day GOD was

able of those stones to raise up children unto Abraham. (See Matthew 3:9).

In the day of the Apostle Paul, the natural branches (the Jews) were broken off, and we Gentiles were grafted in. "Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith! Be not highminded, but fear: For if God spared not the natural branches, **take heed lest he also spare not thee**. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness; otherwise thou also shalt be cut off. And they also if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for **God is able to graft them in again**" (Romans 11:20-23).

In our day, will we Gentiles be cut off because of our unbelief, and the natural branches (Jews) be grafted in? What is going to happen to America?

"O LORD GOD, THOU KNOWEST."

Grow in Knowledge

1. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread _____ and to spare, and I perish with hunger!"
2. "But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that _____, and buy for yourselves."
3. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a _____ that there shall not be room enough to receive it."
4. "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye _____ not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put into a bag with holes."
5. "For they shall eat, and not have enough: they shall commit whoredom, and shall not increase: because they have left off to take _____ to the Lord."
6. "The horseleach hath two daughters, crying, give, give, give. There are three things that are never satisfied, yea, four things say not, _____ is enough."
7. "Yea, they are _____ dogs which can never have enough."
8. "And Azairah the chief priest of the house of Zadok answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed His people; and that which is _____ is this great store."
9. "Intreat the Lord (for it is enough) that there be no more mighty thunderings and hail: and I will let you go, and ye shall _____ no longer."
10. "And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the _____ of the work, which the Lord command to make."

Marks of the Lord Jesus

by Bro. David B. Durrence
Waycross, Georgia

In this lesson, we will try take a look at the Apostle Paul, and how he bore in his natural body the marks of the Lord Jesus, proving his love and commitment to Jesus. Please prayerfully look at the following Scripture. "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh." But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Galatians 6:9-17).

In verse 17, Paul said "from henceforth let no man trouble me". I believe Paul was saying that God had revealed the truth to him, and he would not be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine. You see, Paul was converted from the Jew's religion to Christianity. Paul, as a Jew, was of the circumcision of the body, but now he understood that the bodily circumcision availed nothing. Therefore Paul did not want to be troubled with false doctrine, for he bore, both in his body and in his daily living, the **marks** of the Lord Jesus.

Paul bore the "marks of the Lord Jesus in his body" since he had suf-

fered physically because of his ministry as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus. Paul describes some of the labors, sufferings, and physical marks in the flesh that he had endured as a persecuted Christian, as follows:

"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me: And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands" (II Corinthians 11:22-33).

This word "*marks*" from our text reading comes from the Greek word which has the meaning "to stick or prick; a mark incised or punched (for recognition of ownership), i.e. scar of service." Paul suffered physical and emotional scars and had physical marking in his flesh from beatings, stonings, and other

persecutions which he endured. These sufferings proved that he bore physical pain and the physical marks of the Lord Jesus because of his Christian walk. As you recall, Jesus was beaten, nails pierced His hands and His feet, and a spear pierced His side. Jesus bore "marks" in His flesh, and Paul likewise bore physical "marks" in his body, proving that he was not ashamed to bear, in his body, "marks of the Lord Jesus." In addition to Paul bearing the physical "marks of the Lord Jesus," he also bore the "marks of Jesus Christ" in his daily walk of service to the Lord.

Let us now think about whether or not we bear the Marks of our Lord Jesus in our Christian walk. Is there a similarity with us and our Lord Jesus? For example, sometimes we might see a father and a son together. The son looks or acts so much like his father that it is said the father "marked" his son. People form opinions and perceptions about others based upon their actions and the fruit that they bear. If you are always diligently working, others might form an opinion that you are a hard worker. Likewise, if you are never busy doing anything, people might "mark" you as a lazy person. Remember the scriptural record of Hannah and the Prophet Eli, how as Hannah prayed in the temple for a son, lips were moving but no sound was coming forth. The scriptures tells us Eli "marked" her mouth and believed Hannah to be drunk on strong drink. (See I Samuel 1.)

Are you living daily in such a way that others will look at you and mark you as a Christian? Are you clearly "marked" as a learner and follower of Jesus? Do you bear the marks of Jesus in your daily walk with God?

Let's consider a few of the "marks" of Jesus. As a child and as an adult, Jesus was busy about His Father's business. Jesus submitted to water baptism. Jesus had compassion on

others. Jesus taught others about the will of the Father. Jesus spoke boldly against sin. Jesus prayed for others. Jesus gave to the hungry and needy. Jesus loved the Father and Jesus loved the brethren. Jesus pleased His heavenly Father. Jesus always did the will His heavenly Father. Jesus rebuked the devil and evil spirits. Jesus suffered and died for the brethren. Jesus did these things, and so much more! What have you done that others would look at you and “mark” you as a disciple of Jesus?

We also need to “mark” those that are full of the Holy Spirit and are following the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. The faithful and just, believers and followers of God, are the ones with whom we need to surround ourselves. “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace” (Psalms 37:37). Also, Paul wrote to the brethren at Philippi these words: “Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample” (Philippians 3:17).

We must also “mark” those who walk **contrary** to the teachings of God’s word
 * * * * *

and fill their lives with sin. We must walk no more with them! “Can two walk together except they be agreed?” (Amos 3:3). Paul said, “Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them** which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and **avoid them**” (Romans 16:17).

In addition, as we consider great men of God in the scriptures, such as King David and King Saul, we can learn from their mistakes. We should consider how they sinned against God. We should “mark” those sinful ways, and not walk in them. “Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden?” (Job 22:15).

Since we are known by the fruit that we bear, we are to “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

“For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree
 * * * * *

bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh” (Luke 6:43-45).

Have you “marked” Jesus? Have you seen Him in the written word of God? Have you believed His sayings? Have you walked with Him in the light of His word? Have you taken notice of Jesus, the Son of the Living God, King of all kings and Lord of all lords? Jesus is alive! He is ruling and reigning today in the heavens and in the earth. Do you bear, in your body and in your life the marks of the Lord Jesus? May God help us all to be the Salt of the earth and the Light of the world, and bear the “marks of Jesus” in our daily lives, is my prayer for Christ’s sake.

“I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14).

* * * * *

FOUR WARNINGS FROM THE BIBLE

BEWARE

DET: 6:12 Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

MATT: 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. LK: 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

COL: 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain de-

ceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

TAKE HEED

LK: 21:34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.

ROMANS: 11:21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

HEB: 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of

unbelief, in departing from the living God.

BE YE READY

LK: 12:40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

WATCH

REV: 3:3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

**When Paul was parted from his friends, It was a weeping day;
 But Jesus made them all amends And wiped their tears away.**

Training Up A Child... "Dress Rehearsal"

by Sis. Arlene Strickland
Fernandina Beach, Florida

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

When my son was about 4 years old, he decided to assert his authority on what he would wear. You see, I always chose his clothes for him, and he would dress himself while I was getting everything else ready.

One day, while preparing to go to town, I laid out his clothes which consisted of a polo shirt and plaid shorts. He immediately made it known that he did not want to wear those shorts and refused to put them on. I told him he did not have a choice, and that was the end of it.

I left him in his room to dress and went about completing my tasks before leaving. In a short while, I heard him walk into the living room where I was. I turned around and was stunned at what I saw! He was standing there with the plaid shorts on WRONG-SIDE-OUT with a big grin on his face as if

to say, "Now what are you going to do about this?!" I immediately knew what to do! I told him he would wear those shorts exactly as they were. He screamed and cried and begged me to let him put them on the right way. I refused. I picked him up while he was kicking and screaming, and put him in his car seat. On the way to town, he wanted to know why I would not let him change his shorts. I told him it was because he had a chance to make the right choice, but in his disobedience, had made the wrong choice, and he would have to suffer the consequences.

When we arrived at the mall, I held my head up high and walked with my son whose shorts were wrong-side-out. We got plenty of stares from strangers, but I would smile and nod as if it was the most natural thing. You see, I knew the most important mission of my day was to teach my son to honor his parents, obey authority,

and that there is consequence for disobedience. I didn't care what anyone thought of me as a parent.

After awhile, he got over his embarrassment and became quite pleasant to be around. He learned several things that day: 1) For every action, good or bad, there is a direct consequence. 2) It is best to obey your mother to stay out of trouble. 3) To make the best of a bad situation. 4) To have confidence and overcome an uncomfortable situation. 5) And last, he learned humility and compassion so that when he saw children less fortunate than he, who did not have a choice of fine clothes, he could understand how humiliated they were in their misfortune, and he would not look on them with disdain.

Dear, dear young parents! Do you understand what you are depriving your children of when you allow them to make their own choices?

GOD COMMANDS US TO DISCIPLINE OUR CHILDREN

HE THAT SPARETH HIS ROD HATETH HIS SON:
BUT HE THAT LOVETH HIM CHASTENETH HIM BETIMES. PROVERBS 13:24

CHASTEN THY SON WHILE THERE IS HOPE,
AND LET NOT THY SOUL SPARE FOR HIS CRYING. PROVERBS 19:18

FOOLISHNESS IS BOUND IN THE HEART OF A CHILD;
BUT THE ROD OF CORRECTION SHALL DRIVE IT FAR FROM HIM. PROVERBS 22:15

WITHHOLD NOT CORRECTION FROM THE CHILD:
FOR IF THOU BEATEST HIM WITH THE ROD, HE SHALL NOT DIE.
THOU SHALT BEAT HIM WITH THE ROD,
AND SHALT DELIVER HIS SOUL FROM HELL. PROVERBS 23:13-14

Light A Candle

by Sis. Sarah D. Ledger
Bartow, Georgia

In February of this year, we had a major ice storm. We had been advised by our national weather service of the predicted storm a few days before it hit. My husband bought a supply of groceries that did not have to be cooked, caught up jugs of water for drinking and buckets of water for the toilets. We have gas heat, so we made sure there was gas to last through a crisis. We felt fairly prepared. I don't think we were totally prepared, however, when the electricity went off and we were in the dark!

Of course, we had flashlights which we kept by our bed, and candles which we placed around the rooms. When we went to bed, my husband took one of my fat Christmas candles and placed it on the kitchen table away from the curtains and other flammable materials so that I would have ade-

quate lighting to see if I needed to get up. It gave me a sense of security to wake up and not be in total darkness.

It is my habit to get up early. I think it goes back to all those years I was a farmer's wife. This is my time to read, write, and study. Sometimes I listen to the early morning news. During the ice storm when I got up early to go to the den, I took the candle from the kitchen table with me. It was amazing how much light that one candle gave off. Of course, I could not see to read, but I could see all the furniture, pictures, flowers and even the tiny "what-nots".

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, Chapters 5-7), Jesus calls His disciples the Light of the world. He goes on to say that no one lights a candle and puts it under a basket, but sets it on a candlestick so that it can be seen. He further admonishes His

followers to let their lights shine so that others may see their good works and glorify God. What a difference Christians (God's faithful children, believers, disciples, followers of Jesus) could make if we all let our lights shine individually and as the Church in the world. Even a little light in a dark place makes a lot of difference! We need to light the little space where we are.

The ice storm and our power outage lasted for several days. Some of our citizens handled it better than others. We were truly blessed. We only lost a few trees and some food in the freezer. Our utility company worked diligently, and we were none the worse for wear when our power was restored. I kept my Christmas candle. It will remind me to let my light shine.

The Gospels of the Bible (Good News)

Though the word "GOSPEL" is sometimes an all-inclusive word referring to the Scriptures, there are occasions where there is a particular truth under consideration. For example, the "beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" was with John the Baptist (see Mark 1:1), even though we can look back through the Scriptures and see Jesus throughout the Old Testament. The thrust of the preaching of Jesus Christ was the "gospel of the kingdom". There is an "everlasting gospel" which has been preached to all of God's dear children in all ages of the world by the Holy Spirit (not by

a man). It is important that we not allow anyone to ever distort or preach another gospel than what is set forth in the Scriptures.

The Gospel of God-

Romans 1:1; 15:16;
II Corinthians 11:7;
I Thessalonians 2:2-4,8,9;
I Peter 4:17

The Gospel of Peace-

Romans 10:15; Ephesians 6:15

The Gospel of the Grace of God-

Acts 20:24

The Gospel of Jesus Christ-

Mark 1:1; Romans 1:16; 15:19;
I Corinthians 9:12;
II Cor.2:12; 9:13; 10:14

The Gospel of the Kingdom-

Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 24:14;
Mk. 1:14,15

The Everlasting Gospel-

Revelation 14:6,7

REMEMBER GALATIANS

1:6-11 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

**WORRYING DOES NOT TAKE AWAY TOMORROW'S
TROUBLES...IT TAKES AWAY TODAY'S PEACE**

Thank God for Friends

by Bro. Joshua Leach
Waycross, Georgia

Every morning, my wife and I try to read the chapter of Proverbs that corresponds to each day of the month. Then, we try to focus on one or two verses from the chapter that stand out to us that we need to work on, that we can learn from, or that revive us. I try to think about those verses throughout the entire day to help that truth sink into my heart more permanently. Studying Proverbs has truly been a great blessing in my life. I find myself thinking of a passage from Proverbs when certain situations arise each day, and it really helps me focus on trying to glorify God in all that I do. I highly recommend that everyone do the same, in addition to other more in depth studying of the Bible each day.

Today, my wife and I read Proverbs 27. In this chapter, there are many verses that deal with the blessing of having Christian friends. We all need to thank God every day for the blessing we have in our friends who are trying to serve and follow Jesus.

Our greatest friend is and should always be Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). If we have no other friend, we should still rejoice and be thankful because of the finished work on the cross that our greatest friend completed to save us from our sins. He laid down His life to pay our debt when He is the only one who did not deserve to pay that debt. That is the greatest act of love that has ever happened or that ever will happen. On top of that, His name is Emmanuel, God with us, and He is our Friend, Shepherd, Guide, Healer, King of kings, Savior, Teacher, and Lord each and every day of our lives. By far, He is the greatest friend we could ever have, and we should rejoice each day that

we feel the fellowship and friendship of Christ.

Jesus does not manifest Himself as a friend to everyone! Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). We have to try to serve and follow Jesus to be His friend. We must be His disciples. We must be set apart from the world. We can't be friends of the world and friends of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). So, in order to enjoy the friendship of Jesus, we must keep His commandments and follow Him.

I've tried to think today about the many blessings I receive from the good friends that God has given me. The blessings we get from true Christian friends are not what the world thinks of when they think of friends. The world may think that a friend doesn't "judge" and accepts you exactly the way you are--faults and all. The world says you can "be yourself" around your friend. They say a friend is always a friend despite your differences. While some of these sayings seem okay, the true meaning behind the sayings is anti-Biblical and does not result in true, God-honoring friendship.

A true friend does not overlook your faults and weaknesses, but loves you enough to strengthen you, help you grow in a knowledge of the truth, and try to convert you from the error of your way. The Bible states, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:6). True friends do not overlook faults. Sometimes they offend their friends in love to correct their friends "that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken

captive by him at his will" (II Timothy 2:26). I'm truly thankful for my friends who love me enough to call me out, correct me, and gently prod me when I am straying off course.

Those friends who are brave enough to confront others in their sin are stepping out in faith, selflessly, not knowing if their friends will reject them and curse them for their admonition. It is a very difficult thing to do. On the other hand, those "friends" who avoid confrontation simply do not love those individuals enough to risk friction in order to save them from destruction and disaster in their lives. We should rejoice if we have friends who risk losing us in order to save us from the "cords of sin."

"Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel" (Proverbs 27:9). This proverb compares the hearty counsel of a friend to ointment and perfume, and it states that a friend's counsel is sweet and rejoices the heart. What a blessing it is when a friend gives Biblically sound, good counsel and advice! As the proverb indicates, we should rejoice and be thankful for these kinds of friends! I'm so thankful that I am surrounded by friends who counsel me and give me good advice based on "thus saith the Lord". "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14). "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established" (Proverbs 15:22). What a blessing Godly counsellors are!

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). I can't count how many times I can call my pastor or my daddy when I feel distant from

God and feel revived after speaking to them. When I am able to spend some time with Brother Brooks, we delight in encouraging one another as soldiers of Christ to continue trying to raise the standard of God's word in our community. We are sharpened in our focus of serving the Lord and bringing glory to His name after spending quality time in fellowship. A zeal for Christ returns strongly in my body, spirit, and soul when I commune with men of God. I am so thankful to God for that blessing!!!

When my wife (my best friend besides Jesus) and I were living in Valdosta, we were away from family in a way that my wife had never experienced and that I hadn't experienced in a long time. Of course, we saw them every weekend at church, so we really weren't that far away compared to many others who live in states and even countries away from their families. But, isn't it a great blessing that God provides friends when we are away from family. "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbour that is near than a brother far off" (Proverbs 27:10). I know that God blessed Macy and me with "chief", "inward" friends like Brooks and his wife, Jessica, as well as Sister Leah and the Milligan's while we were in Valdosta. If great calamity had struck while we were living there, I believe we would have found great blessing and safety in their fellowship.

While Macy and I were praying in the car just before going into the nursing home in Valdosta for the first time, Brooks called us because he happened to be in town. He was able to join us, and God led us straight to two of the most beautiful, Christian women I have ever met who rejoiced that the Lord had put them together as roommates. The Lord did that! He put those ladies together and blessed them with each other's friendship! The Lord blessed us to meet up with Brooks and enjoy visiting the residents in the

nursing home together. After that act of God, He blessed me and Macy to meet up with Brooks and Jessica weekly for nursing home worship services, and that day of the week was so important to me! It revived my soul and almost rivaled Sundays as my favorite day of the week. I'm thankful that God puts friends in our lives when we are away from family. Those friends become as family or even closer than family.

"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). Notice, though, that a man that has friends MUST show himself friendly. In order to fully experience the blessing of Godly friends, we must learn how to be friendly in a Biblical way, and then actually carry out that kind of friendliness. All these traits that we have discussed and rejoiced in above about the friends that God has given us are traits that we must adopt ourselves.

On top of those things, remember this: "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Proverbs 17:17). What a great blessing it is to have friends in times of adversity. We must learn to be good friends and to manifest love when others are going through adversity.

Think of Job. I know his friends messed up when they opened their mouths, but they did the right thing at first. "Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him" (Job 2:11). We must be willing to travel to a good friend who is mourning! Notice that each of them travelled from his own place, probably from far away, and probably with a hard journey ahead of them. When a loved one dies, when someone becomes sick, or when great troubles arise in our friends' lives, we should be willing to travel to them and just be with them.

Job's friends messed up when they started speaking. Sometimes, all that we can do is just be there to show that we care and are thinking about them and praying for them.

Something else a friendly person must do is forgive his friends. When iron rubs against iron, there will be friction. Our pastor describes us as porcupines. We must get close together to warm each other up to survive the cold, but when we get too close we prick each other. We have to be able to forgive one another even as Christ forgave and forgives us. That's when God removed the troubles from Job's life, when he prayed for his friends. "And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 42:10).

We should comfort our friends when they are mourning, but we should also rejoice with our friends! Consider the parable in Luke chapter 15 where a man leaves ninety nine sheep to find the one that is lost. Once "he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost" (Luke 15:5-6). Likewise, when a woman has ten pieces of silver and loses one, she goes around with all the lights on searching every inch of the house and seeks it diligently until she finds it. "And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost" (Luke 15:9). In both cases, they called their friends together to rejoice with them! We should rejoice when good things happen in our friends' lives, but we should rejoice even more when friends turn from sin, repent and grow in their service to Christ. "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:7).

What I have taken from this study

and what I hope you will take from this wonderful blessing from the Father of herd, and BEST friend, Jesus Christ!
 article is this: Christian friends are a lights and from our Lord, Savior, Shep-

TREASURES REPORT

Month of April 2014

Receipts -Contributions 3,410.07

Expense:

Printing Cost 2,568.00

Typesetting Cost 317.79

Postage 2,494.91

Total Expense 5,380.70

Expenses OVER Income: (1,970.63)

Month of May 2014

Receipts -Contributions 7,425.00

Expenses:

Printing Cost 2,568.00

Typesetting Cost 317.79

Postage 2,656.55 Packaging

Other Expense /P.O. Box Rent 84.00

Total Expenses 5,626.34

Income OVER Expense: 1,798.66

Month of June 2014

Receipts -Contributions 4,541.74

Expenses:

Printing Cost 2,568.00

Typesetting Cost 317.79

Postage 2,655.86

Packaging Supplies 673.40

Total Expenses 6,215.05

Expense OVER Income: (1,673.31)

Month of July 2014

Receipts -Contributions 3,745.33

Expenses:

Printing Cost 2,568.00

Typesetting Cost 317.79

Postage 2,523.39 Packaging

Total Expenses 5,409.58

Expense OVER Income: (1,664.25)

Total for four-month period:

Income- \$19,122.14

Expenses- \$22,631.67

EXPENSES OVER INCOME- \$3,509.53

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NEEDED! If you are able to help spread the truth of salvation by grace, please help!
Also, please ask the Church of your membership to help with this ministry! THANK YOU!!!

Answers to Grow in Knowledge

1. Enough - Luke 15:17

2. Sell - Matthew 25:9

3. Blessing - Malachi 3:10

4. Have - Haggai 1:6

5. Heed - Hosea 4:10

6. It - Proverbs 30:15

7. Greedy - Isaiah 56:11

8. Left - II Chronicles 31:10

9. Stay - Exodus 9:28

10. Service - Exodus 36:5

**So why is a car's WINDSHIELD so large
 and the Rear View Mirror so small?
 Because our PAST is not as important as our FUTURE.
 So, Look Ahead and Move On.**

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	Jeremiah 1,2	II Thess. 2
21	Jeremiah 3,4	II Thess. 3
22	Jeremiah 5,6	I Timothy 1
23	Jeremiah 7,8	I Timothy 2
24	Jeremiah 9,10	I Timothy 3
25	Jeremiah 11,12,13	I Timothy 4
26	Jeremiah 14,15,16	I Timothy 5
27	Jeremiah 17,18,19	I Timothy 6
28	Jeremiah 20,21,22	II Timothy 1
29	Jeremiah 23,24	II Timothy 2
30	Jeremiah 25,26	II Timothy 3
31	Jeremiah 27,28	II Timothy 4

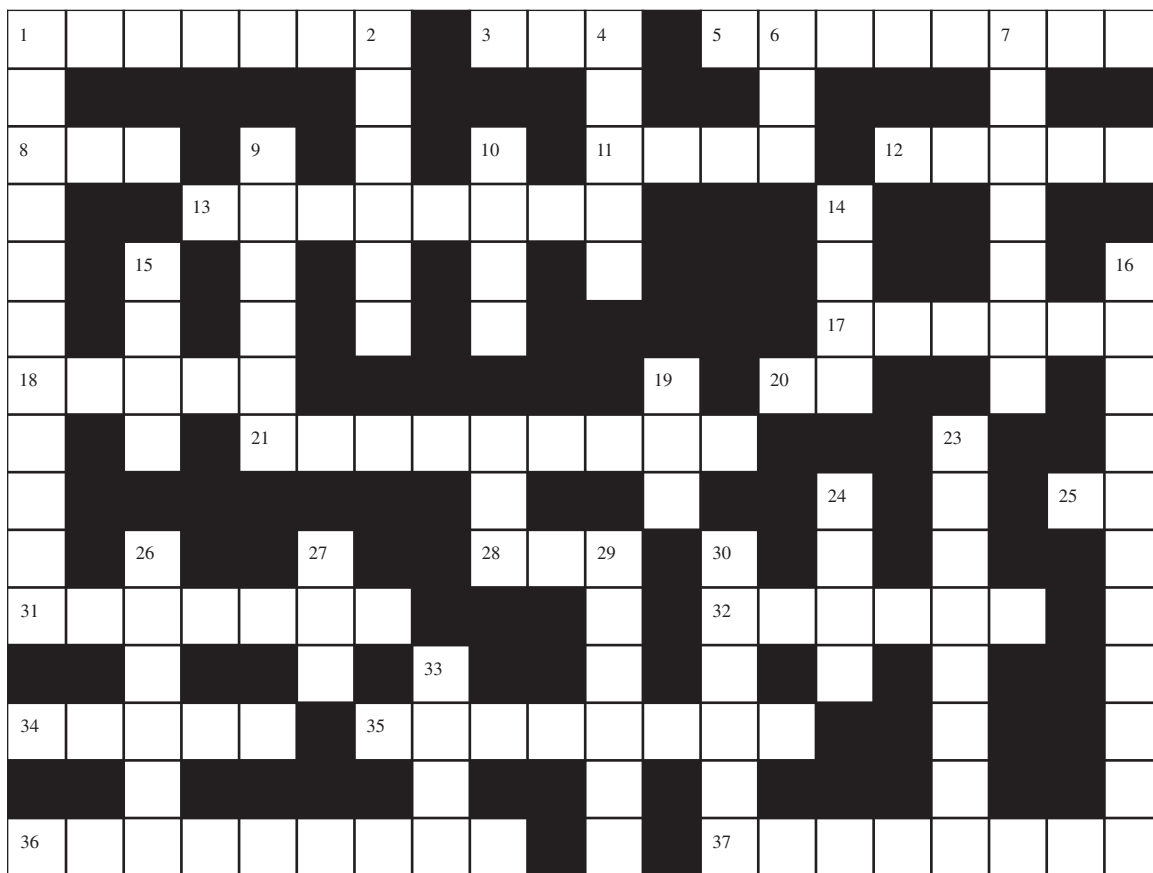
ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE SEPTEMBER 14

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Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have _____ from the face of the earth;..." 3. "I do set my _____ in the cloud,..." 5. "The king's _____ is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." 8. "the Lord is _____ slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness;..." 11. "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a _____ out of a dry ground:..." 12. "And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the _____ seat,..." 13. "...It is _____,..." 17. "Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; behold a _____ shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." 18. "And the Lord smelled a _____ savour;..." 20. "...it shall be for a token of a covenant between _____ and the earth." 21. "And hath raised up an horn of _____ for us in the house of his servant David." 25. "...And so shall we ever _____ with the Lord." 28. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the _____," 31. "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the _____ of God." 32. "Blessed be the Lord God of _____; for he hath visited and redeemed His people," 34. "And the word was made _____, and dwelt among us,..." 35. "And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a _____: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him:" 36. "Behold I will send my _____, and He shall prepare the way before me;..." 37. Who shall _____ us from the love of Christ?"



DOWN

1 "...or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy _____ out of his place, except thou repent." 2' "...and when we shall see him there is no beauty that we should _____ him." 4. "Wherefore comfort one another with these _____." 6. "Remember therefore from whence thou _____ fallen, and repent, and do the first works;..." 7. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors _____ him that loved us." 9. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of _____,..." 10. "...for it repenteth me that I have made _____." 14. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall _____ His people from their sins." 15. "...and, lo, I am with you alway, _____ unto the end of the world." 16. "Thanks be _____ unto God for His _____ gift." 19. "_____ the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;..." 22. "And, of, his fulness, have _____ we received, and grace for grace." 23. "For where two or three gathered in 'my name, there am I in the midst of them." 24. "...he hath no _____ nor comeliness;..." 26. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his _____." 27. "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was _____." 29. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and _____, and day and night shall not cease." 30. "...ye shall not have gone over the _____ of Israel, till the Son of man be come." 33. "And it shall _____ to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud."