

**The Advocate
of
Truth**



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*We wish our Dads a
 Happy Father's Day*



Thoughts From Jude

The Way of Cain, The Error Of Balaam And The Gainsaying Of Core

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core" (Jude 11).

The Way Of Cain

Jude did not write his epistle to unbelievers and the worldly wise, but "...to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" (Jude 1). Therefore, we can conclude that some of them had "gone in the way of Cain." This suggests the possibility of the Lord's people taking the same wrong course if they are not diligent in keeping themselves in the love of God and His truth.

The way of Cain was the sin of jealousy. Cain's jealousy became so deep-rooted that he was led to commit murder. Song of Solomon 8:6 tells us that "...jealousy is cruel as the grave..." Like every other sin, jealousy has a small, perhaps almost imperceptible, beginning. David asked "Who can understand his errors?" Then he prayed to the Lord to cleanse him from "secret faults."

Let us pray to be cleansed from secret faults. After praying, we should probe deeply into our own hearts in order to discover any possible small beginnings of jealousy that may be taking root. Do we truly rejoice when

those with whom we are associated, in the church or in the home, appear to be receiving a larger measure of the Lord's favor than ourselves?

Satan senses our fleshly weaknesses and takes advantage of them. Before we know it, the passing thought may become a firm conviction that leads to envy and bitterness of heart. The evil roots of jealousy blind us to the real truth. This makes it impossible to reason correctly on any question coming before us in which the objects of our jealousy are involved.

The proper application of the Word of God will cleanse us from the possible beginnings of jealousy. To be jealous means that we consider ourselves more worthy of, and better qualified for, certain blessings than those to whom they may be given. The Apostle Paul gave us good advice in this connection which is found in Romans 12:3, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

If we lack faith, we will fail to believe that God has set every member in the body as it has pleased Him. "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (I Corinthians 12:18). King Saul was the Lord's anointed. David knew that he had been anointed to take Saul's place. David patiently waited for the Lord to remove the disobedient Saul, and he did not lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed. David said, "The LORD forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the LORD'S anointed: but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of

water, and let us go" (I Samuel 26:11).

This principle means that we should be content with what the Lord, through His providence, sees best for us. If our lot does not seem as favorable as that of others, we must wait on the Lord to change things rather than be too hasty in taking matters into our own hands.

The Error Of Balaam

Jude also speaks of others in his day who, being once in the love of God, did not keep themselves in it. Instead, they ran greedily "after the error of Balaam for reward." We might think that this could not be possibly true of us or anyone in the truth. **We must remember that every sin has its small beginning in our minds and hearts.** The example of Balaam is a very appropriate one. He was asked by the heathen King Balak, of the Moabites, to curse the people of God. Balaam was not a worshiper of God, but having heard of the many miracles accredited to God on behalf of the Israelites, he refused to curse them unless he could secure the permission of Israel's God. The account is recorded in chapters 22 to 24 in the Book of Numbers.

The point of the lesson for us is that Balaam really wanted to do the bidding of King Balak in order to get the reward that was offered. He refrained from doing so only because he feared what might happen to him. He greedily desired the reward, and cared little or nothing what the result of his curse might be upon the Israelites. Outwardly, he conformed to the Lord's will, but at heart he still wanted the offered reward.

The world, the flesh, or Satan can offer us rewards which might lure us from the love of God. The example Jude has given of Balaam may serve as a warning to us along the lines which may be much more subtle. In this connection, it is helpful to consider what a priceless heritage we have in the Church of God. Most people consider themselves fortunate if, in a lifetime, they can be assured of having made a few close friends. But the Lord's people have true friends that are loving, loyal, and understanding because they are in the love of God, and the love of God is in them. We must safeguard the interests of those who are also the Lord's friends.

One of the allurements which Satan holds out to the Lord's people is the reward of being looked up to with a

little flattery or praise. If we let our ambition develop to this point, we might easily find ourselves using schemes and methods to accomplish what by now we have convinced ourselves to be God's will. We may be willing to circulate a half-truth about brethren, which apart from the whole truth is actually a slander, as one means of attaining the ends we seek. Some may be injured by our methods as we falsely reason that it is the Lord's will that we get our reward.

The greediness of Balaam in seeking a reward would, in principle, represent any selfish attitude we might have which, if permitted to grow, would lead to words and actions designed to promote our own selfish interests regardless of what the result might be to one or more of the brethren. Our protection against this sin, even though its beginning may be difficult to detect, is a true self-sacrificing love for the brethren. If deep down in our hearts we would rather die than to say or do anything that would even in the smallest degree injure one of our brethren, then there is little likelihood that we will be snared by the sin of Balaam which will take us out of the love of God.

The Gainsaying Of Core

Core (Greek form for Korah) was one of the sons of Levi who led a rebellion against the leadership of Moses and Aaron. See Numbers 16:1-3. The fact that Moses and Aaron had been appointed by the Lord for the service they rendered seemed to escape his reasoning. He concluded that he and his associates were just as qualified, and therefore should share the privileges and honors which, in their false reasoning, they concluded that these two servants of God were selfishly holding for themselves.

It is doubtful that, at the time Jude wrote his epistle and mentioned those who followed the "gainsaying of Core", there were any situations in the church which were exactly like the case of Core. **There were false apostles in the early church, and these might have been questioning the authority of the Lord's true apostles,** insisting that they had as much authority to speak for the Lord as anyone else.

The principle is that we must recognize the Lord's supervision over His people and especially in our own individual affairs. It implies the humbling of ourselves "under the mighty hand of God," that He may exalt us in due

time.

In our church, circumstances and situations may arise that we might like to change. Perhaps our ways would be better than those being followed. There would be nothing wrong in suggesting what may seem to us a better way, but if the Lord, in His providence, does not permit the change to be made, we should accept the divine will.

In this case, the "gainsaying of Core" principle could perhaps manifest itself in unjust and unloving charges against our brethren. **We might become obsessed with the importance of what we would like to accomplish.** In such a case, it would be well to remember the lesson of Core who forgot the Lord. He thought only of himself and of Moses and Aaron, whom he looked upon as thwarting the attainment of his wishes and the position among

God's people he sought to occupy.

This principle applies in all our associations. In the factory or office, there may be those who are promoted ahead of us, when we feel that we are equally, or even better, qualified. Usually there is little or nothing that can be done about situations of this kind, but we do need to guard against any rebellious spirit that could easily develop in our own hearts. This could lead to bitterness of heart which, if allowed to develop, could eventually take us out of the love and favor of God.

When we detect the way of Cain, the error of Balaam, or the gainsaying of Core developing in our hearts, we must diligently wield the sword of the Spirit to destroy these enemies.

Do's And Don'ts For Dealing With Hurt Feelings



1. *Don't blame someone else for your hurt.* Take responsibility for your own feelings and behavior. Overcoming your hurt feelings is something only you can do. Acknowledge that your ego was hurt when someone said a bad or false thing about you or rubbed you the wrong way.

2. *Don't be angry.* God gives us a definite command in Psalm 37:8, "Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil."

3. *Don't let yourself feel, "Poor Me!"* Be as firm as steel against self-pity and sensitiveness. The oversensitive person suffers in mental pain. Nothing is accomplished

by silently brooding over some perceived offense. Nobody knows he has a grievance, much less what it is. Self-pity only makes it worse.

4. *Don't retaliate.* Don't even make a mean remark under your breath. Bite your tongue before you do that. The first part of Romans 12:17 says, "Recompense to no man evil for evil."

5. *Don't mull over and over the problem. Let it go.* Psalm 119:165 tells us, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

6. *Realize you can't read other people's minds.* You don't know what the other person was thinking. You can-

not say, "I know it was intentional" because you do not know. Perhaps he or she were thoughtless or inconsiderate, but you don't know it was intentional because you cannot read their minds.

7. Empathize. Be understanding of others. Say to yourself, "Possibly they don't understand." Realize the other person may be tired to exhaustion, or may be overwhelmed by some personal problem too painful to even express. Also it could be that the other person may be reacting to serious time pressures in his or her life. The effort to understand them will help to eliminate the hurt you feel.

8. Suspect yourself. Say to yourself, "I could have misread that person." You also could say to yourself, "I may be too sensitive."

9. If you still think someone has wronged you, go to that person with a Christ-like spirit. Go with love, not retaliating, seeking a solution. See Galatians 6:1.

10. Become more positive. Look for opportunities to be kind and spread cheer. Instead of being hurt, feel

sorrow for those who show animosity and unkindness.

11. Don't rely on others for emotional support. We know that at some point some people are going to fail and let us down. Remember our purpose is to please God, not our ego.

12. Practice thinking of others and not yourself. When you are hurt, that means you are thinking of yourself. Try to apply the words of Philippians 2:3-4: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Focus on others and their needs.

13. Show kindness to the one who has offended you. An act of lovingkindness to the one who offended you may do wonders. The Apostle Paul says it in these words, "Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). If you show kindness to the one who offended you, even if he does not realize he wronged you, it may help him be kinder and more considerate.



MULLING OVER THE BIBLE

Many people do not accept the Bible as the literal, inspired Word of God, but they do have a copy in their home. Though they are not children of God and do not adhere to the life-plan and walk found in the Holy Scriptures, yet they feel a necessity to own a copy of the Bible. The Bible maintains that if a person will study and practice its teachings, that individual will be blessed, both

now and hereafter.

The Bible is not a book of mysteries as some individuals would have you believe. Perhaps, you have heard some people say the Bible is a deep, mysterious book, and they did not think that anyone really understands it. Such a charge is incorrect. The Bible explains in detail its so-called "mysteries." If a person rightly reads and divides the Word of God, the Bible is a self-interpreting

book. When correctly read, Scripture will interpret Scripture.

The Bible is not a book that says one thing and means another. Generally speaking, passages in the Bible have one simple, literal meaning. If properly read, it is not possible to get a hundred different meanings from the Scriptures. We must faithfully and correctly divide God's Word. We must not try to make it mean what we want it to! It means what God wants it to mean.

When a person studies the Bible, he will find that it gives divine information on practically every subject. There is practically no subject excluded from discussion in the Bible. For example, the Bible discusses creation, forming of the seas, oceans, the sun, moon and stars. It discusses the calculating of days, weeks, months, seasons, times and years. It contains a vast coverage of moral, economical and political issues of everyday life.

What is absolutely necessary for the individual reader is that he must collect together from the various writers of the Scriptures God's accumulated information in order to know the whole truth of any desired subject. When this is done, there is perfect harmony and everything which a man really needs to know about the desired subject is very clear. There are no contradictions in the Bible, even though some of the writers wrote as much as a thousand to fifteen hundred years apart.

The Bible is a book to which all people in all ages and in all times can conform, and yet retain their own lawful customs and habits which are not contrary to the will of

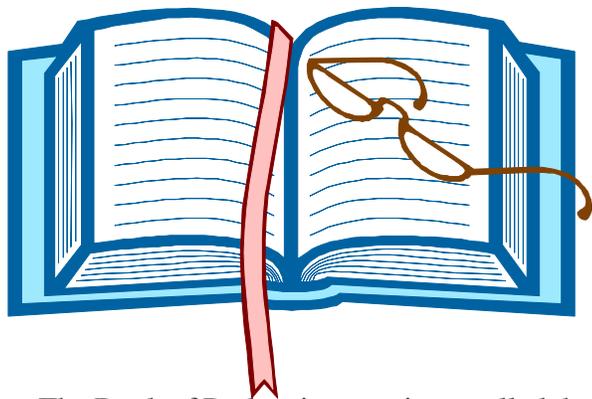
God. The Bible is not segregated by race, creed or color, but it is written for the individual human being, whether his skin is white, black, red, or yellow. The Bible is the power of God unto salvation and the source of present help for men.

The Bible is the most remarkable book ever composed or written. It contains a divine library of sixty-six individual books, some of various size, and others no larger than a short business letter. These books include various forms of literature- history, biography, poetry, proverbial sayings, hymns, letters, laws, parables, riddles, allegories, prophecy, and all other forms of human expression and experience are included in its pages.

The Bible is the only book that reveals the mind of God, the state of man and the way of salvation. Its doctrines are true, and its precepts are binding, its history is true, and its decisions are immutable. It contains light to direct, spiritual food to sustain, and comfort to cheer. It has been said that "man should read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy." He should read it that it might fill his memory, rule his heart, and guide his feet in righteousness and true holiness.

There is no other book in all the world like the Bible, which is God's Word. Books may come and books may go, but the Bible will remain forever! The libraries of the world are filled with dead, obsolete books, bound in faded leather bindings, the sayings of men who no longer exist, but the Bible is the living Word of the living God.

Selected



THE BOOK OF PSALMS

The Book of Psalms is sometimes called the song book of the Bible. Many of the psalms express devotion, thanksgiving, and praise to God. Psalm 1 begins with, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in

the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (verses 1,2). This thought is repeated in various ways throughout the book. There are songs of praise for the marvelous manner in which God blesses those who delight in His law. The whole book tells of thanksgiving

and glory to God, closing with the following beautiful words: "Praise ye the LORD. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts...praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance...praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD" (Psalm 150).

The Book of Psalms contains some of the most outstanding prophecies of the Old Testament. In Psalm 2, we see God's enemies, mentioned in verses 1 and 2, being broken with a rod of iron and dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel. This happens just before the establishment of the kingdom of God upon earth.

The 46th Psalm also contains the promise of God to care for His people during times of world chaos and distress. The words are, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof" (verses 1-3).

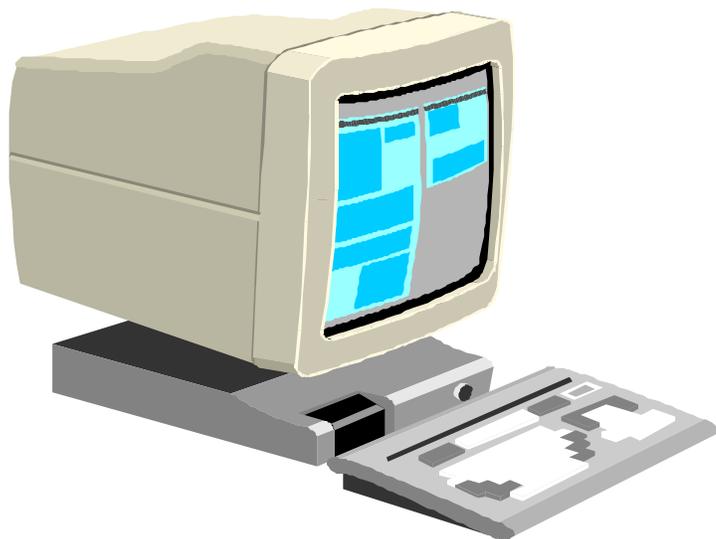
The 72nd Psalm speaks of the rich blessings of peace and security which all nations will experience during the kingdom period. The words are, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him

that hath no helper. He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy" (verses 11-13).

In the 16th Psalm, the writer personifies Jesus and expresses his hope in a resurrection. The words are, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (verse 10). In this verse, the Hebrew word *sheol* is used. It is the only hell of the Old Testament. It is the state of death, and it was necessary for Jesus to "pour out his soul unto death," that He might redeem the human race from death.

The 96th Psalm is one of thanksgiving for the establishment of righteousness and judgment when He comes. "...for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth" (verse 13).

Many of the psalms are of an inspirational nature, expressing thanksgiving for the assurance of God's loving care of His people. Outstanding among these, is the 23rd Psalm, in which the Creator is likened to a shepherd caring for His sheep. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (verse 1). Another is the 91st Psalm which is a song of assurance that God will care for His people regardless of the cunning and strength of enemies who may plot to injure them: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (verse 1).



It is possible for a virus to get into our computers and disrupt operations. If our antivirus software is on duty, we should be safe. Also we should use caution and not open any e-mail that we do not recognize. However, there

is always the possibility that the virus makers may invent a new scheme and that we users may become innocent victims.

There are other viruses about which we must be more

**KEEP YOUR
ANTIVIRUS
SOFTWARE
UP TO DATE!**

concerned. These other viruses are spread rapidly, and they have even greater potential for damage. They are viruses that attack the heart. The heart is the center of our spiritual lives, our emotions, and our feelings and convictions. Jesus said that all evil proceeds from our hearts. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Viruses that attack the heart are very serious. An attacking virus can quickly destroy the faith, the conviction, the integrity, the courage that one has taken many years to build. If our spiritual life dies, what do we have left? We may have gained the whole world. But if we lose our soul (life)--if a virus kills our hearts--what do we have left? Let us quote the words of Jesus found in Mark 8:36: "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

How can we avoid these heart viruses? There is only one way, and that is to keep God's antivirus software up-to-date and running in our minds all the time. If we do not, those heart viruses will get in, and spread, and infect everything. Our spiritual life will become dead.

What are these heart viruses? They are deadly attitudes that are around us, even right in our own hearts. A very common one is the negativity virus. Someone is disappointed or unhappy because of a loss, an injury, a gripe, or simply a failed expectation. He or she voices the complaint to the next person. That person adds a bit to the complaint and passes it on to the next person. On and on the virus spreads until someone, who is running God's antivirus program, blocks it by saying to the complainer, "What is the reason for this complaint? Has anyone checked out the problem? Has anyone tried to solve it? Even if the complaint is valid, there is no reason to spread the virus of negativity.

Discontent and negativity flourish in an environment of thinking of one's self. My rights were violated, my wishes were not considered, I did not get the proper respect, my effort was wasted, and so on and on the complaints go. Each is a problem with "self". How does God's antivirus protection kill discontent? The disinfectant is called selfless humanity. Let us consider the words of the Apostle Paul: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but

in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:3-4).

There are many other viruses that can do great damage. Some of them are a little resentment, a little jealousy, a little feeling of hate, a little hurt feeling, a little uncleanness. They start little, but they don't stay little. This is why we need God's antivirus program running all the time. His program has a very special ability. Properly used, it can surround the virus (the antivirus people call it "quarantine") rendering the virus powerless. When the virus is quarantined, it can't do its deadly work. Instead of being spread, it dies.

Let us not think that the talk about viruses is exaggerated. The antivirus makers say that it's precisely why viruses are so dangerous. It is because people don't take them seriously. Most people don't heed the warnings because they don't install and update antivirus software and firewalls. They still open suspicious e-mails and click on unknown attachments. Is God's experience with us any different?

Viruses that attack the heart are serious. They are everywhere. Let us not neglect the warnings because every one of us is vulnerable!





Mature, Like Christ

By David DeLong

It should be the goal of every believer to be, in character, exactly like the Master Jesus Christ. His life set the pattern for us, and we are to follow His example as closely as we can. To help us to mature in our Christian walk, the Lord in His wonderful grace has given gifts to the church. We read in Ephesians chapter four, verses 7,8,11-16, “But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men...And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 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 of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

The Bible indicates that staying children in our spiritual lives is a very dangerous thing.

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.”

It should be noted that these gifts, in the form of ministers to the Body of Christ, are for “the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry...” Every church age, from the time of Jesus to our present day, has needed the five-fold ministry of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers so that the church can be edified (built up). The main purpose of this edification of the Body of Christ is so that we will attain “...unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children...” This means that we are to grow up spiritually.

The Bible indicates that staying children in our spiritual lives is a very dangerous thing. However, there are certain child-like qualities that believers must possess if they are to enter into God’s kingdom. Matthew 18:1-4 reads, “At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” Our Lord Jesus specifically speaks of the humble nature of a child, and how His disciples should emulate that quality. When we think of other positive qualities of children that we also should have, we

may reflect upon the fact that they are many times very trusting--to their parents, teachers, and even to the Lord. Children tend to be honest--sometimes brutally so--but at least then, they are not hypocrites. Though children may be quick to squabble with each other, they are also generally quick to forgive each other, so that one minute they are glaring at one another over a desired toy, but the next minute they are the best of friends again.

Another positive trait that a child usually has is a good appetite. This, of course, is absolutely necessary for proper growth and development of the child. The Apostle Peter compares this natural characteristic of a child to the spiritual desire that believers should have with God's Word, when he wrote in I Peter 2:1-3, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." May that be the desire of each one of us, although as we grow spiritually, God's Word indicates that we need to progress from milk to meat. But more of that later.

The Apostle Paul makes a distinction concerning when a believer should not be a child spiritually and when he should be one in I Corinthians 14:20. He writes, "Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men." We may wonder, how does one know if he or she has grown spiritually enough to be classified as a mature person in the Lord? Paul gives us a clue in I Corinthians 13:11: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." We know this principle well in the natural realm. As children, we played with toys, may have lived in a "make-believe" world, etc. When we grew up, many of our tastes changed. Our thinking changed. Now, supposedly, we are more mature.

As children, we played with toys, may have lived in a "make-believe" world, etc. When we grew up, many of our tastes changed.

The Lord Jesus gives us a spiritual barometer, if you will, that lets us know what our spiritual state is at any given time. Let's read His words from Matthew 12:35: "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." In the verse just preceding this one, Jesus says, "...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." What do we find coming out of our heart and flowing across our tongue? Are we speaking as a child or as a grown-up? It has been said that "shallow people talk about people; static people talk about things; mature people talk about ideals." A mature person in Christ will therefore be speaking about many things from the Scriptures.

Is it possible for a believer in Christ to be an unspiritual Christian? In other words, is it possible for him or her to act like an unbeliever? The Apostle Paul indicates that, yes, it is possible. Let's listen to what he writes in I Corinthians 3:1-4: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" Here, Paul makes the case that envying, strife, and divisions among the brethren will keep them "carnal" or "babes in Christ."

Being a "babe in Christ" doesn't just apply to newly baptized converts, either. Sometimes, and sadly so, this situation may go on for years in a believer's life. This appears to be the case among the brethren that James addressed in his epistle. Chapter 3, verses 1,2 tell us: "My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." New converts generally do not desire to be teachers of the Scriptures. It takes much study to build the knowledge and confidence that a person needs to be a teacher. So, it seems probable that these brethren could have been believers for some time. And yet, James admonishes them in verses 13,14, by writing: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let

him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.” In chapter 4: 1-4, James rebukes them sharply for wars, fightings, lusts, killing, asking amiss (presumably in their prayers), being adulterers and adulteresses, and apparently being a friend of the world and an enemy of God. Talk about being “carnal” brethren!

Indeed, carnality and lusts of the flesh can creep into the lives of any believer, no matter how long he or she has been faithful to the Lord. Though Asaph was not a New Testament believer, he was still a godly man and was filled with the Holy Spirit to write under inspiration. Notice his poignant confession in Psalm 73: 2,3,16,17: “But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked... When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end.” Envy--the same root word that Paul and James warned about. This green-eyed monster will tear apart a believer’s spiritual life, as well as tear apart whole congregations of believers.

As we have seen, the Apostle Paul uses the terms “milk” when referring to the spiritual diet of an immature believer, and “meat” when referring to the spiritual diet of a mature one. Just what is it that constitutes “milk” and “meat?” We know that the Scriptures contain both diets within its pages. Is studying deeply into church doctrine and biblical prophecy or history what the Bible would define as “meat?” Let’s find out.

This green-eyed monster will tear apart a believer’s spiritual life.

The writer of the book of Hebrews may have had a similar problem to what James had in regard to teachers in the church. In both cases it appears that those who were teachers (or at least should have been teachers) were not prepared spiritually. Hebrews 5:12-14 reads:

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” According to these verses, the person who uses “milk” and who is a “babe” needs to be taught “the first principles of the oracles of God,” and “is unskilful in the word of righteousness.” The people who have “strong meat” are the ones “that are of full age” and by “use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.” This passage is saying that a mature believer is one who knows what is right and wrong in life situations.

A mature believer is one who knows what is right and wrong in life situations.

At this point, someone might be thinking, “is it as simple as that?” They may believe that knowing all the church doctrines, delving into prophecy and history, and learning the Word to become teachers is what makes a believer a mature Christian. But as good as knowing Scripture is, this does not, in itself, make a believer mature. As we have seen, even when being teachers of the Word, Christians can still be immature spiritually. It takes much practice in the “word of righteousness” for maturity to take place. Real spiritual growth comes from striving to do what is right in every circumstance of our lives. For instance, what is our thought life like? Do we know what to speak in various circumstances? Do we know when to speak and when to keep silence? Are we disciplined in what we watch on T.V.? Can we control our anger? The categories are seemingly endless.

Hebrews 6:1,2 informs us: “Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from

dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.” The word “perfection” here means maturity. This passage seems to be saying that we need to get past certain doctrines and to go on to maturity in our walk with the Lord.

As always, Jesus is our example in spirituality. If we are to mature in our spiritual lives, then we need to look to Him, especially in the Gospels. He relished God’s Word, fed upon it, and lived out its principles. Let us contemplate a few of those principles.

Jesus was a man of prayer. We find in Mark 1:35 where He arose “a great while before day” to go out and pray. Also, we learn in Luke 6:12 that on the night before He chose the twelve apostles, He spent all that night in prayer. Prayer was serious business with our Lord.

He was also zealous for God’s work. Even when Jesus was only twelve years old, he was about His “Father’s business” (see Luke 2:49.) Later, when He was grown, He drove the money-changers and others from the Temple. The Bible records about this incident: “And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up” (John 2:17).

He knew what His mission in life was. Jesus didn’t drift through life, but used His gifts and talents to help Him succeed in glorifying His Heavenly Father. He was a self-starter, taking the initiative in many instances to create opportunities for ministering to others. Praise God that He came willingly to seek and to save the lost. Jesus let nothing deter Him from doing God’s will. In Isaiah 50:7, a text that is considered a prophecy about Christ, we read, “For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”

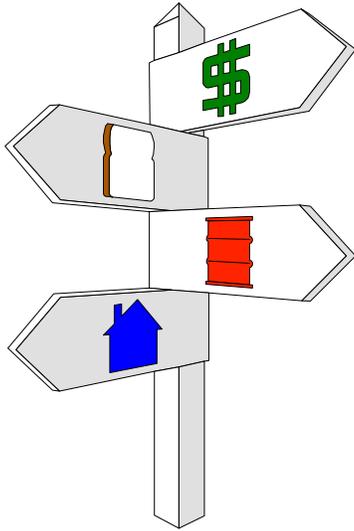
Jesus didn’t drift through life, but used His gifts and talents to help Him succeed in glorifying His Heavenly Father.

Our Lord was filled with love and compassion. A very touching scene is depicted about Jesus in Matthew 9:35-38, where He is greatly concerned about the welfare of people. We find written in these verses: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” We can imagine seeing the concerned look upon His face as He instructed His disciples to pray for the lost. In fact, so much love did Jesus have for others that we are told about Him in I Peter 2:23, “Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not...” What wonderful love He displayed by going to the cross in our place!

He knew, and did, what was right in every circumstance.

Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit (See John 3:34). He knew, and did, what was right in every circumstance. Therefore, He became the perfectly mature Person. He was absolutely, and always, under the control of His Father, and could truthfully claim: “...I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29). And, He submitted Himself to man’s authority as well.

What a wonderful Example our Lord is to us. May we prayerfully consider His life and follow it as closely as we can. May we submit ourselves to God’s authority and to man’s, including the five-fold ministry in Ephesians chapter four, “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...”



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.*

MINISTERING OUTSIDE THE BOX

**Christian mimes say they're showing the world
what it "refuses to hear"**

by **Katie Menzer**
Dallas Morning News

DALLAS - For some people, listening to a sermon can rank right down there with a trip to the dentist or taking a pop quiz.

But what if the sermon included miming, music and dramatic dance moves?

"Some people go to sleep listening to preachers," said Mason Porter, a Dallas mime who uses his talent for the dramatic to encourage people to embrace the Christian faith. "We're out of the box."

Mason and his twin brother, Jason, are founders of the Wandering Mimes Ministry, a 17-member group of Christian mimes and dancers with the motto, "We are just showing the world what (it) refuses to hear."

The twins, now in their late 20s, started their faith-based miming as teenagers. They said the idea was a calling from God after an adolescence of misadventures.

Mason had been a self-professed "gangbanger" in high school. He said he once broke a rival's nose in a fight and had to spend a night in a juvenile lockup.

Jason had his own problems. He was suspended from

classes for a drug offense and had to finish high school at an alternative school.

"I had a bad attitude," he said.

When their family church began planning a pastoral installation ceremony for its in-coming minister in 1999, the twins suddenly signed up to perform at the service.

Their parents, the Rev. Ray Charles and Shirley Porter, said they were surprised--and a bit nervous--that the teens wanted to participate.

"There were going to be a lot of important people there, and the twins like to play jokes," Porter said.

But the parents said they were amazed when the twins, then 19, came out on stage in mime makeup and performed a dramatic dance to an inspiring gospel song.

The congregation at the Bethlehem Pentecostal Holiness Church in Dallas rose to its feet, sang and cried during the performance.

The twins said they knew they had stumbled into their calling.

"We didn't know we could touch people like that without touching them with our fists," Mason said. "Sometimes you just fall into it."

"We fell into some paint," Jason added.

The twins have no formal training in mime but decided the white makeup would help emphasize their point.

"I want them to see the message, not my face, Mason said.

"God's in the forefront, and we're behind the paint," said Jason.

Their performances are a cross between a music video and an interpretive dance which isn't surprising because

they used to be backup dancers for a local rhythm-and-blues singer.

Their moves are heavily influenced by hip-hop and break dancing, but the brothers find inspiration in other unlikely places.

"We like the Looney Tunes," Mason said.

With the help of family members, they've taught other young people at their church to dance and mime. The group performs at funerals, family reunions, church services and other events several times each week.

Their pastor, the Rev. Daisy Shipman, said she loves the mimes, and she's been excited to watch them witness to others.

"But sometimes I think they're so booked up they

don't spend enough time in church," she said, laughing.

Comment

Entertainment cannot make people become true children of God.

A late minister said, "The notion having grown up that we must entertain men in order to win them to Christ, every invention for world pleasing which human ingenuity can devise has been brought forward till some churches have been turned into playhouses, and there is hardly a carnal amusement that can be named from billiards to dancing which does not find a nesting place in Christian sanctuaries."

EX-MUSLIM "APOSTATES" ORGANIZE IN EUROPE

(EXCERPTS)

An Iranian-born Dutch politician under fire from Muslims for his dissenting views on Islam on Tuesday officially launched an organization to support people who have renounced the religion. Ehsan Jami, a 22-year old Labor Party member elected to the council of a city near The Hague last year, announced at a press conference the establishment of an organization called Committee for Ex-Muslims.

Similar groups have begun in recent months in Britain, Germany and Scandinavian countries. According to leading Islamic schools of thought, apostasy is a crime, punishable by death in the case of a sane male who renounces his faith. Jami also is controversial for his strong public



comments on Islam, including the view expressed last June that Mohammed, the Islamic prophet, was a "criminal".

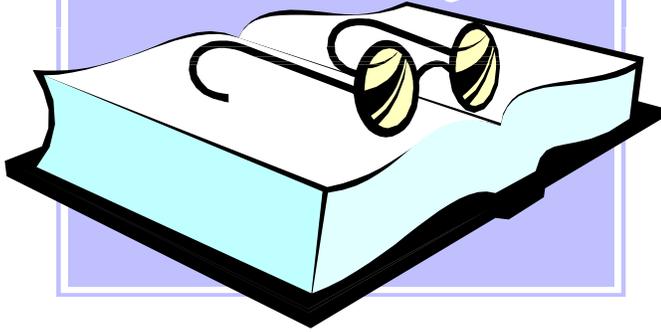
At a press conference, timed for the sixth anniversary of 9/11 and attended by leaders from the British and German organizations, Jami declared that Islam was not a religion of peace. "It's a religion of submission...of its followers, submission of Christians, Jews, Buddhists, atheists, infidels, the whole world," he was quoted as saying.

Last month, he was attacked by three men, in an incident believed to be linked to his views and the new organization. Although Jami was not hurt in what his spokesman said was the third such incident, Dutch law enforcement agencies decided to provide additional security for him.

The Berean Call

BIBLE

Study



QUESTION: Must we keep God's commandments in this dispensation although we are now under grace?

ANSWER: Let us quote two verses of Scripture for the benefit of those who believe that we are not obligated to keep the law of God today. "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).

Let us make it even plainer. The only way to keep from being under the law and to be under grace is to keep the commandments of God. Surely we can understand plain language and rightly divide the word of truth.

The grace of God is unmerited mercy. Hebrews 4:16 says: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). To understand better what law is referred to here, we turn to Romans 13:8-10. "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying,

Questions and Answers

namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Undoubtedly the law mentioned by part here is the Ten Commandments written by the finger of God and given in Exodus 20.

No, friend, you are not under the law as long as you obey it in every jot and tittle by faith, or do not violate any of its divine principles. You are under grace by keeping it. The Apostle Paul said, "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Romans 7:7). Paul also said: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Romans 7:12).

Referring now to Romans 6, we find the question: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (verse 1). The answer to this question is found in verses 2 and 3. "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin (repented and baptized), live any longer therein? Know ye not (don't you know this?), that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Let us also read Galatians 3:27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

Reading on in Romans 6, we find that it all confirms the definition of sin to be: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law (commandments of God): for sin is the transgression of the law."

Is the grace of God (unmerited mercy) for unrepentant sinners, or is it for the saints (righteous) who keep the

commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus? Please read what Paul says in Romans 6:14: "For sin (transgression of the law) shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." You are under grace when you obey the law of God by faith. Paul asked another question: "What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?" Again the answer is "God forbid" (see verse 15).

The Apostle Peter says of Paul's writings, "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (II Peter 3:15-16). Will you not take warning and examine yourself to see if you may not be "wrestling" the writings of our beloved Paul in this text (Romans 6:14) to your own destruction? Paul says, "Ye are not under the law but under grace." Are you wrestling this to mean that you do not need to keep (obey) the commandments of God in this age because you are under the dispensation of grace? If so, may God have mercy, and give you spiritual discernment from this time forward, seeing that He has thus granted you favor by putting this message into your hands.

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We also read, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Then the penalty of death hangs upon every soul. We are all bound over to the executioner to pay the penalty of death. There is but one recourse; there is one hope of release, and that is to have issued to us a decree of pardon from the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the One who has the power to set us free and release us from the penalty of death. Those who believe in the power of the blood of Jesus to forgive and grant pardon to them for their sins should come humbly beseeching that mercy may be extended and pardon granted. It is freely forgiven to the truly repentant sinners, and while this sets us free from the condemnation of death, it does not give us the liberty to break the law of God to sin again.

Let us no longer wrestle Paul's writings to our destruction. Let us no longer yield ourselves to law violation, but to obedience through faith. "Being then made

free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Romans 6:18). "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (verses 22-23).

Romans 7:1 shows conclusively that the law of God was not abolished. It says: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth?" Therefore, it is the same today. Verse 7 mentions one commandment of the ten, showing that it is the Ten Commandments to which Paul by inspiration here refers. Then the conclusion of the first part of this chapter is summed up in verse 12, as follows: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." In verse 22 he says, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man."

The Ten Commandments are also spoken of in James 2, and elsewhere in the Scriptures, as the law of liberty because the keeping of them guarantees liberty, while their violation forfeits liberty.

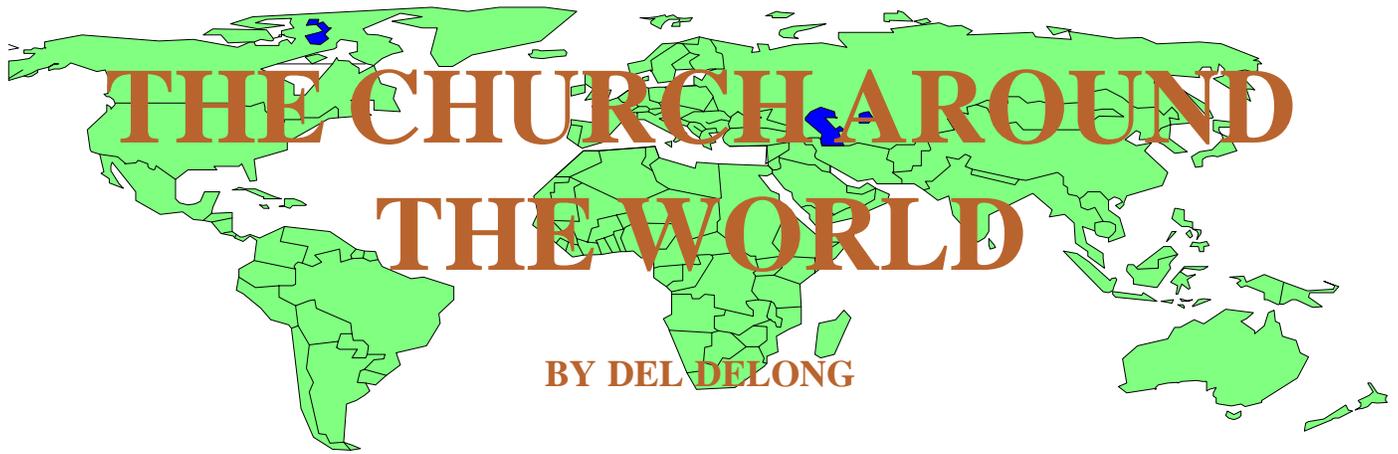
Jesus declares: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). The truth makes us free from sin and death. It is true that we must obey God's commandments in this dispensation.

The great cause for wrongly wrestling Paul's writings and claiming the Ten Commandments to be abolished is that the fourth one declares the seventh day to be the Sabbath of the Lord while the world observes the first day.

However, we praise the Lord that there are honest souls over the world who are walking in the light and are forgiven of all sin through Christ. These ones obey God's commandments to be worthy of eternal life!

QUESTION: What were the names of the two thieves who were crucified with Christ?

ANSWER: We do not know. The names, as preserved by legend and tradition, vary according to different writers, and there is no absolute authentic record on the subject. One early writer (in the Apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus) gives the name of Demas or Dimas as the penitent, who hung on the right hand of the Saviour, and Gestas as the impenitent.



THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

BY DEL DELONG

These photos were taken and sent by Brother Ricky Herrera (left), Brother Moises Torres (center), and Brother Manuel Gonzales on a recent missionary trip to Central America.





LESSON I**THE CAPTURE**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:47-56; Luke 22:45-53.

Golden Text: Matthew 26:50.

"And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him."

NOTE: In our last lesson we learned that Jesus and the disciples were in the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus asked His disciples to pray with Him, but instead they slept and left Jesus alone. Let us continue the story.

1. While Jesus was speaking, who came to the Garden, and who was with him? Matthew 26:47.
2. What sign was Judas to give to let the men know which was Jesus? Matthew 26:48-49.
3. What did Jesus say to Judas, and what happened to Jesus? Matthew 26:50; Luke 22:48.
4. What did one of the disciples do to the servant of the High Priest? Matthew 26:51. Read John 18:10 to find out which disciple did this.
5. What did Jesus say to Simon Peter when he cut the servant's ear off, and what did he do for that servant? Matthew 26:52-54; Luke 22:51.
6. What did Jesus say to the chief priests, captains and elders? Luke 22:52-53.
7. Did the disciples stay with Jesus throughout His capture? Matthew 26:56 (last part).

LESSON II**PETER'S DENIAL OF CHRIST**

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:66-72.

Golden Text: Mark 14:71.

"But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak."

NOTE: Jesus is taken before the High Priest and questioned. Peter had followed him from afar and goes into the palace to sit with the servants (Luke 22:54). We will now study of Peter's denial.

1. Where was Peter at this time, and who came up to him? Mark 14:66.
2. What statement did she make? Mark 14:67.
3. How did Peter deny this statement, and what happened next? Mark 14:68.
4. Who saw him again, and what did she say? Mark 14:69.
5. What did Peter do again, and what did those who stood by say to him? Mark 14:70.
6. In what uncouth manner did he deny this? Mark 14:71.
7. What happened the second time? Mark 14:72 (first part).
8. What did this make Peter remember, and what did he do? Mark 14:72 (last part).

LESSON III**JESUS OR BARABBAS**

Scripture Reading: Mark 15:6-15.

Golden Text: Mark 15:15.

"And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified."

NOTE: The chief priests bound Jesus and took him be-

fore Pilate. Pilate questions Jesus and finds no wrong with Him. Let us find out what happens as Pilate talks to the crowd.

1. At the feast of the Passover, what did Pilate do? Mark 15:6.
2. Whom did Pilate bring before the multitude? Mark 15:7.
3. Did this please the multitude? Mark 15:8.
4. How did Pilate answer the multitude, and why had they delivered Jesus unto him? Mark 15:9-10.
5. What did the chief priests do? Mark 15:11.
6. What question did Pilate ask them? Mark 15:12.
7. What did the multitude cry out again? Mark 15:13.
8. What did Pilate then say, and how did this effect the people? Mark 15:14.
9. What did Pilate finally do, and why? Mark 15:15.

LESSON IV

JESUS SUFFERS FOR US

Scripture Reading: John 19:1-15.

Golden Text: John 19:2.

"And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe."

NOTE: What does "crucify" mean? Answer: To put to death by nailing the hands and feet to a cross.

1. What cruel thing did Pilate do? John 19:1.
2. Did the Roman soldiers have any part in causing Jesus to suffer? John 19:2-3.

3. Could Pilate find any fault in Jesus even though the Jews cried out to crucify Him? John 19:4,6.
4. Why did Pilate go to the judgment hall to talk to Jesus? John 19:8-9.
5. What were his words to Jesus? John 19:10.
6. What did Jesus mean by His answer in John 19:11.
7. When Pilate tried to let Jesus go, what did the Jews do? John 19:12-15.
8. Who were the actual people that crucified Jesus? John 19:6,12,16. (It was the Jewish Temple guards).

A BIBLE TOWN

- The name of Jacob's youngest son. (Genesis 35:18)
- A stone that told what God had done. (I Samuel 7:12)
- A saint who showed great unbelief. (John 20:24)
- One who to God poured out her grief. (I Samuel 1:15)
- A man to save his life who fled. (Genesis 19:18-22)
- A queen who filled another's stead. (Esther 2:17)
- A king who had God's witness slain. (Matthew 14:3-11)
- And a man whose prayers stayed the rain. (I Kings 17:1)
- He lived the longest here below. (Genesis 5:25)
- The initials name a place you know.

Answer to Bible Town - Benjamin, Ebenezer, Thomas, Hannah, Lot, Esther, Herod, Elijah, Methuselah The place: Bethlehem.

A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

By Sherry James

Rosie stomped her foot and crossed her arms. "I'm mad," she said. Grandmother sat in her big, plump chair and pulled out her needlework. "Come," she said, "pick out a yarn for me."

Rosie's little hands dug in the yarn box until she found a thick, red piece that was coarse and hard.

Grandmother smiled, "Thank you, my child. Go clean your room."

The next day at breakfast Rosie found the toy in the cereal box. She squealed with delight; "I'm a winner!"

Grandmother sat in her plump chair. "Come," she said, "give me a piece of yarn." Rosie pulled out a dark blue, smooth string. "Thank you, my child. Now go do your homework."

The phone rang and Rosie answered it. She ran into the living room where Grandmother sat in her chair. "Come," she said, "select a yarn for me." Rosie pulled out a fat, black piece that felt prickly in her fingers. "Thank you, Rosie. Now go do your homework."

The phone rang and Rosie answered it. She ran into the living room where Grandmother sat in her plump chair. "I'm so excited," she said. "Daddy is coming home early." "Go to the garden and pick some flowers for your dad, but first hand me a piece of yarn." Rosie rolled the big pile around until she found a yarn with many colors like a rainbow.

After dinner, Grandmother listened to the laughter in the house. "Come to me, Rosie. Get me a yarn." Rosie chose a bright pink, satin piece that matched her dress.

The doorbell rang. It was the neighbor needing Daddy's help with his car. Rosie laid down on the couch. Little tears fell on the cushion. "I'm so lonely," she said. "Sit with me, my child," Grandmother said.

Rosie sat in her Grandmother's lap in the big, plump chair until the tears dried up. "Pull out another yarn and then go feed your puppy," Grandmother said. Rosie

picked a fuzzy gray yarn the same color as Grandmother's hair.

At bedtime Grandmother, Rosie and Daddy said prayers together thanking God for tomorrow was Rosie's birthday. They also prayed for each friend who would attend. "Do you think we'll have balloons?" Rosie asked. "Yes," Grandmother said. "What color yarn do you want for the balloons?" Rosie smiled. "Yellow. That's my favorite."

At the party Grandmother sat in her big chair and gave Rosie a present; a plump pillow. Colorful pieces of yarn were stitched together to make a picture of trees and a road. "Do you remember this red yarn?" she asked. "Yes," said Rosie, "that's the day I was mad, but now it looks beautiful."

Grandmother pointed to the blue and black yarn. "Do you remember these?" Rosie nodded.

Daddy ran his finger over the rainbow and pink yarn. "This was a good day," Rosie giggled.

Rosie stroked the gray piece. "I love this one, Grandmother."

Grandmother's eyes twinkled as she touched the yellow yarn. "And I love this one."

The kids peeked over the plump chair to see the pretty pillow. "What's it for?" They asked.

Rosie hugged the pillow. "To remind me that every day whether it's good or bad, I have a beautiful life."

MY DAD

When I see my father smile,
I'm happy as can be
To know he is a gift from God
Sent down to earth for me.
When I see his big, strong hands
So rough from honest toil,
I know my heart to him will be
Always true and loyal.
When I hear his tender voice
With words so wise and kind,
In my heart I give deep thanks
To God, that Dad is mine!

**USING THE KEY BELOW,
SEE IF YOU CAN DECODE THESE VERSES.**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
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1. " _____
b w k f k z c z g f w m q q o m q q d l k j

e w z j m r z k y e w z q k g p f w m q q

n z f m c z p " (Romans 10:13)

2. " _____
v m r e w z c v j z i z m g z e w z

n g m j o w z f w z e w m e m n v p z e w

v j r z m j p v v j w v r e w z

f m r z n g v j x z e w y k g e w r d o w

y g d v e " (John 15:5)

3. " _____
e w z j f w m q e e w k d o m q q m j p

e w z q k g p f w m q q m j f b z g e w k d

f w m q e o g i m j p w z f w m q q f m i

w z g z v m r " (Isaiah 58:9)

Your Father

What sort of a son or daughter are you to your father? Do you appreciate and encourage him? God gave you two parents that through what each contributes you may grow up prepared to enter the real world of men and women. The part your father plays in the building of your life is far more than that of earning money to support the family. His interest in your welfare, his love for you, is more than you will ever know until you yourself become a parent.

From the beginning of your life, your father took delight in you. All through the years he has been a partner with your mother in caring for you both physically and mentally. The two of them work together and counsel together. Your father's point of view supplements and complements that of your mother. The pooled judgment of the two brings you more good than either alone could provide. You need your father's strength, firmness, knowledge, and manliness, just as you need your mother's gentleness, tenderness, insight, and womanliness. God gave you two parents because you need both of them.

"Children are an heritage of the Lord" (Psalm 127:3).

Children bring many cares to a parent, but they are also the source of great happiness. A man experiences deep joy when a son or a daughter is born to him. Gladly your father assumed the burdens that became his with your entrance into the world.

Willingly he works that you may have the necessities and, as much as possible, the things that make life happy. Lovingly he watches over you as you develop. Always he is concerned about you; always he is thinking upon you for good.

"A wise son maketh a glad father" (Proverbs 15:20).

