A photograph of a winter forest scene. The trees are heavily laden with snow, and a path or clearing is visible in the foreground. The overall tone is cool and serene.

Sea of Glass

Obedience

Temptations

Evil Eye

Integrity

Decisions

The Advocate of Truth



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THE SEA OF GLASS: IS IT IRRELEVANT?

By Bond Tennant

When I was going to college, I remember discussing some of the end-time events mentioned in Revelation with four of my fellow students. One of them wished to know what the Sea of Glass was. Of course, I volunteered to answer his question. Another student said that the Sea of Glass was irrelevant and therefore made no difference.

Is the Sea of Glass irrelevant? We think not! Let us quote a lesson found in *The Instructor of Truth*, Volume II, pages 159-161, called **THE SEA OF GLASS - NEW JERUSALEM:**

1. When the saints are caught up, where will they be?

Answer: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God" (Revelation 15:2).

2. Will the throne of God be there?

Answer: "And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne... And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind" (Revelation 4:2,6).

3. Will God's children from all nations be gathered around the throne?

Answer: "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel...

After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Revelation 7:4,9).

4. Is the sea of glass that comes down the same as the New Jerusalem?

Answer: "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband... And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Revelation 21:2, 10-11).

5. Is the city described as being transparent glass?

Answer: "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass" (Revelation 21:21).

6. Is the New Jerusalem for the overcomer?

Answer: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Revelation 3:12).

7. Did Abraham look for a city from God?

Answer: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10).

8. Is there room in the city for us?

Answer: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3).

9. Will this city be a temporary place for us?

Answer: "For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13:14).

10. Did God prepare a city for the faithful?

Answer: "But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:16).

11. What blessing will come to those that keep God's commandments?

Answer: "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).

12. Where will these commandment keepers be found?

Answer: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27).

NOTE: The Sea of Glass to which the saints are caught up is the New Jerusalem, which comes down with the Lord Jesus Christ at the reaping phase of the second coming of Christ. It is the reward of the saints and home of the saints.

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect" (Hebrews 12:22-23).



Obedience and Its Reward

By Catherine Noel (Grenada)

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (I Samuel 15:22 last part). The Lord told Saul to "...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). Saul went his way and did as it pleased him. He spared what he wanted and destroyed what he thought was vile and refuse. He saved the best of the animals to offer sacrifice. The Lord was

not delighted in whatever he was preparing to offer. Obedience was expected from Saul and he blew it. "...Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king" (vs. 23). What transpired after caused Samuel to utter the words, "...The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou" (vs. 28). Thus Saul reaped the fruit of his actions and disobedience. He was left stranded. The Spirit of

God left him. He was like any other man without the protection of the power of God. Saul's response was to seek a witch in Endor, thinking that help might come from that source. When he finally got an answer from the witch of Endor, it was just to reproach him for not obeying the voice of God, and to spell out his demise. Dear ones, let us not go the way that Saul traveled and be disobedient too. Whatever the task the Lord has called us to perform, we must remember that obedience is vitally important to the children of God. It is not a onetime display, then to return to one's old life. Obedience must be constant and continuing, and must be fueled by faith in God. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus is really the perfect example, since He, as the Son of God, showed us that obedience is extremely important. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8,9). Remember, He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. We are also very privileged because He said to us that "...if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1). We can go to Him regularly if sins are committed, asking for forgiveness. God never destroys a city or individual without first warning them. We are warned

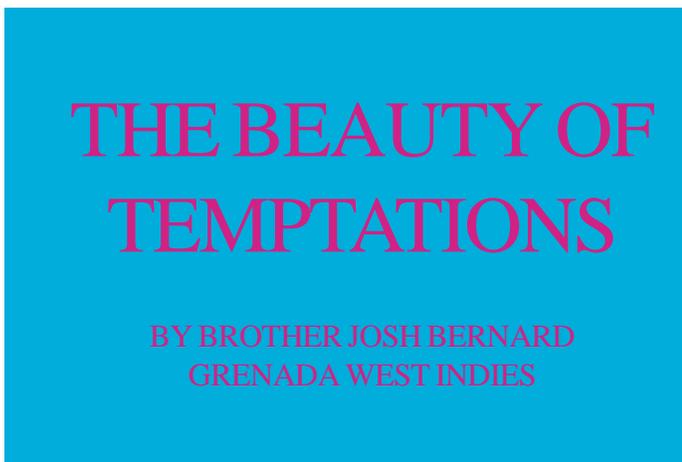
and reminded that we should not provoke the Lord. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Hebrews 2:2,3).

Today the voice of the Lord is not to them in the past, like Saul. It is to us who are alive and, as children of God, we must become aware lest we fall after the same example of unbelief, and die in our sin. "Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you" (Hosea 10:2). Disobedience has a reward, and it is not nice. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15).

Obedience also has a reward. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen" (Jude 24, 25).

Obedient, you shall live; disobedient, you shall die.



When someone is tempted, the question is commonly asked, "Lord, why me? And why so great?" According to the book of James 1:2-4 we read, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

In the life of a child of God, temptations will come, and they should not be burdensome in our lives, but we should glory in all our temptations when they come, because by temptations we obtain patience and extensively more of God's Holy Spirit. People often think that temptations descend upon them from God, but this is totally, and entirely, wrong. James 1:13-14 tells us, "Let

no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

It is clearly stated here that God, our heavenly Father, is not the author of temptation. Satan leads individuals away into a position where he or she would be more vulnerable, or prone to crumble, under temptation. The Lord assures us in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Our heavenly Father is indeed wonderful. He never allows his people to be tempted above their capacity of strength. We never bear temptations by ourselves. God is always walking along with us, and in the roughest of situations He even carries us along.

Even our Lord Jesus, speaking to His disciples, told them in Matthew 26:41 to "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." This is the remedy that Jesus gave His disciples in order to abstain from being drawn away. In like manner, at this time, we should also apply this same practice to our daily lives, so that we can remain, and continue, to live in harmony with the law of God.

Job, a servant of God, suffered great and troublesome temptations, and because he trusted in the God that he knew, he was much more blessed in the end as compared to his beginning. Our God is the same, even today, as He was yesterday. He was able to help others, and He will surely be able to help those today likewise, providing that they overcome and endure. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10: 22).

IS THINE EYE EVIL, BECAUSE I AM GOOD?

By Moises Torres M.



There are good persons around us who are always willing to help others when they need it. Unfortunately, there are also people who are not able to see this benefit, and judge the good actions with an "evil eye."

The Lord Jesus illustrates this human tendency in His parable of the labourers: In Matthew 20:1-16, the Lord describes a householder who went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And he hired some of them, and agreed with them for a penny a day, and sent them into his vineyard. Then, he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and hired them also and told them: "...Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is RIGHT I will give you. And they went their way" (vs. 4). He also "...went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

They say unto him, Because NO MAN HATH HIRED US. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is RIGHT, THAT SHALL YE RECEIVE" (vss. 5-7).

This parable continues, saying that when even was come, the labourers were called to receive their hire, "beginning from the last unto the first" (vs.8) (which was done on purpose). And those who were hired in the eleventh hour received a penny, each one, and because of this the first thought they would receive even more, but they also "...received every man a penny" (vs. 10). Then "...they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I

will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? IS THINE EYE EVIL, BECAUSE I AM GOOD? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen” (vss. 11-16).

If we look superficially on this matter, we could think that the householder was unjust, but if we look with the eyes of the Spirit, we would see all the benefit and goodness that the lord of the vineyard did to all the labourers. They all were in a hopeless and sorrowful situation. Nobody hired them and they probably did not have a single penny to take food to their families. Then suddenly they receive from the lord of the vineyard the benefit of a job and a hope of life to make their living. The

good man did not make any difference, and considered them all equal because they were in the same hopeless situation and need. So, he offered them the same job and the same hire, and without taking care of the number of hours they would work, he only told them: “whatsoever is right I will give you.” Egoism caused those men to murmur against the good man. They looked only at the material benefit and could not see farther because of their EVIL EYE.

We need to develop a good eye to consider our neighbors and brothers in the same level in their adversities and needs. We must consider the “first and the last” equal as the householder did. Let us learn from this parable to share our treasure of mercy and goodness with a good eye.

Integrity

By David DeLong



Integrity appears to be a rarity in today’s world. As defined by *Webster*, integrity involves: an “adherence to a code of moral, artistic, or other values; the quality or state of being complete or undivided.” A synonym for this word is “honesty”. Even in the realm of government, where all of our leaders should possess integrity, we see many falling short of this virtue.

One of America’s greatest leaders, Abraham Lincoln, was a man noted for integrity. He was nicknamed “Honest Abe” by many of his contemporaries because he exemplified honesty throughout his life. Let us review some of the aspects of Lincoln’s life which show him to be a person of integrity.

Abraham Lincoln was born into a life of humble circumstances on February 12, 1809 on a farm near Hodgenville, Hardin County, Kentucky to Thomas and Nancy Hanks Lincoln. When he was seven, the family moved to the Little Pigeon Creek community in Indiana

to start a new life. Here they lived in a 3-sided lean-to for part of the winter until a log cabin could be built. And it was here, in 1818, that Abe’s mother died of a mysterious illness that people called the “milk sick”.

Thomas Lincoln eventually remarried, to a widow woman named Sarah Bush Johnston, and she was to have a tremendous impact upon Abe’s life, encouraging him to develop to his full potential.

Even as a youth, Lincoln was known as a person of integrity. When his father hired him out to neighboring farmers, he worked “hard and faithful” and was considered “mighty conscientious” for earning twenty-five cents for a day’s work. At one point in his young-adult life Abe, along with a relative John Hanks, split 3,000 rails from the trunks of trees. He was regarded as being an expert with an ax. To one individual it seemed that Abe could do the work of three men when swinging an ax.

Twice he was entrusted, along with several others, to

take a boatload of goods down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to the city of New Orleans. Here, in this bustling metropolis, Abe witnessed gangs of slaves chained together. On each trip, he faithfully helped to sell the boatload of goods and returned home, months later, to use his earnings to help his family out.

While living in New Salem, Illinois, Lincoln entered into a business partnership to run a local store. His partner died, however, leaving Abe a debt of over a thousand dollars to pay back. Many other bankrupt persons had fled the county, leaving their debts behind. But not so with Abe. He determined that he would pay back every dollar he owed--a determination which took him about 15 years to accomplish.

As far as his education was concerned, Abe received only about a year of "formal" schooling. Even of that amount he claimed, essentially, that some of his educational experiences were less than noteworthy. And yet, Abe stated that "still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the rule of three; but that was all." Because of a lack of books, Abe borrowed them from other people. One such book was Weem's "The Life of George Washington". When rain soaked this book, he worked for three days, pulling fodder, to repay the book's owner.

His lack of formal education did not stop Lincoln from fulfilling his dream of becoming a lawyer. After studying law on his own for about two years, he passed the bar exam and joined a law firm, as a junior partner, with John T. Stuart. A few years later, Lincoln joined another law firm, and in 1844 he set up his own practice, taking William H. Herndon as his partner. Eventually, Lincoln became known as one of the best lawyers in Illinois, having a reputation for being very thorough in his case research.

In 1857 Lincoln reemphasized his moral stand against slavery by speaking out in opposition to the famous Supreme Court decision given in the "Dred Scott" case. The next year he ran (for the second time) as a candidate for the U.S. Senate. This pitted him against the Democratic candidate, Stephen A. Douglas, and Lincoln debated him across the state of Illinois in what came to be called the "Lincoln/Douglas Debates". Lincoln lost the Senate election, but the debates, which had given him national recognition, put him in the limelight as being the Republican candidate for President in 1860.

When Lincoln became President of the United States,

he faced possibly the worst ordeal that any other American President has ever faced--the Civil War. At times the strain of the war seemed so great as to almost break him. And yet he persevered through this colossal test, his goal being to see that the Union was not destroyed. And even though Lincoln was distressed with bouts of "melancholy", he seemed to have an almost childlike faith in God.

Many people berated him as a person not fitted for his job. Horace Greeley wrote of Lincoln, "You are not considered a great man". Even his Secretary of War Edwin Stanton had, at one time, called Lincoln "imbecilic" and an "original gorilla". Lincoln, however, showed no ill will to Stanton, and even declared that he never carried a grudge.

Lincoln was also a very compassionate person. At times he visited battlefields with seemingly little concern for his own welfare. At other times he visited sick or wounded soldiers, thus giving them encouragement. And after the Battle of Gettysburg, we can hear his heart's desire for those who were slain: "...that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain--that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

His compassion extended to those who were locked in the chains of slavery. When some black leaders came to him for a visit, Lincoln told them that their people had been afflicted with "the greatest wrongs inflicted on any people." Acting with great courage, he issued the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863 declaring that the slaves in the rebellious states were "forever free."

The war lasted for four exhausting years. With its final ending in April, 1865 many in the North wanted to see vengeance exacted upon the secessionist states. Lincoln had remarked, "I shall do nothing in malice. What I deal with is too vast for malicious dealing." Of the three Reconstruction plans that were advocated, his "Ten Percent" plan was the most lenient to the South.

However, this plan was never put into practice. Just a few days after the war's end, Lincoln, who was attending a play with his wife Mary, was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. Thus given to rest, and to the pages of history, he was one of the best examples of a man--a leader--who possessed integrity.

(The above information was taken from, "With Mal-

ice Toward None: A Life of Abraham Lincoln”, by Stephen B. Oates; “Abraham Lincoln: The Prairie Years and the War Years”, by Carl Sandburg; “The Portable Abraham Lincoln”, edited by Andrew Delbanco; “The Worldbook Encyclopedia”.)

The Bible has a lot to say about integrity. This word comes from two Hebrew words, “tom” and “tummah” (the feminine form), and it refers to “completeness”; being “perfect”; “upright”; and with “innocence”. For instance, when Abraham and his wife Sarah lived in Gerar, Abimelech, the king of Gerar, wanted Sarah as his wife thinking she was only Abraham’s sister. The Lord would have killed Abimelech except for the integrity (innocence) of this king. We read in Genesis 20:4-6: “But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.”

After Solomon had built a temple for the Lord and had prayed his prayer of dedication for it, the Lord appeared to him, a second time, in a dream. In I Kings 9:4,5 we read about the Lord’s admonition to Solomon: “And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.”

Indeed, David, the father of Solomon, strongly petitioned the Lord concerning his integrity. He proclaimed in Psalm 26:1, 11: “Judge me, O LORD; for I have walked in mine integrity: I have trusted also in the LORD; therefore I shall not slide...But as for me, I will walk in mine integrity: redeem me, and be merciful unto me.” It is important to point out from these verses that one must be willing to live a life of integrity before he or she can truly have trust in the Lord, and have His redemption and mercy.

Once a person possesses a vital relationship with the

Lord--waiting on God--then “integrity and uprightness”, as David explained, will preserve that person in the Lord (see Psalm 25:21). David continued to explain this concept in Psalm 41:12: “And as for me, thou upholdest me in mine integrity, and settest me before thy face for ever.” This integrity that David wrote of must also include others in its scope. Referring to this truth, we learn of God’s actions concerning His servant in Psalm 78:70-72: “He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.”

Perhaps one of the best-known examples, given in the Bible, of a person having integrity is the patriarch Job (see Job 1 and 2). Even after losing so much of his earthly goods and family, he still kept his integrity. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if what was true for Job would be true for us as well? We read, perhaps in amazement, what the Lord said of His servant in the book of Job 2:3. “And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.”

Other people of integrity, recorded in the pages of Scripture, include Daniel, who was put into the lion’s den; his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, who were put into a fiery furnace; Rahab, who hid the Israelite spies; Noah, who was spared with his family when the the rest of earth’s population was destroyed; all of the others listed as examples in Hebrews chapter 11; and, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who followed His Father’s will perfectly. All of these individuals were people of integrity, doing God’s bidding even when it wasn’t popular, even when it meant suffering to them, even when death could be the result.

We will close with three verses from the book of Proverbs, chapters 11:3; 19:1; 20:7. “The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.” “Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.” “The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.”



Choices and Decisions

By Carol Buechner

The following phrases constitute these choices and decisions: out of the abundance; fiery darts; two-edged sword; death and life; and, edification.

Concentrate carefully on the first phrase above which comes from Matthew 12: 34: "... for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The word "abundance" means a great quantity or supply, plenty or more than sufficient in quantity. It can also mean a surplus or excess above what is necessary. Abundance can be produced by what you sow, for you will reap according to what you have sown. The word "heart" is interesting. The Greek for it is "the mind". The heart in a human body is a hollow, muscular organ that receives blood from the veins and then it pumps it through the arteries of the body. The heart spoken of in Matthew chapter twelve is not the muscular organ that keeps you alive because it would be impossible to produce thoughts in it. It refers to the Greek meaning, which is the mind. It is the very essence of who you are in your innermost being which does include your mind, will and emotions.

Perhaps examining a few common phrases about the heart will enlighten the meaning. "After one's own heart" means that what you have in your mind or innermost feelings are what you reflect in your life. If you are a Christian you will have a heart that is different from a convicted felon. You will have built this upon life's experiences, what you were taught, what you have read, your family interactions, your education and so much more. Another phrase, "have a change of heart" means that you do change your heart or mind as you mature, learn more and interact in different ways. This phrase, "have a heart" means to be kind, considerate, generous and sympathetic. The phrase "have one's heart in one's mouth" is interesting because it means to be full of fear or even nervous anticipation. In contrast, the phrase "have one's heart in

the right place" is to be reacting with good intentions and being determined to do what is right based upon the Word of God. Another phrase, "take to heart", is when a person considers something seriously and wisely. These two phrases, "with all one's heart" and "with half a heart", are completely opposite. The first phrase means you put your full and complete sincerity or devotion into what you are doing. The second phrase is to do something but not in a true genuine manner, your thoughts being on other things rather than concentrating on the matter at hand.

Examine carefully the complete thirty-fourth verse of Matthew chapter twelve and verses thirty-five through thirty-seven. This will reveal the consequences to what comes from the heart (mind) and is spoken by your mouth. "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." The word "viper" means a venomous and poisonous snake. It can also mean a malicious, spiteful and treacherous person. If you are a viper you cannot be bringing forth good words. Think of how quickly a venomous snake can strike and how quickly the poison can paralyze the human body. The above passage clearly says that you are either good or evil. You cannot be good part of the time and evil part of the time. You will be judged for the words you speak. Are you bringing forth good things from your heart (mind) into your speech, or are they evil words? God does not accept both! What is your mind full of that you are speaking out? Perhaps it would be beneficial to spend some time examining what is truly in your mind. It may surprise you. As you speak, further

examine what you are saying.

Consider now the second phrase, "fiery darts," which comes from Ephesians 6:16: "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Darts are usually not large but they can deliver serious injury. They can consist of a slender rod, or little spear or arrowlike instrument with a very sharp and penetrating point at the end. Often a dart may have featherlike structures on the other end that help guide it to its intended target. The above verse speaks of the darts being fiery, which indicates they have been set on fire, ignited and are burning hot. This makes them very dangerous because when they penetrate the intended target, it is set on fire. Remember the verse states that the fiery darts are of the wicked. Who is this wicked one? Without any doubt it is Satan, the father of lies. John 8:44 explains it quite well: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." These ideas can be summarized by stating that Satan has "fiery darts" aimed at you that can penetrate your heart or mind and set your thoughts on fire with lies. The burning thoughts can grow and spread and greatly change your thinking which eventually will turn into spoken words. Satan can send those "fiery darts" through words spoken to you by other people, what you hear from television, radio, songs and many more sources. Do not forget that Satan has no truth in him, so if your mind is not in line with what God says, such words should be completely annihilated from your mind and replaced with God's words.

Ponder now one concept that you may not have thought of. Someone tells you something about someone else. Do you know if it is the truth or just Satan's "fiery darts" penetrating your heart (mind) to use you to accomplish his will? This person is possibly speaking something that has been passed from person to person several times. As it was spoken by different people, it becomes changed and distorted and may be far from the truth. You may be tempted to repeat this information to someone else, but it is risky to do so because it may now have become a lie. This has a name: gossip! Gossip is not of God in any form. You need only repeat facts that you can verify and you will be justified.

The third phrase in the title, "two-edged sword," needs to be carefully scrutinized. It comes from the following two references: "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians: 6:17). "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). The sword is a larger instrument of destruction than the dart, but that should not diminish the power of Satan's "fiery darts". The sword is a long blade with a sturdy handgrip at the top. The key of the effectiveness of a sword is that the blade is sharp on both edges, doubling its cutting power. You probably, at one time, have cut your finger while using a kitchen knife and it was quite painful. A kitchen knife is only sharp on one edge. Think what could happen if it were sharp on both edges. It would be quite dangerous to use to chop vegetables, slice meat and do other such activities. Maybe you have seen a sword fight in person or in a movie. The two opponents involved move around quickly to avoid the sharp edges of the blade. However, someone must triumph, and the victim of the sharp blade is penetrated by the sharp blade delivered to the body. How painful a death it must be!

What is the sword spoken of in Ephesians 6:17 and Hebrews 4:12? It is the Word of God (every word written in the Bible). As the verse says, God's "sword" is His Word and it can "cut" through what Satan has put in your heart, even deep seated things from the past. Jesus spoke the Word of God to Satan when He was being tempted in the wilderness and Satan did not triumph. It is not just some of the words and commandments you want to pick out to follow, but it is all of them. The followers of Christ must know the Bible so it can be utilized in all of the activities of life. When a temptation comes along, the Word of God can "cut it to pieces" in your mind before you act on it. The Word of God can penetrate your mind and give you guidance in many ways. Words from your mouth can come out as words of condemnation from Satan, or words of comfort and strength from God. If the words written for you by God are not stored in your mind, thoughts cannot be pierced correctly and your tongue may sound like a hissing viper. How do you have the Word of God for many different situations that arise in life? You hear the Word taught in church and spoken by other people. Do

you think that going to church once or twice each week is enough to fill your mind with God's Word to control your tongue? Absolutely not! It must be a daily habit of reading the Bible, meditating on it, memorizing it and speaking it out loud as needed. Does God spend just a couple of times with you each week? Let's hope not. His Bible says He never leaves you or forsakes you. He is with you continually. Are you with Him continually through praying without ceasing, meditating on His Word and using His Word for daily situations to "cut" through Satan's influence? Do you have enough of God's piercing Word in your heart (mind) to "cut" through everything you face? Only you can learn the Word for yourself. Are you faithfully teaching the Word of God to your children or is the majority of what they hear from television, friends, ungodly influences and other worldly sources?

The fourth phrase from the title, "death and life" comes from Proverbs 18:21 stating that: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof." Death means to cease from a state of living or become deceased and no longer breathing or having any vital signs. Life means living, breathing, energized and able to move about. The body can die, but so can the heart, mind, soul and spirit of a person. This is like murder (remember it is of Satan) because it "kills" the innermost being of a person. Proverbs 18:21 clearly indicates that you have two choices of what you can speak, and it is either death or life. What comes "out of the abundance of the heart" (mind) can "kill" (slay) or "bless" (bring life) to another person. You can "kill" yourself (in the innermost soul) by what is in your mind and what comes out of your mouth. If you speak words of love, peace, kindness, joy, etc., which comes from the knowledge and wisdom of God, a person can be greatly blessed. However, if you speak words that do not line up with what God would want you to say, you can bring a curse (death) that affects the person mentally, emotionally, spiritually and can bring sickness, and may even result in actual physical death. Such words spoken in anger are even worse because they can "cut" deep into one's heart and start a downward spiral that can lead to depression, discouragement, despair, unhappiness and so much more. The Bible clearly advises this concerning anger: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to

the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27).

The fifth part of the title is simply one powerful word, "edification." To edify is to teach or instruct or speak in a manner that will improve, enlighten, or uplift a person mentally, spiritually or morally. It is to build one up, exhort, earnestly admonish and help them feel encouraged in what is right. It is important to take a tour through the Bible and carefully and thoughtfully examine what God has to say about edification. The journey will begin in Romans 14:19; 15:2: "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another... Let every one of us please his neighbour (anyone you meet) for his good to edification." This is simply stating that you are to live in peace by doing what will edify or encourage, enlighten or uplift all those that you are in contact with. This does not seem to exclude anyone. Paul says to: "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us" (II Timothy 1:13-14). Sound (effective, reliable, flawless) words will come from your tongue if you hold in your mind the enlightenment of the Bible, through faith and love, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The scriptural tour continues by examining some scriptures that speak directly to the "body of Christ," the church. God has appointed leaders in the church such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to do the following: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight (deception) of men, and cunning (sly, skillful) craftiness (dishonest ability), whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:12-16). Those in the church who have

leadership roles have a very important job, and not one that should be taken lightly. They must keep the overall working of the “body of Christ,” the church. All are to be growing in faith and knowledge that will bring unity and harmony in the group. The goal is for everyone to become more Christlike in all areas of life so that the body can be edified through love. Be careful of anyone who is not acting in the right way or edifying others. Always be aware of what is taught and discussed so that you know if it is the truth as measured by the Bible.

Why does Paul issue this advice given in Ephesians chapter four? He expresses his fear in 2 Corinthians 12: 19-21: “Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? We speak before God in Christ: but we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying. For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.” The people who have been appointed to oversee the church must be vigilant as to what is happening among church members. This will help avoid all of the negative things listed above that can tear the church apart. Does this mean that the individual has no responsibility in this matter? Not at all! Every member must make account for himself or herself and strive to bring edification to all in the church so that harmony exists and progress is made in bringing others to salvation. This is so stated in Romans 14:19: “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.” Are you a shining light of edification for the Lord, or a part of the darkness of Satan? It’s vital to examine yourself (not someone else) and make changes as needed in your heart (mind) and words that you speak.

Now it is time to direct your attention to the title of this article: “choices and decisions.” A choice is the act of choosing or making a selection from various options. A decision is when one takes choices and makes up his mind by coming to a conclusion or determination. Every day of your life you have choices and you make decisions

concerning how you are living your life as a Christian. Just as Moses gave the following choices to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 30: 15,19, so now these choices are given to you. “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil...I call heaven and earth to record this day against you. that I have set before you life and death. blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.” Joshua also issued choices to the Israelites and to you: “And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD” (Joshua 24:15). You can choose life, good, death, evil and whether or not you will serve God with all of your heart and no other gods (money, homes, people, things or whatever occupies your time that could be spent with God). Moses and Joshua also gave instructions on how to serve God: “In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments and his statutes and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply: and the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it...That thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days...” (Deuteronomy 30:16,20). "Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served ..." (Joshua 24:14). To sum this up, you must decide which is most important in your life. Is it serving the world with all of your heart, or is it serving God with all of your heart? You cannot choose both. God wants all of you or none of you!

The following verses are for you to meditate upon: Psalm 34:13; Psalm 39:1; Psalm 49:3; Psalm 57:4; Proverbs 4:23-24; Proverbs 6:2,12,14,16-19; Proverbs 10:14,20-21; Proverbs 11:13; Proverbs 12:14,17,18-20,22; Proverbs 13:2-3; Proverbs 16:24,27-28; Proverbs 20:19; Proverbs 25:15; Proverbs 30:14; Ecclesiastes 9:17-18; Ecclesiastes 10:12-14; Matthew 15:18-20; II Corinthians 10:5; I Peter 3:4,8-12.



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.

AT CAMP QUEST, KIDS FROM ATHEIST FAMILIES CELEBRATE BELIEF IN NOT BELIEVING

by Jennifer Garza
McClatchy Newspapers (MCT)

NEVADA CITY, California - At Camp Quest, campers may not believe in God, but they do have faith in their community.

On July 12, 39 children from across the western United States arrived at the camp nestled in the hills outside Nevada City. It is one of five summer camps in the country for the children of atheists and other nonbelievers.

In a campground in Malakoff Diggins State Historical Park, the campers have many of the traditional summer experiences. They practice archery in the meadow, participate in team competitions and gather around the campfire at night to sing.

Their activities, however, have a decidedly secular twist.

Campers play games that encourage critical thinking such as one called Evolution and another where they are asked to prove something invisible doesn't exist.

Before meals, they learn about freethinking heroes such as Margaret Sanger and Isaac Asimov. Many of their camp songs promote rational thought such as their version of this children's classic:

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
You're a ball of gas that's very far

32 light-years in the sky
10 parsecs which is really high...

Here, it's all about celebrating their belief in not believing.

"It's important for them to have a place to learn how to investigate the world and to not accept what they hear," said camp director Chris Lindstrom of Los Altos, California. "Plus the kids enjoy meeting other kids from similar families."

It makes them feel a part of a larger community.

Camp Quest, which started in 1996 in Ohio is now offered in Minnesota, Michigan, Tennessee, Ontario and California. Attendance at the California camp, officially called Camp Quest West, has gone from 14 to 49 in four years.

Campers attribute the growth to positive word of mouth on atheist chat sites.

Soon after the campers arrived last Sunday, they gathered outside the dining hall. The children's ages range from 9 to 17. Most campers are from California; some traveled from as far as New Mexico.

After a brief introduction, they heard how Socrates questioned the religion of his day. Afterward, the campers headed inside for a spaghetti dinner. One joked aloud that here, at least, they wouldn't have to say grace.

Everyone who heard him laughed.

Many campers said they were relieved to be with kids from other atheist families.

"I live in a small town, and at my school, a lot of the kids will flaunt their religion," said Cameron Musser, 16, who wanted to attend the camp to be around other non-

believers. "We don't have to worry about that here."

Rebekah Hinckley, 12, learned about the camp from her parents, who thought it was worth the drive from Oxnard, California, and the \$450 cost of the six-night camp.

While their parents are atheists or freethinkers, many of the children said they are unsure of their beliefs. Hinckley said she is not ready to label herself an atheist.

"I really don't believe in God," said Hinckley. "But really, I'm just not sure."

That's exactly the kind of thinking-for-yourself that is encouraged at Camp Quest.

One lesson in critical thinking involved a campfire story about an invisible monster named Schree. Camp staffers pretend they believe that a monster exists because their parents told them so or a friend who told them about it is really cool. They promise to pay a camper \$10 to prove it doesn't exist. No camper has ever won.

"It helps to learn that these kind of arguments don't go anywhere," Linstrom said. "And that they shouldn't believe everything they hear."

Several campers have been to Camp Quest before. This is the camp's fourth season. Last year was canceled because of nearby fires.

Alexa Garcia, a 13-year-old from Albany California, has attended the camp twice. She likes the camp philosophy but also the activities. "I don't consider myself anything right now. I just like the camp," she said.

At 10, Lili Thorson is one of the youngest campers. Her father picked out the camp for her. Lili does not know what she believes or doesn't believe, though, "My dad told me I'm too young to decide yet."

Excerpted from **THE BULLETIN**
Lake Jackson, Texas

COMMENT

The children who are attending Camp Quest are in no way being taught to use critical thinking and rational thought. The camp leaders are like the false prophets that Peter spoke about who even deny the Lord that bought them. See II Peter 2:1.

Children of God see the many wonderful things in this world. Did they just appear? Was there not an intelligent Creator Who created them? There can only be one an-

swer, and that answer is yes. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20).

The fact that the children could not prove that the invisible monster did not exist is a good argument for the existence of God.

In no way can their version of Twinkle Twinkle Little Star prove the atheist's claim that God does not exist.

Let us pray for all of the undecided children who attend such camps as Camp Quest.

HE REALLY WANTED TO SKIP CHURCH

Police in Utah say a 7-year-old boy led officials on a car chase in an effort to avoid going to church.

Dispatchers received report of a child driving recklessly on Sunday morning. Weber County Sheriff's Capt. Klint Anderson says one witness said the boy drove through a stop sign.

Anderson says two deputies caught up with the boy and tried unsuccessfully to stop the Dodge Intrepid in an area about 45 miles north of Salt Lake City. The car reached 40 mph before the boy stopped in a driveway and ran into a home. Anderson says when the boy's father later confronted him, the boy said he didn't want to go to church. The boy is too young to prosecute, and no citations were issued, although police did urge the father to make his car keys more inaccessible to children.

The Houston Chronicle

COMMENT

This is the mindset of many children and young people today. They are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Let us pray that this young boy will change his attitude because someday he will need God's help.

Ecclesiastes 12:1 tells us, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them."

He may find what to remember about God by attending church.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: What is the relationship between Law and Love?

ANSWER: Among the signs of the end of the age, and of the return of our Lord Jesus Christ, we read this: "...because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matthew 24:12), or in literal translation: "Because of the completion of lawlessness." It is surprising that the Lord shows here a causal connection between law and love (because...therefore). Love can only become evident when the law is kept. How is this to be understood?

As an answer to this, we will consider the parable told in Luke 18:1-8, falsely called the parable of the unjust judge. A better title would be: "The parable of the poor widow," for she is the central figure of the story. It is her attitude that matters.

The social and legal position of the widows and orphans had already been ordered by Moses, on behalf of God, in a precept belonging to the group of commandments following immediately after the Ten Commandments. The widows and orphans who were bereft of their natural protectors must not be oppressed. "If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless" (Exodus 22:23-24).

The people of Israel, as slaves in Egypt, had known until then only the injustice of powerful exploitation and

oppression of the weak. Now they are told, with awe-inspiring sternness, the meaning of righteousness and how it should be practiced. Moses repeats the same commandment several times in the Pentateuch.

Yet the divine call to men to stand by the unprotected is found all through the Bible; for instance, in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zechariah. In the Psalms and the book of Job, God Himself is praised as the Protector of widows and orphans, for He had stood by His defenseless people. Even in the Epistle of James in the New Testament, it is said that men can have no better religion than to visit orphans and widows in their plight (see James 1:27).

This is the background from which to understand the parable of the poor widow. The judge "feared not God, neither regarded man" in his actions. What attitude should one take towards such a person who impudently and brutally resisted the commandment of God? Should there be measure for measure? Should rudeness be met with rudeness?

For the poor widow these questions were meaningless, since she had no means of power against such a cynical person. She could do only one thing: set her request against his hardness of heart in an attempt to move him. Her daily persevering question: "Will I be given justice today?" was at last successful, just as constant dropping of water wears away a stone. Every day she opened the door of the judge's room, every day she spoke the same words, thus reminding him that he did wrong. Fi-

nally, unable to bear this, becoming nervous and fearful that she might weary him, he gave in.

Thus, God will have mercy on His children if they call to Him day and night. And He adds, according to some translations "He bears with them," perhaps so long that those calling to Him no longer expect their prayers to be heard. Let us remember what God told Abraham: that only the fourth generation of the children of Israel would return from Egypt, "...for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16).

When the time comes, when the longsuffering of God is at an end, He will avenge His children speedily. God may tarry long, but once He begins to act, events will follow each other in rapid succession, as it was at the exodus from Egypt. The children of Israel had to wait a very long time for their liberation, yet when it started happenings pressed upon each other so quickly that they had no time even to make bread, but their dough in "...their kneadingtroughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders" (Exodus 12:34).

Therein is the righteousness of God made manifest: longsuffering towards His enemies and the enemies of His children, great tests of patience for these. But then He turns towards them and in His love He brings about their justification and freedom speedily.

The parable also answers our question as to the connection between law and love. The unjust judge despises the law. He is lawless and therefore incapable of love. For love becomes manifest in the fulfillment of God's commandments.

At the end of the age, many people, following the great lawless one (II Thessalonians 2:9), will become lawless themselves. Today, already, a cynicism raises its head against the laws of God, reasoning why His commandments can no longer be kept: "Overruling" interests (personal, national, social interest of groups) do not "permit" this.

By such despising of the law, the rights of the "neighbor" are curtailed, which, in turn, arouses hatred in him so that love is killed in the hearts of either side. It has "waxed cold."

Such loss in faithfulness towards the law is much greater than we may realize, for with it "coldness" has come into the world. Even the children of God are in danger of ceasing their cry to Him, for they, too, get chilled

by the cold that is in the world.

Thus, it becomes clear why the Lord Jesus questioned whether, at His return, He will find faith in the world which will not stop calling to God for righteousness, because with righteousness love, too, will return—the righteousness of the Kingdom and the love of the Christ, which will then rule and take hold of the hearts of men.

For "love is the fulfilling of the law."

QUESTION: What did Jesus mean by saying, "Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead?"

ANSWER: These words of Jesus are found in Matthew 8:22, "But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead."

The language employed by Christ on this occasion is figuratively as in many other instances of His teachings. He was speaking of the characteristics of true discipleship, and particularly referred to those who permitted themselves to become so entangled in worldly affairs, that they persistently procrastinated in spiritual things. To these Jesus showed that all other claims were inferior to the divine claim upon their energies and the command to preach the gospel. While souls are in peril, the true disciple must not hesitate. Those who remain, being dead to the spiritual call, may well be relied upon to fulfill all needful natural duties to the dead or dying among themselves.

QUESTION: What is the true meaning of the phrase "Be still, and know that I am God" as found in Psalm 46:10?

ANSWER: To many people, this phrase, "Be still, and know that I am God", means a command to quiet one's mind and to put aside all the day's hustle to contemplate the majesty and sovereignty of God. Though this kind of meditation is commanded elsewhere in Scripture, it is not the meaning of this phrase found in Psalm 46:10.

"Be still" is not an invitation to draw apart from daily cares. It is a literal command to cease fighting. "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:9-10).



THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

BY DEL DELONG

Pico Rivera, California





Children from Oxnard, California

LESSON I

THE CREATION

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1.

Golden Text: Genesis 1:1.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

1. What did God create on the first day and the second day? Genesis 1:3-5, 7-8.
2. What was created on the third day and fourth day? Genesis 1:10, 12-14, 16-19.
3. What was created on the fifth day and sixth day? Genesis 1:20-23, 25-26, 31.
4. What did God do when He finished His creation? Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:11.
5. Who was with God when the heaven and the earth were created? John 1:1-3.

NOTE: Another name for Jesus is "The Word". In Genesis 1:26 God was talking to Jesus when He said, "Let us make man in our image..."

6. Was God happy with what He created? Genesis 1:31; Revelation 4:11.

LESSON II

GOD MADE MAN

Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:7-23.

Golden Text: Genesis 2:7 (first part).

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground..."

1. Who did God create man to look like, and how did He create him? Genesis 1:27; 2:7.

2. After God created man, what did He do with him? Genesis 2:15.

3. What orders did God give to the man? Genesis 2:16-17.

4. Why did God make a woman for the man? Genesis 2:18.

5. How did God make the woman? Genesis 2:21,23.

6. What was the name of the man that God had created? Genesis 2:19.

7. For what purpose did God bring the animals to Adam? Genesis 2:19-20.

LESSON III

MAN AND WOMAN'S DISOBEDIENCE

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:1-12.

Golden Text: Genesis 3:4.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

1. What was the most subtle of all the beasts in the garden? Genesis 3:1.

NOTE: Subtle means sly, clever, and deceiving.

2. Why did God tell the woman not to eat of the tree that was in the middle of the garden? Genesis 3:3.

3. What did the serpent answer when the woman told him that she should not eat of the tree? Genesis 3:4-5.

4. What did the woman do then? Genesis 3:6 (first part).

5. To whom did she give some of the fruit to eat? Genesis 3:6 (last part).

6. What happened after they had disobeyed God? Gen-

esis 3:7.

7. What did they do when they heard God walking in the garden? Genesis 3:8.
8. When God couldn't find Adam, what did He ask? Genesis 3:9.
9. What was Adam's reason for hiding? Genesis 3:10.
10. What did He ask Adam, and what was Adam's reply? Genesis 3:11-12.

NOTE: We will continue this lesson next week.

LESSON IV

MAN AND WOMAN'S DISOBEDIENCE (CONTINUED)

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:13-24.

Golden Text: Genesis 3:20.

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

1. What did God ask of the woman and what was her answer? Genesis 3:13.
2. What did God say, and do, to the serpent? Genesis 3:14.
3. What curse did God put on Adam and his wife? Genesis 3:16-19.
4. What did God name his wife and why? Genesis 3:20.
5. What did God make for Adam and Eve? Genesis 3:21.
6. When God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden, what were they to do? Genesis 3:23.
7. What did God place at the east of the Garden of Eden? Genesis 3:24.

WHAT IS A CHILD OF GOD?

1. A real Child of God is one who knows the teachings of Jesus and obeys them.

A person may be good, sweet and kind by accident, but he cannot be a Child of God by accident. He must know what to do and why. He must be sure that he is doing all of the things which Christ did and told him to do.

2. Above all things, a Child of God will obey Mark 12:30-31:

Maybe we think it is easy to love God because He did so much for us. Is it? He said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Is it easy to keep them? First, we must know them.

We know it is not easy to love everybody as much as we love ourselves. How may we learn to do this?

- (a) By doing little things for them.
- (b) By praying for them. We cannot hate those for whom we pray.
- (c) By keeping unkind thoughts to ourselves, we will forget them sooner.
- (d) By refusing to think unkind things even if they are true.

3. A Child of God believes the Bible from cover to cover. He neither adds to it nor takes from it. He says, "Jesus said this, and I will do just as He said. I will obey every word of the Old and New Testament."

Name other traits of a true Child of God, and talk about them.

"Yes you did too!"

"I did not!"

**Thus the little quarrel started,
Thus by unkind little words,
Two fond friends were parted.**

"I am sorry."

"So am I."

**Thus the little quarrel ended,
Thus by loving little words
Two fond hearts were mended.**

By Benjamin Keech.



WATCH YOUR VOICE

Would you be willing to do something very simple in order to make people glad to have you around? Watch your voice. Don't laugh. It sounds impossible, but it isn't. If you have a tape recorder at school or at home, just speak into it and play it back. You may see a picture of your voice.

Of course, your companions aren't going to care very much about how the picture of your voice looks. But they will care whether or not your tones are shrill and unpleasant. And the picture of your voice is affected by those qualities which make it pleasing to hear.

This has nothing to do with a career as a public speaker or as a concert singer. It is concerned with your everyday communication or speech with your friends, parents, teachers, and other members of your family. If you whine, they may fail to include you in the conversation. If you speak sharply, they may prefer to talk over your ideas with others.

Of course, your speaking voice may reflect your character. Unless something is wrong with the bones or muscles in your throat or with the construction of your ears, there is no reason why you cannot develop a pleasant voice which everyone will like to hear. You may do this by speaking softly, distinctly, and with changes in tone.

Many times one's character is judged by his voice. If you are interested in what you are saying, you are likely

to use a pleasant voice. You know how your voice changes when you are angry. It doesn't sound very pleasant, does it? Some people are angry so much of their time that their voices almost always are gruff. People who are happy and want to help others enjoy life, generally have sweet voices.

The kind of work you do may depend to some extent upon the quality of your voice. Could you imagine a successful nurse who had a loud voice? A streetcar conductor may have a mighty voice, but he may speak so indistinctly that the passengers are unable to understand what he says.

It certainly will be rewarding for you to "watch your voice."

I CAN AND I CAN'T

by L.A. Reber

I Can was a little chap,
He was both brave and true.
He made success with everything
That he would try to do.

I Will is I Can's brother,
And they always do agree.
Everybody likes them,
For they are nice chaps, you see.

I Can't lives in another house,
He's as shiftless as can be.
He never does a single thing
That anyone can see.

I Won't is I Can't's brother,
But people pass them by.
For nobody ever likes them,
And they never seem to try.

A BIBLE ORCHESTRA

Suppose you were making up an orchestra and could use only the musical instruments mentioned in the Bible. How many could you find? How do you think they would sound together? Look up these references and make a list.

1. Job 21:12
2. Amos 5:23
3. Hosea 5:8
4. Daniel 3:5
5. I Samuel 16:23
6. Nehemiah 12:27
7. Exodus 28:33
8. Isaiah 18:3
9. Revelation 18:22
10. Judges 11:34
11. I Samuel 18:6
12. Psalm 75:4

BIBLE BOOKS

1. What book of the Bible has only three letters?
2. Fill in the first and last letters of these four letter Bible books.
 -UT- -ZR- -OE-

 -AR- -UK- -OH-

 -UD- -CT- -MO-

3. Fill in the first and last letter of these five letter Bible books.
 -ING- -OSE- -ONA-

 -ICA- -AHU- -ITU-

 -ETE- -AME-

A WORD PUZZLE

In each of the following sentences, there is a misspelled word. Can you find it? If you do, underline it.

1. The boy's mother gave hymn ten cents to put in the collection.
2. I have bin to Sabbath School every week.
3. Vacation time is here because skule is out.
4. We shud love our enemies.
5. We should keep our minds filled with cleen thoughts.
6. If we smile, we bring sushine to others.
7. The wind blue Jane's hat away, but brother caught it.
8. Mary took flours to her sick friend.
9. Jane will bee ten years old tomorrow.
10. How can you sea out of the window? You are so small.

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I Am Just A Servant

By David DeLong

I am just a servant:
To do my very best;
To serve with everything I have,
And leave, to God, the rest.

I am just a servant:
No glory of my own;
But serving God, and others too,
My life has been on loan.

I am just a servant:
And when my time is through,
I've only done my duty, it
Is all that I can do.

I am just a servant:
But oh, my gracious Lord;
When He says, "Well done" to me,
He'll give a rich reward!

