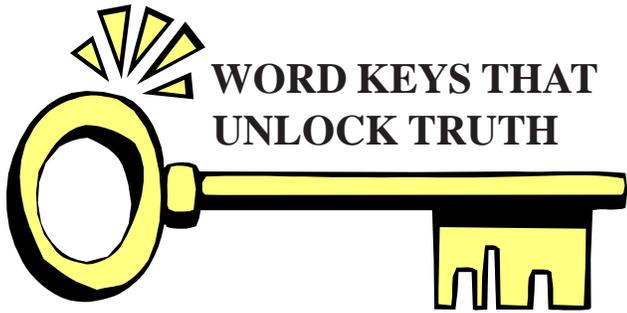


ADVOCATE OF TRUTH





WORD KEYS THAT UNLOCK TRUTH

OSTENTATION

The word, ostentation, does not appear in the Bible. It simply means to be proud and boastful. The use of ostentation forms the subject of a number of passages of Scripture. It is against the teaching of our Lord, as well as being a useless and foolish vanity.

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your

Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:1-4).

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips" (Proverbs 27:1-2).

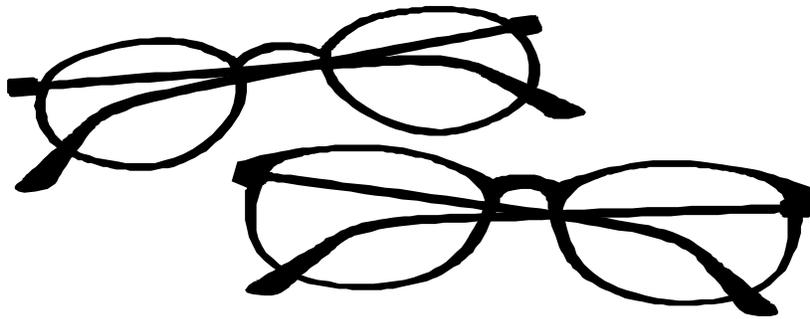
"Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain" (Proverbs 25:14).

"Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5)

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished" (Proverbs 16:5).

TAKE A GOOD LOOK

by Bibi Shimoon Allicock



Let us take a good look at our all powerful God, for He made the heavens, earth, sea and all that is in them. "Drop down, yea heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it" (Isaiah 45:8).

"I will go before thee, and make the crooked places

straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel" (Isaiah 45:2-3).

"I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known

me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things" (Isaiah 45:5-7).

"I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts" (Isaiah 45:12-13).

Take a look unto the only true and wise God to see his honor. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22).

"Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is everyone that trusteth in them" (Psalm 115:4-8).

"They shall be ashamed, and also confounded, all of them: they shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols" (Isaiah 45:16).

"Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me" (Isaiah 45:20-21).

Take a good look, and see how He sent His only begotten Son into the world that men should be saved from sin. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not,

Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus" (Luke 1:26-31).

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:16-19).

Brothers and Sisters, take a good look. Men make promises, but very few keep them! Our God always keeps His promises! "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9).

"And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are they that wait for him" (Isaiah 30:18).

Take a good look at our God. He is always willing and ready to answer prayers from sincere hearts. "The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. Evil shall slay the wicked: and they that hate the righteous shall be desolate" (Psalm 34:17-22).

Take a good look. Great is our God's faithfulness. "I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psalm 34:1-8).



STANDING ALONE

by Bond Tennant

When everyone around you agrees with you and supports you, it is easy to do the right thing. But that is not a test, and it is not the reality of life. People do not always agree. When they do not, how well do we stand for our convictions and principles of faith?

Let us take the Apostle Peter for our example. He stood very strong at the time of our Lord's Supper. To him, the very suggestion that he would deny Jesus was unthinkable. Peter's love and dedication to Jesus were so strong that he was dreaming of the bliss of being with his Master. Nothing could sever the bond between them. Peter said that he would go all the way with his Master, even to death.

However, there was a weakness in his dedication. He could be strong so long as he was with his Master. Peter was not prepared for the test that was to come. It was the test of standing true when he was alone. Could he stand for his Master when he was alone, on his own? Probably Peter had not thought about it, much less be prepared for it.

The idea of being separated from his Master cut close to Peter's heart. When Jesus was arrested and led away in the Garden, everything he had believed in and depended on seemed to be falling apart. Peter tried to stop what was happening by drawing his sword and cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus rebuked Peter and healed the ear. Jesus was ready to submit, but Peter was not.

Suddenly Peter found himself alone. This was a situation for which he was not prepared! He just could not

face it. Although he was strong and robust, he just could not face it! Peter was coming up short!

Just a little later, a second test came. Wanting to see what was happening, Peter was waiting near the entrance to the palace where some strangers were gathered to warm their hands by the fire. Peter joined them. However, they turned out to be his interrogators. Obviously they were not looking to be converted when they asked Peter about Jesus.

We can visualize Peter shaking in his boots. He knew that if he admitted association with Jesus, they would think less of him. They would suspect him and maybe even arrest him. This was another test for which he was not prepared, and he failed it. Not wanting to risk his own safety, he lied and denied his Lord! He did this not once, but three times. Then, the cock crowed. The reality of what Jesus had said struck him. He went out and wept bitterly.

Perhaps we can feel for Peter in his weakness. We feel strong in the presence of the Lord and with those who are strong for Him. What about the times we are alone? How well do we do among those who oppose us? How well do we do when we must witness to our faith among others? We must be willing to risk their disapproval! When others challenge our faith, are we able to stand strong for it? Are we afraid of what they might think? When we are with others, and when we are alone, serving Christ requires courage!

Let us face the facts! We will not always be in the presence of strong ones. We must be prepared to stand

strong and true, with or without them. We learn this lesson from Peter!

Peter was with Jesus throughout his entire ministry. Peter was the strong one of the Eleven. When others were forsaking him, Peter was the one who said to the master, "And we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (John 6:69). Peter was the one who said to Jesus that he could not leave Him because He had the words of eternal life (John 6:68). Peter was the one who stood up and said, "..., Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended" (Matthew 26:33).

When Peter came to the test of standing firm and putting his faith in action, his courage failed. He was too weak and worried about what other people would think of him to stand for his Master. He had not yet learned what Jesus knew. Jesus knew that the only thing that matters is what God thinks! He had not grown to the point where

he could say with his Master, "I receive not honour from men" (John 5:41).

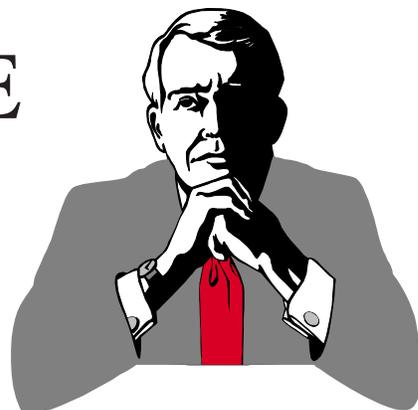
What about you and me? Are we prepared to stand strong, even if we're alone? Are we so concerned about what others may think of us that we will compromise convictions.

Apparently, Peter's failure was the turning point in his life. A few months later, after the day of Pentecost, he is the prime spokesman for the apostles. He is bold and fearless. He has a new direction, new resolves and new determination.

I am sure that all of us can identify with Peter, because he made the same mistakes that we make. However, each time he fell, he humbled himself and recognized the wrong. He rose up stronger than before. Peter offers the perfect formula in his Epistle. His formula is this, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (I Peter 5:6).

THE NEED TO MAKE RIGHT DECISIONS

A LESSON STUDY



"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Samuel 15:22).

There is one decision that the true child of God must make, and that is to be obedient to God's instructions! A willingness and in fact a desire, to be obedient centers around a condition, or state of mind, called humility. Humility has been defined as an attitude of mind that results from a proper appraisal of one's self when compared with our Heavenly Father or our Lord Jesus. We are as dust in the balance. We are nothing by comparison. The child of God knows that he has nothing but that which is received

from the Lord. Thus, it would seem that being obedient would be very easy for him, but this is not so. Pride and selfishness, which are an inherent part of our makeup, constantly push themselves to the fore front in our daily conduct. One of the hardest battles of a child of God is to eliminate these two unwanted elements from our conduct.

Our lesson centers around the experience of Saul. The government of Israel, until Saul was appointed king, was theocratic. In other words, God directed the affairs of Israel. He used earthly representatives, such as Samuel, to convey His instructions. The nation of Israel grew tired of this arrangement, especially since all the neighboring governments were kingdoms. Israel wanted to have a king

like their neighbors.

This was a terrible shock to Samuel. I Samuel 8:6-7 reads, "But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." The Lord listened to the people and selected Saul to be their king.

When it came time to inaugurate Saul as king, he could not be found. "Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff" (I Samuel 10:22). At this point in his life, Saul was a humble man. However, it was not long before pride began to assert itself in Saul's actions. This became manifest when Saul tired of waiting for Samuel to offer a sacrifice to the Lord before going to battle. Saul himself then offered a burnt offering unto the Lord. Saul disobeyed the Lord's instructions.

Then the Lord instructed Saul, "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling ox and sheep, camel and ass" (I Samuel 15:3). The



The scriptures tell us how giving help to others can be a blessing to the giver. In I Kings 17:10-16, we read of a widow's gift of limited food to Elijah, the prophet, and the blessing that God bestowed upon her in reward for her generosity. "...And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said,

Lord gave them the battle, but Saul kept back for the children of Israel the best of the animals and saved the king, Agag. The Lord rejected Saul from ruling over the children of Israel because of his disobedience. "And the Lord said unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons" (I Samuel 16:1).

The lesson from this experience of Saul is well summarized in this statement of Samuel, "And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?" (I Samuel 15:17) It was only when Saul was humble that the Lord could deal with him. This is true with us also! As footstep followers of Jesus, we have been figuratively beheaded. This means that our consecration to the Lord involved the death of our own will and the accepting of His only. Disobedience is an evidence that our own will is not dead and that we are not being faithful to our covenant with the Lord.

Sacrifice was offered as an atonement for transgression. Of course, the Lord prefers obedience, and then there would be no transgression.

GIVING AS A BLESSING

By Dinah Langai

As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not: go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did ac-

According to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasteth not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah."

Here we see this widow collecting firewood to make the last meal of the day and, possibly, the last meal of their lives because there was nothing more left in the jar to be prepared. We see the prophet of God asking her for water and a meal. This widow did exactly that, and the more she prepared the more there was in the pot of meal. Praise God! "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

God requires an action from us before He can bless us. Farmers don't wait for the rain to plant their crop.

They plant their crop and have faith that God will send the rain to make it grow. Similarly, the more we give the more we are blessed. "Give to him that asketh thee, and from them that would borrow of thee turn not thou away" (Matthew 5:42). "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measure to you again" (Luke 6:38). Let us remember to be generous, so God may be generous to us! "I have shewed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

YOU MUST HAVE IT NOW

By Carol Buechner

Examine the words in the title of this article for a good starting point in discovering what is important to learn as you read. The word **YOU** is a personal pronoun that refers to the one whom is being addressed in writing or speaking. In this case, it is the person reading this article. The word **MUST** means that something is essential, necessary, required, indispensable, vital, fundamental, compulsory, an obligation, responsibility, duty, basic. These words all state that there is not a choice, it cannot be dispensed with, it has to be done, you cannot function without it and it is of utmost or extreme importance. It cannot be questioned but that it is absolutely needed. The word **HAVE** means to hold, to be in possession of, to keep, retain in the mind, take unto oneself. The word **IT** means the subject, thing or item being discussed. You will soon find out



what **IT** is that will be discussed. The word **NOW** means at this time, right now, at this very moment, just now, at the present time, at once, at the current time. This is not in the past or in the future but right at this time.

WHAT IS IT?

You are probably wondering what **IT** is that you absolutely must possess at this very moment. The Bible gives the answer in Hebrews 11:6: "But **WITHOUT FAITH** it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God **MUST BELIEVE** that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." From this scripture you can plainly see without any doubt that you **MUST POSSESS FAITH**. In addition, there are two things listed here that you must believe. The first, **HE IS**, and second, **HE IS A REWARDER**. You must know that **HE** is the great God,

that there is no other. He is the creator and the very source of all life. You MUST be assured and convicted of the truthfulness of God and that He fulfills all His promises. You also must believe that He will reward you when you diligently, with careful effort and constantly with determination, seek or look to Him or come to Him.

FAITH may seem like a simple matter. However, when it comes to your spiritual life as a Christian, it may not be something that you can simply say that you have without really examining yourself and the concept of faith. What exactly is faith? The Bible states that, ~"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). This is telling you that faith is looking for something you cannot see or take hold of in actuality at this time. You believe God according to His promises, and you feel assured that you will eventually be able to receive that for which you are hoping. It is trusting that in time what you have in mind will be a reality. It is being aware of God's presence at all times and remaining in a constant profession of belief. The belief is firmly and securely held in your heart, mind, soul and spirit. It is not something that you believe for and when circumstances do not look good, you give up hope. Faith is the absence of worry, doubt, fear, wavering. For example, you are trusting God for a certain job that you want. You have faith that He will bring it about for you. You do not have the job but you are looking forward to it. All the while you are waiting for the job, it is your faith that is working. You have a steady belief that God is handling the situation. You do not allow Satan to convince you otherwise. Once you receive the job, faith is over for that particular thing. Even if you didn't receive the job, you are assured that it was not God's will for you at this time. He has something better planned for you.

WHAT MORE CAN YOU LEARN ABOUT FAITH?

Careful consideration of some different aspects of faith may help you more fully understand the extent of your own faith. Analyze and scrutinize the following presentations on faith:

1. FAITH IS A FOUNDATION.

A foundation is a structural support, base on which

something rests, or a fundamental principle on which something is founded. It is the main thing that supports the construction or the growth. It can be the beginning point. Faith is just that. "...Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Peter 1:5-7). Faith is the beginning, and the other necessary characteristics are built upon it. There is reason for this. "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (Verses 9-10). You will flourish and produce fruit for the Lord if you are constructing your spiritual life with faith as the foundation. Otherwise, you are floundering about producing nothing.

2. FAITH IS BEING STEADFAST AND UNMOVABLE AND STANDING STRONG.

To be steadfast is to be stable, firm, *fixed*, settled, not changing or wavering, constant. The Bible says that it is necessary to be steadfast in your faith for a special reason. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith..." (1 Peter 5:8-9) When your faith is not stable, Satan has access to you. Paul advises, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58). You cannot be praying for something and then saying that you probably will not receive it. This is not standing strong. This makes you weak and unfruitful.

3. FAITH IS ACTIVE, NOT PASSIVE.

To be active is to be functioning, working, moving, alive, currently in effect or operating, in a progressive state that can bring change. To be passive is to be inactive, not doing anything, idle, motionless, lifeless. When you are passive, you are easily influenced because your mind is not concentrating on any certain thing. The Bible states:

“NOW FAITH IS...” (Hebrews 11:1). The word now was discussed previously in this article. It means at this very moment. The word “is” is a verb that is in the present. When used with the word faith, it denotes that faith is now, not was or will be. Faith must be alive and working as you are reading this. It continues with the passage of time.

4. FAITH IS A SHIELD.

In Ephesians 6, Paul is admonishing you to have on the full armor of God to be able to withstand the attacks of Satan. He says, “**ABOVE ALL, TAKING THE SHIELD OF FAITH, WHEREWITH YE SHALL BE ABLE TO QUENCH ALL THE FIERY DARTS OF THE WICKED**” (Verse 16). Paul states that it is essential or absolutely necessary to have that shield. A shield is a moveable guard or safety device that can be carried to ward off attacks by the enemy. If someone were to throw something at you, you could put your arms up as a shield of protection for your body. Satan is attacking with glaring hot, flaming, fierce, penetrating darts. Darts are small pointed missiles, arrows or spear like devices with sharp points that penetrate a target. With Satan, this would be thrown in the form of thoughts, ideas, untruths or anything that would penetrate or attack your mind in an attempt to cause you to believe something other than what is right. However, when you have faith, it is there to extinguish, overcome, subdue, stop or suppress whatever is coming at you.

5. FAITH IS CENTERED ON CHRIST AND HIS ABILITY.

“And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you” (Matthew 9:28-29). Two blind men had followed Jesus asking for His mercy. Jesus first tested their faith. They did not say that it **MIGHT BE** possible for Him to heal them, but they simply said yes. The blind men believed in the capability of Jesus to perform this miracle. If you are not convinced of the ability or power that Jesus has as the **SON OF GOD**, then you are weak and unable to receive.

6. FAITH IS PATIENT.

Patience is bearing, enduring and persevering in difficult times without complaining or losing self-control. It is remaining composed and not letting anger and resentment cause you to speak the wrong things. Lazarus had been dead for four days. Jesus had delayed coming to the family and friends of Lazarus. There was reason for this. They had to wait patiently for Jesus to arrive. The family of Lazarus could easily have become angry with Jesus for His delay and spoke out against Him with angry words. Martha simply said, “But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee” (John 11:22). When Jesus brought Lazarus back from the dead, many believed and had faith. Had Jesus come before the death of Lazarus, the lesson of patience, faith and trust would not have been learned. When you are believing for God to bring something about in your life, it is vital that you wait patiently. It may take a long time for you to receive because God knows the best time for the answer to come. If you have faith, it will come in God’s timing. If you give up, there is no hope of receiving.

7. FAITH IS SPECIFIC.

Specific means to be precise, definite, certain, exact, accurate, absolute, clearly defined, beyond doubt. Jesus tells you to, “Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall **SAY** unto **THIS MOUNTAIN**, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that **THOSE THINGS WHICH HE SAITH SHALL COME TO PASS**; he shall have whatsoever **HE SAITH**” (Mark 11:22-23). Jesus speaks of your request as a mountain. The mountain represents what you are seeking or having faith to happen. It is a specific thing. You are not to go to God simply asking for His help. You must tell Him specifically or exactly what it is that you are in need of. How can you believe for something that you yourself cannot state in well-defined words? For example, you may be having a problem with not enough money to pay your bills. When you bring this before God, you need to explain to Him that you have all these bills and cannot pay them and that you are unable to figure out a solution on your own. Ask for the wisdom you need to deal with the matter. Give the matter to Him

for His guidance and direction. This is much better than simply saying, “God please help me with my bills.” God knows all about your problem, but it is for your benefit to spell out exactly what you need. When the answer comes, it will be without a doubt that God has given it to you.

8. FAITH IS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WORKS.

Works are physical or mental activities that are exerted to do or accomplish a purpose. The Bible is a rich commentary on this subject. “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so FAITH, IF IT HATH NOT WORKS, IS DEAD, BEING ALONE. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou HOW FAITH WROUGHT WITH HIS WORKS, AND BY WORKS WAS FAITH MADE PERFECT? Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and NOT BY FAITH ONLY. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, SO FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD ALSO” (James 2:14-18, 20-22, 24-26).

“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as we see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:23-25). “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:8-10). Works are doing the good things that God wants us to perform for His glory. It is helping others in need, being with others and encouraging

them, performing acts of kindness and charity and providing what others need whether it is verbal support with words or providing physical things that are needed by someone. It also includes doing what God has commanded you to do. Abraham is the supreme example of following God’s command. God told Abraham to take his son and sacrifice him. Abraham showed his faith was extremely strong by not hesitating and wondering why God was asking him to do such a difficult thing. God knew that Abraham was faithful because Abraham was ready to slay his son when God stopped him at the very last possible moment. Would you have been so faithful? Following God’s commands and giving of yourself to help others builds your faith and keeps you stimulated to remain faithful in all you do. When you slack off, faith will weaken and become inactive.

9. FAITH IS ABLE TO WORK WHEN ACCOMPANIED WITH LOVE.

“... Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, AND HAVE NOT CHARITY, I AM NOTHING” (1 Corinthians 13:2). Charity is love. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul describes what love is: “CHARITY (1) SUFFERETH LONG, AND (2) IS KIND; CHARITY (3) ENVIETH NOT; CHARITY (4) VAUNTETH NOT ITSELF, IS (5) NOT PUFFED UP, (6) DOTHT NOT BEHAVE ITSELF UNSEEMLY, (7) SEEKETH NOT HER OWN, (8) IS NOT EASILY PROVOKED, (9) THINKETH NO EVIL; (10) REJOICETH NOT IN INIQUITY, BUT (11) REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH; (12) BEARETH ALL THINGS, (13) BELIEVETH ALL THINGS, (14) HOPETH ALL THINGS, (15) ENDURETH ALL THINGS” (Verses 4-7).

If you have charity or love, you are caring for other people in a kind, selfless, forgiving, patient, enduring, humble, and truthful manner. You are not being self-centered. You are loving others as God loves you. Just how important is love? “Charity never faileth...” (Verse 8). “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (Verse 13). Love MUST be a priority in your life for faith to work. They become a union that works!

10. FAITH IS A SEED THAT NEEDS

CULTIVATED AND NURTURED.

A seed is the part of a plant that contains the embryo. For example, the embryo in a bean is a very tiny bean plant. The embryo is surrounded with a protective cover and stored food. To cultivate is to care for. To nurture is to feed, water, provide with sustenance, support and nourish. This growing process for the seed can only take place when the seed is planted in fertile soil, watered, fertilized and the weeds removed from growing around it. A flower seed can lie dormant in a package for years. It does not change until it is planted and taken care of. Then it grows and produces beautiful flowers. The Bible states: “. . . God hath dealt to every man the measure (quantity) of faith” (Romans 12:3). Think of the measure as being the seed of faith. The seed of faith is in your heart, mind and spirit but it needs to be cared for and nurtured just as the flower seed was taken care of. The seed of faith is in a fertile mind that is ready to nourish it. The Bible says, “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Faith must then be watered daily with the WORD OF GOD and fertilized with prayer, praise, thanksgiving, love and all the fruit of the Spirit. This brings in the activity of works which has been mentioned as necessary. Only then can faith become active and enable you to produce the fruit of a godly life. The fruit of the flesh MUST be weeded out continuously or it will overcome and choke out the fruit of the Spirit.

11. FAITH IS CONFIDENCE THAT GOD IS IN CONTROL OF ALL CIRCUMSTANCES.

Confidence is having a strong, firm belief, trusting, reliance on, and assurance. Control is exercising authority over, in command of, power to direct and establish. Circumstances are happenings, occurrences, situations, events and conditions surrounding and affecting a person. When God is in command, you can be sure that everything will turn out for your benefit. You will be able to walk in the will of God with complete assurance at all times. “Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble. When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet. For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken” (Proverbs 3:23-23, 26).

12. FAITH IS INCREASED THROUGH PRAYER.

To increase is to become greater in amount, size or degree. It is to enlarge, develop, intensify and grow. Prayer is important to bring about the increase or growth of faith. In his letter to the Colossians, the Apostle Paul states, “We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, Since we HEARD OF YOUR FAITH in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints. For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and (1) to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will (2) in all wisdom and (3) spiritual understanding; (4) That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, (5) being fruitful in every good work, and (6) increasing in the knowledge of God” (Colossians 1:3-4, 9-10). Paul and the other saints heard about the faith of the Colossian brethren, so they prayed for them to have the six things listed in the above verses. Why did they pray for this? They knew that it would take these SKILLS for the brethren to RETAIN their faith and INCREASE in faith. Without prayer support, their faith might weaken. Paul said that they DID NOT CEASE TO PRAY FOR THEM. They did not stop or discontinue praying in this manner but made it a continuous, daily practice. This is a lesson in being faithful in praying without ceasing for others as well as yourself so that faith will grow. Who are you praying for so that their faith will increase?

A DRAMATIZATION OF A NEW TESTAMENT INCIDENT

There is so much more that could be said and learned about what faith is, and this is something that you can do as you continue to study about faith. Taking a look at an incident from the Bible may help you better understand the working of faith in your life. In Mark, chapter five, a woman is in desperate need of healing. She knows Jesus is coming and has heard that He is a miracle worker and the One that can heal her. Maybe her story went something like this: “I have heard that this man, Jesus, is coming. I cannot think of anything else. I have been sick for twelve years now with this issue of blood. No doctor can help me and I have no money left. I must seek this great healer to receive my healing. I know I should not go out of my house because I am considered unclean. But, I

MUST do it NOW while Jesus is here. I see the crowd. It looks like so many people are thronging around Jesus. I must not let that stop me. If only I can get close enough to just touch Him, even if it is only His robe. Everyone is yelling, shoving and pushing. Oh, no, I have lost sight of Him. I am being shoved and elbowed, and now I have been knocked to the ground. It seems impossible to reach Him, but I will not quit. I MUST REACH Jesus NOW! I am getting closer. I must press against the crowd even harder so I can touch Him. I want to yell, 'Wait, Jesus, wait, all I need to do is to touch You.' I must not yell or someone might recognize me and carry me off. The crowd is so noisy and pushing so hard but I am getting closer. I am almost there. I must not give up now. If I reach through those people, I can touch the hem of His garment. I am giving it all my effort now. It is so difficult. I made it! I made it! I have touched His garment. Oh, I feel healing surging through my body! I am healed! I am healed! Thank You Jesus! No one even noticed me. Oh, but Jesus did. He is looking for me and now He has his eyes fastened on me. He is coming toward me. What is He going to do? He is reaching His hands out to me and saying, 'DAUGHTER, THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE WHOLE; GO IN PEACE, AND BE WHOLE OF THY PLAGUE' (Mark 5:34). I shout back, 'Thank You Dear Jesus! " This incident is a good example of how you MUST persevere and hold onto your faith. Do not give up even when it seems impossible and too hard. Keep on keeping on until you have results. Satan is your enemy. He wants to destroy your faith. He has many devices to throw at you in order to weaken your faith. It is important to recognize some of Satan's favorite devices. First, there is fear. Fear is a feeling of danger, being afraid, apprehensive, nervous, uneasy, overwhelmed with dread, a foreboding feeling that something bad or harmful is going to happen. Second, there is doubt. Doubt is uncertainty, inclined to disbelief, wavering of opinion, undecided, unsettled, feeling of distrust and suspicion, lacking confidence, faltering. Third, there is anxiety. Anxiety is feeling uneasy or apprehensive about a future event. It is feeling powerless and unable to cope with threatening happenings. Fourth, there is unbelief. Unbelief is uncertainty in what is the actual truth. Fifth, there is mistrust. Mistrust is being unable to have confidence, being suspicious, without security. Sixth, there is timidity. Timidity is backwardness, being easily frightened, without self-

confidence, hesitant. These six things are only a small sample of Satan's devices. One could write a book about Satan's ways. Satan is there saying to you, "You cannot do that, because you do not have the skills needed. You can't afford it. You aren't smart enough. You know that a certain person will oppose you. You don't really think that you can be healed! There is an easier way." The thing that you need to remember is that "... God hath not given us the spirit of fear; (You can add doubt, anxiety, unbelief, mistrust, timidity.), but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7). God has given you the spirit of power. The power of the Holy Spirit is in you to guide you and show you the way. You have the spirit of love that can carry you through anything. You have the spirit of a sound mind. Your mind is stable, healthy and rational because you have the mind of Christ. Satan will do all he can to make you think that you don't have the ability to make good decisions. It is important to remember that, "... With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). Remind Satan of this!

**YOUR FAITH WILL BE TRIED,
BUT THEN COMES THE GLORIOUS END**

Being tried is a testing process of trials to demonstrate, verify, prove, or show that your faith is valid, well-grounded, genuine, authentic, real, dependable, stable, solid. Trials are times of testing by suffering through pain, illness, misfortune, temptations, hardships, annoyances, afflictions, irritations. Having your faith tried is absolutely necessary. The Bible makes this clear. "...Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and lull of glory" (1 Peter 1:6-8). "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure" (2 Thessalonians 1:3-4).

You are told that the trial of your faith is more precious than the possession of gold. It refines you and strengthens you enabling you to grow in faith, love and patience. Without the trials, you don't grow spiritually and would eventually become spiritually dead. The important thing to always have in mind is the END or conclusion that is waiting for you. **“RECEIVING THE END OF YOUR FAITH, EVEN THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS”** (I Peter 1:9). Salvation is the deliverance from sin and its penalties through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. And **WHAT IS THE FINAL END OF ALL THIS?** “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12). “Blessed are they that do his commandments, **THAT THEY MAY HAVE RIGHT TO THE TREE OF LIFE, AND MAY ENTER IN THROUGH THE GATES INTO THE CITY”** (Revelation 22:14). Eternal life will be yours, and you will live in the New Jerusalem when Jesus returns!

JESUS ASKS, “WHERE IS YOUR FAITH”

(Luke 8:25)

Jesus and his disciples were crossing the lake in a ship. A wind storm came, and the ship became filled with water causing the disciples to fear that it would sink. Jesus was asleep so the disciples awoke him to inform him of the situation. After Jesus calmed the storm, He asked them, “. . . Where is your faith?” Is that what He is asking you today? Are you in a struggle or trial that is getting you down? Do you need reminded that you need faith NOW? Do you remember that **YOU CANNOT PLEASE GOD IF YOU DON'T HAVE FAITH?** Did you forget that God rewards those who have faith? Is your faith in “critical condition?” Have you allowed worry, doubt, fear, anxiety, etc., to overcome you? Is your foundation of faith crumbling, leaving you ready for spiritual collapse? What happened to your pledge to remain steadfast? Have you become inactive and unable to move in faith? Where is the shield of faith? Did you forget to put on the whole armor of God? Are you looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith? Is impatience causing you to do things on your own? Have you specifically asked God for certain things so you can activate your faith for them? Are you slacking in works thus allowing your faith to slowly die? What about your love walk? Is it strong or faltering?

Are you caring for yourself spiritually by reading and hearing God's word, praying and walking in the fruit of the Spirit? Have you allowed the works of the flesh to dominate your thinking and what you do? Are you confident that God is in control and with Him nothing is impossible? What if Jesus could sit down with you and personally ask you these questions? How would you respond to Him? Would He discover that Satan's fiery darts are deeply penetrating you spiritually? Would Jesus be saying the following to you?

“I HAVE NOT FOUND FAITH AS GREAT AS YOURS!”

A centurion, a Roman soldier, not a disciple or a follower of Jesus, approached Jesus saying, “. . . Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord; I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but **SPEAK THE WORD ONLY, AND MY SERVANT SHALL BE HEALED.** When Jesus heard it, **HE MARVELLED,** and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, **I HAVE NOT FOUND SO GREAT FAITH, NO, NOT IN ISRAEL.** And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour” (Matthew 8:6-8, 10, 13). Think about this! Jesus was astonished and amazed at this expression of pure faith and belief in what He could do. It was coming from a pagan! Jesus had much contact with His disciples and other followers, but He had NEVER encountered such extraordinary faith.

If you were to talk to Jesus today, which would He say to you?

“WHY ARE YOU SO FEARFUL?”

“WHERE IS YOUR FAITH?”

“I MARVEL AT YOUR GREAT FAITH!”

FAITH IS NOW!

Whatever your circumstances may be, Remember

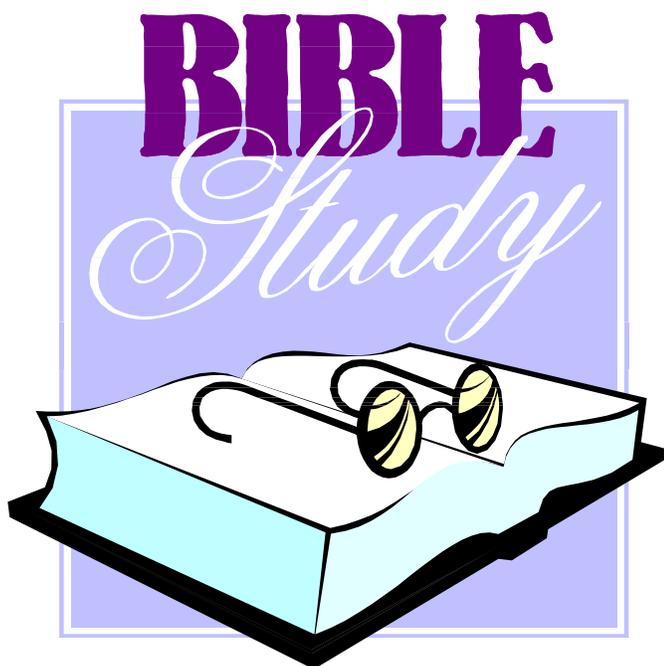
God is ALL you need! He has given you promises
to hold, So loose your faith and they'll unfold!

Faith is necessary right now, So don't to
Satan ever bow! Stand strong and be
steadfast,
For God's strength will always last!

When the fog of doubt envelops you, Know that
God, to you, will be true! Look through the foggy

cloud of doubt, Lifting your voice in a triumphant
shout!

Get out your Bible now, and read, and read,
To see how God supplied each and every need!
God was faithful to supply way back then
And He will respond to your faith again, And again,
**And again,
And again**



Questions and Answers

Question: Will you please harmonize Romans 14:9 with Matthew 22:32?

Answer: First, let us quote these two verses which the Apostle Paul wrote. "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living" (Romans 14:9).

"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matthew 22:32).

Jesus's statement was made to the Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. He explained that the doctrine of the resurrection was implied when God said to Moses at the burning bush, "..., I am

the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Exodus 3:6). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were then dead. Since God is not a God of the dead, this meant that they were to be awakened from death, and therefore they were merely asleep in death. Luke explains, "for he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him" (Luke 20:38). The thought is that God considers all to be alive because, by divine power, they will all be restored to life.

Paul's reference to Jesus's being a God of the dead and the living carries the same thought. It is merely a different use of words. Paul acknowledges the death condition of the world of mankind, but Jesus will exercise power to restore them to life. Paul refers to Him as being "Lord," that is, controller of the dead. There is no disharmony between these two texts.

Question: Jesus said to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth

where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit" (John 3:8). I have heard many earnest Christians say that they are "born" of the Spirit, " but they are unable to go and come as the wind. How do you explain this matter?

Answer: The difficulty is in connection with the word "born." In the Greek language, the word that is here translated born is also properly translated "begotten," or "beget." It is the word, Gennaō. This Greek word is translated "begat" many times in the first chapter of Matthew where the genealogy of Jesus is given. It is properly translated either begat, begotten, or born, and the subject matter in the context where it appears needs to be taken into consideration in order to determine whether the reference is to the beginning of a new life or the birth of that life.

From the beginning of his dedication to the Lord, a child of God is begotten to a new life, a heavenly life. He has new hopes, new aims, new ambitions. These are based upon the promises of God which are recorded in His Word under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the child of God is properly spoken of as begotten by the Holy Spirit, meaning that in his mind and heart, a new life has begun.

Then, through the years of his experience, this new life is nourished by the Word of God. Finally, in the resurrection, that begotten new life is "born" a glorious spirit being, which is able to go and come as the wind, unobserved. Therefore, it is obvious when Jesus used the wind to illustrate the powers of one who is born of the Spirit, He had reference, not to those in whom the new life had already begun, but to those who, having proved faithful unto death, are brought forth in heavenly glory in the resurrection.

Question: Does the Church of God take the Lord's Supper, and then have the washing of feet, or do they wash one another's feet according to the command of Jesus in John 13:14-17, and then afterwards take the Lord's Supper?

Answer: In verses two and four of this chapter, it is clearly seen that the old Passover supper, according to the law of Moses, and which pointed to Christ, and which did not end until He was crucified, was taken at night. It says, "He riseth from supper," and then He washed their feet. This must not, however, be confused with the Lord's

Supper, for it was the old Passover,^a and they ate the roast lamb as usual. This was also proper and in order, for Jesus had not yet died upon the cross.

Notice that in verse twelve, it says after Jesus had washed the feet of the apostles, He sat down again. It was at this time that Jesus told the disciples the reason for footwashing (verses 12-17). Then Jesus pointed out the betrayer (verses 21-30).

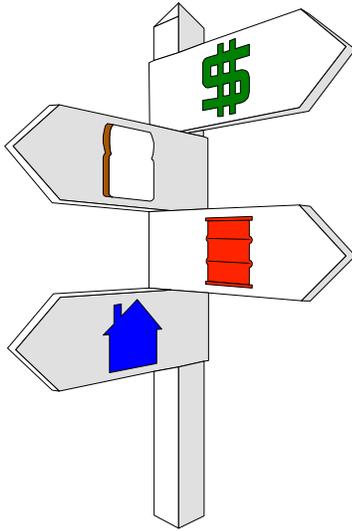
Then Jesus said that, "...Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (verse 31). When we read Matthew 26:26, Jesus institutes the emblems of the Lord's Supper. When the fruit of the vine is presented as His blood, Jesus also said, in verse 29: "..., I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom."

Then take notice of what happened! "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives" (verse 30). The footwashing came definitely before Jesus presented his emblems.

Question: What is meant in the Bible when it uses the word, "Sanctification"?

Answer: According to the dictionary, the word, sanctification, means "To set apart as holy," or "something set apart to be holy". We find that the Bible uses this word to set apart many different things to be holy.

1. God sanctified the seventh day of the week to be set apart for mankind to worship Him and to commemorate His great creative works. Read Genesis 2:1-3 and Exodus 20:8-11.
2. God set apart His name by vindicating it through His great creative power and ability. Read Ezekiel 36:22,24,33. Remember Israel did not use the title YHWH. Therefore, they could have not profaned it among the heathen.
3. Anything used in the worship of God is sanctified. Read Exodus 13:2 and Numbers 7:1. Anything that God wishes to use for Himself and His service is sanctified. Read Jeremiah 1:5; I Corinthians 1:2; 6:11; I Thessalonians 5:23 and John 17:17.
4. The Father in heaven sanctifies Himself by His severity against sin. Read Numbers 20:13 and Hebrews 10:10, 14.
5. All children of God have to become sanctified in order to belong to the family of God. Every believer in Christ is set apart to be a witness for Christ and is thus called sanctified, holy and a saint.



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

The following article appeared in the Houston Chronicle.

'Fundamental' concerns aired at conference

By Richard Vara

Houston Chronicle Religion Editor

Religious fundamentalism threatens individual freedom, societal stability and worldwide peace, according to Christians, Jews and Muslims who spoke this week at a conference sponsored by Texas Faith Network.

"Fundamentalists have significant power in Texas and the U.S.," said the Rev. Larry Bethune, president of the network and pastor of University Baptist Church in Austin. "Their voice is out of balance to their actual numbers." Bethune could not estimate the number of Christian fundamentalists but described them as a "noisy minority."

Texas Faith Network is a 10-year-old organization of more than 400 people opposed to fundamentalist theology and activism in the educational and political arenas. The group advocates liberty of conscience in matters of faith and thought, compassion for the poor and respect in public discourse.

National speakers at the conference, held at South Main Baptist Church, included the Rev. James Forbes Jr. of the Riverside Church in New York; the Rev. Mel White, co-founder of Soulforce, a gay rights movement; and Qamar-ul Huda, assistant professor of Islamic Studies and Comparative Theology at Boston College.

Although the network's focus is on the Christian right, the conference also touched on fundamentalism in Judaism and Islam.

Bethune said fundamentalism is characterized by a negative reaction to modernity and to diversity in religion and society. Fundamentalists "have a desire to go back to

what they perceive to be a better time (in the past)," Bethune said. They want everyone to abide by what they believe are essential religious morals or values, he said.

"They fear a certain way of life is disappearing, and part of that fear is that we might lose our religious identity," Bethune said.

Fundamentalism usually begins as church members react against what they perceive as secularism or culturally influenced change within their denomination, he said. "Most fundamentalism begins as (fundamentalists) attempting to purge their own ranks and their own denominations," Bethune said. "Then they move (outside the church) with a concern to change the society around them to make everyone conform to their vision of how society or beliefs ought to be."

It is the conformity, often in form of pressure or coercion, that threatens the freedom of individuals and societies, Bethune said.

But Mark Tooley of the conservative Washington, D.C.-based Institute on Religion and Democracy said exactly what is meant by a "fundamentalist" is the crux of problem.

"The modern meaning of fundamentalist from the liberal perspective is anyone who is adamant about upholding the orthodox, traditional understanding of the (Christian) faith," said Tooley, who did not attend the conference. "If you believe in the Virgin birth, then you are fundamentalist. I reject that definition of what fundamentalism is."

White, for example, told the more than 600 participants Monday that all Christian fundamentalists are opposed to gay rights. "They are terrified that gays will de-

stroy the American family and undermine everything we value in this country," he said.

"When they ask you if you are in favor of gay ordination and you say yes, they think you don't believe in the supremacy of Scriptures, the supremacy of Christ or the supremacy of the church."

For the past three years, White has led protests at national denominational meetings hoping to change views toward homosexuality. Hundreds of gay protesters and their supporters have been arrested at the church meetings.

His next protest will be at the Rev. Jerry Falwell's Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. White, an author and former dean at Dallas' Cathedral of Hope, said he and his partner, Gary Nixon, are moving in a few days to Lynchburg where they will attempt to join Falwell's church.

Falwell, a national leader in the religious right, has been a frequent critic of gay rights. He apologized nationally after saying gays and lesbians were partly responsible for the September 11th terrorist assaults because immorality was the reason God allowed the attacks.

In addition to trying to join the church, White plans to protest at Thomas Road Baptist October 25-27 with several hundred Souforce members. The dates mark a relatively friendly 1999 meeting between Falwell's church members and White's supporters. White said that Falwell has not honored a pledge to stop anti-gay rhetoric.

Falwell told the Lynchburg News and Advance last month that he will not affirm homosexuality because the Bible describes it as sin.

"We will not change our message," Falwell said, adding that the protesters are welcome but he does not want them to disrupt services.

White suggested that one way to counter fundamentalism is by expressing Christian love.

"(Fundamentalists) are true believers," White said. "Take them seriously but love them until they can't stand it."

Tooley said the issue is not homosexuality but "who defines the faith. Traditional Christians have always believed the Bible defines the faith. More theologically liberal people in the church say the faith has to be more adaptable to changing times, so the faith is more fluid and mobile. That's the crux of the difference between us." Other speakers at Monday's conference focused on Jewish and

Islamic fundamentalism.

Warren Bass of the Council on Foreign Relations, a private New York research center, said Jewish fundamentalism became influential in Israel after the Six-Day War in 1967. Fundamentalists became convinced that the victory over the Arab states was miraculous and divine intervention, he said. That inspired Jewish fundamentalists to settle the West Bank, an act that continues to cause problems for the Israeli government.

"A series of Israeli prime ministers have found the presence of settlements on the West Bank to be a seriously sensitive issue in their diplomacy with Palestinians," Bass said.

Israel is currently unable to deal with internal issues caused by hardline Orthodox Jews, including the sensitive issue of "who is a Jew," said Bass, who is Jewish. Orthodox rabbis refuse to recognize conversions to Judaism performed by Reform and conservative rabbis. There is also tension over hardline stances by Hsadic Jews who battle secular or nonreligious Jews over issues of observance of the Sabbath.

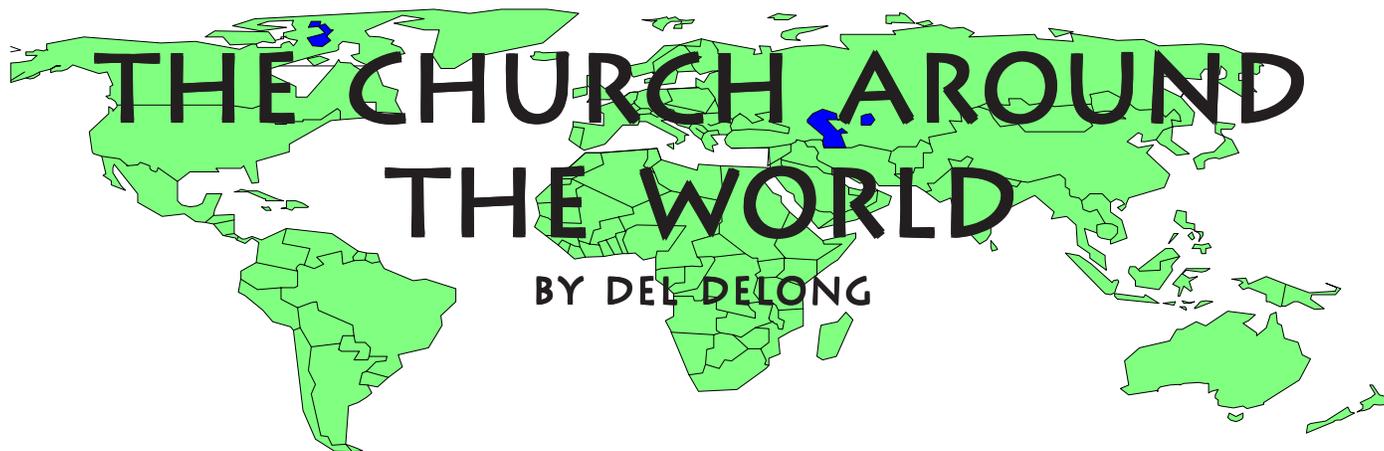
But the current wave of terrorists attacks against Israelis have put those issues on the backburner, Bass said.

Huda said that fundamentalism in Islam comes primarily from Wahabism, a 19th-century austere view that focuses on narrow perspective sin the religion.

Comment

This article gives fundamentalism a bad name especially when writing about the Christian religion. Webster's New World Dictionary defines fundamentalism as "religious beliefs based on a literal interpretation of everything in the Bible and regarded as fundamental to Christian faith and morals".

Every religion has its own fundamentals which are found in its sacred writings. We cannot speak of those of other religions except the Christian religion. The real Christian fundamentalist will never enforce his belief on others by way of war or legislation. Jesus did not tell His followers to reform the world, and nowhere in the Bible do we find such a command. Therefore, a Christian who attempts to do this is not really a Christian fundamentalist. The Bible heroes such as Joseph and Daniel, who seemed to be in a position to do this, were used of God to preserve His chosen people but never to reform godless societies.



San Antonio, Texas

The San Antonio Church will be sponsoring a youth camp again this year. It will be done for two different age groups. For ages 15 - 20, the camp will be held from June 26th to June 29th. For ages 11 - 14, the camp will be held from June 29th to July 1st, 2003. For more information, contact Tim and Cindy Buechner, 13032 Macdona Lacosta Rd, Atascosa, Texas 78002-3616.

Salem, West Virginia

Here is a picture taken inside the Publishing House



LESSON I

ABRAHAM AND HIS FAMILY

Scripture Reading: Genesis 15:1-18.

Golden Text: Genesis 15:6.

"And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

1. How many children did Abram have at the time of our scripture reading? Genesis 15:2.
2. What did the Lord show to Abram? Genesis 15:5.
3. Did Abram believe everything the Lord told him? Genesis 15:6.
4. What did God promise Abram? Genesis 15:18; 17:4-8.

NOTE: The word covenant means a mutual agreement between two or more parties.

5. What is the name of Abram's first son? Genesis 17:18.
6. What was the name of Abram's second son? Genesis 21:3.
7. What does the Apostle Paul say of Abram's family? Galatians 4:22-23.
8. Who were some of Abram's descendents? Matthew 1:1-2.



LESSON II

SODOM AND GOMORRAH (PART I)

Scripture Reading: Genesis 18:1-8; 16-33.

Golden text: Genesis 18:22.

"And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the Lord."

1. How many men came to visit Abram one hot day? Genesis 18:1-3.
2. Was Abram a good host? Genesis 18:4-6.
3. What did Abram set before the Lord to eat? Genesis 18:7-8.
4. After eating the sumptuous meal, what did Abram's guests do? Genesis 18:16.
5. Did the Lord tell Abram why He was visiting the city of Sodom? Genesis 18:20-21.
6. What wonderful testimony did the Lord say of Abram? Genesis 18:19.

NOTE: Boys and girls, this truly is a wonderful statement made by the Lord about what Abram would do. Does He know when you are obedient too? Live that the Lord can also say about you that you will always be obedient to the laws of God.

7. When Abram heard of the Lord's mission, what did he say? Genesis 18:23-24.
8. In what manner did the Lord answer Abram? Genesis 18:26.
9. From fifty righteous souls down to what number would the Lord spare the city of Sodom? Genesis 18:32-33.

LESSON III

SODOM AND GOMORRAH (PART II)

Scripture Reading: Genesis 19:1-3; 12-29.

Golden text: Genesis 19:24.

"Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gommorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven."

1. From last week's lesson you learned why the Lord came and visited Abram. Tell us the reason again.
2. Who did God send to the city of Sodom to meet Lot? Genesis 19:1.
3. What did Lot say to the two angels in Genesis 19:2-3.
4. What did the angels tell Lot to do and why? Genesis 19:12-13.
5. What happened when Lot talked to his sons in law? Genesis 19:14.
6. What other special instruction did they give Lot's family, and did all of them obey it? Genesis 19:17, 24-26.
7. What special purpose did God have in destroying the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah? II Peter 2:6; Luke 17:28-30.

NOTE: The cities were destroyed as an example of what will eventually happen to the wicked people of today.

LESSON IV

GOD'S TEST FOR ABRAHAM

Scripture Reading: Genesis 22:1-19.

Golden Text: Genesis 22:18.

"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

1. What was God's test for Abraham? Genesis 22:1-2.
2. What did Abraham do the next morning? Genesis 22:3.
3. What did Isaac ask his father, and what did Abraham answer back? Genesis 22:7-8.
4. Was Abraham going to sacrifice Isaac? Genesis 22:9-10.
5. What did the Lord do to help Abraham and Isaac? Genesis 22:11-13.
6. What did the Lord promise to Abraham for obeying him? Genesis 22:16-18.
7. This story is one of the classic examples in the Bible of having faith to do what God tells you. This means also doing works to show your faithfulness. James 2:17-24; Hebrews 11:17.
8. Who else offered his son as a sacrifice so that the world might be saved? John 3:16.

BIBLE JUMBLES

Old Testament Books

Can you untangle these twisters?

Each answer is one word.

VEIL IS CUT

SEE SING

MAPSLS

SOB REVRP

AND LIE

TON MEAT NAILS

SOX DUE

MINAHEHE

RUBS MEN

RICH CONELS

O NERO MY DUET

CIC SEES SLATE

OUJASH

JUG SED



JANET THE ARTIST

by Eunice B. Cattano

"Good morning, Janet. Time to get up. There's lots to do today. I want you to help me with the housework," said Mother as she walked into Janet's bedroom.

Janet had just awakened from a goodnight's sleep. "Oh, Mother," she protested, "do I have to help today? Why can't I help you some other time? I want to play with Susan today."

"I'm sorry," said Mother. "You can play with Susan some other time. The house cleaning must be finished today. I want you to clean the living room. I have lots of baking and cooking to do."

"Can't you do the baking tomorrow?" asked Janet as she slowly climbed out of her bed.

"Of course not," said Mother. "Tomorrow is Sabbath. We are going to Sabbath school and church."

"Oh, yes, that's right. I forgot that today is Friday," said Janet. "All right, I'll start right after breakfast. I might as well get the work over with."

Janet helped Mother get breakfast. After she had eaten, she put her dishes in the sink.

"I don't see how you can stand to do housework every day," said Janet. "It's no fun."

"Housework can be fun," said Mother, "But you have to make it so."

"How can anything make housework fun?" asked Janet in surprise.

"Make it a game," said Mother.

"How can you make a game out of housework?" asked Janet.

"See how pretty you can make the rooms that you clean," explained mother.

"Oh, Mother," protested Janet. "There's nothing artistic about housework."

"Just try it and see," said Mother with a smile.

"Housework is just plain work," Janet said to herself as she took the vacuum cleaner out of the closet.

She worked hard for a while. In a short time she was tired.

"Well, the rug is almost cleaned anyway," she said to herself as she sat down to rest. She looked around the room. "How could anyone make this dirty work fun or a game?"

She sat quietly for a while looking at the room. She thought about what mother had said.

"I wonder if I could make this room beautiful," she thought. "It's a nice room, but not very pretty."

Thoughtfully she got up and pressed the button on the vacuum sweeper. Soon she had finished with the vacuuming.

By the time she had dusted the furniture, she had a plan in her mind to make the room pretty.

"Where's the furniture polish, Mother?" asked Janet, coming in the the kitchen where her Mother was getting the pans out of the cupboard to start baking.

"Here it is. But you don't have to polish the furniture today if you don't want to. I polished it a few days ago," Mother said. "You can just dust it."

"That's alright, Mother. I'm going to try something with the polish," Janet said, smiling.

"All right, dear," Mother said, handing the furniture polish to her.

Janet put the polish on the furniture. Then she rubbed each piece of furniture until it shone. She worked quickly, and before long she had all the furniture polished. It was beautiful. She thought it had never looked so shiny.

"Wonder what I should do to make the room look pretty," she thought. "Oh, I know; I'll straighten all the books in the bookshelves."

It was fun straightening the books and putting them in their proper places. Some of the books she laid down to

make them fit better in the shelves. When she finished, she looked at the bookshelves.

"Why, it makes a pretty picture," she said to herself.

She looked all around the room. She was pleased at how nice the room looked. Then she frowned. "It needs something else," she thought. "I know what it needs. Flowers!"

She ran outside and picked a bouquet of flowers. She put them in a vase with some water and placed the vase carefully on the coffee table in front of the couch.

Then she went in to the kitchen where her Mother was baking. "Mother, can you come and see the room now?" she said.

"Yes, I can" Mother answered. She wiped the flour off her hands and went toward the living room. She stopped at the doorway and looked around the room. "It's like a picture. It's so pretty," she said.

"I think so; too," Janet said, pleased that her Mother liked the way the room looked. "You were right, Mother. It was fun to do the room when I tried to see how pretty I could make it." "I knew you would discover that if you would try," said Mother.

"And I didn't get tired, because I was so interested in what I was doing. Mother, do you think I'm artistic?" Janet asked.

"You certainly are," Mother said, smiling.

"From now on I'm going to try to be artistic in all my work," said Janet. "Then it will be fun instead of tiresome."

BIBLE JUMBLES CONTINUED

New Testament Books

CATS
 WHAT MET
 ONE TAR VEIL
 SEW HERBS
 KRAM
 NAILS A TAG
 SITTU
 LEMON HIP
 RAMSON
 HEN IS PEAS
 IS NO THIN CAR

MATCHING BIBLE VERSES

Match the proper Bible verse to the description in the first column.

Put the proper letter in the blank in front of each numbered statement.

- _ 1. A statement of its beginning
- _ 2. A sign of sanctification
- _ 3. A Sabbath command
- _ 4. A Sabbath song
- _ 5. A Sabbath healing
- _ 6. A broken Sabbath
- _ 7. Lord of the Sabbath
- _ 8. A warning
- _ 9. A Sabbath reformation
- _ 10. Sabbath in the new world

- a. Jeremiah 17:27
- b. Genesis 2:2-3
- c. Isaiah 66:23
- d. Exodus 20:8-11
- e. Leviticus 13:40
- f. Ezekiel 20:12
- g. Exodus 16:27
- h. John 9:15-16
- i. Mark 2:28
- j. Nehemiah 13:15-21
- k. Psalm 92



From the Internet
submitted by Kathy and Lee Petit

A boy was sitting on a park bench with one hand resting on an open Bible. He was loudly exclaiming his praise to God. "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! God is great!" he yelled without worrying whether anyone heard him or not.

Shortly after, along came a man who had recently completed some studies at a local university. Feeling himself very enlightened in the ways of truth and very eager to show this enlightenment, he asked the boy about the source of his joy.

"Hey", asked the boy in return with a bright laugh, "Don't you have any idea what God is able to do? I just read that God opened up the waves of the Red Sea and led the whole nation of Israel right through the middle."

The enlightened man laughed lightly, sat down next to the boy and began to try to open his eyes to the "realities" of the miracles of the Bible. "That can all be very easily explained. Modern scholarship has shown that the Red Sea in that area was only 10-inches deep at that time. It was no problem for the Israelites to wade across."

The boy was stumped. His eyes wandered from the man back to the Bible laying open in his lap.

The man, content that he had enlightened a poor, naive young person to the finer points of scientific insight, turned to go. Scarcely had he taken two steps when the boy began to rejoice and praise louder than before. The man turned to ask the reason for this resumed jubilation.

"Wow!" Exclaimed the boy happily, "God is greater than I thought! Not only did He lead the whole nation of Israel through the Red Sea, He topped it off by drowning the whole Egyptian army in 10-inches of water!"