

A photograph of a large tree with vibrant red and orange autumn foliage. The tree is the central focus, with its branches spreading out and filled with leaves in various shades of red, orange, and yellow. The background consists of other trees with green foliage, suggesting a forest or park setting. The sky is visible at the top, appearing overcast. The text "The Advocate of Truth" is overlaid on the image in a blue, italicized serif font.

The Advocate of Truth

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Principles and Reasons

Imperatives For Salvation

By Moises Torres M.

NOTE: The Old Testament introduces the indicative method of God for man. In the New Testament lesson it is displayed the imperative of the indicative through the Lord Jesus Christ.

The New Testament introduces the imperative as a new commandment in Christ which is the same indicative expression in the Old Testament.

“Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” (I John 2:7-8).

Let us look at some of these imperatives for salvation.

LOVE:

In Leviticus 19:18, is written, “...but thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.” Then the Lord Jesus makes this a new commandment and an imperative for salvation: “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:34-35).

The Son of God taught us what real love is and how to love one another **“as I have loved you”**. So it is imperative for us to love our brothers as He did, otherwise we cannot be His disciples. “...He that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (I John 3:14).

PEACE AND HOLINESS:

It is imperative to have peace and holiness in our hearts if we want to see the Lord Jesus at His return for His saints. “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

“Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless” (II Peter 3:14).

FORGIVENESS:

It is essential for us to forgive in a way that we are forgiven.

“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses” (Matthew 6:14-15).

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21-22).

NOTE: “Seventy times seven” is an infinite multiple which means that there is not limitation for forgiveness. It is as the famous Albert Einstein formula, $E=mc^2$, which expounds an infinite multiple on energy which is equal to mass multiplied by the speed of light squared. The speed of light is 300,000 kilometers per second, and the speed of light squared would be $300,000 \times 300,000$. Can you imagine the effectiveness of this formula? So it is the Lord’s formula about forgiveness, 70 times 7.

ENDURANCE AND FAITHFULNESS:

“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matthew 24:13). “...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

It is imperative to finish our course as Paul did to receive the crown of righteousness and not give up for any reason. “And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” (Luke 9:62).

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing” (II Timothy 4:7-8).

FAITH:

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). It is imperative to be completely convinced in the existence of a God who created everything that exists, including ourselves. “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring” (Acts 17:28).

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES:

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” (John 5:39). In searching the Scriptures--the Bible--we get knowledge from God and from His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and we get also words of eternal life. “Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

BELIEVE AND BE BAPTIZED:

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Baptism **in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ** is an imperative for salvation.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38).

“And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, **Believe** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (Acts 16:30-31).

KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS:

NOTE: It is imperative to keep the commandments of God to enter into life. All those who break the eternal Law of God (Ten Commandments) will not inherit life, but death.

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”

(Revelation 14:12).

“And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, **what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?** And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother” (Mark 10:17-19).

“And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, **keep the commandments**” (Matthew 19:17).

“If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

“For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:20). The scribes and Pharisee's righteousness was based on the law, the Levitical law, and the Lord called them hypocrites! Ours must be based on the Spirit of Christ our Lord and Saviour.

“Lord, I am Waiting for You”

Although my eyes can't see You, my heart trembles
When I feel Your presence in the middle of my prayer.

I smell Your essence as You touch my broken heart.
Lord, You are Holy.

You are beautiful beyond my imagination.
I can feel Your presence.

I am invaded with Your mercy and love.
I am down on my knees imploring You to give me strength
In the middle of the storm.

Please come and embrace my soul.
With no doubt, You are worthy of pure adoration.

My heart rejoices in the promise of salvation.
Jesus, I am waiting for You, ready to meet You soon.

As I walk in the valley of trials and tribulation, I will
Not fear or doubt that You
Will come to my rescue.

I am waiting, Lord...I am waiting for You!

Sister Rebeca Calzada Chavez
--Houston, Texas Church

Christmas Finds Roots In Paganism

by Lisa Monaci

Note: The following article about Christmas appeared in *The University News*, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho in December, 1984

The celebration of Christmas as we know it is a relatively new holiday. The early Christians did not have a day to honor the birth of their Lord until the fourth century.

December 25 was decided on after much argument between the Roman and Orthodox churches. After this date was agreed upon, it wasn't until 500 years later that the word "Christmas" replaced "Midwinterfeast," because ancient winter celebrations took place before Christmas.

The ancient Roman festival of Saturnalia was held from November through February. This festival celebrated the time when Saturn ruled the world. The festival of Saturn was filled with feasting and debauchery. During this festival, the masters and the slaves traded places and even clothing for a brief time.

The Norse held a great Yule-feast in honor of their god. The Yule feast consisted of many elements that are still familiar to the Christmas scene: Yule logs, mistletoe, lighted trees, Kris Kringle and feasting. The Yule log was burned in honor of the Norse solar god, Frey. The Yule log was a phallic symbol and a sign of fertility for the coming year. Mistletoe was also a fertility symbol. Kissing under the mistletoe signified a casual sign of sex and fertility. Lighted trees and trees in general were places of sacred ritual to the pagans. Pine groves were temples to the Great Mother.

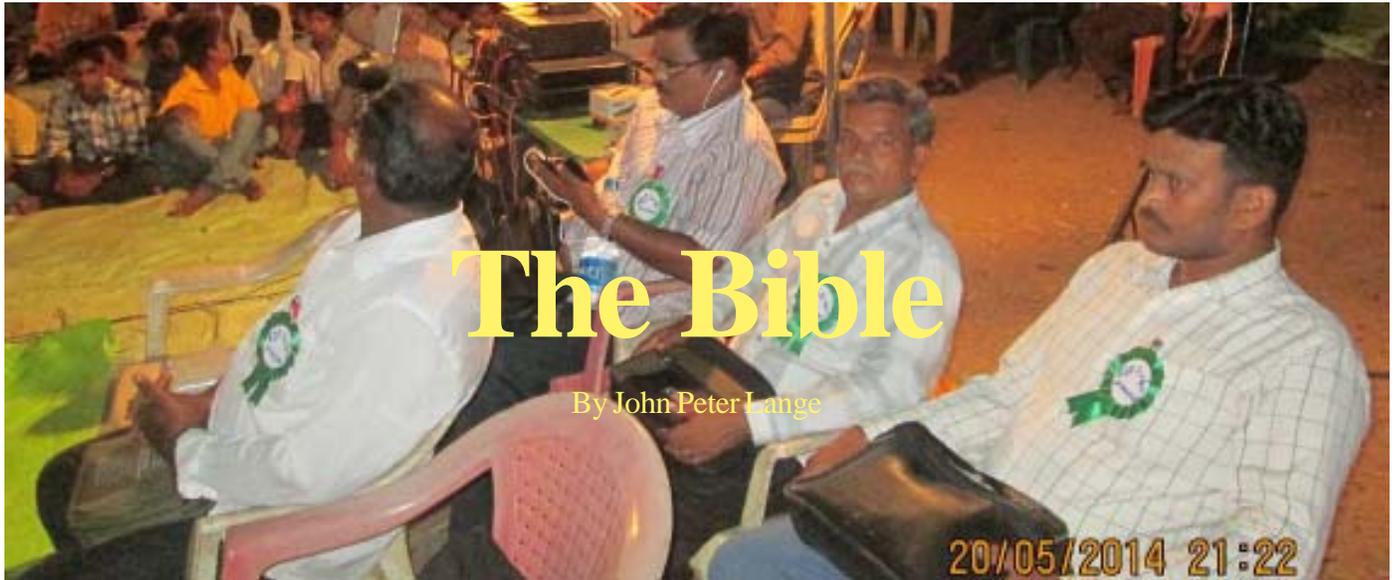
It was the Mother goddess that rested in the winter and the Horned god of light was honored. Since the winter festivals worshiped the vanishing sun, lights in the form of

fires or candles were commonplace. Candles were placed on the trees outdoors to honor the god of light.

Kris Kringle was called the father of the wheel of the year by the Norse. This name was later one of the many names given to the Dutch Santa Claus. Whether pagan or Christian, the male figure played an active role in the Mid-winter feast celebration. Santa Claus was famous in the U.S. because of the Dutch and German settlers. This idea caught on in the mid-1800s in Britain. In many other countries like Spain, it is the three kings that brought gifts to children, imitating the three kings that brought gifts to the Christ child. In Italy, it is a female fairy named Befana that brings gifts to the children.

Another old custom from the ancient Mid-winter feast is Twelfth Night. Although it is seldom celebrated, Twelfth Night is what ends the Christmas season on January 5. It was believed that there was a parallel between the twelve months and the twelve days of the season. It was bad luck not to take Christmas decorations down on the Twelfth Night. Twelfth Night used to be celebrated with festivities and special Twelfth Night cakes. A reminder of this celebration can be seen in the Christmas song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

Christmas remained a popular celebration in Europe despite its pagan elements. Christmas did come under attack by the Puritans in the 1600's. Because of the strong Puritan influence in the U.S. it was not until 1836 that Christmas became a legal holiday.



NOTE: This short article on the Bible appeared in the March 23, 1959 issue of *The Advocate of Truth*. It is the preface of the new “Commentary on the Holy Scriptures.” It contains magnificent comments concerning the Bible as a whole. We hope you enjoy reading it.

The Bible is the Book of Life, written for the instruction and edification of all ages and nations. No man, who has felt its Divine beauty and power, would exchange this one volume for all the literature of the world. Eternity alone can unfold the extent of its influence for good. The Bible, like the person and work of our Saviour, is theanthropic in its character and aim. The eternal, personal Word of God “was made flesh,” and the whole fullness of God and of sinless manhood were united in Jesus through the Words of His Father. So the spoken Word of God may be said to have become flesh in the Bible. It is therefore all Divine, and yet all human, from the beginning to end.

Viewed merely as a human or literary production, the Bible is still considered a marvelous Book, but it actually is the Words of God and without rival. “For men wrote these words as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

All the libraries of the theology, philosophy, history, antiquities, poetry, law and policy would not furnish material enough for so rich a treasure of the choicest gems of human genius, wisdom and experience. It embraces works of about forty authors, representing the extremes of society, from the throne of the king to the boat of the fisherman; it was written during a long period of sixteen centuries, on the banks of the River Nile, in the desert of

Arabia, in the land of promise, in Asia Minor, in classical Greece and in imperial Rome; it commences with the creation and ends with the final glorification, after describing all the intervening stages in the revelation of God and the spiritual development of man; it uses all forms of literary composition; it rises to the highest heights and descends to the lowest depths of humanity; it measures all states and conditions of life; it is acquainted with every grief and every woe; it touches every chord of sympathy; it contains the spiritual biography of every human heart; it is suited to every class of society and can be read with the same interest and profit by the king and the beggar; by the philosopher and the child; it is as universal as the race, and reaches beyond the limits of time into the boundless regions of eternity.

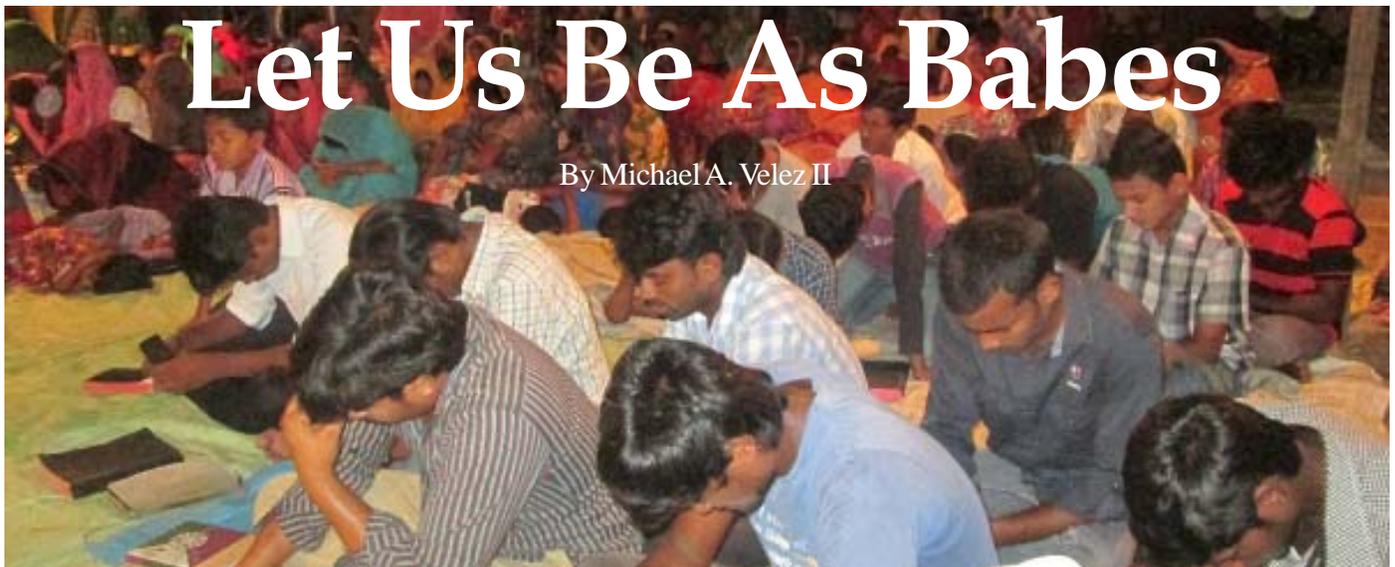
But the Bible is first and last a book of religion. It presents the only true, universal and absolute religion of God, both in its preparatory process or growth under the dispensation of the Levitical priesthood and the promise, and in its completion under the dispensation of the Melchizedec priesthood, and the gospel of grace, a religion which is intended ultimately to absorb all evil. It speaks to us as God’s children on the highest, noblest and most important themes which can challenge our attention, and with an authority that is absolutely irresistible and overwhelming. It can instruct, edify, warn, terrify, appease, cheer and encourage as no other book. It seizes man in the hidden depths of his intellectual and moral constitution, and goes to the quick of the soul, to that mysterious point where it is connected with God’s realm and eternity. It

acts like an all-penetrating and all transforming leaven upon every faculty of the mind and every notion of the heart. It enriches the memory, it elevates the reason, it enlivens the imagination; it directs the judgment; it moves the affections; it controls the passions; it quickens the conscious; it strengthens the will; it kindles the sacred flame of faith, hope and charity; it purifies, enables, sanctifies the whole man and brings him into living union with God through the Holy Spirit.

It can not only enlighten, reform and improve, but regenerate and create anew, and produce effects which lie far beyond the power of human genius. It has light for the blind, strength for the weak, food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty; it has a council in precept or example for every relation on life, a comfort for every sorrow, a balm for every womb. Of all the books in the world, the Bible

is the only one of which we never tire, but which we admire and love more and more in proportion as we use it. Like the diamond, it casts its luster in every direction; like a torch, the more it is shaken, the more it shines; like a healing herb, the harder it is pressed, the sweeter is its fragrance.

What an unspeakable blessing, that this inexhaustible treasure of divine truth and comfort is now accessible without material alteration to almost every nation on the earth in its own tongue, and in Protestant countries at least even to the humblest man and woman that can read. Nevertheless, we welcome every new attempt to open the meaning of this Book of books, which is plain enough for the profoundest philosopher and the most comprehensive scholar.



“And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:13-16). We see in the parallel verses found in Matthew 18 and 19, Mark 9 and Luke 9 that Jesus overhears the disciples talking and arguing about who will be greatest in the kingdom, and Jesus likens the child to being as the

Kingdom of God. But what does it mean “for of such is the kingdom of God?” We see what prompted Jesus to bring this little child forward, put him in the midst of them and call the attention of the disciples is the issue of who is to be the greatest in kingdom among themselves. So the main issue here is being humble, but I believe there is a greater meaning here besides just being humble. Remember Jesus said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of GOD.”

The word child or children is used in the Bible 1708 times, 1502 in the Old Testament and 206 in the New Testament. So I would have to come to the conclusion

that being childlike is of some importance to God. Remember, we are called to be sons and daughters of GOD and children of light. Children are great gifts from GOD as well as great teachers. While we as adults may always seem to know everything and assume we are here to teach the little ones, I believe GOD gave us children to teach us just as much as we teach them. You see, parenthood is as much teaching as it is learning. Those of us who have been blessed to have children also know it can really teach us how patient we really are.

So what qualities do children have that we as adults should be learning to develop within ourselves? First is the notion of belief. A child's belief is way stronger than an adult's, and I will tell you why. We all profess to believe in GOD and we should. There is a warning in James 2:19 which says, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." GOD wants us to do more than believe in Him. He wants us to spend the time to get to know Him. So why do I say a child's belief is stronger than an adult's? Belief doesn't have the weight we hold it to be. GOD wants us to display childlike faith like the sick servant of the centurion and how he tells Jesus, "I'm not worthy for you to come to my house, but just say the word and my servant will be healed." Jesus marveled at his faith.

Children don't need much reassurance that what is promised will come to fruition. They just need our words. They know when their mom or dad says something, it will be done just as we should also be with our Father in Heaven. We should know that if we ask, seek and knock it will be provided to us, but sometimes asking is the hardest thing for an adult due to the fear of rejection. A child, on the other hand, will be persistent and ask, seek and knock as long as he needs. We should never be afraid to petition our Father for the things which we need. Children have no fear in asking, and they have no worry of what others may think of them if they ask this or wear that or act this way or that way. All that matters to them is the image their parents have of them. Little children are such great helpers and servants just like Jesus, and just like Jesus children thrive when they do the will of their father. Jesus and little children show us the true meaning of the fifth commandment. Nothing pleases a father more than when a child is obedient just like it pleases our heavenly Father when we do His will and keep His commandments. Jesus states in Matthew 12:50, "For

whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." What a wonderful thing to be called family to our Lord and Savior.

Little children have many of the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. They love, they are joyful, they have peace, they are gentle, they have faith, and they have meekness. The special thing about a child's love is it's untainted. A little child genuinely loves those he professes to love, and he is not afraid to show it with his actions. In I John 3:18, we are told to love in deed and truth, not in word or tongue. There is no fake show put on or alternative motive to a little child's love. They show it by cheerfully giving presents of flowers they picked which are usually dandelions or drawings they draw which we can't make out, but these are done with all their heart, soul and might as we are called to do. They proclaim this love to those around them. They profess it from the rooftops as we're supposed to do with the gospel of GOD'S love. They get sad when their parents are sad but still find a way to edify their parents and uplift their spirits. There is no fear because their love covers it, and because they have no fear due to that love they also forgive as GOD calls us to, although that forgiveness usually comes with a small rebuke to humble us again. We read of this in Luke 17:3-4 where Jesus says if our brother trespasses against us, we are to rebuke him, and if he repents forgive him, no matter how many times he may offend us. While we as adults are quick to rebuke our children for things they may do wrong, it often baffles me how wise they can be when we do the same thing we told them not to do. They are quick and bold to remind us it is wrong (such a humbling thought) and most parents will say do as I say, not as I do. I encourage everyone to take that moment to thank the child and tell him you were wrong and ask for forgiveness. This humble moment will further one's walk with GOD. Children don't hold grudges like adults tend to do. Once it's past, it's past!

Little children are the embodiment of what Jesus tells us to do in Luke 6:27-36. They do not hate, they do not retaliate when they are hit, they do good to those who hate them, they freely give when you ask and expect nothing back. They are merciful and thankful for what they get. As stated in Romans 12:17 they do not repay evil with evil.

I believe children are more discerning than we think

them to be, and that we do a great disservice to them when we try to force them to be friendly to strangers. If we took a step back, they are just discerning things we cannot see. They don't judge appearances, but rather on what people do to, and around, them.

Little children pour out their hearts when they give praise and worship, as Jesus said in Matthew 21:16, "... Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" They put their all into it while we as adults sometimes let our emotions get in the way of truly worshipping GOD as He deserves to be.

There are a few warnings about being childlike in mind. We see in I Corinthians 14:20 that Paul tells them to be not children in understanding, but in malice be children. In Hebrews 5, we read that those who use milk of the word are unskillful and that we should want to go beyond milk to the strong meat of the Word. I believe that we should first start with a strong desire as babes do for the milk of the Word, and continue in His grace to learn all that we can about GOD, especially the meat and harder things. While growing in our understanding, we should conduct ourselves as little children: happy, joyful, merciful, tender, giving, loving, peaceful, without malice and only care what our heavenly Father thinks of us.

In closing, turn with me to Luke 10:21. "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let us be as babes, not holding ourselves superior to others so GOD can reveal the things He has hidden to the wise and prudent and to the seminary learned. I challenge each and every one of you, myself included, to see where we can be more childlike. Remember, all a father can really ask is for his child's love and time. Everything else to him is just stuff. Let us make sure that we are giving GOD our hearts and our time.



LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE GRAVE

By Betty Whetstone

Two sisters were sad, their brother was dead,
The head of the family had died;
"I'll send for the Lord," Martha said with a prayer,
As Mary just bowed down and cried.
The word came to Jesus that Lazarus was dead,
But it looked like He just didn't care;
The disciples then whispered in stunned disbelief,
"Oh Lord, if you'd only been there!"
But He stayed for two days, right there in that place,
Then quietly went on his way;
Healing the crowd, and preaching the Word,
And teaching them all how to pray.
When the time was just right, to Bethany, He went,
His disciples along with Him, too;
They all had their doubts, but decided to go,
And witness just what He would do.
"Oh Lord, you have come" Martha cried with great pain,
"If only you'd had time to heed,
Our Brother would be here, protecting us now,
Supplying our wants and our needs!"
Mary echoed these words as later she came
To the place Jesus had stopped to pray;
"Lazarus would not have died, and left us alone,
And we would not be grieving today."
His heart was breaking at the sight of the pain,
And He wept as he told them, "Don't doubt";
"Arise", Jesus said, and in stunned disbelief,
Alive, Lazarus came walking out!
Their brother restored, and the sisters rejoiced,
And made a great feast on that day;
The disciples had witnessed an impossible thing,
Learning what to expect when they'd pray.

--John, Chapter 11.



Sanctification

By David DeLong

To be sanctified means to be set apart for a holy use by the Lord. It is the will of God that each one of His children be sanctified and that they live a life of sanctification. I Thessalonians 4:3-4 informs us: "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour". Only a disciple who is truly sanctified can be of use to his Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. We read in II Timothy 2:20-21: "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

Sanctified People, Sanctified Church

God's people (and thus His Church) are sanctified through the death of His Son, Jesus Christ. We learn from Hebrew 10:10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Because of this offering we are then joined to God's family. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren" (Hebrews 2:11). Furthermore, we find in I Corinthians 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption". The Apostle Paul reminded some of the brethren in Corinth just how far they had come in Christ, from having been sinners to being sanctified. "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the

name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Corinthians 6:11).

We learn from this last verse that not only was the offering of Christ essential to our sanctification, but that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is also a part of that process. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13).

"Belief of the truth" also is a part of the sanctification process. Jesus, in His intercessory prayer, made this plain statement: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth" (John 17:17-19). I Peter 1:1-2 sums up these means of sanctification beautifully: "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

Faith, of course, is a must for our sanctification. When Paul testified to King Agrippa about the mission he had of the Lord, he spoke these words of the Lord: "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inher-

itance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." (Acts 26:18).

In writing about the relationship that men should have with their wives, and comparing that relationship to Christ and His Church, Paul penned: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Sanctified Day

The Lord has given His people a number of helps to assist them in their walk of sanctification. One of these helps is a sanctified day--the Sabbath--to observe and enjoy. When the Sabbath was made, God set it apart for the holy purpose of giving mankind a specific time for rest and spiritual reflection. Genesis 2:1-3 tells us: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."

By drawing our minds to the Lord, and giving us a physical and spiritual rest, the Sabbath helps us become more sanctified in our daily lives. Jesus confirmed that the Sabbath was for the benefit of all mankind when He testified: "...The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:27-28). Furthermore, the Lord said that keeping the Sabbath is a sign that He is sanctifying His people. We read in Exodus 31:13-17: "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you:...Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD:...Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." As the Lord sanctified the

children of Israel, He sanctifies His people today as they walk in obedience to the truth, including Sabbath observance.

Sanctified Food

One should think that there is a sanctified food for a sanctified people. Is there? Absolutely! We learn of this food in Leviticus, chapter 11. After listing the clean from the unclean in verses 1-43, the Lord declares: "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy. This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that moveth in the waters, and of every creature that creepeth upon the earth: To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten." (verses 44-47).

In I Timothy 4:1-5 we have recorded in the Scriptures a situation "in the latter times" when some will be listening to "doctrines of demons". Included in these doctrines are: "Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer" (verses 3-5). God created these meats to be eaten. Therefore, they are of the clean variety because He never created unclean meats to be eaten. Possibly these clean meats had been offered to idols and, therefore, some brethren thought they were ceremonially defiled. In any event the meats are "sanctified by the word of God and prayer." The Lord only gives His people sanctified food.

Sanctification in operation

It may take only a very short time for a person to become justified in the eyes of the Lord through repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and the reception of the Holy Spirit. However, it takes a lifetime, and much cooperation with the Lord, to live in a sanctified position. We must always be on guard against the temptations of the devil. He will take every measure to try to bring a saint into an unsanctified state. Acts 20:31-32 warns us:

"Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."

So, we see that sanctification is an absolute necessity for us to receive an inheritance in the kingdom of God. He sanctifies us, through His Spirit, as we cooperate with Him in obeying His Commandments. Justification must lead to sanctification, which in turn will lead to our glorification when the Lord comes again for His people. However, let us not fall into the trap of doing our own works instead of the Lord's works, thinking that we are in the process of being sanctified. Isaiah 66 records such a depraved situation. "For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many. They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the LORD" (verses 15-17).

Jesus denounced the scribes and Pharisees for having a false sense of what sanctification means. They believed that their own works and ways were good enough for being holy in God's sight. Matthew 23:16-22 gives us one scenario. Here we find Jesus rebuking them: "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift? Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon."

The Patriarch Job attempted to sanctify his children after they had engaged in feasting, with alcohol, as we discern in Job 1:4-5. "And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them. And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually." (See also verse 13).

This was a noble gesture on Job's part. In one sense a person can sanctify another person for a specific purpose. For instance, we learn in I Corinthians 7:14: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." This specific purpose of sanctification, we see, is for the children in a divided family. These children are probably not of the age of individual accountability before the Lord. However, when it comes to salvation, every person of accountability age is responsible for being sanctified on a personal basis. We cannot hide behind another person's sanctification to be right with the Lord.

What, then, is the age of accountability? If you hear the Lord speaking to your heart to be saved and sanctified, then you are of the age of accountability. Paul wrote: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (II Corinthians 6:1-2).

The pattern of our sanctification is the Lord. Because He is holy, we must be holy, too. Such a witness will be given by our lives to others that some will be drawn to the Lord and become His people. Not only does the Lord set His people apart for a holy purpose by sanctification, but God's people must sanctify (regard as holy) the Lord to themselves. Isaiah 8:13 reminds us: "Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread."

The Christian's Walk

Solomon, of whom God Himself said, "...lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee", wrote, "The wise in heart will receive commandments..." (I Kings 3:12; Proverbs 10:8). Were the Apostle John here today he would still say, "...his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). The Psalmist records: "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold" (Psalm 119:127). Job wrote, "...I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12). Jesus Himself said: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).

To follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth invariably means to follow in the path of suffering. The Apostle Paul plainly tells us in II Timothy 3:12: "...all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Apostle Peter penned: "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21).

Moses chose rather to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Abraham dwelt in tabernacles and looked for a city whose builder and maker is God. Our Savior Jesus Christ had nowhere to lay His head while on earth, paying the price of our guilt, although in Him was the fullness of the Godhead bodily and the Father had given all power to Him. The Apostle Paul knew what it meant to suffer. But he had one aim in view and that was to please Him who had called him to be a soldier.

Many believers halt here instead of pressing forward. They forget that the Lord Jesus Christ was perfected through suffering, and that His followers by no means can escape it if they desire to follow in His footsteps.

The route of a Christian is a lowly route, but not a lonely one. He has the King of all ages to walk by his side, a Comforter to dwell within, and a Father above who daily loads him with benefits. Always remember that God's people are the temple of the Holy Spirit. When the Lord Jesus comes in glory He will find those who have walked humbly before Him and have kept their garments unspotted from the world.

Strive To Serve Him In Spirit And Truth

**The Lord is our Creator,
In whom we should allow to be our
unbiased dictator
To lead us through this life,
With no envy, malice or strife.**

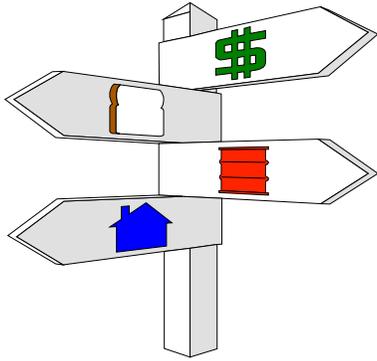
**Pretense is a sly way of hiding who you
are,
It is as though the real and fake, you are
at war.**

**The Christian should not portray such a
behavior,
But rather follow the footsteps of our
Lord and Savior.**

**Humility should be the key
To those who believe in life eternal.
Facilitated by Jesus Christ
Who paid a heavy price.**

**We should seek to be a prisoner of hope,
Bound by ropes
Of God's infallible Word,
That will grant us an everlasting reward.**

By: Sister Isis Richards



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.

I was looking through some old newspaper articles when I saw an article that appeared in an old issue of *The Telegram and The Exponent* which was published in Clarksburg, West Virginia. It is entitled **THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS GREETINGS IN AMERICA**. The following is the article:

“Would you believe that about four billion Christmas cards are sent every Christmas? No wonder the post office hires extra help each year! It does sound like an insurmountable job! But what a lively way to wish friends and family well and to renew old friendships. But do you know that exchanging Christmas cards is a comparatively recent custom?”

Although there are several claims as to who originated the sending of Christmas cards, there is evidence this ... custom began in England in the early 1800's. It is generally acknowledged that Louis Prang, a native German who settled in Boston, introduced them in about 1875.

His early cards, produced by a process of color lithography, were models of expert craftsmanship. They featured flower design such as daisies and roses, and were quite unlike Christmas cards of today. By 1881, Prang was turning out about 5 million cards a year, and as time went by he offered more typical Christmas scenes including the visit of Santa Claus, Madonna and Child, and blazing fires. In 1880 and 1881, Prang sponsored an open competition for Christmas card designs, offering prizes that came to about \$3,000. More than 600 entries were received and were exhibited in galleries. Noted personalities of that time acted as judge. The superior quality and workmanship of the Prang cards added to their popularity. However, with an increasing demand for cards, inferior inartistic, cheaper cards came flooding in from Europe, and Prang found it hard to compete. He stopped producing his beautiful cards, but they are still

highly valued and sought after by collectors.

Now we have cards available to fit our every mood, and one would be hard pressed to imagine the number of artists and verse writers who make up the creative forces of this vast industry. Sending and receiving Christmas cards is one of the delights of the holiday.

There is no doubt that this heartwarming custom will continue and so say “thanks” to Mr. Prang, wherever he may be, for adding great spirit to Christmas in America.

Comment

Just as Christmas became a legal holiday in the 1800's in America, the Christmas card was introduced in America about 1875. Some people may think that they are wishing friends and family well by sending Christmas cards. Little do they know of the origin of Christmas. The spirit of Christmas is Babylonian, and adding to it only adds to the abomination.

The Deteriorating Family

I read an article that said the family, which is made up of one man and one woman as God planned, continues to deteriorate.

The following is a news item of interest taken from the February 13, 1981 issue of **The Advocate of Truth** entitled *Deterioration of Family Unit Increases Crime*. It was written by Patrolman Ronald Williams who was a crime prevention officer with the Clarksburg, West Virginia Police Department during that time. It is even more true today! We quote the article.

“The deterioration of the family unit, as we know it, is one, if not the main, cause of crime in society today. Families used to live together, work together and play together. In our modern society, we have drifted apart. We no longer do things together. We have electronic gadgets to entertain us. We go our separate ways for social events and get together.

People used to get married with the intention of staying together for life. They worked out marital problems and did not have to get a divorce. Husbands and wives needed each other to make it. Today, most wives work and can support themselves if need be. People do not have to get married, they can live together, and when they tire of each other, find someone else to live with. Children run the street without parental supervision and no one cares. There is no permanency to marriage – no family unit as there used to be.

When problems arise, a lot of couples do not sit down and talk about them. They start fighting each other. Physical abuse is used too often, while reason is not used enough.

We are receiving more and more calls dealing with domestic violence. This is the call police officers fear most. One out of five police officers are killed answering this type call. Some police departments do not answer this type of call, but advise the person to get a warrant. When you answer this type of call, you cannot go in with your gun drawn and ready for action as you can when you get an armed robbery call. Many times the wife will call the police and then, when they arrive, turn on the officers.”

Messy World?

I heard on CNN that President Obama made a comment that the world is a messy place, and mass media makes it worse. He is correct that the world is a messy place. Mass media only makes this known. It does not make it worse. The world became messy when man rejected God’s Commandments and first served Satan. Sin is what makes the world messy, and it will become more messy as the years pass because Satan knows that he has but a short time (Revelation 12:12).

No Respect For Human Life

We may remember that a few months ago a passenger airplane was shot down in Eastern Ukraine by pro-Russian rebels. All two hundred plus passengers were killed. It was difficult to get to the crash site to tend the bodies because of the fighting between the factions. The bodies lie in the field. However, they were able after several days to retrieve the remains of a few bodies. To my knowledge, it was never announced if all of the bodies were recovered and sent home to their families.

It Takes Cooperation

Several months ago, President Obama received flack

for not having a plan on how to deal with ISIS. It seemed like very few of the nations were too interested in agreeing to a plan in cooperation with the United States. One news columnist wrote that President Obama’s legacy could rest on the Islamic State. Is it up to the United States to go it alone? ISIS is not only a threat to the United States, but also to Europe and the United Kingdom. So everyone needs to work together!

Not Sure About Economy

Consider the following article taken from the **Houston Chronicle** entitled *Fed officials divided on rate of economy recovery*. “WASHINGTON – Federal Reserve officials are increasingly divided about how much better the economy recovery is likely to get. Officials are more confident that the economy is gaining strength after years of false starts, according to an account of the most recent meeting of the Fed’s policymaking committee, published Wednesday. The Fed’s chairwoman, Janet Yellen, and her allies maintained the central bank’s stimulus campaign at the July meeting, arguing that the Fed can now help millions of unemployed Americans find new jobs.

An increasingly vocal group of dissenters, however, saw evidence that the Fed has nearly exhausted its ability to repair damage caused by the recession. They argued that the Fed must retreat quickly to maintain control of inflation.

The debate will receive a public airing Friday and Saturday when central bankers, including Fed officials, and academic economists convene on Jackson Hole, Wyo., for an annual conference held by the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City. This year’s theme is labor markets.

Labor markets have improved more quickly than the Fed expected at the beginning of the year, according to the minutes of the July meeting.

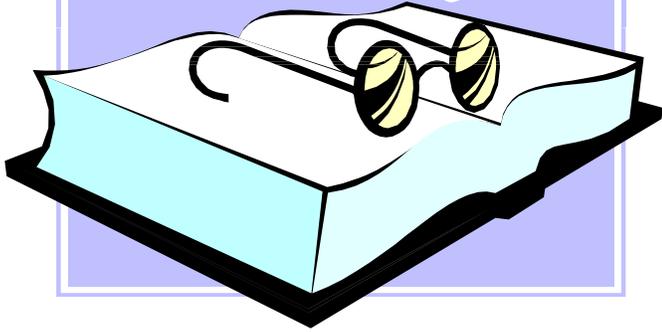
The unemployment rate, in particular, stood at 6.2 percent in July. But while officials agree that the finish line for the Fed’s extraordinary stimulus campaign is drawing closer, they do not agree on where it is.”

Comment

The economy has not fully recovered from the Great Recession! Perhaps the economy will never be at the strength which it was before. It is most difficult for those who had better things before to later settle for less. It is said that this is the first time that the children will not be able to live on a higher standard than their parents.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Why should mothers speak gently to their children?

ANSWER: Children catch cross tones quicker than parents. When an impatient mother sets the example, you will scarcely hear a pleasant word among the children in their play with one another. The discipline of such a family expect about so much scolding before they do anything they are bidden, while in many a home, where the low, firm tone of the mother or the decided look of her steady eye is law, they never think of disobedience, either in or out of sight.

O mother, it is worth a great deal to cultivate that excellent thing in woman--a low, sweet voice. If you are ever so tired by the mischievous or willful pranks of the little ones, speak low. It will be a great help to you to try to be patient and cheerful. Even if you succeed, anger only makes you all wretched.

Impatient, angry tones never did the heart good, but plenty of evil. Remember what Solomon says of them, and remember that he wrote with an inspired pen. You cannot have the excuse for them that they lighten your burdens in any way. They make them ten times heavier. For your own sake, as well as your children's sake, learn to speak low. They will remember that tone. They also will remember a harsh or angry tone!

QUESTION: Will you please explain the meaning of Jesus' words which are found in Matthew 18:7-9?

ANSWER: Let us quote Matthew 18:7-9: "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

In the above Scripture, Jesus brought in a saying that has perplexed many. Those who do not remember that Jesus spoke to the people in parables, and never without a parable, will not likely comprehend these words of his. His teaching is this: If we have anything in our makeup dear to us as a right hand or a foot or an eye, that is likely to cause us to stumble and fail to enter the kingdom, we had better cut off that tendency, no matter what it costs, no matter how precious, no matter how great a hold it may have upon our very lives. Would it not be better to enter into life than to go into Gehenna fire, that is, destruction, the second death? Surely this is true. After becoming followers of Jesus and putting our hands to the plow, we must not look back. We cannot back out of the contract. We must go on to everlasting life or to everlasting death.

QUESTION: Jesus said, "For the poor always ye have

with you; but me ye have not always” (John 12:8). Does this mean that there is no need for Christians to help the poor?

ANSWER: Jesus’ words in John 12:8 were directed at Judas who would soon betray Him. Judas was more interested in getting money for himself than in serving Jesus. However, Jesus was not saying that we should not help the poor. Jesus was only giving a description of the way the world actually is, not the way it should be. The Bible repeatedly commands us to help the poor. The Bible condemns those who take advantage of the poor. Psalm 41:1 says, “Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble.”

We live in a prosperous society, but hunger, homelessness and poverty are still a tragic reality for many in our country. At least half the world’s population lives on the edge of survival because of the effects of poverty.

QUESTION: I have a friend who believes that Jesus was just a good man and no more. How can I refute his belief?

ANSWER: You can refute his belief by citing some important roles that Jesus carried out in doing God’s will. The following are only four of them:

1. **“Only begotten Son of God.”** “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:18). Jesus knew His roots. His life actually began before His birth on earth. He said, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). Jesus was God’s first creation. Therefore, Jesus could rightly be called “the only begotten Son of God.”

2. **“Son of Man.”** “And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matthew 8:20). Many times Jesus referred to Himself as “the Son of Man.” The expression, “Son of Man,” occurs many times in the gospels. How did God’s only begotten Son come to be born as a human? It was by means of the Holy Spirit. God transferred His Son’s life to the womb of the virgin Mary, causing conception to take place. As a result, Jesus was born sinless and perfect. See Matthew 1:18.

3. **“Teacher.”** Jesus made it clear that His work was teaching and preaching about the kingdom of God. “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people” (Matthew 4:23). “And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent” (Luke 4:43). He explained what His Father’s Kingdom is!

4. **“The Word.”** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Jesus served as His Father’s spokesman. He was the means by which God conveyed information and instruction to others. God used Jesus to deliver His message to others. “Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself” (John 7:16-17).

QUESTION: How can I have a good impact in my community?

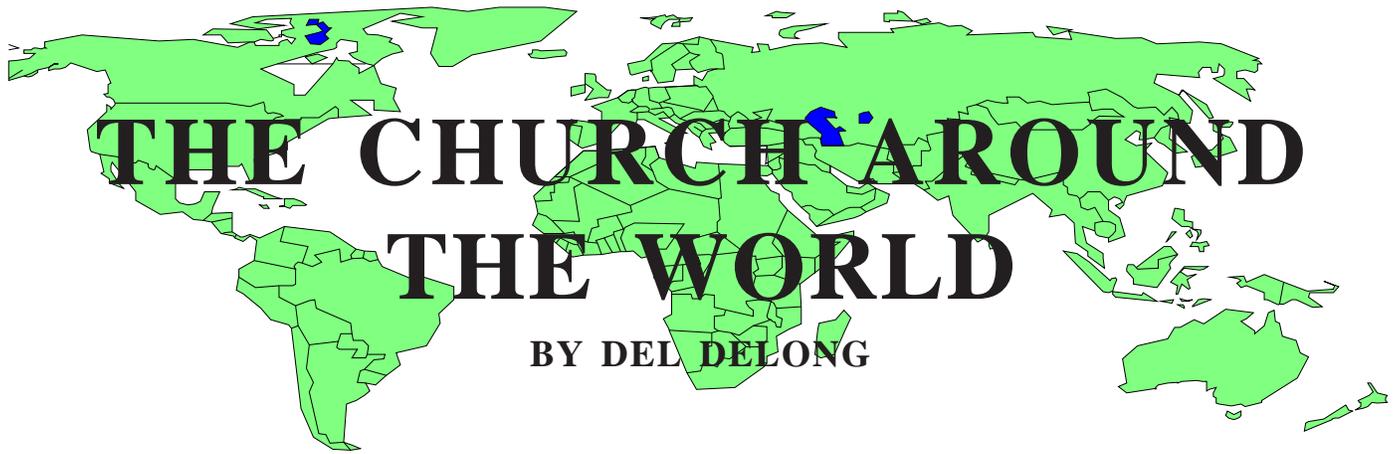
ANSWER: In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reveals some of His thoughts that can serve as guides to your question. He said that we are like salt, present, yet invisible; unseen by the naked eye, but very noticeable by taste. He also describes our influence as light in darkness. Obvious to the sight, the light can be easily seen.

Quite often we hear the comment, “What difference does it make?” This comes in a tone of resignation and bewilderment. Based on biblical authority, God and Christ make a difference! God in Noah made a difference! God in Jonah made a difference! God in Saul of Tarsus made a difference! God in the early churches made a difference! God in you and through you can make a difference!

This influence comes “...*Not by might, nor by power; but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts*” (Zechariah 4:6).

Your saltiness is felt in your community when you care for the sick, the poor, the imprisoned, the famished and the aged. It is felt when you care about decisions being made in town hall or city hall.

Your light shines forth when you reach out and share the good news about Jesus. It can be seen by others as you visit those who need to make their personal commitment of faith in Christ.



Youth Retreat In San Antonio, Texas





Church meeting in Nagiligonda, India



LESSON I

JONAH DISOBEYS GOD

Scripture Reading: Jonah 1:1-17.

Golden Text: Jonah 1:3 (first part).

“But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa;...”

NOTE: Jonah was a minor prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II. He labored among the people of the ten tribes, and during this time he was suddenly called by the Lord to do a dangerous mission. We will study about Jonah and what happens to him when he disobeys God.

1. Who was Jonah, and what did God tell him to do? Jonah 1:1-2.
2. What did Jonah do to flee from God? Jonah 1:3.
3. What did God cause to happen to the sea, and what did the sailors do? Jonah 1:4-5.
4. What did the shipmaster say to Jonah, and what was decided to do at this time? Jonah 1:6-7.
5. What did the sailors ask Jonah, and what was his answer? Jonah 1:8-10.
6. When faced with this sin by the sailors, what did Jonah do? Jonah 1:11-12.
7. What did the sailors do to Jonah in chapter 1:13-16?
8. What did God prepare for Jonah, and how long was he there? Jonah 1:17.

LESSON II

JONAH IN THE FISH AND GOING TO NINEVEH

Scripture Reading: Jonah 2:1-10; 3:1-10.

Golden Text: Jonah 2:10.

“And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.”

NOTE: We last studied how Jonah disobeyed God and went on board a ship. God caused a storm on the sea, and Jonah was thrown overboard. God prepared a great fish that swallowed Jonah. We will now study what happens to Jonah while in the fish and on his journey to Nineveh.

1. What did Jonah do while in the fish’s belly? Jonah 2:1.
2. Read Jonah’s prayer, Jonah 2:2-9, and tell if he admitted his sin and promised to obey God.
3. What did God cause to happen after Jonah’s prayer? Jonah 2:10.
4. What did God ask Jonah to do a second time? Jonah 3:1-2.
5. Did Jonah do as God asked this time? Jonah 3:3-4.
6. Did the people of Nineveh listen to Jonah and obey God? Jonah 3:5.
7. What did the king of Nineveh proclaim when he heard Jonah’s message from God? Jonah 3:6-9.
8. Did God spare the city of Nineveh? Jonah 3:10.

LESSON III

JONAH IS ANGERED

Scripture Reading: Jonah 4:1-11.

Golden Text: Jonah 4:1.

“But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.”

NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that God rescued Jonah from the fish’s belly, and Jonah went on to Nineveh

to warn them of their destruction. The entire city heeded his warnings, repented, and turned to God. God showed mercy on the people and saved the city. We will now study about Jonah's anger and the lesson that God teaches him.

1. Jonah is angered because God saves Nineveh. What does he pray to God? Jonah 4:1-3.
2. What was God's reply to Jonah in Jonah 4:4?
3. Where did Jonah go? Jonah 4:5.
4. What did God prepare that made Jonah glad? Jonah 4:6.
5. What did God prepare next that made Jonah unhappy? Jonah 4:7-8.
6. What did God tell Jonah in Jonah 4:9-11? Discuss the comparison of the gourd to the city of Nineveh.

NOTE: We should also remember that God has love for all nations and that His forgiving peace is extended to all the people of the world.

LESSON IV

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE--EZRA

Scripture Reading: Ezra 1:1-11.

Golden Text: Ezra 6:15.

“And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.”

NOTE: When we studied II Chronicles, we learned that the children of Israel were taken captive. In the book of Ezra, we will learn of their return from captivity. They were in captivity for about 70 years.

1. What Persian king captured Babylon? Ezra 1:1-2.

2. Who was the king of Babylon? Ezra 2:1.

3. How many Jews returned after the captivity? Ezra 2:64-65.

NOTE: This totals about 50 thousand.

4. What was one of the first things the people did upon their return? Ezra 1:5.

5. Did they bring the vessels of the temple with them? Ezra 1:7.

6. What king stopped the work? Ezra 4:21-24.

7. Who reversed this order? Ezra 6:1, 7-8.

8. Who were the principal workers in this building? Ezra 5:2.

9. Who was Ezra, and what did he want to do? Ezra 7:1,6,10.





ASHLEY FINDS A FRIEND

By Janet Craig-James

It was on the way to school that Ashley heard Joan and Margie talking. Ashley did not mean to listen, but she was wearing her running shoes, and the two girls did not hear her walking behind. Margie was talking, and Ashley knew it was Kate Sharpe they were talking about.

"I do not like her at all," Margie was saying. "Just because she is smart in class, she thinks she knows everything. Let us stop talking to her, Joan. If we stop, all the rest of the girls will leave her alone, too. When we are playing out in the yard we will not pick her for any of the games. It will be fun to see what she does."

Ashley walked slowly into school, thinking about what Margie and Joan had been saying. Kate was a very quiet little girl. It was true that she was clever, but she never said anything about it. All she wanted was to be friendly with the other girls. Ashley knew how much it would hurt Kate if the girls did what they were planning. She would never know why they were treating her badly.

At recess, Ashley watched Joan and Margie walk over to the other side of the playground. They had always been the leaders in the class, and so the rest of the girls followed them. Kate was left standing alone, not knowing what to

do.

Ashley felt her heart thump with fear. She knew it would be a difficult thing to do, and that probably the girls would treat her the same way as they were treating Kate but she threw back her head and walked over to Kate. Ashley slipped her arm through Kate's and said, "What was the name of that book you were talking about in class, Kate? It sounded so exciting I thought I would get it out of the library."

Ashley saw the girls were watching as she spoke to Kate, but she pretended not to notice.

Kate clutched her arm as if she would never let it go. She could not understand why she was being left alone, and she was grateful to Ashley for helping her.

During recess Kate told Ashley all about the book, and about a lot of other books she had read, too.

When they went back to classes, Kate smiled at her gratefully, but Joan and Margie glared. If even one girl was speaking to Kate it would spoil their plan.

Ashley felt a little uncomfortable, but she was glad she had not ganged up on Kate with the rest of the girls. Because Kate was so quiet, Ashley had never gotten to know her very well, but now she knew what an interesting person she was.

The next day most of the girls were still not speaking to Kate, and they were avoiding Ashley as well, but one or two of them seemed sorry for what they had been doing. At recess, Ashley and Kate were joined by these girls. One of them brought a new skipping rope, and they took turns turning and skipping.

Ashley did everything she could to make the girls see how nice Kate really was - even though she was very clever and did not say much.

Pretty soon everyone, including Margie and Joan, were speaking to Kate again. The plan had not worked because Ashley had made up her mind she was not going to join in doing something she knew was wrong.

Now that Ashley knew Kate so much better, she found out something else. She thought she was being a good friend to Kate by helping her, and so she was. But something else had happened, too. By doing what was right, she also had gained a friend.

KIDS CORNER
BIBLE ALPHABET QUIZ

By T.V. LaKahmaiah

GIFTS FROM GOD

God has given each of His little creatures special abilities. He has also given each of His children certain gifts or talents. The verse below tells us how He wants us to use these gifts. The words are in the wrong order. Rearrange them so that they make sense. The answer is in I Peter 4:10. "As God man of every grace hath manifold received the gift of stewards even good so as another minister to the one same."

ONLY A PENNY!

A small boy observed that his mother put a penny in the offering plate at the Sabbath morning worship service. On the way home from church, she freely berated and criticized the poor sermon they had heard. "But Mother," said the boy, "What could you expect for only a penny?"

"What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death" (Romans 6:21).

**If you were another person,
would you like to be a
friend of yourself?**

- A - The first person to die _____
- B - Where Daniel was prime minister _____
- C - Famous trees of Lebanon _____
- D - The shepherd king _____
- E - He fell from the third story _____
- F - Where Paul found refuge in a storm _____
- G - The big man killed by a small stone _____
- H - Caused the death of David's son _____
- I - The father of Esau _____
- J - His daughter was restored to life _____
- K - A brook near Jerusalem _____
- L - The priests of Israel _____
- M - The girl who watched at a river _____
- N - The king who dreamed of an image _____
- O - Sister-in-law of Ruth _____
- P - Feast of the Exodus _____
- Q - A guard of four Roman soldiers _____
- R - Jacob's eldest son _____
- S - City destroyed by fire _____
- T - God's tenth _____
- U - A king of Judah _____
- V - The queen before Esther _____
- W - Where Israelites hung their harps _____
- X - A great Persian king _____
- Y - Implement used with oxen _____
- Z - A priest of David's time _____

Answers to Bible Quiz

Abel; Babylon; Cedars; David; Eutychus; Fair Havens; Goliath; Hair (Absalom's hair was in the branches of a tree when he was being chased); Isaac; Jairus; Kidron; Levites; Miriam; Nebuchadnezzar; Orpah; Passover; Quaternion; Reuben; Sodom; Tithe; Uzziah; Vashti; Willows; Xerxes; yoke; Zadok.

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:6-7).

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Winter

By David DeLong

**This season helps us see a plan,
A look ahead to what we can,
When God will usher all anew,
Fresher than the morning dew,
And all are called, but only few
Will be picked from the ranks of man;
So, winter is a cleansing broom,
A time to sweep away the old,
And rather, placing in its room,
God's precious plants of green and gold.**

