

Language

by Elder McKinley Wright (93 years old)
Jacksonville, Florida

“Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver.” This was a favorite saying of Elder J. Walter Hendricks, an old preacher when the writer was young, about sixty years ago. Elder Hendricks cared about the young preachers. He wanted to see all of them develop into powerful preachers and helped them do so, not because he wanted to establish his own legacy but because he wanted their preaching to honor the God whom he served. When we young preachers heard him quote the words cited above, we knew that we were about to hear a short lecture on the subject of ‘words fitly spoken.’ That is what this article is about.

Elder Hendricks believed that preachers should spend a lot of time in their dictionaries so they could accurately convey their ideas to their congregation. The writer wants to emphasize that point, and to add that the congregation should use their dictionaries too! No matter how perfectly the preacher expresses a thought, if the congregation does not understand what he said, they might as well have stayed at home.

Several years ago, the writer attended an Association in Georgia. There was a preacher there who lived in California. Being so far from home, of course he was asked to preach the introductory sermon. His text was John 3:16. The writer felt that the preacher missed the main point of Jesus’ conversation with Nicodemus, but found no fault with what he said. He began by mentioning that most Christian Religions teach that John 3:16 is a proposition that God makes to people who have not been born again. Many think that if they will just believe in Jesus as their Savior, God will give them the new birth, thereby saving them. He then explained that the saving that comes when one believes in Jesus is

not the New Birth. He didn’t use the term ‘Time Salvation,’ but established to the writer’s satisfaction that the consequences of that salvation are confined to the lifetime of the individual concerned. He then spent most of the time exhorting those who had a ‘whispering’ (the writer’s word) of this idea in their minds, to meditate on it, and it would grow into a foundation for their lives.

During lunch, a local pastor sat down beside the writer. He was ‘bent out of shape’ about what the preacher had said. The local pastor was thinking of the word “saved” as a synonym for being born again, so when the visitor exhorted his hearers to have a part in their being saved, he became incensed. Together, we went through what the preacher had said. The writer also explained the difference between being born again and being saved. The pastor seemed relieved. He was probably not the only one who was ‘bent out of shape’ about the matter, because the preacher went back to California, and we never heard from him again.

One of the biggest disappointments in this writer’s life is the number of Primitive Baptists who use the word “saved” just like the Arminians. The Arminians use the word that way because they do not really understand what the Bible definition of the word “saved” is. When our people use the word that way, it proves that they don’t know either. Jesus is the only one who “saves” from eternal hell to eternal heaven. We can “save” ourselves from this untoward generation: walk differently in order to have fellowship with God and be spared of chastening. We can save our brethren from the error of their way (James 5:19-20). We should desire and pray for our brethren to be saved from ignorance (Romans 10:1-

4). The word “save” is used in many different ways in the word of God! Failure to see the different “salvations” taught in the word of God leads to confusion and false teachings!

Since the writer has mentioned feeling that the preacher had missed the point of the lesson, maybe he should say what he feels is the main point. Nicodemus was an official in the synagogue. Jesus was preaching all over the country, claiming to be the Messiah. Most of the High Officials in the Jewish Religion rejected His claim. Many (maybe most) of the common people believed Him. Nicodemus wanted to be in the group with his friends (the officials), but when he considered commitment on the point, he just could not be sure. Maybe Jesus was who He said He was. He wanted to have peace of mind, so one night he went to see Jesus. Maybe that would help him to find peace. To Jesus, he said, “Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.” When he said this, Jesus answered, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” To me, Jesus was saying to him, ‘By what you have said, I know that you sense that there is such a thing as the kingdom of God. This proves that you have been born again because no one can see the Kingdom unless he has been born again. Therefore I exhort you to become one of my disciples, thereby honoring God, and accruing to yourself blessings that you can only imagine.’

Nicodemus was not ready for such a serious commitment. The conversation continued down to verse 22. Nicodemus probably believed in his heart that Jesus was the Messiah, but he did not openly commit himself to the

idea. If he had done so, surely one of the gospel writers would have mentioned his commitment like they did of that of Mary Magdalene and others. We never hear of him again until Jesus was crucified. John tells us (19:38-42) that when He was Crucified, His body was buried by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Some people look on this as a commitment. But the writer believes that any action that does not put Jesus first in our lives is not worthy of being called by the name "commitment." In all probability, when Nicodemus and Joseph buried Jesus, they may have been "called on the carpet" by the Jewish religious authorities and their response was that it was simply an act of charity. Their response probably went something like this, "That pauper needed to be buried. His family is poor and could not bury him. His remaining unburied would have caused a riot, instigated by his disciples. Our action averted a lot of unpleasant circumstances. If this explanation does not satisfy you, we apologize." If there had been even a whisper of commitment on their part, surely that would have been mentioned in the history of the early church.

We shall now get back to the original theme of adequate communication.

The writer was always troubled when communication was vague. His father taught him that anything worth doing is worth doing correctly. When communicating with others became important to him, it was second nature for him to change the word "doing" into "saying."

We must use words to communicate. Each word has meaning. Some words have more than one meaning. For most words that have more than one meaning, the meanings are similar to each other. The word "gray" describes a range of colors between almost white and almost black. They are similar in that they are all made up of a mixture of white and black. There are other words that have more than one mean-

ing, but the meanings are not so similar. The meaning of the English word "love" is "an emotional attachment between two individuals that causes them to have pleasant feelings toward each other." A boy and a girl are attracted to each other, but the features of their attraction may be sexual in nature. But they describe themselves as being in love. This is far different from love as taught in the Bible. When talking about love, a speaker should go out of his way to make sure people understand which kind of love he is talking about. This can be said about any subject.

No speaker wants to be misunderstood. If a subject is important enough for him to put forth the effort to talk about it, he wants people to understand what he is saying about it. No hearer wants to misunderstand a speaker. But when a speaker speaks and a hearer hears, unless both of them use the same definition for the words that the speaker uses, the speaker is misunderstood! Both of them bear responsibility in the matter. But the primary responsibility rests upon the speaker. As much as possible, he should use words that the individuals in the general population all define the same way. If he succeeds in this, there will be no misunderstanding. If he uses words that someone might define differently, he should take time to define them so a hearer will know what he means by the word. Of course, this dictates that he should spend a lot of time with his dictionary.

The hearer should also spend a lot of time with his dictionary. When he hears a speaker, if he agrees with what the speaker said, the speaker was probably using words that they defined the same way. On the other hand, if he questioned what the speaker said, there is a good possibility that the speaker used words that the hearers did not define alike. That was what happened in the incident involving the California preacher and the local pastor that was cited above. Most of the

disagreements that disrupt the fellowship among churches had their beginnings with something like this. Of course there are times when a hearer anticipates what a speaker is going to say, and does not really listen to what he actually said. When that happens, any disruption is the so called "hearer's" fault, not the speaker's.

Several years ago, the writer attended an Association in another state. Being so far from home, of course he "was put up to preach." His text was Acts 2:47, "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The first point that he made was that the Bible does not use the word "saved" as a synonym for the New Birth. He even cited some instances when he had heard Primitive Baptist preachers use the word in that way. He emphasized the idea that our preachers should teach this fact to our people. Then he talked about the Bible definition of the word "saved." He put strong emphasis on the role of the church in accomplishing this salvation. In this part of the discourse, he wondered out loud if the reason some of our churches are disbanding because of a decline in their memberships could be that God had removed the candlestick from the churches because their people were not being saved. As soon as the Service dismissed the pastor of that church went to him and said that he agreed with him on the point that no one wants to be saved unless he has already been saved. He had missed the point of the sermon completely.

This article is about preachers and listeners. Both have roles in communication. But as long as preachers are satisfied with their effort at preaching, the churches will not prosper. No matter how clearly we speak, we can always do better. May the Lord help us to put more effort into our "service" ever seeking to honor God with our lives. Words fitly spoken are like apples of gold in pictures of silver!

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Christ and the Holy Spirit

by Elder W. H. Durrence
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Prophecy - Isaiah 61:1-2 Fulfillment - Matthew 4:18-19

In the above passage from Isaiah, many wonderful prophecies are given; however, we will focus our study on those which apply to God's only begotten Son Jesus Christ and the third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit. John said, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one" (1 John 5:7). Even though Jesus and the Holy Ghost are identified as separate Persons of the Godhead, we will discuss how they are connected together in this prophecy of Isaiah.

According to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus entered the synagogue on one occasion and publicly read the Holy Scriptures, selecting and reading the above passage from Isaiah. Upon comparing the above cited references in Isaiah and Luke, we can easily see that the passage in Luke is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. After Jesus read the ancient prophecy, He closed the book and gave it to the minister and sat down. Apparently, all eyes were fixed upon our Lord "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:21).

Clearly, Isaiah was in fact prophesying of Christ and the Holy Spirit with Him. The "Spirit of the Lord" mentioned by both Isaiah and Luke is the Holy Spirit Who is said to rest upon Christ. When Isaiah wrote those prophetic words it was as though Jesus was speaking them, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me..." (Isaiah 61:1a). This explains why the Ethiopian Eunuch asked the question concerning Isaiah 53:7-8 which is recorded in Acts 8:34. It says, "And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee,

of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" He did not understand if Isaiah was speaking of himself or of someone else, it simply was not clear to him. However, from our perspective we know that Isaiah was **not** speaking of himself, but was in fact speaking of Christ in prophecy. The same principle is true of the passage from Isaiah 61, he was again speaking of Jesus. Prophetically speaking and in fulfillment, the Holy Spirit was upon our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

One of the many interesting things about this prophecy is that God told John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, that the Holy Spirit would actually come upon Jesus. It was to be the defining moment and mark of identification for the Son of God. John actually witnessed the Holy Spirit come upon Christ. It occurred when Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Matthew 3:13-17 says, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Remember that Isaiah said the Spirit would come **upon** Him (Jesus). So, when John baptized Christ and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove; the prophecy was

fulfilled. Clearly, God inspired Isaiah's prophecy and His Word was fulfilled as prophesied. Keep in mind that Isaiah said of God: "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" (Isaiah 46:10). Just as God promised, it was His pleasure to send the Holy Spirit upon His Son, Jesus.

We need to recognize that when John the Baptist witnessed the Spirit descend upon Christ, it was not a singular and momentary occurrence. The Holy Spirit actually came upon Christ and **remained** with Him. John the Baptist was blessed with a wonderful understanding about Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Look at God's Word as recorded in John 1:32-33: "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." In both verses John said the Holy Spirit would descend upon Christ but would also abide or remain upon Him. Therefore, the Holy Spirit was ever with our dear Saviour.

When Isaiah wrote of the Holy Spirit descending upon Christ, he called it an *anointing*. The second statement of the prophecy said, "because the Lord hath anointed me..." In the Old Testament there were different kinds of anointings. (1) Kings were anointed to their position as when David was anointed by Samuel. I Samuel 16:13 says, "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of

his brethren: and the spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.” (2) We should also remember that priests were anointed to their office and work. The Bible tells us that Aaron was anointed as High Priest. Psalm 133:2 says, “It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments.” These offices call our attention to the fact that Jesus is both our King (Revelation 19:16) and our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1). Just as anointing oil was poured upon the head of those anointed, the Holy Spirit came upon Christ. It is very important that we understand these were offices to which our Saviour was anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Even after our Lord accomplished His work of redemption and returned to Heaven, Peter reminded us of the anointing of Jesus. He told, “How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him” (Acts 10:38). Peter not only wanted to proclaim the good which Jesus did while here, but also to remind us of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in His life and Divine work. Can we fully understand these teachings about Christ and the Holy Spirit? Absolutely not! Nevertheless, it is important for us to give our hearts in prayerful consideration of such wonderful truths. It will help us understand the power of the Holy Spirit in our own lives.

If we have been born again, the Holy Spirit dwells **within** us. This indwelling is very important and is a sovereign work of grace by which we are brought from death in sin to life in Christ (Ephesians 2:1). Yet, there is a need for more of the presence of the Holy Spirit because we need His power **upon** us as we endeavor to serve our Saviour.

Remember that before the glorious day of Pentecost, Jesus said to His Apostles: “But ye shall receive power,

after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Notice that the Holy Spirit would give them power after He came **upon** them. No doubt, they had already been indwelt by the Holy Spirit but He would also come upon them to empower them as they went forth to preach Christ Jesus. We are also empowered to do God’s will by the Holy Spirit coming upon us.

Paul wrote of the demonstration of the Spirit and His power, saying to God’s children in all ages, “That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (I Corinthians 2:5). Let us pray for the Divine power of the Holy Spirit, that we may truly glorify Jesus in all we do. Jesus said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13). Have you prayed for God to send His Holy Spirit upon you? Every heaven born soul is blessed when we feel the power of the Holy Spirit upon us.

While it is of vital importance that we note the Holy Spirit upon Christ, it is not the only message before us. It is only the beginning point and it enables us to understand that which follows. We notice that Jesus was anointed to **preach** good tidings to the meek (Isaiah 61:1). The Bible gives ample evidence that Jesus preached and as He did so, many were healed and multitudes were fed. As great as those unrecorded messages must have been, there is a singular sermon that towers above all of them inasmuch as God was pleased to record it. It is referred to as “The Sermon on the Mount.” Three chapters in the Gospel of Matthew are devoted to the “good tidings” of that message. Matthew, chapters five, six and seven declare messages of paramount importance for the church of all ages. Though the world is ever changing around us, we continue to be richly blessed because of the eternal truths

spoken by our Lord 2000 years ago.

He was anointed by the Holy Spirit to preach good tidings to the “meek.” It is interesting to observe that in the Gospel of Luke, Jesus changed the word to “poor.” Jesus used the “gospel” for “good tidings,” which is easy to understand; after all, gospel comes from the anglo-saxon word which means “good news.” Understandably, the good news and the gospel are the same. However, changing the word “meek” to “poor,” warrants some explanation.

The understanding of this change is not really difficult. We readily admit that as “God manifest in the flesh” (I Timothy 3:16), Jesus would have understood the truth of God’s Word. Who better to understand what Isaiah had spoken than the One of Whom he spoke, Jesus. Understanding that the knowledge of Christ was and is perfect, we conclude that He was divinely accurate in making the change from “meek” to “poor.” There seems to be no discrepancy between the two, so why did Jesus use the word “poor?”

Perhaps that question can be best answered by looking at another passage found in the Gospel of Matthew. John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ, preparing the way before Him. Isaiah had prophesied of him too. Matthew 3:3 says, “For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” After he had announced and identified the Lord of glory, John was imprisoned and later beheaded. While in prison, he sent messengers to Jesus asking, “art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?” (Matthew 11:3). Look carefully at the response Jesus sent to John. The Bible says, “Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matthew

11:5). Observe the final statement: "the poor have the gospel preached to them." Clearly, that was vital information for John. Jesus was telling John that He had fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy. Those words reaffirmed that Jesus was the One Who should come and John was apparently reassured. There is no record that John ever asked that question again. Apparently, his heart was satisfied as to the identity of Christ.

In conclusion, let me hasten to say that there are other important statements in the prophecy of Isaiah that I will not endeavor to address at length. In the essence of space, I will briefly consider them. He was sent "to bind up the brokenhearted." Many Christians can attest to the fact that when

their heart was broken (for whatever reason), Jesus somehow put it back together and healed their hurt.

Jesus also came "to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of prisons to them that are bound." John said, "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Oh, the joy of a soul set free from the guilt and penalty of sin, because Jesus died for us on the cross of Calvary.

The last statement of Isaiah's prophecy that Jesus brought to the New Testament, is the fact that He came "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19). With those words He closed His remarks, making no further reference to the prophecy of Isaiah. When Jesus mentioned "the accept-

able year" was He calling our attention to "the Year of Jubilee" mentioned in Leviticus 25:8-17? Perhaps, for it was a wonderful time which occurred every fiftieth year. It was a joyous occasion when people were set free from bondage, debts were forgiven, and lands were returned to their original owners. What a glorious celebration it must have been! It could have also pre-figured the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. While we cannot understand the fullness of it all, thank God for this glorious truth - Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, and we are blessed to have this insightful glimpse of the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners and Lord of our lives.

Grow in Knowledge Integrity

1. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, not ____, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."
2. "for I the Lord thy God will ____ thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not: I will help thee."
3. "Fear thou not; for ____ am with thee:..."
4. "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand ____, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will shew to you today:..."
5. "And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the ____, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

6. "But straightway Jesus came unto them; saying, Be of good ____; It is I; be not afraid."
7. "And Jesus came and touched them, and said, ____, and be not afraid."
8. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the ____ according to His purpose."
9. "...Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours but ____."
10. "Be ____ and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the King of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him."

A Good Soldier

*Let our hands bring
Blossoms sweet,
To a brave man
Lying low.*

*Let our hearts
To a soldier's death,
Our love
and honor show.*

*We love the land
For which he fell,
The dear old
Banner bright.*

*We love the cause
For which he fought,
for soul, strength
And might.*

Things to Remember

by Elder William M. Mullis
Waycross, Georgia

"Remember Lot's Wife"

Though we do not know her name, yet Jesus Christ says, "Remember Lot's wife." It is not her accomplishments, achievements, or good works that are recorded in the Scriptures! It is not her faithfulness or obedience that Christ says to remember!

God had commanded Lot and His family to flee from the city of Sodom: "Escape for thy life; **look not behind thee**, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." (Genesis 19:17). "**But his wife looked back** from behind him, and **she became a pillar of salt.**" (Genesis 19:26).

Many of the people of God have a distorted view and warped understanding about God. They know the truth that He is a God of love. In fact, HE IS LOVE. But too often it is **forgotten** that He is a consuming FIRE. HE IS A JEALOUS GOD! It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God! "WHOM THE LORD LOVETH HE CHASTENETH, AND SCOURGETH EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVETH!" (See Hebrews 12:6, 29, 10:30,31).

When we REMEMBER Lot's wife, we are REMINDED that our God does not beg for obedience, He commands it! When we "REMEMBER Lot's wife", we see that though He is merciful and gracious, and longsuffering, yet we can provoke God and grieve Him till He will manifest His wrath, and we will be destroyed!

What led to the destruction of Lot's wife? In what way did she DISOBEY GOD? She had been commanded to not look back. "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

Our sight, our vision, has a great effect on our lives! We read in I John 2:16, "For all that is in the world, the

lust of the flesh, and **the lust of the eyes**, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." It seems that ALL SIN is connected to one of these three categories: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. What sin is there that is not connected to at least one of these three? REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE! The lust of the eyes —looking back—resulted in her being turned into a pillar of salt. Oh, brethren! "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning!" (Romans 15:4). Let us LEARN from the mistake of Lot's wife. Let us REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE!

Many different lessons in the Scriptures teach us the importance of **looking** at the proper things. LOOKING includes our affections, thoughts, minds, hearts, as well as our eyes. When we read in Matthew 14:25-30 that Peter was walking on the water toward Jesus, we see that he began to sink and cry out, "...when he **saw** the wind boisterous, he was afraid!"

When Peter looked at the storm and raging sea, he began to sink! See the importance of sight and vision! When we focus on the storms, troubles, and problems of life, we begin to sink! We begin to perish when we look at difficulties! Depression and despondency are a result of **looking at trouble** - just like Peter.

When we can say with the Psalmist, "My heart is fixed!" (Psalm 57:7), then we are saying, "I will not look back; I will not look at the raging sea; I will not fear the roaring lion; because Thou art my shield and buckler, my ALL IN ALL!"

In Colossians 3:2, the Apostle Paul was inspired to admonish, "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." This wise counsel

gains in meaning to us when we **REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE!** Her affection was for Sodom, rather than toward the MOUNTAIN!

Going back to the garden of Eden for the first time Satan enticed through the eyes, we read, "And when the woman SAW that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the EYES, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat." (Genesis 3:6). The lust of the flesh, **the lust of the eyes**, and the pride of life are all three seen in this one verse!

The devil SHEWED (there is the use of eyes) Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, but He did not yield to the temptation of them! Thanks be unto God for His faithfulness! Let us ever be found "**Looking unto Jesus** the author and finisher of our faith!" (Hebrews 12:2). If we do that, we cannot LOOK BACK. REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE! Fear God and keep His commandments! "For whom the Lord **loveth, He chasteneth!**" Because of God's love, He chastens!

Jesus emphasized the **danger** of "looking back", and taking our eyes off Him, and ceasing to **press** into the Kingdom, by His statement in Luke 9:62. "No man, having put his hand to the plough and **looking back**, is fit for the kingdom of God."

REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE!!!

'Where there is no vision, the people perish!' (Proverbs 29:18). But there is a vision that leads to perishing!

"THINK ON THESE THINGS"

Upon what are you looking?

Are you depressed or discouraged? Then remember Lot's wife and STOP LOOKING in the wrong direction!

Be everfound LOOKING TO JESUS

for leadership and guidance! for strength and help!

HE IS OUR SAVIOUR! May God help us fill our **minds** with things pleasing to Him!

KEEP A LIST OF THINGS TO REMEMBER! REMEMBER THEM!

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoev-

er things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8)

Sermon on Suffering

by Bro. Chris and Sis. Nicole Dardis
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"The following is a summary of our understanding of the Scriptures after listening to this sermon on www.thetrumpetoftruth.com web site and looking at the video on Waycross Primitive Baptist Church Facebook page."

Suffering can be divided into three categories: for Well Doing, for Evil Doing, and as Trials of our Faith.

Suffering Wrongfully for Well Doing

We are called to suffer for well doing. We are to suffer patiently and be happy in the Lord while we endure. It is our responsibility to speak up against evil. Because of this, we will suffer. It is a blessing in the end. After the pain, there will be glory and rewards in the Kingdom of Heaven (righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy spirit). All who live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted and suffer. We shouldn't be afraid of the judgment and suffering. Instead, we can find happiness in the Kingdom of Heaven and knowing that we are suffering for well doing and standing up for what is right. **1 Peter 2:19, Matthew 5:11, 1 Peter 3:14

Suffering for Evil Doing

When we go against the will of God and sin knowingly, we will suffer for it. It is better to suffer for well doing than to suffer for evil doing. Nothing can comfort you when the suffering comes from God. There is no glory from the Kingdom of Heaven to come after this suffering. If you choose to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, you will suffer the pain. **1 Peter 3:17

Trials of Faith (Fiery Trials)

These sufferings are caused by following Christ. They are unlike fiery judgment, which is brought on by wrong doing. As a Christian and follower of Christ, we will experience this. It isn't something we should think of as strange. It is something we should expect to endure and rejoice for. He will reveal his glory in the kingdom of heaven, and we will experience joy for

enduring. A great example of someone who experienced trials of faith is Job. The Lord asked Satan if he had considered his servant Job. He said there were none like him. God allowed Satan to wreak havoc in Job's life as a trial of faith. Job endured patiently. In one day, he experienced more suffering that we can imagine! He lost his possessions, his kids, and his servants. He suffered from that, then he worshiped! The Lord gave and took away. Blessed be his name! After this, the Lord allowed his body to be touched by boils all over. Even after his wife told him to curse God and die, he still took the good with the evil patiently. He did cry and wail and wish he was never born because of this suffering during the pain, but still was faithful and pleasing to God. In Job 42, we see the glory of God! Job has SEEN God. He is so much closer to him because of the suffering. The glory he feels now can not compare to the pain and suffering he felt. He prayed for others to experience the same and have this closeness. In the end, God gave him two times what he had lost on top of the unimaginable closeness he experienced. **1 Peter 4:12-14, Job (all)

Peter on suffering

Peter wrote more than anyone else on suffering. He explains that we will suffer. We should endure it, and not think it is strange. In Matthew 16:21, we can read about a time that Jesus made clear to Peter how important suffering is. Peter was trying to keep Jesus from having to endure terrible suffering when Jesus said to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan". He explained that he will have to suffer and that suf-

fering is of God. This strong message may be a reason that Peter writes as much about suffering as he does. God put this strong in his mind.

1 Peter 2:19: Endure grief patiently. Be willing to suffer; 1 Peter 3:14: Be happy to suffer for righteousness sake; 1 Peter 3:18: Christ suffered; 1 Peter 4:1: Arm yourself with the same mind as Christ in suffering. He suffered willingly. 1 Peter 4:12: Trials aren't strange. Expect them and rejoice.; 1 Peter 4:19: Don't get even for suffering. Leave it to God; 1 Peter 5:10: Suffering works to strengthen you.

Choose to suffer

We should suffer patiently. We should also choose to suffer over choosing the easy route of sin and temporary pleasures. Moses chose to suffer over pleasure starting in Hebrew 11:24. We should all chose the fellowship of Christ over the company and approval of men! Pleasure is going to come with sin, but only for a season. It is guaranteed to stop and judgment and suffering will come.

Examples to follow

Take the prophets as an example of suffering with patience. Take Job as an example. What we know: Philipians 1:29 Believe in Christ and suffer for his sake! Suffering WILL happen if we are doing right. We should not be surprised by it! We should be willing to endure. We should endure patiently.

We should choose to suffer for well doing over sin. After we suffer, there will be glory. We know that suffering also comes from wrong doing. There is no glory for this!

Can You Limit What God Will Do?

by Bro. Joshua Leach
Valdosta, Georgia

There are two main thoughts on my heart in studying the scriptures that are in this article. One main thought is the current state of our nation that once honored and worshipped the Almighty God, but has so quickly forgotten our Father in Heaven. And the other main thought I'd like to present is in the form of a question: Can you limit God?

When I was first asked this question, I answered boldly, "No, you cannot limit God!" Then, the asker presented this passage of scripture to me. "Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" (Psalm 78:41). The truth is, the question is incomplete. Adding a short phrase to the question makes the answer much more obvious. Examine the difference between these two forms of the same question: "Can you limit what God can do?" versus "Can you limit what God will do?"

The answer? No one can limit what God CAN do, but we can limit what God WILL do.

Let's look at the truth that no one can limit what God can do. Read Isaiah 46:9-11 carefully, "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: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." God is omnipotent! Whatever He purposes, it will happen. God's omnipotence is seen in creation. Just as He spoke this world into existence, just as He said, "Let there be light," and there was light, He is able to do whatever He pleases. Whatever He has spoken, He "will also bring it to

pass!" Job declared to the Lord, "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job 42:2). The Lord is "he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Revelation 3:7). So, clearly no one can limit what God CAN do.

However, we can limit what God WILL do. Isaiah 59:1-2 states, "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." What caused God to hide His face from the people? What separated the people from God? Iniquities! Sins! Not being obedient to God will limit what God will do for His people. Disobedience will become a barrier between us and our Heavenly Father!

Notice that their sins "hid his face" from them and that "he will not hear!" Will God always hear our prayers? "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9). "The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous" (Proverbs 15:29). In Jeremiah 11, we can read about how Israel and Judah "turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers" and "thus said the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them" (Jeremiah 11:10-11). God would not "hearken unto them" (hear their prayers) because they turned back to the "iniquities" of their forefathers. Iniquities limit what God will do for His people.

In Revelation chapters two and three, Jesus warns several churches of the iniquities that were between them and Christ. The church in Ephesus had

left their first love. The church in Pergamos allowed those who held false doctrines to remain in the church. The church in Thyatira suffered Jezebel, "which calleth herself a prophetess," to teach and to seduce God's servants to commit fornication and worship idols. The church of the Laodiceans was lukewarm, "neither cold nor hot," and called themselves rich and in need of nothing, not knowing that they were "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." I encourage you to study and read about the good works, bad works, and consequences of each of the seven churches to whom Jesus spoke.

Jesus ended His message to the churches with this passage of scripture, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Revelation 3:19-22). I have heard many take this passage out of context and claim that Jesus is knocking on the "door of your heart" and will quicken you, or cause you to be born again, if you open the door "to your heart." Brethren, nothing we do can cause us to be born again! The new birth is the work of God alone. He quickened us while we "were dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1, 5). HE quickened US. We did not quicken ourselves. We were DEAD in trespasses and sins.

When Nicodemus questioned Jesus about being "born again," Jesus told him, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind

bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:7-8). Jesus basically told him not to worry about how to be born again because it is like the wind. We don't know when it comes or where it goes. It is the work of God alone and is completed at the time of God's choosing because of His marvelous grace. It is not caused by anything that we do. The passage of scripture in Revelation is not referring to the door "to your heart" but the door to intimate fellowship with Christ as we live in this world. The "door" is a barrier and represents the sins and iniquities in the churches (remember this passage of Scripture is a message "unto the churches"). These sins and iniquities were limiting what God would do for the churches, limiting them from "supping" with Christ. If the churches would repent and remove the "iniquities" that "have separated between" them and God, He would allow them to sit with Him on His throne as a child finds comfort while sitting in the lap of his father in safety.

Our nation desperately needs to repent from our iniquities. We are limiting God from the bountiful blessings and protection He will bestow to us if we "choose life and good" rather than "death and evil". We need to love God and to "walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes, and his judgments" so that we may "live and multiply" and so that God will "bless" us "in the land..." (Deuteronomy 30:15-20). Read and study Deuteronomy 28 where God tells His people how to remain in His bountiful blessings and how to avoid falling into His judgment and cursings. He tells them how NOT to limit God's blessings on them. "And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken dilligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings

shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 28:1-2). "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee: Cursed shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me" (Deuteronomy 28:15-20).

The iniquities of our nation are great. We are killing millions of unborn children each year. Our president and many other elected officials are legalizing, promoting, and paying for this massacre through our tax dollars. The sin of homosexuality (Lev. 18:22, Lev. 20:13, Rom 1:26-28, 1 Cor. 6:9, 1 Tim. 1:7-11) is promoted as something to be proud of in our land today and is being pushed on the people through government, media, and even early childhood education. We are legalizing what people are falsely calling "same-sex marriage" when God, who created marriage, clearly defines it as being between a man and a woman (Gen. 2:24). The divorce rate is just as high among self-proclaimed "Christians" as it is among the heathen. "Churches" ordain men to preach and appoint deacons to office who do not meet the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. We are proud and boastful as if we are "self-made" men. We act as if we have brought the blessings in our lives instead of acknowledging the fact that God has bestowed on us those blessings in His mercy, grace, and love

despite our shortcomings each day.

Many in our nation are justifying the wicked, and condemning the just which is an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 17:15). Self-proclaimed "Christians" are rebuking true followers of Christ when they speak out against homosexuality, divorce without Scriptural grounds, abortion and many other sins. Like the churches in Pergamos and Thyatira who did not put away false prophets and Jezebel, many do not carry out church discipline and continue to have fellowship with unrepentant fornicators, coveters, idolaters, railers, drunkards, and extortioners when God has called us to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person" and "with such an one no not to eat" (1 Cor. 5:11-13). These same confused children of God condemn and rebuke other churches that do carry out God's word on this matter. Some are so far away from God that they even ordain proud, professing homosexuals as "pastors".

Brethren, just as God dealt with Israel and Judah in Jeremiah 11, just as He dealt with the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 28 and 30, just as He dealt with Jerusalem, Sodom and Gomorrah, and every other nation that turned their back on God, He will deal with the United States of America, who He has blessed beyond measure and protected and nurtured and founded on Christian principles with Christian Founding Fathers. Our iniquities will limit the Holy One of Israel in the same way, and we will experience cursings instead of blessings if we do not repent.

Jeremiah 5:24-29 describes us today: "Neither say they in their heart, Let us now fear the Lord our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season: he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. For among my people are found wicked men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares; they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage

is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich. They are waxen fat, they shine: yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked: they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

Let me encourage you, however, not to limit God further by giving up and not believing that God can protect His obedient children in the midst of His judgment upon this nation. He may even work in the hearts of His people and spare this nation if we repent like Nineveh. Matthew 13:58 states, "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Iniquities can limit God on what He will do for His people, but also unbelief limits God on what He will do. Think of the Children of Israel when God delivered them out of Egypt so miraculously, and they were still scared of entering

the promised land because of the giants. They didn't believe God could deliver their enemies into their hand. Because of their unbelief, they died in the wilderness and experienced what they were so afraid of: perishing. Instead, their children, who they were so afraid would be killed, entered the land and possessed it along with Caleb and Joshua who protested, "If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us... Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us: fear them not" (Numbers 14:8-9). In Hebrews, God, in reference to the children of Israel in the wilderness, makes it clear that "they could not enter in because of unbelief." Please study Hebrews chapter 3 and 4 where it teaches about a rest that we can obtain today if we trust and believe in God. "Let us labour therefore to enter into the rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Hebrews 4:11).

I encourage you to fear God, not men ("neither fear ye the people of the land...fear them not"). When the people of our nation persecute you and rebel against you for speaking and carrying out the truth of God's Holy Word, do not stop for fear of what they may do. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Prov. 29:25). "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).

James 4:2-3 teaches us that we limit God on what He will do because we ask not. Let us believe and obey II Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." Let us not limit God on what He will do in our lives and in our nation. Let's keep His commandments and trust in Him!

* * * * *

Make A Joyful Noise!

The first four words of Psalm 100 are "Make a joyful noise." Usually, when I think about making a joyful noise, I think about singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Certainly, that is the main thought in the Psalmist's mind when he told us to "Make a joyful noise" because the next verse says, "Come before His presence with singing!"

In order for our singing to be a "joyful noise unto the Lord," the singing must be expressing words of truth. We always need to be careful that every verse of every song we sing is expressing the truth of God's Holy Word. We remember the words of songs longer than we remember Scriptures we memorize. When visiting patients who have forgotten most everything else, even who their loved ones are, I start singing Amazing Grace, and most of them will start singing with me. They may not remember who people are, may not remember Scriptures, but there is still a song in their hearts, and the words come back as you sing with them! They can make a joyful noise as the last thing they ever do on this earth! Paul said, "I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Corinthians 14:15 (b)). May God help us to make a joyful noise every day, singing and making melody in our hearts unto the Lord! (See Ephesians 5:19.)

May God help us also to teach and admonish one GO TO www.thetrumpetoftruth.com

another in singing! (See Colossians 3:16.) Make a joyful noise all day, every day, singing out loud (making a joyful NOISE) when possible, but singing silently in our hearts when we cannot sing out loud. Remember the words, "There's within my heart a melody...."

Another way to "Make a joyful noise" unto the Lord is by giving thanks. In Psalm 100, verse 4 says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise!" God is pleased when we are thanking Him, praising Him, remembering that every good and perfect gift we have comes from Him! "Thank You Lord for saving my soul! Thank You Lord for making me whole! Thank You Lord for giving to me Thy great salvation so rich and free!" Thank Him for your family, your health, food, clothing, shelter, Church family, and the Bible! Thank Him out loud!!! Make a joyful noise! If you have a thankful heart, and you are giving God thanks, you will be making a joyful noise because you will be happy as you think about the blessings you have, and stop thinking about the things you want, or the things you do not have! Make a joyful noise by GIVING THANKS!!!

Make a joyful noise by praying! Jesus said, "Men ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). Do not only pray "asking" for blessings. Pray words

of praise! Pray words of thanksgiving. If you study the example prayer Jesus gave us, you will see Him teaching us to "Make a joyful noise" in that prayer! Can you pick out the parts of that prayer where you will be giving a joyful noise if you are praying with the Spirit and praying with understanding? (I Corinthians 14:15).

We are also "Making a joyful noise" when we are speaking words of comfort, encouragement, edification, kindness, and Scriptures to others! Every day, in our homes, at work, at school, in our community we are around people. Every person needs to hear you "making a joyful noise." You can encourage elderly ladies by complimenting them on their clothing, or their hair, or their eyes, or their smile. Loving people with our words and deeds is an important part of our Christian walk!

There are many other ways to "Make a joyful noise!" Think of your own list, and put this into practice every day!!!

W.M.M.

"LET THE WORDS OF MY MOUTH,
AND THE MEDITATION OF MY HEART,
BE ACCEPTABLE IN THY SIGHT, O LORD
MY STRENGTH, AND MY REDEEMER!"

(Psalm 19:14).

The Unforeseen Lesson and Gift From God

By Bro. Jim Berbigler
Beaufort, South Carolina

A short time ago (in the month of November), I was sent to Waycross, Georgia by my general manager to help that location out for a week with a large roll-off job. Later I would be enlightened that I was actually sent by God.

I accepted this assignment with a heavy heart as I would miss our weekly moment at church on that Wednesday, but with the understanding that I would be back in time to go to church on Sunday.

Upon arrival at the Waycross division, I was met by the manager, Mr. Richard Lee, who thanked me for the help. I informed him that it was my privilege and that I needed to be back in time to go to church on Sunday. Mr. Richard stated that church was indeed very important. When I explained that I was going to miss our fellowship moment at our church that day (Wednesday), Mr. Richard immediately invited me to go to church that night with him for dinner, fellowship, worship, and Bible Study. I was very pleased and accepted his loving offer.

When I arrived at the church, I was met by Mr. Richard. He introduced me to his immediate family and his church family. We gave thanks and asked God's blessings on the food, then enjoyed dinner together. While enjoying dinner, I was accompanied by Pastor Bill Mullis. I explained that I was called to worship and that I would like to ask him some questions to help me on my journey serving the Lord. He was very accommodating, and even invited me to come study with him the next evening. Then we went into the sanctuary and had a very celebrating, praising, and educational service. Afterward, we all said our thanks to each other

and departed for homes or hotels.

At the hotel, I got out my Bible and talked to the Lord to give me guidance on what scriptures to study to prepare me for my Bible study lesson with Pastor Bill the next night. I studied for a while, thanked and praised the Lord for his guidance and love, and then went to sleep.

When I arrived the next evening to study with Pastor Bill, we praised the Lord and asked for guidance in the lesson. In our Bible Study that night, I learned many things! I learned that there is more than one heaven taught in the Bible (Revelation 21:1 and II Corinthians 12:2). I learned that the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God are both the same, and are now in this life and world. I learned that this heaven on earth (called the kingdom of heaven or kingdom of God) is the primary heaven mentioned in the New Testament! I already knew about the eternal heaven where we go when we die, but did not know about heaven we can have now! Every preacher in the New Testament preached about this kingdom of heaven NOW! (See Matthew 3:1,2; 4:17; 10:5-7; Luke 10:1,9; Acts 8:12; 20:25; 28:30-31.) I learned that this kingdom of heaven is within us! (See Luke 17:20-21.) I also learned that the kingdom of heaven (kingdom of God) is defined as "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17). This was great as these were some questions that I have always had, and had been looking for the answers! During our study period, it was interesting to find that the majority of the scriptures we studied that night, I had already selected the night before with guidance of God. I had already read them and studied them, but

did not understand them so much until we had our study together!

We both felt God had brought us together and blessed our study in a miraculous way. I agreed to write a story of my experience to share in a Christian magazine at my return home, so he could publish it in the next edition. I did not get this done, so I called Pastor Bill to let him know that I did not forget and would soon get it turned in. He stated that that was fine and would be looking for it. That same week in my Sunday school class in Tennessee, the conversation centered around the question: Is there more than one heaven taught in the Bible. I jumped at the opportunity to explain what I had learned. Our teacher even let me go further into detail about this topic with our class. It was a great experience sharing this knowledge with others as I was called to do. The next day, I called Pastor Bill and told him of the experience. Pastor Bill stated that now I will be able to write the story and that there was a reason why I waited to write the story.

I would like to first thank God for all that he does for all of us and for the lesson and gift that he has given me to assist in my calling. I would also like to thank the congregation of Waycross Primitive Baptist Church for making me feel right at home and part of their family. I would like to thank Pastor Bill and Mr. Richard for their fellowship and love as well as Mr. Walley for his unconditional love and mentorship. All of you are gifts from God to me! I am a better person and, more importantly, a better Christian and disciple of His Word for knowing all of you.

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A Story of Gratitude

By Bro. David Humphries
Liveoak, Florida

This story is simple, yet it has an ending that is divine. My wife, Barbara, had a major stroke January of 2012. The circumstances surrounding this event were complex, but suffice it to say, the fact that she survived is a pure miracle. She also had a defibrillator placed to help protect her. She had to stay with her family in Waycross, Georgia during recovery as I had to work six days a week. She was finally able to come home to Live Oak about mid 2012. I took a week's vacation to welcome her.

About a day after she came home, Tropical Storm Debby hit. The water rose swiftly to about four feet inside the house and about six feet outside. Ducks swam by our windows. Tadpoles swam inside. The cockatiel birdseed floated over the couch in the living room. They grew fast into three inch sprouts of every color. The couch looked like a giant Chia-Pet, or a small spring meadow. We lost everything. I had to send Barbara back to Waycross. I stayed with neighbors, went to work, and tended to the house. I rebuilt the house, slowly, after work and weekends.

After about five months, she was able to return home. During this time, up until now, it was unwise for her to drive a vehicle alone. I bought her a

three-wheel pedal bicycle. She pedals all around town just about every other day, shopping at Walmart, Publix, Fred's, etc. Everyone has gotten to know her.

Last week, she was out shopping, and it was very cold. Her fingers were somewhat numb. She thought that she had placed her purse securely into her waist-pack. When she arrived home, she suddenly realized that she had lost it. Inside was her driver's license, her medical records, insurance cards, and credit card. She was so upset, she went back out and retraced her path back to the last store she had been. Now, it was very cold outside. Luckily, the bank was open late, as it was Friday. They were able to calm her down, as she was weeping. They canceled her card and issued a new one. She was so happy that, as we left, she stopped to hug people standing in the teller line.

For four days, she prayed and dreamed that someone would return her purse to her. She even had a dream about Jesus. As a somewhat practical man, I informed her to go ahead and accept that her purse was gone for good. Tuesday morning, we went for a duplicate driver's license. They informed her that she needed a birth certificate. We went home and lit-

erally tore the house apart in search of it. We then realized that Tropical Storm Debby had taken it. We went to the vital statistics branch in Live Oak. Hers was an out of state birth certificate and so we would have to contact that state. I was unable to get a person on the phone, so I downloaded the state form. In bold letters it stated that you cannot get a birth certificate without a photo ID. We could not get a driver's license or picture ID without a birth certificate, and we could not get a birth certificate without a driver's license or picture ID. So we found ourselves in a catch 22.

One afternoon I went briefly to the store. When I returned, Barbara ecstatically informed me what happened. She said that two detectives came to our door and returned her purse to her, everything intact. Some good person found her purse and turned it over to the police department. I was floored. The way she prayed and would not give up hope made me believe in the possibility of divine intervention, even in relatively small matters.

From the bottom of our hearts, we wish to thank the compassionate person who found and turned over her purse to the police department. We also thank the detectives for returning it to us. I have learned the strength of prayer.

Answers to Grow in Knowledge

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Fear - Isaiah 43:1 | 6. Cheer - Matthew 14:27 |
| 2. Hold - Isaiah 41:13 | 7. Arise - Matthew 17:7 |
| 3. I - Isaiah 41:10 | 8. Called - Romans 8:28 |
| 4. Still - Exodus 14:13 | 9. God's - II Chronicles 20:15 |
| 5. Palsy - Matthew 9:2 | 10. Strong - II Chronicles 32:7 |

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Why Do We Have Trials?

by Bro. Richard Lee
Waycross, Georgia

If we could be blessed to see it, there is a very important lesson taught in God's word about how we should deal with problems in our lives. If we study Joseph's life (Jacob's or Israel's son), we find that God's word records many of his different problems. If we look at each segment, we can break it down to 1) the time Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him, threw him into the pit, and then sold him into slavery, 2) His service to Potipher as a slave, 3) his time spent in prison, and 4) his service to Pharaoh.

God's word tells us about Joseph's journey in Gen. 37 through 47. In each segment of Joseph's life, we can find "unfair" things happening to Joseph.

Though Joseph had done nothing wrong to cause it, his brothers hated him! They sold Joseph into slavery. Ultimately he belonged to Potipher, an officer of Pharaoh.

During the time of Joseph's service to Potipher as a slave, we read in Genesis 39:2-4, "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand." Then another "unfair" thing happened. Potiphers' wife lied about Joseph trying to touch her. He was thrown into prison and spent over two years there.

When Joseph got to prison, we read in Genesis 39:21, "But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison." While he was in prison, two of the Pharaohs' officers were also put into prison because Pharaoh was wroth with them. They were put under Joseph's care. Joseph met

them and interpreted their dreams, with God's inspiration and revelation. When one of them returned to Pharaoh's house, Joseph had a direct connection to Pharaoh, the most powerful man in the world. Another thing that seemed unfair was that the chief butler forgot about Joseph, after he helped by interpreting the dream. I am sure that Joseph, after he specifically asked the chief butler to remember him when he got back to Pharaoh's service, was disappointed when no word came from Pharaoh's house after two years had passed.

One day when Pharaoh had his dream, forewarning about the famine to come, the chief butler remembered his faults (Genesis 41:9), and recommended that Joseph be brought forward to interpret Pharaoh's dream. Because of the power of God to reveal the interpretation of the dream to Joseph, he did tell Pharaoh the meaning of the dream. Joseph recommended that Pharaoh find "a man discreet and wise" (Genesis 41:33) to put in charge of the affairs, because Pharaoh's house had to prepare for the famine which was to be upon them after the seven years of plenty.

In Genesis 41:39-41, we read, 39) "And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40) thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41) And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt."

My thought is that at this point, Joseph was a great success. He was the most powerful man in Egypt and probably in the world. If, when Joseph was born, Jacob decided to choose his son to elevate to be the most powerful man

in the world, would he have chosen the path that God used to bring Joseph to this place?

Consider all of these "unfair" segments of Joseph's life. First, when his brothers sold him into slavery. To us, this surely doesn't seem like he is on the path to becoming great, but this led him to be put in charge of Pharaoh's house. Then another "unfair" thing happens, he meets an evil, manipulative, deceitful woman that tells a lie which gets Joseph put into prison. This doesn't sound good to us. Joseph didn't know that God would send two of Pharaoh's key people into the same area of the prison and that God would help Joseph interpret their dreams. Then again, it doesn't seem fair that the chief butler would forget about Joseph for two years in prison. Joseph didn't know that Pharaoh would also need an interpreter two years later and that he would be in position to be brought out for that purpose.

In Genesis 45: 4-8, we read, "4) And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said I am Joseph your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. 5) Now therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life. 6) For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. 7) And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. 8) So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."

As we can see God caused all these problems or "unfair" circumstances, but only for the purpose of having Jo-

seph in position to preserve life, giving him wisdom to store food.

When we suffer, it may be caused by God as judgment for our repeated wrong doing. Suffering may also come from our well doing, or as a trial of our faith. If we are obedient to God's law, suffering will come because of well doing or as a trial of our faith,

but will result in our well being, just as with Joseph.

Romans 8:28 says "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."

Jeremiah 29:11 says "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of

evil, to give you an expected end."

I hope that I can remember God's law, be given grace to follow it, and be reconciled to God's will and be used in His service. I must stand firm and not faint and complain when I am faced with a problem, but have faith that I am on the path God has chosen for me.

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Sanctify

by Sis. Danielle Sapp
Waycross, GA

My pastor preached on sanctification last Sunday. He taught us that sanctification means "to set apart for a holy use". He showed the difference in God sanctifying us for eternal heaven (Jude 1; Hebrews 2:11; Hebrews 10:10,14; Ephesians 1:3-7, and Romans 8:28-39), and us sanctifying ourselves to enter the kingdom of heaven (see II Timothy 2:20, 21; I Cor. 6:9-11; and John 17:19).

The sermon motivated me to study some more. This sanctifying we do is not the sanctification which Jesus did when He died on the cross. The sanctifying we do is what we do by doing the works God tells us to do. We do not go to the eternal heaven based on anything we do. But we are blessed to have a closer walk with God each day when we sanctify ourselves.

Remember that the word sanctify means to set apart for a holy use. So, we see to sanctify ourselves, we must set ourselves apart from the world. We must get rid of things of the world in our lives and fill our lives with works which God teaches us to do in His holy word.

John 17:16-19 tells us not to be of the world, but to sanctify ourselves through the truth of God, which is His holy word. So to sanctify ourselves, we must set ourselves apart from the

world and learn and do the things of God. Here are some scriptures that seemed to simplify it all for me. It tells us things to do to be sanctified.

In studying Ephesians 5:11-26, I see many ways for us to sanctify ourselves!

- 1) Have no fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness, but reprove them.
- 2) Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead.
- 3) Walk carefully as wise, not as fools.
- 4) Be understanding to what the will of God is.
- 5) Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the spirit of God.
- 6) Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.
- 7) Give thanks always for all things to God in the name of Jesus.
- 8) Submitting yourselves one to another in fear of God.
- 9) Wives submit yourselves to your own husbands as to God with the washing of water by the word.

I Thessalonians 5:6-23 also tells us things to do to be sanctified.

- 1) Let us not sleep; let us watch and be sober.
- 2) Be sober, putting on breastplate of faith and love and helmet of hope of salvation.

3) Comfort yourselves together and edify one another.

4) Know them who labour among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you and esteem them highly in love.

- 5) Be at peace among yourselves.
- 6) Warn them that are unruly.
- 7) Comfort the feebleminded and support the weak.
- 8) Be patient to all men.
- 9) Do not render evil to any man.
- 10) Follow that which is good among all men.
- 11) Rejoice evermore.
- 12) Pray without ceasing.
- 13) In everything give thanks to God.
- 14) Quench not the spirit of God.
- 15) Despise not prophesying
- 16) Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.
- 17) Abstain from all appearance of evil.

Verse 23 tells us if we do these things, the God of peace will sanctify us wholly.

Study these scriptures, and I think it will show you things to do to sanctify yourselves. This will be a good start to honoring and glorifying God in our lives. He has sanctified us for eternity. Now, let us sanctify ourselves to manifest our love for Him!

Bible Reading Calendar for April

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Judges 3,4,5	Luke 7:31-50
2	Judges 6,7	Luke 8:1-21
3	Judges 8,9	Luke 8:22-56
4	Judges 10,11	Luke 9:1-36
5	Judges 12,13,14	Luke 9:37-62
6	Judges 15,16,17	Luke 10:1-24
7	Judges 18,19	Luke 10:25-42
8	Judges 20,21	Luke 11:1-28
9	Ruth 1,2,3,4	Luke 11:29-54
10	I Samuel 1,2,3	Luke 12:1-34
11	I Samuel 4,5,6	Luke 12:35-59
12	I Samuel 7,8,9	Luke 13:1-21
13	I Samuel 10,11,12	Luke 13:22-35
14	I Samuel 13,14	Luke 14:1-24
15	I Samuel 15,16	Luke 14:25-35

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	I Samuel 17,18	Luke 15:1-10
17	I Samuel 19,20,21	Luke 15:11-32
18	I Samuel 22,23,24	Luke 16:1-18
19	I Samuel 25,26	Luke 16:19-31
20	I Samuel 27,28,29	Luke 17:1-19
21	I Samuel 30,31	Luke 17:20-37
22	II Samuel 1,2,3	Luke 18:1-17
23	II Samuel 4,5,6	Luke 18:18-43
24	II Samuel 7,8,9	Luke 19:1-28
25	II Samuel 10,11,12	Luke 19:29-48
26	II Samuel 13,14	Luke 20:1-26
27	II Samuel 15,16	Luke 20:27-47
28	II Samuel 17,18	Luke 21:1-19
29	II Samuel 19,20	Luke 21:20-38
30	II Samuel 21,22	Luke 22:1-30

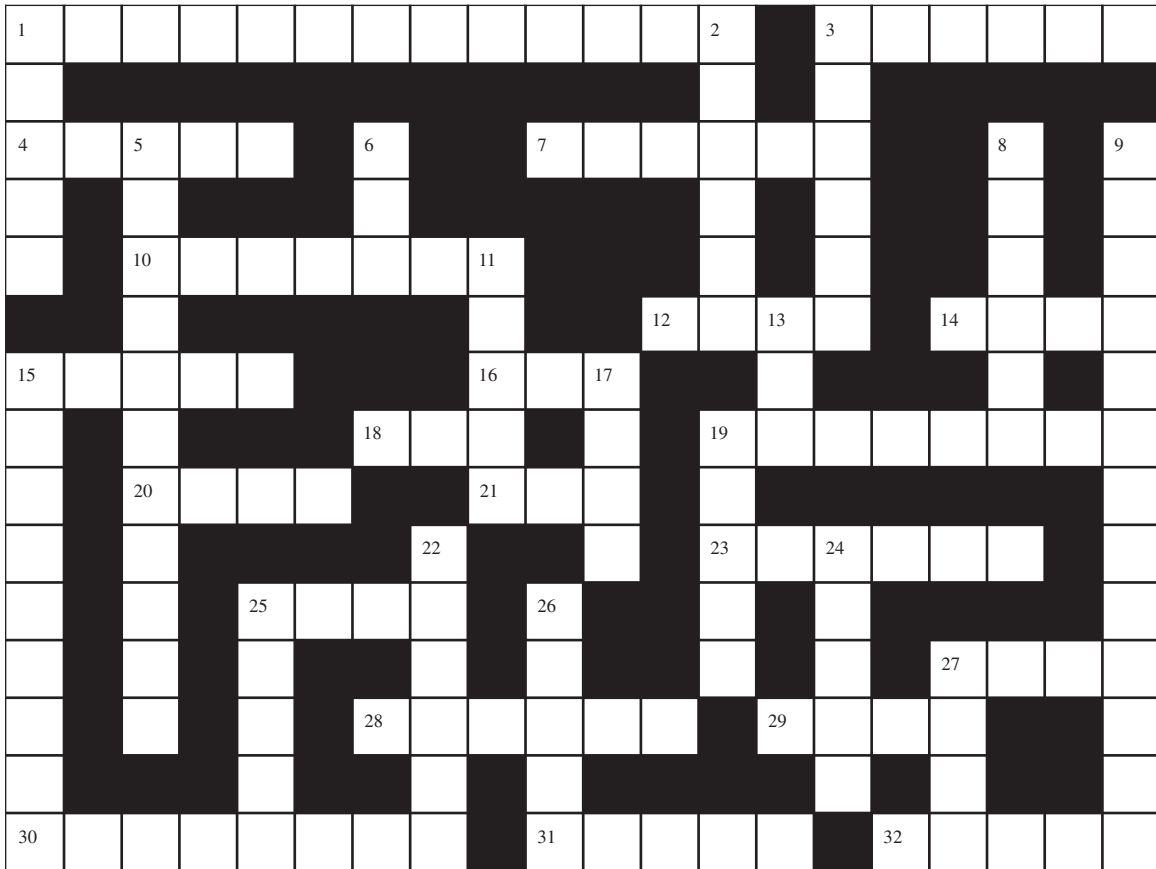
**ANSWERS TO
CROSSWORD
PUZZLE
MARCH 2014**

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Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "I can do all things through Christ which _____ me." 3. "...for every one that exalteth himself shall be _____,..." 4. "I say, through the _____ given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think;..." 7. "And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the _____ which fall from their masters' table." 10. "...Repent for the _____ of Heaven is at hand." 12. "By humility and the _____ of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life." 14. "... Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou _____ me thus?" 15. "...but _____ upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." 16. "A new heart also will I give you, and a _____ spirit will I put within you:..." 18. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other _____ are,..." 19. "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my _____,..." 20. "Blessed be the _____, who daily loadeth us with benefits,..." 21. "Come unto me, _____ ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." 23. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one _____ unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" 25. "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the _____ is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven." 27. "...This is an _____ saying; who can hear it?" 28. "... and he shall _____ thy paths. 29. "Be not _____ in thine own eyes:..." 30. "...and he that _____ himself shall be exalted." 31. " _____ in the Lord with all thine heart..." 32. "A man's pride shall _____ him low:..."



DOWN

1. "Humble yourselves in the _____ of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." 2. "...but honour shall uphold the _____ in spirit." 3. "...and be ready always to give an _____ to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." 5. "In all thy ways _____ him,..." 6. "My flesh and my heart faileth: but _____ is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever." 8. "... fear the Lord, and _____ from evil." 9. "...and lean not unto thine own _____." 11. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden _____." 13. "and I say unto thee, that thou _____ Peter, and upon this, rock I will build my church;..." 15. "...and _____ every son whom he receiveth." 17. "...and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I _____ give you an heart of flesh." 19. "...and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be _____." 22. "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not _____, but have everlasting life." 24. "Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the _____ with the proud." 25. "...and the gates of hell _____ not prevail against it." 26. "...and none can stay his hand, or say unto Him, what _____ thou?" 27. "He that hath an ear, let him _____ what the spirit saith unto the churches;..."