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Matthew 1:18-25 INTERVENTION!

MARY'S DILEMMA – Vss. 18-19

She was pregnant because of the work of the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:26-38

Joseph was ready to quietly divorce her. Mary was innocent of any wrong doing, but could not prove it.

GOD'S DEFENSE – Vss. 20-23

God's angel intervened to explain Mary's pregnancy to Joseph.

JOSEPH'S DEPENDABILITY – Vss. 24-25

Joseph did as he was told by God.

Matthew 1 and Luke 1 GREETED BY ANGELS

Angels played an important part in the events occurring before the death of Christ.

They delivered specific messages.

A MESSAGE OF PROVISION - Luke 1:5-26

Zacharias and Elizabeth were childless.

The Angel appeared to announce that God would provide a child to this godly couple. This was God's provision for their need, and also God's provision of fulfilled prophecy. Malachi 3:1

A MESSAGE OF PROMISE - Luke 2:26-38

The Angel appeared to Mary with a great message of promise.

She would be the mother of God's promised Messiah.

A MESSAGE OF PEACE - Matthew 1:18-25

Joseph was troubled over the pregnancy of his promised bride.

The Angel explained the situation to Joseph and gave him peace.

Matthew 1 & 2 THE UNSUNG HERO OF CHRISTMAS

We hear much about the virgin, the angels, the shepherds, and the wise men.

All of these, of course, can be considered "heroes", in a sense, because of their roles in the Christmas Story. However, we tend to forget God's servant, Joseph, who valiantly served His God. To me, he is the unsung hero of Christmas.

HE WAS A SPIRITUAL MAN 1:19

We are shown here that Joseph was both just and compassionate.

HE WAS SENSITIVE MAN 1:20-23, 2:13, 19, 21

Four times we are told that God spoke to Joseph in a dream.

He was sensitive to God's leading in his life.

HE WAS A SUBMISSIVE MAN 1:24-25, 2:14-15, 21-23

Joseph was not a free thinker. He simply did as God instructed Him.

Matthew 1:1-17 SPECIAL WOMEN

There are some special women in my life. (Introduce message by mentioning special women in your life.)

In the genealogy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 1, there are four special women mentioned. They are, of course, special because of their being included in the lineage of our Lord. But they are also special because they remind us of the types of people our Lord receives.

TAMAR (THAMAR) - THE FORGOTTEN WOMAN - Vs. 3

According to custom, Tamar was to have a husband from among her dead husband's family. Although Judah promised Tamar a husband, he did not keep his promise. She was forgotten on purpose! Gen.38.

Many people feel like they have forgotten, especially during the holidays. However, the Lord Jesus died for all, forgetting nobody!

In a special way, He has not forgotten or forsaken those who have trusted Him as Savior. Hebrews 13:5

RUTH - THE FOREIGN WOMAN - Vs. 5

The book of Ruth in the Old Testament tells of this woman who was born a foreigner. First of all, she placed her faith in the Lord God of Israel (Ruth 1:16-18). Later, she married Boaz.

Just as God received this foreign woman into His Son's genealogy, God receives those who are foreign to church and/or Christianity into his family. One does not need to be brought up in the church in order to be received into God's family. It's a matter of faith (John 1:12-13)!

BATH SHEBA - THE FALLEN WOMAN - Vs. 6

David and Bath Sheba committed adultery! Her husband was allowed to die in battle – being murdered.

However there was forgiveness for David and Bath Sheba. Their story is found in 2 Samuel 11-12. As Christians, we often fall into sin. Although God is not pleased, there is always forgiveness (1 John 1:8 - 2:2)

MARY - THE FAITHFUL WOMAN - Vs. 16

Mary was a sinner just like the rest of us! However, she had great faith and sterling character (Luke 1:26-38)

We Christians need to remember that faithfulness is a quality that is pleasing to God (2 Corinthians 4:2).

MATTHEW 1-2 THE MEN OF CHRISTMAS

There are several men who are very much a part of the Christmas story in the Gospel of Matthew. From some of them we learn negative lessons, and from some we learn positive lessons.

JOSEPH - A TRUSTED MAN

Not just any man could be trusted to be the guardian of the Son of God! Notice 3 qualities that make Joseph a trusted man.

1. He was just. Vss. 18-19
2. He was compassionate. Vs. 19 - Not willing to publicly expose what he thought was Mary's sin, he would privately divorce her.
3. He was obedient. Matthew 1:20-25, 2:13-15, 2:19-23

HEROD - A TREACHEROUS MAN

Herod wanted the wise men to find the Christ Child, and report back to him. He said he wanted to worship Him, but he wanted to kill Him.

Notice his act towards the children of Bethlehem. 2:1-8, 16-18

THE PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM - TROUBLED MEN

When Herod was troubled, the whole city of Jerusalem was troubled too. Probably this was because when Herod was troubled, he troubled others. But being troubled would also be an indication of unbelief.

Where was the joy that Israel's Messiah was born? Matthew 2:1-3

When there is unbelief, there is trouble! Hebrews 11:6

THE WISE MEN - THOUGHTFUL MEN

1. Thoughtful to visit. Matthew 2:1-2
2. Thoughtful to worship. Matthew 2:11
3. Thoughtful to share. Matthew 2:11
4. Thoughtful to obey. Matthew 2:12

Matthew 1:18-25 A BABY IS ON THE WAY!

A MIRACLE - Vs. 18

Mary became pregnant through the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

Isaiah 7:14, Luke 1:34-35

A MISUNDERSTANDING - Vs. 19

Joseph, of course, thought that Mary was guilty of unfaithfulness.

Espousal was a very serious commitment. Even though the couple had not come together physically, they were considered married.

Joseph was thinking of privately giving her a divorce, rather than causing her public shame. Notice, he was a righteous man.

A MESSAGE - Vss. 20-23

Joseph is told that Mary is pregnant by the Spirit of God, and that his name will be Jesus. (Vss. 20-21) We are told that all of this was done to fulfill the Scriptures. (Vss. 22-23)

A MARRIAGE Vss. 24-25

Notice the faith and obedience of Joseph.

Matthew 1:18-25 JOSEPH'S DILEMMA

It's happened before! It will happen again! An engaged young lady is found to be pregnant by someone other than her intended husband. In this case the young lady is Mary, who was pregnant because of the work of the Spirit of God. You can imagine how hurt Joseph, who appears to be a godly man, must have felt.

JOSEPH'S CONFUSION - Vss. 18-19

Joseph did not realize that God the Holy Spirit was responsible for the pregnancy.

He was considering his options, the key one being that of divorce. In those days engaged people were considered "married" even before they did not yet live together. In the case of adultery there were the possibilities of stoning or a quiet divorce. Joseph, "being a just man" was considering the kinder of his options.

JOSEPH'S COMFORT - Vss. 20-23

Joseph was told not to fear taking Mary as his wife. The angel that appeared to Joseph explained that the pregnancy was the result of the work of God's Holy Spirit. The child's name was given as "Jesus" because He would be the Savior of His people. (Vss. 20-21)

Verses 22-23 tell us that all of these things happened in fulfillment of prophecy. (Isaiah 7:14)

JOSEPH'S COMPLIANCE - Vss. 24-25

Joseph had the faith to believe the Angel's message.

Joseph acted immediately to do as he was told.

Matthew 1:18-25 NAZARETH NARRATIVE

A PREGNANCY - Vs. 18

A PROBLEM - Vs. 19

A PROCLAMATION - Vss. 20-21

A PROPHECY - Vss. 22-23

A PERFORMANCE Vss. 24-25

Joseph did as he was told. In a sense of the word, Joseph is the unsung hero of Christmas, who trusted what God had to say, and obeyed!

Matthew 2:1-12 THE SEARCH FOR MESSIAH

REQUEST – Vss. 1-3

The Wise Men came asking "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?"

RESEARCH – Vss. 4-6

Herod was troubled and researched to find any information he could.

He learned of the prophecy of Micah 5:2.

REPORT – Vss. 7-8

Herod privately got the information to the Wise Men. His hope is that they would report back and that he would be able to kill the Lord Jesus.

REWARDS – Vss. 9-11

The rewards the Wise Men received for finding Jesus was actually seeing Him, worshipping Him, and sharing with Him.

Matthew 2 LESSONS FOR CHRISTMAS

The Christmas story is full of truths which we can apply to our own lives. Consider these four truths:

1. GOD'S TIMING IS PERFECT Vss. 1-2

Jesus was born at just the right time and in just the right place (Micah 5:2)

The wise men came at just the right time to just the right place.

2. GOD'S ENEMIES ARE TREACHEROUS Vss. 3-8

Satan, through Herod, would do all that he could to destroy the Lord Jesus, including trying to deceive the wise men.

3. GOD'S SERVANTS ARE FAITHFUL Vss. 9-14

a. To go. Vss. 9-10

b. To share. Vs. 11

c. To obey. Vss. 12-14 (The wise men and Joseph obeyed God's directions.)

4. GOD'S PROTECTION IS POWERFUL Vss. 15-23

Satan through Herod tried to destroy Jesus, but God protected His Son.

Matthew 2:1-12 HOW WISE ARE YOU?

WISE MEN SEEK JESUS - Vss. 1-10

WISE MEN SHARE WITH JESUS - Vs. 11

WISE MEN SENSE GOD'S LEADING - Vs. 12

Matthew 2:1-12 WISE MEN STILL

There are many wise people mentioned in the Bible.

There were Enoch and Noah, wise enough to walk with God.

There was Ruth, wise enough to say to her Jewish mother-in-law,

"...for whither thou goest I will go; and whither thou lodgest, I will

lodge; Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; (Ruth 1:16)

There was Andrew, who was wise enough to bring people to Jesus.

There was David, who was wise enough to say "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

There was Martha, wise enough entertain Jesus in her home.

There was Martha's sister, Mary, wise enough to set at Jesus feet and hear his word.

And, of course, there were the three wise men, who came to Jesus when he was born.

There are still wise men (and women) today. God is looking for wise men who will imitate the qualities of the wise men of Matthew 2.

WISE MEN STILL COME - Vss. 1-10

WISE MEN STILL WORSHIP - Vss. 2, 11

WISE MEN STILL GIVE - Vs. 11

WISE MEN STILL LISTEN - Vs. 12

Matthew 2:1-12 WISDOM AT WORK

**They were called "wise" men. Indeed these men showed much wisdom!
(Note that the first letter from each of the points spell "STAR".)**

They SOUGHT the King! - Vss. 1-2

They TRAVELED from the East - Vss. 1-10 To Jerusalem - Vss. 1-8 To Bethlehem - Vss. 9-10

They ADORED their King. - Vs. 11

They RESPONDED with Obedience - Vs. 12

Matthew 2:14 THE RESULTS OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas effects people in different ways. We see this in the story of the Wise Men.

THE WISE MEN HAD A PURPOSE - Vss. 1-2

They came to worship the newborn King of the Jews. We should have the same attitude at Christmas. We are to worship Him. Now we worship Him as our Redeemer, Lord, and friend.

HEROD HAD A PROBLEM - Vs. 3, 7-8

Herod was troubled, and wicked king that he was, he troubled everyone else when he was troubled! After inquiring of the priests and scribes, Herod sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem to see the King and report back. He claimed to want to worship Jesus. He wanted to kill Him. There are people today who still have a problem with Jesus. They want to destroy Him and His followers.

THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAD A PROPHECY - Vss. 4-6

This is interesting. The religious leaders knew their Bibles. They know what the Scripture said about the birth of their King, and yet they did nothing to respond. Evidently they either didn't believe it, or were afraid of King Herod. Today there are many ministers who claim to be Christ's servants, who don't believe God's Word concerning the Virgin Birth of Christ and many other key doctrines.

THE WISE MEN HAD A POTENTATE (KING) - Vss. 9-11

They worshiped Him. They gave Him gifts.

Let us worship Him. Let us give Him gifts of money for His work (gold) sweet smelling prayers of adoration and requests (frankincense), sacrificial service (myrrh).

JESUS HAD PROTECTION - Vss. 12-15

God warned both the Wise Men and Joseph.

HEROD HAD PERVERSION - Vss. 16-18

What a terrible crime!

Matthew 2:15 SOMETHING SPECIAL

SPECIAL TIME - Vs. 1 - "When Jesus was born..."

SPECIAL PLACE - Vs. 1 - Bethlehem - Micah 5:2

SPECIAL PERSON - Vs. 1 - Jesus - Isaiah 9:6

SPECIAL WELCOMING COMMITTEE - Vs. 2 - The Wise Men

SPECIAL ENEMY - Vss. 3-8 - Herod

SPECIAL JOY - Vss. 9-10 - See Luke 2:10

SPECIAL GIFTS - Vs. 11

SPECIAL PROTECTION - Vss. 12-15

Matthew 3:1-12 LISTEN TO JOHN

John was the prophet assigned to being the forerunner of the Lord Jesus. He cried out to the Jewish people that they should "Prepare ye the way off the Lord, make his paths straight." We should listen to John today as we hear him:

CRYING FOR REPENTANCE Vss. 1-6

John was calling for repentance. Baptism was the symbol of the repentance these Jews were experiencing. Today, Baptism is for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ after coming to Christ as Savior (Matthew 28:19-20.) However, we are never beyond need of repentance, and should be ready to turn away from all evil, so we can have closer fellowship with our Lord. Psalm 66:18, 1 John 1:9

WARNING THE RELIGIOUS Vss. 7-10

The Pharisees, especially, were known for being very religious. John called upon them to give up their hypocrisy and repent. Many Christians appear very devout but harbor inner sins. It is time to give them up, and live truly Godly lives. James 4:7-20

PROMISING RENEWAL Vss. 11-12

Jesus did baptize with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2) and does baptize each new Christian with the Holy Spirit today (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9). However, as we confess our sin and ask for filling, we will be filled (controlled) by the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-21, Galatians 5:16, 22-23, 1 John 5:14-15)

Matthew 3:1-12 THE MINISTRY OF JOHN**A PREDICTED MINISTRY - Vss. 1-3****A PRODUCTIVE MINISTRY - Vss. 4-6****A POINTED MINISTRY - Vss. 7-10****John was strong towards those who needed it most.****A PROPHETIC MINISTRY - Vss. 11-12**

Matthew 3:1-12 MEET JOHN

JOHN'S MINISTRY - Vss. 1-6

JOHN'S MESSAGE - Vss. 7-10

JOHN'S MASTER - Vss. 11-12

Matthew 3:13-17 MEET THE TRINITY

There are people today who would like to remove the doctrine of the Trinity from Christianity. When they do, the whole building called our faith comes tumbling down. The doctrine of the Trinity is part of the structure of our faith. Without it, we do not have Biblical Christianity.

When we think of the word Trinity, we think of the Biblical teaching that God is "three in one and one in three". Although the word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, the doctrine of the Trinity is. Don't panic if you do not fully understand how there can be one God, and yet three persons in the Godhead. No human being can fully comprehend the doctrine of the Trinity.

In this passage we are examining the Baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is an important passage because it is here that we find the Trinity presented together. Jesus the Son of God is baptized. The Holy Spirit descends upon him in the form of a dove. God the Father gives his approval from Heaven.

This scene reminds me of some of the ways God the Trinity is involved in the lives of true Christians.

GOD WITH ME - IDENTIFICATION

Jesus is God with us - God identifying with man.

Instead of remaining aloof from his creation, Jesus Christ who for all eternity has been and ever will be the Son of God, came to earth, identifying with man.

Jesus identified with us in his BIRTH. Matthew 1:20-23

Jesus identified with us in his BAPTISM. Matthew 3:13-15

Jesus identified with us through his BLOOD. 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Jesus identifies with us in the BATTLE. 1 John 2:1-2, Hebrews 4:14-15 (He is always interceding for us before the Father.)

Jesus identifies with us in BEREAVEMENT. Isaiah 53:3, Matthew 28:20, Hebrews 13:5, Romans 8:35-39

GOD IN ME - INDWELLING - Vs. 16

The Holy Spirit is God in us - God indwelling man

Because Jesus was the perfect man, the God-Man, He did things the way we should do them. He was our example. All that Jesus did as a man on earth was done in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1. John promised that Jesus would baptize with the Spirit. Matthew 3:11, 1 Corinthians 12:13

There is PRESENCE. Romans 8:9 (The Holy Spirit Indwells)

There is POWER. Acts 1:8

There is PRODUCTION. Ephesians 5:18-21, Galatians 5:22-23

There is PRAYER. Romans 8:26

GOD OVER ME - INVOLVEMENT - Vs. 17

The Father is God over us - God involving Himself with man.

God the Father is present as He always is. He is involved in the life of the perfect man. He is also involved in the life of the Christian.

God's AUTHORITY - "This is"

One of the greatest reasons for Godly Christian behavior is God's authority in my life.

God's AFFECTION - "My Beloved Son"

We too are God's beloved children if we know Christ. John 1:12, 1 John 4:10, John 3:16

God's APPROVAL - "In Whom I am well pleased."

The perfect man had approval from God.

We, as His children, can also have his approval.

As Jesus pleased God, God approved.

As we please God, God approves.

Matthew 3:13-17 BAPTISM!

A SPECIAL REQUEST - Vs. 13

Jesus wanted to be baptized.

A STEADY RESISTANCE - Vs. 14

Knowing the identity of Jesus, John realized that Jesus should be baptizing him.

A SUBSTANTIAL REASON - Vs. 15

Jesus said that He must be baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

A SUPERNATURAL RESPONSE - Vss. 16-17

God, the Spirit, descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. Vs. 16

God, the Father, spoke from Heaven, giving His approval. Vs. 17

Matthew 3:17-25 A GREAT START

It's important to get a good start on a project or ministry that God has called you to.

Our Lord Jesus got off to a great start on His ministry.

JESUS' MESSAGE - Vs. 17

The message was a call to repentance because the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand.

JESUS' MANDATE - Vss. 18-22

Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James and John as disciples. They were to follow Him. He would make them "fishers of men".

JESUS' MINISTRY - Vss. 23-25

1. Teaching

2. Preaching

3. Healing

Matthew 4:19 SO, YOU WANT TO BE A SOUL WINNER

Do you want to be a soul winner? That is do you want to bring people to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus as Savior? The way we start winning souls may surprise you. Read Matthew 4:18-22.

Jesus was walking along the sea of Galilee.

Peter and Andrew were casting a net to fish.

James and John were mending their fishing nets.

Jesus called them all to be his disciples.

And in calling them to discipleship, Jesus was also calling them to be those who share the good news of the Gospel with others, to be soul winners.

The key verse that tells us much about soul winning is Matthew 4:19 –

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

In this verse we see:

THERE'S A PRIORITY

THERE'S A PROCESS

THERE'S A PROMISE

1) THERE'S A PRIORITY

Many people who would like to win friends and loved ones to Christ make a grave mistake.

So to speak, they put the cart before the horse.

They think about witnessing or try to witness before they follow the command of Jesus is this verse!

The command is "Follow Me"!

Jesus wants followers before he wants witnesses.

A follower is a disciple. A disciple is a learner.

Although new Christians can certainly witness for the Lord and should, it is the Christian who is a committed disciple of Christ's that will be the most effective witness.

I believe that truly following Jesus involves several things.

SALVATION

The person who is going to be a soul winner, must be saved himself. I believe that Peter, Andrew, James and John all had encounters with Jesus in John 1:35-42. I believe that the other disciple of John the Baptist that followed Jesus was John the Brother of James who wrote the Gospel of John. I believe that he too, found his brother and brought him to Jesus. To be someone's follower, you must believe in that person.

It is Jesus who died for your sins and mine. He took the punishment for our sins upon Himself. 2 Cor 5:21

The Lord Jesus did not stay dead, but arose from the dead. It is faith in the Lord Jesus as our only hope for forgiveness and for heaven that gives us eternal life. John 3:16, John 3:36
To be a "fisher of men" you must be caught by the Lord Jesus yourself.
To be a true follower of Jesus, you must place your faith in Him for your own salvation.

SACRIFICE

Following Jesus involves sacrifice. It means loving Him enough to give your whole life to Him.
Why should you and I love the Lord Jesus?
We should love Him because He is God. John 1:1-2
We should love Him because He is our creator. John 1:3
Most of all, we should love Him because He made the ultimate sacrifice for us, giving His life as a ransom for ours. 1 Timothy 2:5-6, 1 John 4:19
How deep is our love for Christ to go?
Our love of Christ is to be one of total sacrifice so that no one else is loved more. Luke 14:26-27

Your love for the Lord Jesus is to be so strong that love for anyone else pales in comparison.
Luke 9:23-24
You may wonder why sacrifice is such an important part of following Jesus. Jesus giving His all was essential for us to be saved. You and I giving our all is essential as we serve the one who saved us.
And you will only be a truly dedicated soul winner, when your life is a sacrifice so that you are willing to go and do whatever He says. Romans 12:1-2

SCHOOLING

We already said that a disciple is a learner. A disciple of Jesus must be taught by and about Jesus.
The early disciples spent lots of time with Jesus.
They ate with Jesus.
They worked with Jesus.
The disciples listened as Jesus taught them and also the multitudes that followed Him.
They saw His miracles.
They saw what he was like in the private times, when the world in general was not watching.

How will you learn from Jesus today?

First you need to learn to love and read his Word.
Second you need to learn to communicate with Him. Jesus calls it abiding. John 15:7
Third you need to be discipled by Godly followers of the Lord Jesus. Eph.4:11-12 2 Tim.2:2

SUBMISSION

Jesus said it so simply. *John 14:15 - If ye love me, keep my commandments.*
John 14:21 - He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

It is the submissive follower of Jesus who will witness to whoever and wherever the Lord sends.

SALVATION

SACRIFICE

SCHOOLING

SUBMISSION

STAYING POWER

A true follower of Jesus is faithful. He has staying power or sticktuitiveness.
He continues to follow no matter how tough things get or how inconvenient they get.
He continues to follow even when others don't want to listen to what they have to say. Luke 9:57-62

Jesus says "Follow Me".

That is to be the Priority of my life.

SALVATION

SACRIFICE

SCHOOLING

SUBMISSION

STAYING POWER

1) THERE'S A PRIORITY

2) THERE'S A PROCESS

Jesus says, "Follow me and I will make you."

Who made Paul and Peter great soul winners?
Who made Dwight Moody a great soul winner?
Who made Billy Graham the greatest evangelist of our generation?
God did.
Jesus is saying "If you follow me, being saved, living a sacrificial life of love, letting me school you, submitting to me in obedience and sticking with it, I will make you. You will be all that I want you to be."

Being effective for Jesus is a process of Jesus making us. As we mature the more he will be able to use us. And we are confident that he will work through us in the Power of the Holy Ghost. Acts 1:8, Isa 55:10-11

If we have are following Jesus, He will not only give us the words to say, but the Holy Spirit's power behind. That doesn't mean that every person we witness to will be saved, but the words we say will have impact.

And remember, God uses many people to get his message across. You may be one of many to witness to a person who will eventually be saved.

1 Corinthians 3:6 - I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

- 1) THERE'S A PRIORITY
- 2) THERE'S A PROCESS
- 3) THERE'S A PROMISE

And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Jesus has promised to make us "Fishers of Men".

We will be able to bring men and women to Jesus Christ as Savior.

What a privilege that is.

Matthew 4:1-11 THE PRIORITIES OF LIFE

When Jesus was tempted He showed the priorities of God.

He did not yield to temptation, but kept His priorities straight.

THE PRIORITY OF THE WORD – Vss. 3-4

God's Word is more important than physical comfort.

THE PRIORITY OF THE WALK – Vss. 5-7

It is more important to please God than to tempt Him.

THE PRIORITY OF WORSHIP – Vss. 9-10

It is more important to worship God than to worship Satan or anything else.

Matthew 4:1-11 THIS IS A TEST!!

During our lives we will face many tests. Some tests will be of an academic nature. Other tests will be of a Spiritual nature. Adam and Eve were tested in the Garden of Eden, and they failed! Our Lord Jesus Christ was tested, being tempted by Satan and He passed!

There are some things about the temptation of Jesus, that will help us when we face life's temptations.

DIRECTION FROM THE SPIRIT Vs. 1

When Jesus was tempted, it was right after a great time of blessing. See Matthew 3:13-17.

When we are tempted, it will often be after a Spiritual high". Satan likes to catch us off guard.

Note, however that Jesus went into the wilderness under the guidance of the Spirit of God. You and I can't avoid life's tests, but we should follow our Lord's example, and let His Spirit guide us.

DISTRACTIONS FROM SATAN Vss. 2-3, 5-6, 8-9

Jesus was tested with the exact 3 types of sin that confronted Eve. 1 John 2:15-17 gives us a description of these temptations. They are the "lust of the flesh", the "lust of the eyes" and "the pride of life."

Compare the temptation of Jesus with that of Eve, referring to Genesis 3:6

Lust Of The Flesh Vss. 2-3 - "...the tree, was good for food..."

Pride Of Life Vss. 5-6 - "...and a tree desired to make one wise..."

Lust Of The Eyes Vss. 8-9 - "...and that it was pleasant to the eyes..."

DECLARATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE

One Word - Vs. 4 - The Word of God has the final say, not Satan. We should live by every Word from God.

One Way - Vs. 7 - The way to follow is God's way, therefore, we should not tempt (test) him by trying to go our own way.

One Worship Vss. 10-11 - Only God should be worshipped, not Satan.

[Note that Jesus was victorious over Satan, and that every time he was tested, He quoted the Scriptures.]

Matthew 4:1-11 TEMPTED TO DENY

Satan tempts us in the same areas that He tempted Jesus. Satan was trying to get Jesus to sin by denying three truths about God. Satan will try to get us to deny God in the same three ways.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-2**SATAN WANTS US TO DENY GOD'S PROVISION Vss. 3-4**

God has promised to take care of our needs. Psalm 23:1, Philippians 4:19

When we do not get what we think we need, Satan will tempt us to take matters into our own hands, and go against God's provision in our lives. Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread. If He had done this, He would have denied God's power to take care of Him.

SATAN WANTS US TO DENY GOD'S PLAN Vss. 5-7

It was not God's plan that Jesus jump off the pinnacle of the temple. There are times when we will be tempted to go against what we know to be God's plan for our lives. When we do this we are following Satan and not our God.

SATAN WANTS US TO DENY GOD'S PREEMINENCE Vss. 8-10

Satan promised Jesus great power if He would bow down and worship Satan.

Satan may not ask you to worship Him directly, as he did Jesus.

However he will ask you to worship things other than the one true God. Matthew 6:24, Deuteronomy 6:4-5

Notice that Jesus resisted Satan by quoting Scripture. We should resist in the same way, relying on the Holy Spirit to control us and give us strength to resist the temptation to deny God. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Matthew 4:12-25 MEETING THE MASTER

Jesus is beginning his ministry and introducing Himself to the Jewish people.

THE MASTER'S MOVEMENT - Vss. 12-16

In fulfillment of prophecy, Jesus moved His ministry to Capernaum.

THE MASTER'S MESSAGE - Vs. 17

The message was a reiteration of John's message. It was a call to repentance.

THE MASTER'S MEN - Vss. 18-22

The first disciples were called to be "Fishers of Men".

THE MASTER'S MINISTRY - Vss. 23-25

He taught. He preached. He healed.

Matthew 4:18-22 RECRUITED!

Jesus called four men out of one career into another.

CAREER - They were fishers.

CHALLENGE - They were to follow, He would make them.

CHANGE - They forsook the old career and began a new one by following Him.

Matthew 5:3-5 HAPPY HUMILITY

The word "blessed" means happy. The beatitudes teach us how to be spiritually happy! A key part of this happiness has to do with being humble, especially before God. To be truly happy we should be:

SPIRITUALLY SHORT - "poor in spirit" - Vs. 3

SPIRITUALLY SORROWFUL - "they that mourn" - Vs. 4

SPIRITUALLY SUBMISSIVE - "the meek" - Vs. 5

Matthew 5:3-5 ATTITUDE

My attitude is important. The first three beatitudes, if practiced, will insure that I have a good attitude.

Vs. 3 - POOR IN SPIRIT - How I view myself.

Vs. 4 - MOURNING - How I view my sin.

Vs. 5 - MEEKNESS - How I view my situation (or standing).

Matthew 5:3-6 THE RIGHT KIND OF HEART

When it comes to lessons in practical Christian Living, nothing surpasses the Sermon on the Mount. With this outline we begin a series of outlines which will run for several months and cover all of chapters 5-7 in the Book of Matthew. Feel free to preach the series with your own adaptations or as individual messages

THE RIGHT KIND OF HEART IS AN HONEST HEART - Vs. 3

A person who is poor in spirit is not "poor spirited". He or she is someone who has an honest opinion of his or her spiritual condition. The person who will admit Spiritual poverty is on their way to salvation.

THE RIGHT KIND OF HEART IS A HEAVY HEART - Vs. 4

The heart that mourns over sin is the heart that will confess and find the comfort of forgiveness. Initially they will find the forgiveness of salvation. After salvation they will find the comfort of forgiveness for sins that they confess. 1 John 1:9

THE RIGHT KIND OF HEART IS A HUMBLE HEART - Vs. 5

According to Haddon Robinson, "Tied up in the word meek is the concept of power under control, the idea of being submissive to someone greater than ourselves." Being Biblically meek is being in submission to God. It is not mean a lack of strength, but strength that is under God's control.

THE RIGHT KIND OF HEART IS A HUNGRY HEART - Vs. 6

To hunger and thirst after righteousness should be a characteristic of every Christian. We should want to please God by doing what is right. We should hunger and thirst for the things of God and His word and apply them to our lives. As they do they are satisfied, but then they will hunger and thirst some more because they want to be satisfied again.

Matthew 5:6-8 THE LORD PROVIDES!

There are some special things that the Lord will provide for those who meet the conditions.

SPIRITUAL SATISFACTION - Vs. 6 - For those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

SPIRITUAL SUPPLY - Vs. 7 - For those who show mercy.

SPIRITUAL SIGHT - Vs. 8 - For those are pure in heart.

Matthew 5:7-12 GREAT BLESSINGS

Jesus says that the person who practices these beatitudes is "blessed" or happy.

The person who practices these things is happy because of the blessings that he receives.

THE PARTICIPANT RECEIVES MERCY - Vs. 7

The one who shows mercy is sure to receive mercy.

THE PURE SEE GOD - Vs. 8

When a person keeps his heart pure through trusting Christ as Savior, and confession and forsaking of sin, he will see God all through the day. We do not mean that he will literally see God, but he will see God at work and feel His presence.

THE PEACEMAKER IS SPOKEN WELL OF - Vs. 9

What better compliment than to be known as a child of the God of peace?

THE PERSECUTED HAVE A HOME - Vss. 10-12

When a Christian is persecuted for Christ's sake, he can be comforted by the fact that he has a home in Heaven. Stephen, when persecuted for His faith, saw Jesus waiting to receive him. Acts 7:55-56

Matthew 5:9-12 HAPPINESS IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING

These two beatitudes show me some of my responsibility, and subsequent suffering as a child of God. And yet through all of this, I will be happy (blessed).

MY MINISTRY = PEACEMAKER Vs. 9

I am to lead people to faith in Christ, which gives them peace with God. Rom 5:1, 1 Peter 3:15, Mark 16:15

MY MISERY = PERSECUTION Vs. 10

See John 15:18-27 and 2 Timothy 3:12.

MY MASTERY = PRAISE Vss. 11-12

I am to rejoice in the face of persecution.

I am suffering for Jesus' sake.

My reward is great.

I am following the example of the prophets who were also persecuted.

Matthew 5: 13-16 REACHING THE WORLD

Jesus gave His followers of reaching the world for Him in Matthew 28:19-20.

This passage reminds us of the importance of our testimony.

THE FLAVOR - Vs. 11

We are the "salt" of the earth. Salt adds flavor. When we act properly as Christians we are adding flavor that speaks of Christ and the need of salvation. Salt also makes us thirsty. If we act properly, we will make others thirsty for the truth. When we act improperly as Christians we have lost our flavor.

THE FLOODLIGHT - Vs. 12

We are "the light of the world".

THE FLOW - Vs. 12

When we do good works as Christians we are letting the light flow to those who need it.

Matthew 5:14-16 THE CHRISTIAN AS A WITNESS

OUR VALUE - Vs. 14a - The light of the world.

Jesus, the true light of the world (John 8:12), has commissioned us to be His lights. We are His witnesses

OUR VISIBILITY - Vss. 14b-15 - As lights we are to be seen!

OUR VOCATION - Vs. 16 - Our job is to let our light shine!

Matthew 5:17-20 JESUS AND THE LAW

JESUS' PURPOSE - To fulfill the law - Vs. 17

JESUS' PROMISE - All will be fulfilled - Vs. 18

JESUS' PRECAUTION - Don't teach law breaking. Personal righteousness needs to exceed that of the Pharisees. - Vss. 19-20

Matthew 5:21-26 A NEW STANDARD

When Jesus presented the Sermon on the Mount he raised the standards by which people should live. I imagine that people thought they were behaving okay as long as they didn't kill anyone! Jesus shows here that undue anger is sin.

THE STATEMENT OF SCRIPTURE - Vs. 21

Exodus 20:13 is clear that murder is wrong.

THE SINS OF THE HEART AND MOUTH - Vs. 22

Anger without cause that leads to anger with the tongue are serious sins. 1 John 3:15

THE SOLUTION FROM JESUS - Vss. 23-26

I think of us as coming to the "altar" of prayer today. When we remember that we have openly sinned against someone, we are to first confess to God (1 John 1:9) and then apologize to the person against whom we have sinned. Then we are in a position to offer our gifts to God.

Matthew 5:27-32 OLD AND NEW

OLD SAYINGS - Vss. 27, 31

The Old Testament Scriptures had some rules concerning faithfulness in marriage. Exodus 20:14

NEW STANDARDS - Vss. 28, 32

Jesus shows us that God's standards are higher than the general understanding the Jews of His day had concerning purity in marriage.

NEW SENSITIVITY - Vss. 30-31

This, of course, is figurative speech, showing that we should be radical when we are dealing with our thought lives. Thoughts must be kept under control.

Matthew 5:33-42 UNDER CONTROL

So many people want to control what others do. In this passage from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus shows us things that should be "under control" in our own lives.

OUR LIPS UNDER CONTROL - Vss. 33-37 - BY TELLING THE TRUTH

As wrong as it is, Jesus is not talking about taking the Lord's name in vain in this passage.

He is talking about the truthfulness of the words that come from our lips.

Vows or oaths were not uncommon in the Scriptures. These oaths were to be done seriously, and with absolute truthfulness. Genesis 14:22-23, Jeremiah 42:5, 2 Corinthians 1:23, Matthew 26:63-64. The problem in Jesus' day was people were making oaths about practically everything. So Jesus tells them to swear not at all. Instead, they were to simply speak the truth.

OUR LOVE UNDER CONTROL - Vss. 38-39 - BY TURNING THE OTHER CHEEK

To turn the other cheek in true humility is a real show of love.

Although the government is to carry out justice (Romans 13:4, Leviticus 38-39), a Christian is not to take matters into his own hands, but quietly surrender his "rights".

OUR LAWSUITS UNDER CONTROL - Vs. 40 - BY GIVING OF YOUR POSSESSIONS

As we yield to the direction of the Holy Spirit in our lives, even lawsuits will not be a problem.

The cloak was essential clothing and protected by Jewish law. If necessary, we must be willing to part with the most basic of necessities, and trust God to take care of us. Matthew 6:30-34

OUR LABOR UNDER CONTROL - Vs. 41 - BY GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Israel was under Roman rule. A Roman soldier could force non-Romans to carry his baggage for a mile.

Jesus encourages us to do more than we are asked, even if we aren't required to.

OUR LOANS UNDER CONTROL - Vs. 42 - BY SHARING WITH THOSE IN NEED

We can't always give all that people ask, but we can usually help in some way when the need is legitimate.

These things will be impossible to do, unless we are under the Lord's control. Ephesians 5:18, Romans 12:1

Matthew 5:38-42 THE BETTER WAY

There will be times when you will be treated improperly. There are several ways we can respond to mistreatment in several ways. Jesus shows us the better way to react.

SHUN - Vs. 38

In personal cases don't live by the "get even" philosophy. Shun any urge to get even.

SUBMIT - Vss. 38-41

Your Body - Vs. 39

Your Possessions - Vs. 40

Your Time and Labor - Vs. 41

SHARE - Vs. 42

Matthew 5:21-48 A HIGHER STANDARD (can be 2-4 messages)

Each section of this passage begins with "You have heard....But I say unto you." In each case Jesus gives his listeners a higher standard than to which they were accustomed.

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR ANGER Vss. 21-26

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR MARRIAGE Vss. 27-32

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR SWEARING Vss. 33-37

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR SUBMISSION Vss. 38-42

A HIGHER STANDARD FOR LOVE Vss. 43-48

Matthew 5:33-48 THE BEST!

So often people are wrapped up in securing the best for themselves and their families (Give examples.). The trouble is, very often we have a warped view of what is best. Our Lord Jesus Christ wants what is best for His disciples. What He views as best is often in direct opposition to what human beings think and teach others concerning what is best. In our text, the Lord reminds his hearers of the teachings they had heard in the past, and then gives them the best teaching of all

THE BEST USE OF THE LIPS - Vss. 33-37

THE BEST MANNER OF LIFE - Vss. 38-42

THE BEST WAY TO LOVE - Vss. 43-48

Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18 SECRET SERVICE, OPEN REWARD

God wants us to serve Him without drawing attention to ourselves. When we do this, He rewards us publicly.

THE FATHER AND GIVING Vss. 1-4

THE FATHER AND PRAYING Vss. 5-8

THE FATHER AND FASTING Vss. 16-18

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18 QUIET MINISTRY

There are those who love to minister publicly so that they can receive the praise of men.

Our Lord Jesus prefers follows that minister privately, or quietly, drawing no attention to themselves.

QUIET SHARING - Vss. 1-4

QUIET SUPPLICATION - Vss. 5-6

QUIET SACRIFICE - Vss. 16-18

Matthew 6:5-15 PROPER PRAYING

THE PROBLEMS OF THOSE WHO PRAY

Some seek to be seen. Vs. 5

Some use vain repetition. Vss. 7-8

Some refuse to forgive. Vss. 14-15

THE PLACE OF PRAYER - Vs. 6

Personal prayers are to be prayed in private places.

THE PATTERN OF PRAYER - Vss. 9-13

The Lord's prayer is a pattern. It is a model prayer. We can elaborate on each phrase in the prayer and apply it to our lives. For instance, when I pray "Thy will be done", I can ask the Lord to reveal his will in situations which relate to me or to those I know. When I pray "Forgive us our debts", I should name my specific sins that need forgiving (1 John 1:9). And when I say, "as we forgive our debtors", I should name those who have hurt me that I chose to forgive.

Matthew 6:7-15 PRAYER TYPES

FOOLISH PRAYER - Vss. 7-8

FAITHFUL PRAYER - Vss. 9-13

FORGIVING PRAYER - Vss. 14-15

Matthew 6:24-33 PRIORITIES

If a husband left on a hunting trip just as wife started labor pains, we'd say the man had wrong priorities. If an employee lies to get ahead in the company, we'd say that person has his priorities mixed up. When Christians put their own well being ahead of serving God, Jesus says they have their priorities mixed up.

CAUTION Vss. 24-25

1. No Man Can Serve Two Masters Vs. 24
2. Life Is More Important Than Food And Clothes Vs. 25

CONSIDERATIONS Vss. 26-30

1. Consider The Fowls Of The Air Vs. 26
2. Consider Your Height (Worry can't change it.) Vs. 27
3. Consider The Lilies Vss. 28-30

CONCLUSIONS Vss. 31-34

1. Don't Worry About Tomorrow Vss. 31,32,34
2. Seek God's Kingdom Today Vs. 33

Matthew 6:24-34 SIMPLE LIVING

Life is so complicated! There are so many things that take our attention away from the Lord. The way to make life simpler for us is to heed the Lord's teaching in this passage.

A PRINCIPLE - SERVE ONE MASTER - Vs. 24

A PRECAUTION - "TAKE NO THOUGHT" (DON'T BE ANXIOUS) - Vss. 25, 27-28, 31-32

A PROVISION - GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF YOUR NEEDS - Vss. 26, 28-30, 32b

A PROCEDURE - PUT GOD'S KINGDOM FIRST - Vss. 33-34

Matthew 6:33-34 WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME!

Now, if there's anything that I'm expert at doing, it's worrying. I have been a chronic worrier. I'm not proud to admit that I've been a chronic worrier. Worry and fear go together. Often we are afraid because we worry, or we worry because we are afraid! Worry and most kinds of fear are sin! Matthew 6:34

Jesus said in John 14:27 - *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

If I allow my heart to be troubled I am guilty of sin!

Philippians 4:6 - *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

If I am careful, anxious I am guilty of sin.

I for one have decided that it is about time that I kick the worry habit! How about you?

The question is, "How?" How do I go about kicking this habit that is as addictive as any other bad habit? How do I go about kicking this habit that is as bad as any other bad habit?

Matthew 6:33-34 - *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. [34] Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.*

OUR TROUBLES ARE MEASURED

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Every person, especially the Christian is going to deal with troubles that could cause us to worry.

Some trouble will come because you are a Christian. Psalm 34:19, 2 Timothy 3:12,

Some trouble will come to help you mature. James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-5

Some trouble comes so that we'll repent of our sin. Proverbs 3:11-12

Although we will face troubles, we must bear in mind that God has them measured. He will not give you any more trouble in one day than what you can handle with His help. 1 Corinthians 10:13

God knows how much trouble we can take and He has only given us one day's worth, no more, no less! And Christian, with that trouble comes God's grace. The Apostle Paul made that discovery. 2 Cor 12:7-9
OUR TROUBLES CAN BE MULTIPLIED

Satan is a thief! And what does a thief do, among other things? HE STEALS! John 10:10

What does Satan want to steal from you?

He wants to steal your joy and peace in Christ.
He wants to steal your ability to serve Christ effectively.
He wants to steal your walk with God.
He wants to steal your mind.
After he steals, he wants to kill and destroy as much of you as he possibly can.

One way he steals is by making you worry.
God has given you all the trouble you can handle in one day.
God will give you all the grace you need to handle the trouble for one day.
Satan wants you to worry about tomorrow's troubles.
Satan wants you to worry about yesterday's troubles.

God will give you grace for today's troubles.
God will give you grace tomorrow for tomorrow's troubles.
God gave you grace to deal with yesterday's troubles.
However, God will not give you grace for tomorrow's troubles today.
When we worry we are borrowing trouble from the past and from the future. When we worry we are using our imaginations to conjure up all sorts of lies about the past and the future.

Matthew 6:34 - *Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself...*

Please note that Jesus does not say, "Don't plan for tomorrow." There is nothing wrong with planning as long as your plans are guided by and submitted to the will of God

God will give you grace for each tomorrow as tomorrow comes. Deuteronomy 33:25
I want you to see something else. When Jesus says "take no thought", "Don't worry", He's repeating himself. It's the third time He's said it in 10 verses. Matthew 6:25, 31, 34

Matthew 6:27, *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*
Worry changes nothing for the good.
Worry does lengthen your life, although it sure can help shorten it!

OUR TROUBLES CAN BE MINIMIZED
So, how do we minimize our troubles?
By only having those God wants us to have
Sin maximizes our trouble.
Confession and forsaking minimizes our trouble.
In our text Jesus shows us how to minimize the trouble caused by worry so that we don't worry.

According to Warren Wiersbe, three words lead us to victory over worry.
FATHER
FAITH
FIRST

Applying these three words to our lives will cause our troubles to be minimized because we won't be adding to our troubles.

FATHER
John 1:12 - *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

If you have trusted Christ as Savior, then God is your Father.
Just think, the God of the universe calls you his child.
That means He is taking personal responsibility for you. Matthew 6:31-32

FAITH
More than anything else worry is a lack of faith.
How do I know this? Jesus says so! Matthew 6:30,
Also see Hebrews 11:6 and Philippians 4:6-7
FIRST

Matthew 6:33 - *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

As children of God we are to seek the good of His Kingdom, the family business.
As children of God we are to seek His righteousness that's part of the business.
And God says to us, "You seek my business and I'll take care of your needs."

WELL IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU STOPPED WORRYING! WILL YOU?

Matthew 6:9 OUR FATHER Part #1 of 8 - The Lord's Prayer

This passage is called The Lord's Prayer because the Lord gave it.
However it is not a prayer that Jesus had to pray, but a prayer that Jesus' disciples should use as a model for their own prayers.

The value of the Lord's Prayer is not found in the repetition of prayer in church services, but in using it as a model. The Lord's Prayer is a skeleton, when we pray, elaborating on each phrase, we put "meat" on that skeleton to produce a prayer that is pleasing to God. Over the next several weeks, I hope to share with you the various phrases found in the Lord's Prayer and teach you how to pray them in your prayer times.

We begin by thinking of our approach to God in Prayer. It is so easy to rush into his presence, forgetting to whom we are speaking. When we approach God in prayer, we need to pause and to focus on just whom we are conversing with. When we come to Him and say, "Our Father which art in Heaven," we are reminding ourselves of three things:

PRAYER IS PERSONAL

The words "Our Father" are personal words.
They imply a personal relationship with God.
Oh you might ask "Isn't God everyone's Father?"
In the sense of God being creator, yes he is.
Malachi 2:10 says in part, Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?

But there is another sense in which God is not the Father of all.
When Adam and Eve disobeyed God by eating the wrong fruit in the Garden of Eden, there was a separation that took place between man and God.

Israel was told in Isaiah 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

God is righteous and just.
Somebody had to pay for our sins. The logical choice would be ourselves. We deserve to be punished.

However, God in his love sent His Son to die in our place! Isaiah 53:5
When a person realizes that he is a sinner without hope and turns in faith to Jesus Christ as the one who died for his sins, many wonderful things happen. Let me mention two of these things:

First, he or she is no longer at war with God because of sin. Romans 5:1

Second, he or she becomes a child of God. John 1:12
As a child of God, you have just as much right to come and talk to your Heavenly Father, as you do your earthly father. The only difference is, your Heavenly Father is a better listener and more available!

When we come to our Heavenly Father, we must realize that we only have access into God's presence because of what the Lord Jesus has done for us. Therefore, we are to pray in Jesus' name. John 14:13-14

When I come to God in prayer, calling him "Father", I am on speaking terms with the God of the Universe! And to show you how personal my relationship with God in prayer really is, consider the words of Romans 8:15-16: "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:"

The word *Abba* is Aramaic for "Daddy". How tender, we are coming to our Heavenly Daddy! This does mean that we should show respect for him, but it also means that we are coming to someone who loves us personally as His own child.

As you begin your prayers, approach God in Jesus' name as your loving, Heavenly Father.
You are coming to someone who cares.
You are coming to someone who wants to listen.
You are coming to someone who knows you and understands you better than anyone else in this whole world!

PRAYER IS PRACTICAL

When you pray, you pray to "Our Father". He is not just your Father, but the Father of all those who know the Lord Jesus as Savior.

You are coming to pray with and for others!
You are not the only one at the throne of grace!
And although you are there to talk to God about your own needs, you are also there to talk to God for the needs of others as well.
The whole Lord's Prayer is in the plural, therefore you are also praying for others!

And we are told to pray for others. Ephesians 5:18, James 5:16

But more important than praying for others, you are praying for the glory of God! You are not to come to God to get Him to do your bidding. God is not a genie in a bottle. You don't rub the bottle of "prayer", so God, the Genie will grant you 3 or more wishes.

You are coming to God to accomplish His program.
That's why the words, "Hallowed be Thy name," "Thy Kingdom Come," "Thy Will Be Done," and "Thine is the kingdom."

Think of being contracted to build a house.
The man who is purchasing this house simply says to you, "When you need something, ask. I'll provide it."

You need a bulldozer and other equipment to get the ground ready and to dig a hole for the basement. You ask, and the equipment and operators show up.

You need cement for footers for a foundation. So you ask. The cement truck arrives.

You need lumber, you ask, and it arrives.
You need carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and ask for them. They arrive.
And so it goes through the whole building process.
When something was needed, the man building the house was asked, and whatever was needed in materials or laborers was provided.

Why was the man so cooperative? You were building his house! He'll have the glory of living there and enjoying the finished product.

So it is with your prayer life. Jesus is building a Church, but He's using you. And He says to you, whatever you need, ask and I will provide. 1 John 5:14-15

Prayer is practical. You are coming to "our father" with countless other Christians.
You are coming to pray for others, as well as yourself.
But most of all, you are coming to bring glory to God in your prayers and to accomplish His work.

PRAYER IS POWERFUL

"Our Father, which art in Heaven..."

As well as having a Heavenly Father, I still have an earthly father.
When I was little and Dad was in the prime of his life, I viewed him as fairly powerful. He could do things that I couldn't do, and he could provide things that I couldn't provide.

I saw my Dad this week. With all due respect, my Dad is now a little old man. Lord willing, he'll be 80 in August. He has been fully retired for years. His health is not the greatest, and things that he used to be able to do with no sweat, he struggles to do now. I love my Dad and respect him greatly, but my Dad is limited in his power.

But when I pray, "Our Father, which art in Heaven", I am reminding myself that my Heavenly Father is in charge of the throne room of the universe! It is God who sits on the Heavenly Throne and runs the show!

Think for a moment of the power of the one with whom you have the privilege to speak.

Our Father is all-knowing. Psalm 139:1-4

Our Heavenly Father is also present everywhere. He's always here! Psalm 139:7-10

Our Heavenly Father also understands us because, he is the one who made us! Psalm 139:14, Psalm 103:13-14

Our Heavenly Father is also all-powerful. There is nothing too hard for Him to do!
Jeremiah 32:17

My earthly Dad is a pretty generous guy. He'd do anything for his children that is good for them, if he could. Especially now, he can't.

However, my Heavenly Father will also do that which is good for me.
And He has the power to do it!

So when you approach God in prayer, don't rush into His presence, unless of course, it's an emergency!

Come before him as Our Father

Come as His child in Jesus name.

Come to pray for His glory and the needs of yourself and others.

Come, realizing that your all-powerful Heavenly Father has the power and the desire to answer your prayers.

Matthew 6:9 HALLOWED BE THY NAME The Lord's Prayer - Part #2 of 8

Revelation 4:11 - "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Worship is an important part of church.

Worship is an important part of our prayer lives.

Worship is evidence that you are filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18-20

When we approach God in prayer, we begin by remembering that we are coming into the presence of "Our Father". This is assuming that the person praying has trusted Christ as his Savior. John 1:12, Rom 8:15-16

So we come, praying to our Father.

And because our Father is who He is, our prayer nicely flows into the adoration of worship, "Hallowed be Thy name."

Worship includes at least three things that we need to consider:

THERE IS REVERENCE IN WORSHIP

According to Martin Lloyd-Jones, The word "hallowed" means "to sanctify, or to revere, or to make and keep holy."

It is to have reverence.

It is to have respect.

It is to set apart as special.

The request is that God's name would be reverenced by us, by others, and by the whole world. Why reverence for the name of God? God's names reveal who He is. In Bible times, the names that God used for Himself and that He was called revealed the character of God. (In my message I took time to elaborate on some of the names of God. You might want to do the same.)

THERE IS REJOICING IN WORSHIP

There is certainly an attitude of rejoicing worship in the Psalms.

Psalm 104:33-34, Psalm 34:1-3, Psalm 30:4, Psalm 96:1-2

How do we go about rejoicing in worship?

To answer that question, let us go to Psalm 100.

Psalm 100:1, 2, and 4 show us how to rejoice in worship. (Elaborate)

THERE ARE REASONS FOR WORSHIP

Psalm 100:3,5

1. The Lord is God.
2. The Lord has made us.
3. We (Christians) are the Lord's People.
4. We (Christians) are the sheep of the Lord's Pasture (Psalm 23)
5. The Lord is good.
6. The Lord's mercy is everlasting.
7. The Lord's truth endures to all generations.

Not only should our worship include reverence, rejoicing, and reasons in our own private times of prayer, but let us remember to worship God in church with reverence, rejoicing, and reasons.

Matthew 6:10 THY KINGDOM COME (THE LORD'S PRAYER PART #3 OF 8)

God has given us a great privilege. The privilege is to be a part of His great work here on earth. God wants to accomplish great things in the lives of believers and unbelievers, and he wants us to be a part of it! God has chosen to get His work accomplished by answering our prayers. That is why we are to pray, "Thy Kingdom Come". John 14:12-14, 1 Peter 4:7, 1 John 5:14-15

When we elaborate on these words in prayer, we can ask God to establish his kingdom in several ways.

ASK GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS MILLENNIAL KINGDOM ON EARTH

Jesus is coming again! When He comes He will establish His Millennial Kingdom. Acts 1:9-11, Revelation 19:11-21, Isaiah 11:1-9, Revelation 20:1-2

As Christians we should be anxiously looking forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus to establish His Kingdom, and praying for His arrival.

ASK GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM IN YOUR HEART

Right now we should be desirous that God's Kingdom would reign in our hearts. We should want Jesus to be Lord right now! Ephesians 3:17, Romans 12:1, Galatians 2:20

Our daily prayer should be that Jesus would reign in our hearts by faith! We should examine our lives for sin, and make sure that we are on good terms with him. Psalm 66:18, Psalm 139:23-24

ASK GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM IN YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

You know those among your family and friends who need salvation - pray for them.

You know the weaknesses of your friends and family - pray for them.

You know the trials and tribulations of your friends, pray for them.

Ask God to bring His kingdom to their hearts. 1 John 5:14-15

ASK GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM IN YOUR CHURCH

The more we pray for God's Kingdom to reign in the hearts and lives of our fellow believers, the more that will be accomplished. Paul was always praying for the churches that he knew. 1 Thessalonians 1:2-4, Philippians 1:3-10, Romans 1:8-9

ASK GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM IN THE UNSAVED

I don't really understand how God balances free will, His election and prayer. I do know this however that God's will is that people get saved. 1 Timothy 2:1-4, 2 Peter 3:9

It is God's will that nobody perish.

It is God's plan to answer prayer.

When we pray according to God's will he hears.

Pray for the unsaved to get saved.

Matthew 6:10 THY WILL BE DONE #4 of 8 in a series on The Lord's Prayer

I want to remind you that God has a perfect plan for your life.

I want to remind you that God has a perfect plan for your family and friends.

I want to remind you that God's will is "good, acceptable and perfect", according to Romans 12:2.

We return to our study of the model prayer, the Lord's Prayer. We said that the Lord's Prayer is a skeleton for prayer, and that we need to put meat on that skeleton by elaborating on these requests as we pray.

Prayer has much to do the will of God.

If we are praying for the glory of God, we will want God's will to be done.

If we are praying to accomplish God's purposes, we will want God's will to be done.

Because all of us are human and tend to be selfish, we have a tendency towards wanting our will to be done instead of God's.

This little phrase in the Lord's Prayer is a reminder, that our prayers are to be centered around God's plan and not ours!

This morning we want to consider 3 things about praying thy will be done. The first letter of each word in our outline spells the word, "ask."

A - ASK ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL - 1 John 5:14-15

1 John 5:14-15 - "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

God wants us to be confident when we pray.

God wants us to expect positive answers when we pray.

God wants us to pray in faith. Mark 11:24

God wants us to be confident when we pray. We are confident that God will answer our prayers when we know that what we are asking is God's will. if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

So how do we know that what we are asking for is according to the will of God? We need to know what the will of God is, in order to ask for the right things. And the place we discover the will of God is in the Word of God.

We are such weak, unbelieving prayers, because we are weak, unbelieving, or should I say non-participating readers of God's Word. You want to know what you can pray, knowing that God will answer? Read the Word of God!

Do you ever pray for the church services here? I got to thinking, as an example of believing prayer, what can we pray for the church services here, knowing that what we pray is the will of God.

1. Pray that Christians will come to church. Hebrews 10:25
2. Pray that non-Christians will come and hear the Word of God. 2 Peter 3:9
3. Pray that the Pastor will preach the way God wants him to preach. 2 Timothy 4:2
4. Pray that the unsaved will trust Christ as Savior. John 3:36
5. Pray that the saved will obey the teaching of God's Word. James 1:22

S - SEEK GOD'S WILL - James 1:5-8

There are times when we do not know how to pray.

We are not sure what to ask for.

Sometimes we have decisions to make, and we don't know what to do. That's when we come to God and pray the way James tells us to pray.

Vs. 5 - When we don't know God's will, especially during times of trial, we are to ask our loving heavenly Father, who gives guidance liberally. And notice when God gives guidance, you don't get a lecture with it! He doesn't upbraid or rebuke you.

As you pray, God will give you guidance! He will show you His will.

K - KNEEL IN SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL - Luke 22:42

Matthew 6:10 - "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Now when I say we are to kneel in submission to God's will, I do not necessarily mean literally. In our hearts our ultimate goal should be to ask for, and to do the will of God!

If we are truly sold out to God as Christians, we will only want to ask for things that are truly His will. Therefore we must be willing for God to answer us with the word "no".

When will God say "no" to your requests?

He will say "no" when you are asking for selfish reasons. James 4:4

God will say "no", if you are asking contrary to His revealed Word. Many a Christian gal has asked for guidance about marrying a non-Christian guy. Every time God is saying no, because that's what the Bible says, not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. 2 Corinthians 6:14

God will also say "no" to your requests, when His will is different than yours. You remember hearing of our Lord Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew what misery, humiliation, pain, and suffering lay ahead for Him at the cross. So he prayed.

Luke 22:41-42

Jesus wanted a way out, but realized that there was no other way. He was willing to accept God's perfect will, which for Him was the cross.

How willing are you to accept God's will?

We are taught to pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Do you know how God's will is done in Heaven?

God's will is done immediately and completely!

As a Christian is that your desire?

The most important thing is that God's will be done.

Your will be done, Lord, in my church.

Your will be done, Lord, in my family.

Your will be done, Lord, in my country.

Your will be done, Lord, on my job.

Your will be done, Lord, in my life.

Your will be done, Lord, in my personal relationships.

The Apostle Paul was a great man of prayer and a great servant of God, actually had a prayer that received a "no" answer. He wanted relief from a physical problem, and God said, "no". 2 Corinthians 12:7-9

Many of you are parents.

Have you said "yes" to every request that your children have requested of you? Of course not, because you know what's best for your children. And what they ask for is not always best.

So it is with our loving Heavenly Father.

He does not always answer yes, because what we are asking for is not best.

My friend, God has given you a great privilege if you are a born again Christian. The privilege is to pray according to the will of God.

A - ASK ACCORDING TO GOD'S WILL

S - SEEK GOD'S WILL

K - KNEEL IN SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL

Matthew 6:11 GIVE US THIS DAY #5 of 8 in a series on The Lord's Prayer

Who needs to hear about God's miraculous provision for His Saints? We do! We have lived in relative wealth and prosperity for so long, we take it for granted. But that could be coming to an end!

The stock market continues to tumble.

Businesses continue to cut jobs.

The "mad cow" and "hoof and mouth" diseases are threatening meat supplies in Britain.

Gas and oil prices remain high.

There seems to be much concern about recession.

And although I'm no fan of recession or economic hard times, perhaps these financial challenges are good for us. When times are real good people kind of forget about God.

When times are bad we are reminded that we are absolutely dependent on God.

We have been studying the model prayer, the Lord's Prayer. We said that the Lord's Prayer is a skeleton for prayer, and that we need to put meat on that skeleton by elaborating on these requests as we pray.

The first part of the Lord's Prayer centers on God and His glory ("Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.") The next part of the Lord's Prayer centers on the things that concern us.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

Bread is basic food. I think every culture has a form of bread. When we are praying to God for our daily bread, we are asking Him to provide for our basic needs. Does this mean that man does nothing in order to provide for himself? No! Proverbs 13:4, 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Ephesians 4:28

Why does God tell us to ask for our daily bread, even if we seem to be able to provide for ourselves? We are dependent on God to send the sunshine and the rain, and the proper weather conditions. We are dependent on God to give us good enough health so that we can work.

We are dependent upon God to provide us the wisdom and ability to work.

We are dependent on God to make jobs available so that we can work.

In order for us to pray properly concerning our daily bread, I think that we need to consider three things, all three of which are covered here in Matthew 6.

PRIORITIES

Everybody has a list of priorities, those things which are most important to us. And everybody's list of priorities is different. The priorities of the young ladies who sang this morning are different than the priorities of their parents. The priorities of our young adults are different from the priorities of senior citizens. The priorities of our grammar school children are different from those who are middle-aged.

One of the things that we must realize is that all two often my priorities are different from God's priorities. As Christians, our priorities should be God's priorities. If we expect God to answer any of our prayers, including the prayer for our daily bread, we must make sure that our priorities are in line with Him.

In Matthew 6 I find that God has much to say about priorities. I've summed them up with four words beginning with the letter "F".

* First

Matthew 6:33

When you wake up in the morning, what do you think of first?

I mean other than having to make a trip to the bathroom.

Your first thoughts are probably a good indication of where your priorities are.

Jesus says to seek first the Kingdom of God.

Now let me tell you, you can't productively seek God's Kingdom unless you are a member of God's Kingdom. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3 - Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. See Romans 3:10-12, Ezekiel 18:4, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Ephesians 2:8-9

Once you are a member of God's Kingdom, it means that God the Son, is your king. After all, we can't have a kingdom without a king, can we?

Jesus said in John 13:13, Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

As Christians, how do we go about making sure that Jesus is king in our lives? By following Him as disciples. Luke 9:23

* Faith

As members of God's Kingdom, our faith should squarely rest on God. But all too often we get worried or anxious about our needs. In Matthew 6 Jesus assures us that our loving Heavenly Father has everything under control.

Read Matthew 6:25-32.

God is simply telling us that we are not to worry, but we are to trust!

Let us realize that God loves and is concerned about us. In fact, God considers us very important. Luke 12:6-7

* FACT

Jesus shares a very important fact concerning priorities in Matthew 6:24.

It's amazing what people will do for money.

They will become traitors to their countries, as this recent spy scandal has shown us.

They will become immoral.
They will lie.
They will steal.
They will sacrifice the well being of their families.
They will work themselves to death.

Jesus is saying in this verse, "You can't serve God and money."

For so many, money and the things that money can buy become a God. Wanting money and the things that money can buy is idolatry! Colossians 3:5

Very often we are anxious not about the basic needs that we have, but we are anxious or worried because we want things that we don't need or put ahead of God on our priority list.

In the context of this passage Jesus says you can't serve God and Money at the same time.
But the truth is not only can you not serve God and money simultaneously, but that you can't serve God and anything else simultaneously. The fact is we will only have one master. The question is who will that Master be?

We wonder sometimes why God doesn't seem to be providing for us as well as we think we could. Could it be it's because we have the wrong Master? Deuteronomy 6:4-5

* FORMULA

READ MATTHEW 6:19-21 - Jesus is giving us a formula here for true riches.
If you are putting God's Kingdom first
If you have faith that God will provide for your needs
And if you believe the fact that you must serve God instead of money,
The logical conclusion is to invest what money you do have into the Kingdom of God.

Jesus is not suggesting that we must live in poverty.
Jesus is not suggesting that you shouldn't save for retirement.
Jesus is suggesting that we are not to hoard or stockpile our wealth.
When we invest our treasures in the things of God, there is eternal reward.
I think especially of investing in missions.

PROMISES

Matthew 6:33

Here is God's great promise.
As you put the Kingdom of God first, Jesus says all your needs will be met.
You will have the food, clothes and shelter that you need.
It is as if God is saying, you take care of my business, I'll take care of yours.
Also see Philippians 4:19 2 and Corinthians 9:6-8

As we give cheerfully, with the right attitudes and for the right reasons, God is able to make it so that we have what we need can share in every good work.

So let's believe these promises!

PETITIONS

Give us this day our daily bread
You probably thought we'd never get to this verse!
But I feel that it's only as our priorities are right and as we claim the promises of God, that we will experience the full impact of our prayers.

Thinking of bread as our basic needs, we bring them to our loving Heavenly Father. We ask Him for them, because we realize that He is the true source of all blessing.

And notice we are to come daily to ask!
It's daily bread.
It's daily needs.
Matthew 7:7-11

Matthew 6:12 FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS #6 of 8 in a series on The Lord's Prayer

I have been pastoring for 25 years. I have discovered that the biggest problem people have is unforgiveness. I think that they do not realize how important forgiveness is. Not only did Jesus teach us to pray "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors", but the words immediately following the Lord prayer are a real challenge. Matthew 6:14-15

I want us to consider some important truths about forgiveness.

FORGIVENESS IS REQUIRED

We need forgiveness, first of all, in order to have eternal life.

Sin causes separation. When Adam and Eve sinned against God in the Garden of Eden, they were separated from God's presence. God evicted them!

God told Israel in Isaiah 59:2, "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

When Jesus died on the cross for your sins, He paid the price so that you can be forgiven. When we trust Christ as Savior, that forgiveness becomes ours. Colossians 2:13-14, Ephesians 1:7

Not only do we need forgiveness for eternal life but also we need forgiveness on a daily basis. Psalms 66:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Ephesians 4:30-31, 1 John 1:8,10

Not only is forgiveness required for salvation and by believers after salvation, but it is also required that we forgive. Matthew 18:21-22, Ephesians 4:32

FORGIVENESS IS REQUESTED

Forgiveness is something that we need to seek.

When one places their faith in Christ as Savior, they have sought and found forgiveness. In a sense, because they have trusted Christ, they have asked for forgiveness. Ephesians 2:8-9, Ephesians 1:7

Forgiveness of sin is also to be requested by us when we as Christians sin against God. Psalms 32:5, 1 John 1:9

There is another sense in which we need to ask forgiveness. We need to ask forgiveness of each other.

We so appreciate it when people come to us and say, "I'm sorry, I was wrong." We must realize that it is our responsibility at times to go to others and say those same words, "I'm sorry, I was wrong." Matthew 5:22-24, James 5:16

Luke 17:3-4 - "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him."

If I am to forgive my brother who confesses his sins, should I not also seek the forgiveness from my brother when I sin against him?

FORGIVENESS IS RELATIVE

Matthew 6:12 - "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Any time I come to the Lord in prayer I must realize that I am just as responsible to forgive as I am to seek forgiveness.

Sometimes it is hardest to forgive those you love.

But forgive them we must do.

When we fail to forgive we become bitter. Hebrews 12:15

Also, when we fail to forgive, we do not experience our Lord's healing forgiveness. I am forgiven relative to the extent that I am willing to forgive.

Matthew 6:14-15 - "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."

FORGIVENESS IS REPEATED

FORGIVENESS IS REPEATED BY GOD: 1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Psalms 103:10-14

FORGIVENESS IS REPEATED BY US:

Luke 17:3-6

Just think how many times you have been forgiven by God.
It's no wonder that you need to forgive others more than once.

Forgiveness means you are removing responsibility from that person. They no longer owe you.

Don't bring it up to them.

Don't bring it up to others.

Don't bring it up to yourself.

Don't bring it up to God.

Forgiveness is not forgetting, but remembering without anger.

FORGIVENESS IS REQUIRED

FORGIVENESS IS REQUESTED

FORGIVENESS IS RELATIVE

FORGIVENESS IS REPEATED

Matthew 6:13 LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION Part #7 of 8 on The Lord's Prayer

A minister was reviewing the family bills. He found a bill from the local dress store for \$250 for a new dress. He confronted his wife yelling that she knew they couldn't afford such expense. The wife replied, "I know honey, but I tried the dress on and Satan tempted me. He said, 'My dear, you look lovely in that dress.' So I bought it."

The husband asked, "Why didn't you say, 'Get thee behind me Satan?'"

"I did," she replied, "But he said, 'My dear it looks lovely in the back too!'" (Source Unknown)

We all face temptations. James 1:13-15

We will all be tempted to do what is wrong. We can not avoid temptation. However, I believe that God has designed a way for the amount of temptation that we face to be drastically reduced.

As we ask Him, He will give us victory over temptation.

We come to the next portion of our model prayer, The Lord's Prayer. Matthew 6:13 - "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." If I sincerely make this my prayer request before God, I am saying,

THERE IS A DESIRE ON MY PART

Do you know why some Christians have a real problem with temptation? THEY WANT TO!

There are areas of their lives that they love so much that they can't let go. Their desire for the sin is so great, that it does not take much to tempt them.

Some love pornography so much that it doesn't take much to get them to be looking at pornographic magazines or websites.

Some love sex so much that it doesn't take much to make them immoral.

Some love gossip so much that it doesn't take much to make them gossip.

Some love hunting, fishing, or sports so much that it doesn't take much to make these things their Gods.

Some love alcohol so much that it doesn't take much for them to make them drink.

Some love themselves so much that it doesn't take much for them to lie to save their skins.

Some love themselves so much that it doesn't take much to get them to worry. And the great majority of worry is self-centered.

What am I saying? We are tempted to sin because we have the wrong kinds of desires.

When we pray in sincerity, And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: we are expressing the desire to have victory over the wrong kinds of desires.

Please turn to 1 John 2:15-17.

According to this passage, we are tempted in three areas. All the temptations I mentioned a moment ago fall into one of three categories: LUST OF THE FLESH - LUST OF THE EYES - PRIDE OF LIFE

They are the same three areas in which Eve was tempted in the Garden of Eden. God said not to eat a certain fruit. Satan tempted Eve. The end result was that Eve succumbed to temptation. Genesis 3:6

Notice what 1 John 2:15-17 is saying. If we love the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, we do not love God the Father! We are easily tempted because we love the world and don't really love the Father! We have a greater desire to sin than we do to please God!

We must remember how much God loves us. Psalms 145:8-9, 1 John 4:10

We must remember that we are to love Him!

1 John 4:19 - We love him, because he first loved us.
John 14:15 - "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Christian, do you love God?

Christian, do you love the Lord Jesus?

If you do, you should have a desire not to sin, because you want to please Him.

If the desire of your heart is not to sin, then your prayer needs to be in all sincerity, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

When you love God and truly desire to please Him, it will be easier to say "no" to those temptations, and to be asking God to deliver you from them.

THERE IS A DECISION ON MY PART

What is the decision that I make as I pray this prayer?

My decision is that, with God's help, I am not going to give in to temptation.

Notice that I said, "with God's help."

You can't do it yourself.

Romans 6:1-4

When Jesus died on the cross, you died with Him.

When Jesus was buried, you were buried with Him.

When Jesus rose to newness of life, you rose to a new life.

Romans 6:10-14

God says you must make a decision. You must decide or "reckon" that you are dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God" through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Such a decision brings another decision. To yield yourself to God and the parts of your body as instruments of righteousness unto God. You will either yield to sin or yield to God. With God's help you decide to yield to God!

And notice the promise in verse 14, "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

If your desire is to please God because you love God, your decision must be to yield to God. If you yield to God, your prayer again must be "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:"

THERE IS A DEPENDENCE ON MY PART

As I said a moment ago, you can not do this yourself. You need God's help. And this request is actually an admission on our parts that we can't do it ourselves, and that we need God's help.

"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:"

And the neat thing is that God will answer our request!

Turn please to 1 Corinthians 10:12-14.

Vs. 12 - "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

We are warned here that we must be careful to not get too smug. There are times when we think that we are doing just fine Spiritually, and that we have everything under control. That's when we need to look out!

1 Corinthians 10:13 - "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Any temptation that you receive is a temptation common to the human race. You won't find that you have a new temptation. In fact the Lord Jesus was already tempted with that same temptation and victorious over it!

Hebrews 4:15 - "...but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Now look what else it says in this passage - but God is faithful!

God is faithful - He loves you!

God is faithful - He wants you have victory over sin!

God is faithful - He will help you!

You are not being tempted above that you are able. Your temptation to sin, no matter how great it is, can be defeated, not in your own strength, but with God's help.

With each temptation God says, "There is a way to escape so that you can bear it."

So when God provides a way to escape, what is our responsibility? Take it!

1 Corinthians 10:14 - Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

So when temptation comes, we must run from it!

It is as if you are in a burning building and someone yells, "You can escape through the back door." Whether you escape or whether you burn is your decision.

God says, are you being tempted? Run! I will help you escape.

You've heard the Bible story about Joseph. He was being tempted to sleep with his master's wife. He literally ran, leaving his coat behind. He was later falsely accused, yet he was innocent. But he had to take God's way of escape.

Matthew 6:13 THINE IS THE KINGDOM Part #8 of 8 on The Lord's Prayer

I personally wonder how long God needs to bombard us with His loving-kindness, mercy, grace, and yes discipline, before we surrender to Him. In preparing for this message I was struck in a new way by the fact that the Lord's Prayer concludes in absolute submission to God. That makes me think that one of the reasons that we do not see more prayers answered is because we are not submissive to God. We are holding out for our will, our own plans and our own satisfaction.

The Lord's Prayer in Matthew concludes with the words, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

Do you see surrender there? Do you see submission there?

"Thine is the Kingdom" - ALL AUTHORITY BELONGS TO HIM!

These words come off our lips very easily, "Thine is the Kingdom."

But I fear that our hearts do not always match our lips.

Matthew 15:8 - "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me."

I fear that in our hearts in various ways we say, "MY kingdom come!"

We want our time to be used the way we want to use it.

We want our money to be used the way we want to use it.

We want our children to succeed in the way we want them to succeed.

We want our plans to be approved by God so we will have what we want.

We want our church to be comfortable, and not necessarily as aggressive as Jesus would have us to be.

What is authority? To me it is right to tell someone what to do. You can certainly see how God has that authority.

* He has authority because he is creator. Genesis 1:1

* He has authority because he is omnipotent. Jeremiah 32:17

* He has authority because He is our Father. John 1:12

And what about the Lord Jesus, does He have authority? Matthew 28:18, Colossians 1:17-19, Philippians 2:10-11, 1 Corinthians 15:25

And we must also remember that there is judgment coming.

The unsaved will face Jesus at the "Great White Throne". Revelation 20:11-12

The saved will meet "Him at the Judgment Seat of Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:12

God the Father has authority.

God the Son has authority.

Does God the Holy Spirit have authority?

Although He works in cooperation with the Father and the Son, He still has authority. He's the Spirit of God. He's the Spirit of Christ. His directions and leadership is to be followed!

We should not quench the Spirit through unbelief or grieve the Spirit through disobedience. 1 Thessalonians 5:19, Ephesians 4:30

So what are we saying when we say "thine is the kingdom"?

We are saying that God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit have every right to rule right now.

We are recognizing God's right to rule.

We are recognizing God's rule in our lives.

We are submitting to God's Will, in every part of the prayer which we have just prayed.

If it's God's Kingdom, He is King!

We are saying that He is king over our bodies.

We are saying that He is king over our behavior.

We are saying that He is king over our plans.

We are saying that He is king in this church.

We are saying that He is king in our families.

"Thine is the Power" - ALL ABILITY BELONGS TO HIM!

We try too hard.

We face a problem and try to solve it ourselves.

We face a challenge and try to solve it ourselves.

We try to serve Christ in our own strength.

We try to build this church in own strength.

We try to witness in our own strength.

We try to live the right way in our own strength.

When in reality, as we pray, "thine is the power", we are realizing that we can't do it in our own strength.

Genesis 18:14, Jeremiah 32:27, Luke 18:27

How has God planned for His work to get done through His children? Through dependence upon Him! John 14:12-14, John 15:4-7

"Thine is the Glory" - ALL ADORATION BELONGS TO HIM!

There is another problem that we have which requires our total surrender.

We want too much of the attention for ourselves.

We want too much of the credit for ourselves.

We want to have glory for what is accomplished. Luke 17:7-10, Matthew 23:11

We need to realize that it is God, the Father, and God the Holy Spirit who are deserving of glory.

Read Revelation 4

"Thine is the Kingdom" - ALL AUTHORITY BELONGS TO HIM!

"Thine is the Power" - ALL ABILITY BELONGS TO HIM!

"Thine is the Glory" - ALL ADORATION BELONGS TO HIM!

So the issue comes back to our submission or surrender.

How long will it take for us to surrender in our hearts to the Lord Jesus?

Matthew 7:1-6 LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

It is very easy to pass judgment on others, and it is very easy to be wrong. In this passage we see an a common and much misunderstood problem in Christianity today. It is a problem that I call, "asking for, or looking for trouble". When we practice the wrong kind of judgment we invite trouble into our own lives.

STANDARDS OF JUDGMENT - Vss. 1-2

Vs. 1 - People have read this verse and have come to the conclusion that they should not do any judging at all. This is not what Jesus is saying. There are at least three specific times when we as Christians should do some judging.

1. We should be able to judge a false teacher when we see one. Matthew 7:15-20
2. We are to judge sin in the local church. 1 Corinthians 5
3. We are to judge disagreements between Christians. 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

If there are occasions for us to judge, when should we not judge?

To judge here carries the idea of condemning another. This would also refer to a critical spirit. Gossip is involved here. People are forever criticizing and evaluating others in a negative sense.

We are all too capable of criticizing a person's motives, methods and ministry (effectiveness of it). Preachers who have national ministries seem to be favorite targets for unmerciful attacks. I don't always agree with what these ministers say and/or do, but the judgmental pronouncements that I have seen and heard are often uncalled for.

How can we tell when we are being critical or judgmental? We can ask:

1. Am I sincerely grieved over sin, or am I speaking self-righteously?
2. Am I speaking about this person's fault because I am concerned about this person's spiritual well being? If not, I should keep my mouth shut. And even if I am concerned, I should keep my shut anyway. Pro 11:13
3. Am I critical of this person because I want to make this person to look bad and me to look good?
4. Am I critical of this person because I am secretly jealous of his success or notoriety?

Vs. 2 - Notice that God promises judgment according to the same standards that we judge. I, for one, would rather have fair, equitable, and merciful judgment concerning myself. Wouldn't you?

I get the impression in this verse that God is saying, "When you criticize another for his failure, you will be tempted in the same area."

Have you ever criticized another for losing their temper, and then lost yours?

Have you ever criticized someone for being defensive, and then become defensive yourself?

Have you ever criticized another for being dishonest, and then been tempted to be dishonest yourself?

SEEING THE PROBLEM - Vss. 3-5

Does Jesus expect us to ignore the problems in another's life? The answer is "No!"

The Lord does want us to see the other person's problem clearly.

Most of us can spot the problems of others, so we think, without spotting our own problems.

Vss. 3-4 - A mote is a piece of sawdust or chaff. A beam is a log or wooden rafter.

I think of Jesus were speaking in our language today he might say, "Why are you finding fault with the splinter in your brother's eye, when there's a two by four in your eye?"

You can't see clearly to correct a brother or a sister when you yourself have greater problems.

Vs. 5 - When we feel motivated to criticize we should look at ourselves first, and confess whatever failures we have (1 John 1:5-10). As we do that two things will happen. First, when I am right with the Lord, I will know whether I need to deal with the person's problem or not. Second, if I do go to that person with a criticism, I will do it with the right attitude. Galatians 6:1

SHARING THE TRUTH - Vs. 6

One of the things we should be doing as Christians is sharing. We should be sharing the gospel with the unsaved (1 Peter 3:15). We should be sharing what the Lord is doing in our lives with other believers (Hebrews 10:24-25). And we should be sharing what God is teaching with others. (2 Timothy 2:1-2).

In this verse we are told to be discriminating as we share with others.

We are not required to share our testimony, or the Gospel, or blessings, or truths from God's Word with those who seek to mock, make fun, or ridicule Christianity. Indeed we are to share our "pearls" with those who will listen, but when someone is seeking to cause embarrassment for the Gospel, we are not obligated to share.

Matthew 7:1-5 JUDGING OTHERS

A SIMPLE CAUTION - Vss. 1-2

We should not judge others because we will be judged on the same basis that we judge others.

A SIMPLE CONDITION - Vss. 3-4

We tend to want to correct others without considering our own faults.

A SIMPLE CURE - Vs. 5

We are to deal with our own faults before we deal with the faults of others.

Matthew 7:7-11 OUR (NOT SO) SECRET WEAPON

When the Lord sent our family to the Village Bible Church in Fonda, New York, things were not good. I was the third pastor in the church's brief 5-year history. After we arrived, things did not get better, but got worse. We came to a very low point in the church's history.

I spoke on prayer in the evening services.

We prayed in our evening services.

God heard and answered our prayers.

We asked the Lord for at least 10 new families, and God sent them. The church came back to life, and still prospers today under a pastor that came right out of that congregation.

What was our secret weapon? The secret weapon that is really not so secret is that God answers prayer!

Our secret weapon involves:

PERSISTENT PRAYER - Vs. 7

God does answer emergency prayers. One year a church I pastored rented a camp for a winter youth retreat. We had a key for the lock on the door. Unfortunately, the door itself was also locked, and that key we did not have. We prayed. Have heard the expression, "When God closes a door, He leaves a window open?" In this case, this literally happened. There was an unlocked window. Someone crawled in the window and was able to unlock the door from the inside. Immediate answer to an emergency prayer.

There are other prayers we pray that do not receive an answer right away.

Often all we do is pray once for a request and forget that we even prayed.

The meaning of the words of verse 7 in the original Greek carry the idea of persistent prayer.

We are to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking. Mark 11:22-24, Luke 11:5-8

PROPER PETITIONS - Vss. 7-8

There are three types of requests or petitions mentioned here.

Asking - We are to ask for things that are God's will. John 15:16, 1 John 5:14-15

We are to ask about everything that bothers us. Philippians 4:6

Seeking - When we pray, we do not always know the will of God. At these times we must seek God's will in prayer. James 1:5-8

Knocking - Sometimes we are knocking on what appear to be closed doors! Only God can open that door in order for us to have victory. We must ask Him to open those doors.

PARENTAL PROMISE - Vss. 9-11

Just as we take care of our children's needs, God takes care of the needs of His children who ask

Matthew 7:7-11 ABOUT PRAYER

A CONTINUAL PROCESS.Vs. 7

We are to keep on asking, seeking, knocking.

A COMFORTING PROMISE Vs. 8

A COMPASSIONATE PARENT Vss. 9-11

Matthew 7:7-11 PRAY!

THE STEPS OF PRAYER - Vs. 7

Ask

Seek

Knock

THE SUPPLY THROUGH PRAYER - Vs. 8

The one who asks receives.

The one who seeks finds.

The one who knocks receives an open door.

THE SUCCESS OF PRAYER - Vss. 9-11

The success of prayer is guaranteed by a loving, caring Heavenly Father who delights to answer our prayers more than we delight to answer our children's requests for food.

Matthew 7:7-11 SIMPLE PRAYER

A SIMPLE PROCEDURE - Vs. 7

Ask

Seek

Knock

A SIMPLE PROMISE - Vs. 8

Those who ask receive.

Those who seek find.

Those who knock have doors opened.

A SIMPLE PRINCIPLE - Vss. 9-11

We, being sinners, know how to answer our children's reasonable requests.

How much more does our Heavenly Father know how to answer our requests.

Matthew 7:13-14 FACING REALITY

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereto: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

There are times in our lives when we have to face reality.

A football team, losing 41-0 in the fourth quarter of the game must face the reality that they are going to lose.

A family sitting by the bedside of a dying relative has to face the reality that the person is not going to get better. A young couple, newly married, has to face the reality that life is different now that they are married.

People need to face reality concerning eternal life.

THERE ARE TWO GATES

1. There is a wide gate. The wide gate implies room to get through. You can come anyway you want, bring in whatever you want, and bring whoever you want.

The "wide gate" which many think of as the gate to salvation includes earning one's way to Heaven, keeping the ten commandments, following a cult, being a member of a non-Christian religion, and a host of other ways of getting in to Heaven. As we'll see later, the wide gate leads to destruction, not heaven.

2. There is a (strait) narrow gate. The narrow gate is just that. There is only room for us to go through. We must leave behind all other ways of getting to Heaven but one! That one way, that narrow gate is a person. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. We must put our explicit trust in Him for eternal life. John 14:6, John 10:9, Acts 4:12

THERE ARE TWO WAYS

1. There is the broad way. The wide gate leads to a broad way, or a super highway of lifestyle. When taking the broad way people can live however they care to live.

2. There is the narrow way. The narrow gate leads to a narrow way of living. The person who is saved through faith in Christ is a changed person (2 Corinthians 5:17). Becoming a Christian cost him nothing, but living the Christian life will cost him everything (James 1:2-4, Romans 12:1, Luke 9:23, Galatians 2:20).

THERE ARE TWO DESTINATIONS

1. The wide gate and the broad way lead to destruction. Revelation 20:11-15

2. The narrow gate and the narrow way lead to eternal life. John 3:16

THERE ARE TWO GROUPS

1. There is the group that does not find the narrow way. There will be many.

2. There is the group that does find the narrow way. They will be few in number.

Matthew 7:21 - "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

Matthew 7:13-23 BE RIGHT!

There is no greater satisfaction than knowing you've done what is right! You might want to give some examples of people who have done what was right, no matter what the cost.

In this passage, Jesus challenges us to do some right things!

ENTER THE RIGHT GATE Vss. 13-14

EXAMINE FOR RIGHT FRUIT Vss. 15-20

EXPECT THE RIGHT JUDGMENT Vss. 21-23

Matthew 7:21-27 ADVICE TO HEED

Jesus is concluding the Sermon on the Mount. He gives us some sobering advice that we must heed.

A SCARY WARNING - Vss. 21-23

Not everyone that calls Jesus Lord is going to Heaven! Vs. 21

Those who would enter Heaven must do the will of the Father. Vs. 21

The primary thing a person must do is to place his faith in the Son of God for salvation. Acts 4:12, John 3:36

Some will claim to have done great things in the name of Jesus, but will be rejected. Vss. 22-23

A SECURE FOUNDATION - Vss. 24-25

The person who hears Jesus' words and does them in the one whom is building on a foundation that will keep him through any trial or judgment.

A SHAKY FOUNDATION - Vss. 26-27

The person who hears Jesus words and does not do them is building on a foundation that will wash away during trials and judgment.

Matthew 8:1-13 LEARNING FROM JESUS

JESUS HEALED A LEPER - Vss. 1-4

The leper believed that Jesus could heal him of Jesus was willing.
Jesus was willing. The man was healed.

JESUS HEARD A LEADER - Vss. 5-9

A centurion (captain over a hundred soldiers) requested that Jesus would heal his servant.
The centurion did not consider himself worthy for Jesus to enter his home.
But the centurion had confidence that because Jesus was a man of authority, all He had to do was "speak the word" and his servant would be healed.

JESUS HAD A LESSON - Vss. 10-13

Jesus marvelled at this man's faith.
He contrasted it with the lack of faith that he found in Israel (The centurion was probably a gentile.).
The servant was healed based on the Centurion's faith.

Matthew 8:1-15 HELPED BY THE SAVIOR

There are many people who have been helped by the Lord Jesus (Give your own examples.)

Three such helped people are described in our text.

THE LEPER WAS HELPED BY THE SAVIOR WHO WAS WILLING - Vss. 1-4

We would come to Him more for help if we only realized how willing to help Jesus is!

THE CENTURION WAS HELPED BY THE SAVIOR WHO MARVELLED - Vss. 5-13

The centurion expressed great faith. He realized that Jesus didn't even have to come to his house.
All Jesus had to do was "speak the word" and his servant would receive healing.

Jesus marvelled at this man's faith.

Our faith in this faithless generation should be such that Jesus would be equally pleased with our faith.

PETER'S MOTHER IN-LAW WAS HELPED BY A SAVIOR WHO WAS SERVED - Vss. 4-15

Jesus healed the lady. She served Him. You and I have been healed if we are saved. We should show our appreciation by serving Him in return. Galatians 2:20, 1 John 4:19

Matthew 8:5-13 A GREAT MIRACLE

DESPERATION OF THE CENTURION - Vss. 5-6

DECISION BY JESUS - Vs. 7

DEPENDENCE IN HUMILITY - Vss. 8-9

DECLARATIONS BY JESUS - Vss. 10-13

OF Approval - Vs. 10

OF Disapproval - Vss. 11-12

OF Healing - Vs. 13

Matthew 8:5-13 THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH

The Centurion in this story shows us the kind of faith we should have. It is a faith that:

REQUESTS THE POWER OF GOD Vss. 5-7

RESTS IN THE POWER OF GOD Vss. 8-12

RECEIVES THE POWER OF GOD Vs. 13

Matthew 8:18-34 STATEMENTS

There were several statements made to and about Jesus in these passages.

STATEMENT OF FICTION - Vss. 18-20

"Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." - Vs. 19

STATEMENT OF PRIORITY - Vss. 21-22

"...me first..." - Vs. 21

STATEMENT OF PANIC - Vss. 23-27

"Lord, save us, we perish." - Vs. 25

STATEMENT OF SURPRISE - Vs. 27

"What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!"

STATEMENT OF SEPARATION - Vss. 28-34

"What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" - Vs. 29

Matthew 8:23-27 MASTER OF THE STORM

No Christian escapes the storms of life (James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-5). It is best to remember that we have a personal faith relationship with the one who is in control of all stormy weather.

THE CHALLENGE OF A GREAT PROBLEM - Vss. 23-24

THE CONFUSION CAUSED BY PANIC - Vs. 25

THE CORRECTION CONCERNING FAITH - Vs. 26a

THE CALM THAT JESUS GIVES - Vss. 26b-27

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Matthew 8:23-27 FACING STORMS

We all face the storms of life. We all have problems to weather through.

Here are some practical tips on how to face them.

1. FOLLOW THE LORD JESUS - Vs. 23 - MY COURSE

2. EXPECT STORMS - Vs. 24 - MY CAUTION

3. DON'T PANIC, TRUST - Vss. 25-26a - MY CONFIDENCE

4. EXPERIENCE JESUS' PEACE - Vs. 26b - MY CALM

Matthew 8:23-27 DISCIPLES IN DANGER

WISE DISCIPLES - Vs. 23

The wisest thing any disciple can do is follow Him wherever He leads. Luke 14:26-27, John 12:26

WAVERING DISCIPLES - Vss. 24-25

When storms come we tend to waver in our faith. We tend to panic

WONDERING DISCIPLES - Vss. 26-27

Jesus calmed the storm and the sea. He rebuked them for their faith. They couldn't help but wonder at his awesome power.

Matthew 8:28-34 CONFRONTATION!

There were often confrontations between Jesus and the representatives of Satan. Sometimes Satan's representatives were real people like the scribes and Pharisees. Other times Satan's representatives were people possessed by demons, such as the case in this story.

THE DESPERATION OF SINNERS - Vs. 28

These men were under Satan's control and in desperate straits. Any person without Christ is in desperate straits as well. Ephesians 2:1-3

THE DESIRE OF DEMONS - Vss. 29-31

It's ironic, the tormentors did not want to be tormented. They can dish it out, but don't want to take it. Their desire was also that they would be sent into a herd of swine.

THE DOMINATION BY JESUS - Vs. 32

At the word of Jesus the demons departed into the swine.

At the word of Jesus the demoniacs became sane.

Such is the authority and power of our Lord.

THE DECISION OF A CITY - Vss. 33-34

Instead of embracing Jesus, they asked him to leave.

How many people today have made the same tragic decision?

Matthew 9 THE AWESOME POWER OF JESUS

THE LAME WALK - Vss. 1-7

THE SINNER IS SAVED - Vss. 8-13

THE SICK ARE HEALED - Vss. 20-22

THE DEAD RISE - Vss. 18-19, 23-26

THE BLIND SEE - Vss. 27-31

THE DUMB SPEAK - Vss. 32-33

Matthew 9:1-7 POWER ON DISPLAY

JESUS SAW FAITH - Vss. 1-2

JESUS SHARED FORGIVENESS - Vss. 2-5

JESUS SHOWED HIS FORCE (AUTHORITY) - Vss. 6-7

Matthew 9:1-13 FRIEND OF SINNERS

JESUS FORGIVES SINNERS Vss. 1-8

JESUS RECRUITS SINNERS Vs. 9

JESUS ASSOCIATES WITH SINNERS Vss. 10-13

Matthew 9:9-13 LOVE FOR THE LOST

THE CALL OF MATTHEW - Vs. 9

Jesus loved Matthew. Jesus called Matthew to leave his old life behind and to follow Him.

Matthew accepted Jesus' gracious call.

THE CONTROVERSY OVER SUPPER - Vss. 10-11

Matthew held a great dinner for his friends who were tax collectors and sinners. The Pharisees had a problem with Jesus associating with those who were not as pure they pretended to be themselves.

THE COMPASSION OF JESUS - Vss. 12-13

Jesus associated with those who were Spiritually sick so that He could win them to Himself.

The Pharisees were also Spiritually in need, but would not admit it.

Matthew 9:18-25 IN COMMON

What did the ruler of a synagogue and a poor woman have in common?

Actually, although their circumstances were different, they shared some similarities.

(For more information see Mark 5:21-43 and Luke 8:40-56)

BOTH HAD A SERIOUS PROBLEM - Vss. 18-20

BOTH CAME TO JESUS - Vss. 18 and 20

BOTH BELIEVED - Vss. 18 and 21

BOTH WERE REWARDED FOR THEIR FAITH - Vss. 22-25

Matthew 9:18-26 THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

A DISPARAGED FATHER - Vss. 18-19 - JESUS COMES

A DESPERATE WOMAN - Vss. 20-22 - JESUS COMFORTS

A DEAD GIRL - Vss. 23-26 - JESUS COMMUNICATES (LIFE)

Matthew 9:18-26 WHEN IT HURTS

JESUS COMES WHEN ASKED - Vss. 18-19

Our Lord still will come to the aid of His followers when that aid is requested. John 14:13-14, Matthew 7:7-11

JESUS CARES ABOUT THE NEEDS OF OTHERS AS WELL - Vss. 20-22

Here was a woman who was just as needy as the ruler of the synagogue. Jesus had time for her too!

JESUS COMFORTS WHEN HOPE IS GONE - Vss. 23-24

JESUS CURES WHEN A CURE SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE - Vss. 25-26

Matthew 9:35-38 MULTIPLYING YOUR MINISTRY

Many of us would like to be able to do more than we are doing to serve the Lord.

As Jesus ministered, He gave us a principle that will help us see the Gospel spread to other places.

JESUS' CONDUCT - Vs. 35

Jesus set the example. He did all that He could. He traveled. He taught. He preached. He healed.

It is important that we do all that we can to spread the good news of the Lord Jesus.

Not all of us can do all of these things, but we are responsible to do what we can.

JESUS' COMPASSION - Vs. 36

Jesus cared about the Spiritual condition of those he saw.

They were as sheep having no shepherd.

He wanted to see them come to Himself.

We will not be effective unless we have compassion on those around us who do not know the Savior.

We must be concerned that people are dying without knowing the Savior!

JESUS' COMMENT - Vs. 37

There is a great harvest of souls who need the Savior!

There are many that could come to Christ, but there are so few laborers. What a tragedy!

JESUS' COMMAND - Vs. 38

Because the harvest is great and the laborers are few, we can pray that the Lord of the Harvest would call laborers into His harvest. When we do this, we are multiplying our ministry, and working to increase the number of laborers.

THE HARVEST Matthew 9:36-38

COMPASSION Vs. 36

The sheep are susceptible (fainted), scattered, shepherdless.

COMMENTARY Vs. 37

The harvest is great, laborers are few.

COMMAND Vs. 38

Ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers for the harvest.

Matthew 10:2 LEADERS AND LOVERS

The first four apostles that Matthew says Jesus chose, turned out to include two leaders and two lovers.
PETER LED THE CHURCH - See Acts 1 & 2 and other Acts passages for details. He was not the first pope, but he was the first significant leader.

ANDREW LED THE CHRISTLESS - Andrew was always bringing someone to Jesus. See John 1:40-42, 6:8-9, 12:20-22

JAMES PRACTICED LOVE TO THE MAX - Acts 12:1-2 - He loved Christ by giving his life as a martyr.

JOHN PREACHED LOVE TO THE MAX - 1 John 3:11-18, 4:7-11

The phrase "to the max" means to the maximum point. James and John practiced and preached love.

Matthew 10:5-20 SPECIAL MISSION

Jesus sent the twelve disciples out to do ministry.

PLACE OF MINISTRY - Vss. 5-6

At this time before Jesus went to the cross, Jesus' ministry was to the "lost sheep of Israel".

The disciples, therefore were not yet sent to the Gentiles or Samaritans. That changed when Jesus rose from the dead. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8

PRACTICE OF MINISTRY - Vss. 7-8

They were to preach that the Kingdom of God was at hand, and were to perform miracles.

Freely they had received, they were to freely give. This is a good point for us today. We have received freely received God's grace. We should freely share God's grace.

PROVISION FOR MINISTRY - Vss. 9-11

The people of Israel were to be used of God to provide for the needs of the disciples.

PRECAUTIONS FOR MINISTRY - Vss. 12-20

Peace was to be on the homes that received the disciples' ministry. Vss. 12-13a

The disciples were to reject those who rejected their ministry. Vss. 13b-15

The disciples were to be "wise as serpents" and harmless as doves. Vs. 16

The disciples were to be prepared to face persecution. Vss. 17-18

The disciples were not to be afraid what to say. The Spirit of God would provide the words. V. 19-20

Matthew 10:34-42 SO, YOU WANT TO FOLLOW JESUS!

THE DIVISION THAT JESUS CAUSES - Vss. 34-36

THE DEVOTION THAT JESUS INSPIRES - Vss. 37-39

THE DEDICATION THAT JESUS REWARDS - Vss. 40-42

Matthew 10:36-38 THE HARVEST

Our Lord shows his burden for the lost, and one of our responsibilities in bringing people to Christ.

COMPASSION Vs. 36

Jesus had compassion of the multitudes because they were Susceptible (faint), Scattered, Shepherdless

COMMENTARY Vs. 37

The harvest is great but the workers are few.

COMMAND Vs 38

Pray for laborers. As we pray, don't be surprised that God calls some of us to be missionaries.

Matthew 11:1-15 AN INQUIRY FROM JOHN (THE BAPTIST)

John the Baptist was in prison.

A WORD OF CONCERN - Vss. 1-3

A WORD OF CHALLENGE - Vss. 4-6

A WORD OF COMMENDATION - Vss. 7-11

A WORD OF COMMENTARY - Vss. 12-15

A WORD OF CONDEMNATION - Vss. 16-20

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A WORD OF COMMENDATION - Vss. 7-11

A WORD OF COMMENTARY - Vss. 12-15

A WORD OF CONDEMNATION - Vss. 16-20

Matthew 11:28-30 etc. MORE THAN FRINGE

One of the key parts of any job are the "fringe benefits". These are the things that you get as compensation for your job that are not reflected in the base salary. Fringe benefits would include hospitalization, housing allowance, a car, club memberships, and a host of other things. These have been called "fringe benefits", but today many of these benefits, such as hospitalization, are more than fringe, they are essential!

The benefits that come with being a Christian are "more than fringe".

They are things which God blesses with besides forgiveness and eternal life.

Some of these more than fringe benefits include:

REST – Matthew 11:28

REASSURANCE – John 10:27-30

RESPONSIBILITY – Matthew 4:4, Luke 9:23-24, Romans 12:1-2

The responsibilities of being fishers of men and disciples are actually great privileges.

REFRESHMENT – Isaiah 44:3, Matthew 5:6

RESOURCES

God's Spirit – John 14:16-18

God's Guidance – Psalm 32:8

God's Protection and Strength – Psalm 27:5-6, Isaiah 41:10, 40:31

Matthew 11:28 THE GREATEST INVITATION (A FUNERAL SERMON)

As we go through life, we receive many invitations. Lately we have received invitations to graduation parties and weddings. We also get invited out for dinner, to go to parties, and to attend sporting events.

We are used to getting invitations. Today I would like to share with you the greatest invitation anyone has ever given. The Lord Jesus Christ gave it.

Matthew 11:28 - "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There are times in our lives, especially at a time of sorrow like this one, that we sense a need for rest. We feel like the whole world is caving in on us. We wonder where to turn. The Lord Jesus Christ invites us to turn to Him!

Jesus Christ, the Son of God says, "Come unto me!" He says "I will give you rest!"

There are two types of rest needed that Christ will provide in this current situation:

REST FROM SIN

Each and every one of us has sinned.

Each and every one of us has failed almighty God.

Most of us are not bank robbers or murderers.

However, we have been unreasonably angry.

We have been disobedient.

We have had bad attitudes.

We have not done things we knew we should have done.

We have done things we knew we shouldn't have done.

We have thought things we should not have thought.

The Bible says "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

The Bible says "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:10

The Bible says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4

There is guilt and punishment associated with sin.

We need someone to relieve the burden of sin.

On the cross Jesus made the way to relieve the guilt and burden of sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21

On the cross Jesus took the punishment for your sins and mine on his own shoulders. He died in our place!

But Jesus didn't stay dead. He arose from the dead.

Because He is alive, he still says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

So, how do we come to Him?

John 3:16 - We come to Christ by faith, trusting Him alone for forgiveness of our sin, believing that He took care of it on the cross. If you haven't found rest from sin, I invite you to put your faith in Christ.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

REST FROM SORROW

There are many sorrows in this world.

We are experiencing just one of them right now.

However, the Lord Jesus says to us "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Bring you sorrow to the Lord Jesus.

First, find rest in Him from sin.

Then, find rest in Him for sorrow.

Come, and pour out your heart to Him and find His peace. John 14:27, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

REST FROM SIN REST FROM SORROW

Matthew 11:28-30 FOR THE LABORER

COME! Vs. 28 - "unto me"

TAKE! Vs. 29 - "my yoke upon you"

LEARN! Vs. 29 - "of me"

FIND! Vs. 29 - "rest unto your souls"

Matthew 11:28-30 THE MESSAGE OF THE CHURCH

There are many different "churches" today. Many of them are true representatives for the Lord Jesus Christ. Many are not. The true church is made up of all those who have been truly born again by the Spirit of God. The local church should also be made up of true believers that try to get out the message of Christ to the community.

Different churches have different messages. But the true churches are those who are giving out the message which God wants the world to hear.

We need to remember that God owns the church. God the Son is the head of that church! Please see Matthew 16:18, Ephesians 1:22-23, Ephesians 5:23 and Colossians 1:18.

The church belongs to Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

Therefore, the message of the church should be the message of Christ.

The message that you and I as Christians have for the world is the message that Christ has for the world.

This message is expressed in many different passages. The most familiar passage is John 3:16.

Another passage that shows Christ's message (And, therefore, the church's message.) is Matthew 11:28-30.

HIS INVITATION

1. "COME UNTO ME."

2. "TAKE MY YOKE UPON YOU"

3. "LEARN OF ME"

HIS INVITED

Just who is Jesus inviting? Those who "labor and are heavy laden".

A verse which further elaborates on who these people is Luke 4:18.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

HIS INVOLVEMENT

"I will give you rest." "Ye shall find rest unto your souls."

This is because His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Let's make sure that our churches are giving out the message of the owner, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 12:1-14 ACCUSED!

Jesus had more than His share of enemies. Here we find his enemies trying to accuse Him of wrongdoing.

CRITICAL ATTITUDES - Vss. 1-2, 9-10

CORRECTIVE ANSWER - Vss. 3-8

COMPASSIONATE ACTION - Vss. 11-14 (12:1-14)

ACCUSED!

Matthew 13:1-23 THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

THE STORY PRESENTED Vss.1-9

THE SECRECY QUESTIONED AND EXPLAINED Vss. 10-17

The disciples wanted to know why Jesus spoke in parables. He explains why.

THE SOLUTION REVEALED Vss. 18-23

Jesus explains the parable and shows us 4 types of ground or heart in which the Word of God is planted.

1. The Destitute Ground Vs. 19

2. The Deleted Ground - Vs. 20-21 - There is not enough depth in the soil to produce properly. A rocky ledge is underneath a little soil on top. There is not enough soil!
3. The Deceitful Ground - Vs. 22 - The soil looks like good soil, but there are thorns also in the soil.
4. The Delightful Ground - Vs. 23

Matthew 13:24-30, 37-43 DOWN ON THE FARM

This parable by Jesus tells us why things are so bad in the world today, and why we shouldn't worry about the future.

GOOD SEED - Vss. 24, 37-38

Jesus is the sower of the good seed in the world.

GREAT EVIL - Vss. 25-26, 38-39

Satan is responsible for planting the weeds.

The good seed are born again Christians.

The evil seed are those without Christ. They are children of the Devil.

GRAVE REPORT - Vss. 27-28

The weeds are springing up with the good seed.

GENEROUS HARVEST - Vss. 29-30, 40-43

For the Fire (Hell) - Vss. 40-42

For the Barn (Heaven) - Vs. 43

Matthew 13:53-58 HOMETOWN REJECTION

When I was a senior in high school I applied to two colleges. Paterson State was in my hometown of Wayne, NJ and Glassboro State, which was in the Southern part of the state. I got the idea that people thought that Glassboro was a pretty good school, but "If you can't go to college, go to Paterson State," was the attitude about the hometown school. I went to Glassboro, and over the years found that people in that area thought that Paterson State was a pretty good school. I also heard it said, "If you can't go to college, go to Glassboro State." The hometown schools got no respect.

Unfortunately, our Lord Jesus Christ ran into a similar problem. Even though he was well received in other places, the hometown rejected him.

MINDLESS OFFENSE - Vss. 53-57a - They were offended by Jesus for no good reason at all.

MEANINGFUL OBSERVATION - Vs. 57b - Prophets receive honor everywhere but home.

MISSED OPPORTUNITY - Vs. 58 - Jesus didn't do many mighty miracles there because of their unbelief.

Imagine what they missed!

Matthew 14:22-33 SINKING PETER

Introduction - Vss. 22-26

PETER'S FAITH Vss. 27-28

PETER'S FAULT Vs. 30

He saw.

He was scared.

He began to sink.

PETER'S FORTUNE Vss. 31-33

To be rescued by the Lord. Vs. 31

To be rebuked for his lack of faith. Vs. 31

To be reminded that Jesus is the Son of God. Vss. 32-33

Matthew 15:21-28 ONE WOMAN'S FAITH

CRY OF THE HURTING Vss. 22-25

CONFIDENCE OF THE HOPEFUL Vss. 26-27

COMFORT OF THE HELPED Vs. 28

Matthew 15:21-28 A SPECIAL LADY

This lady was special for a couple of reasons.

She was of a special nationality. She was not a Jew. She was not special to the Jews, but she was special to Jesus. Jesus considers each one special and wants each one to trust Him.

She was also special because of the faith that she showed.

A CONCERNED WOMAN - Vss. 21-22

A COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR - Vss. 23-24

A COURAGEOUS FAITH - Vss. 25-28

Matthew 15:21-28 FAITH UNDER FIRE

A CRY FOR MERCY – Vss. 21-22

A COLD RESPONSE – Vss. 23-26

A CLINGING FAITH – Vs. 27

A COMPLIMENTARY RESOLUTION – Vs. 28

Matthew 15:29-39 STILL!

There are two recorded instances of the Lord Jesus feeding large crowds.

In Matthew 14:14-21 five thousand. In Matthew 15:29-39 four thousand.

There were several things still true for both miracles.

JESUS STILL HAD COMPASSION - 15:29-32, 14:13-16

THE DISCIPLES STILL DIDN'T GET IT - 15:33, 14:17

They didn't realize that they, with Jesus power, could feed the multitude.

JESUS STILL USED WHAT WAS AVAILABLE - 15:34, 14:17-18

JESUS STILL WORKED IN ORDERLY FASHION - 15:35-36, 14:19

THERE WAS STILL PLENTY OF FOOD WITH LEFTOVERS - 15:37-38, 14:20-21

Matthew 16:1-12 DISCUSSIONS

Here our Lord has two discussions, one with the Pharisees and Sadducees, the other with his disciples.

LOOKING FOR A SIGN - Vss. 1-4

The Jews were always looking for a sign. Jesus told them that the sign they would be was the "sign of Jonah". Jonah, came out of the belly of the whale. Jesus would come out of the grave.

LEANING ON LOGIC - Vss. 5-7

The disciples forgot bread. Jesus said to beware of the "Leaven of the Pharisees".

The logic of the disciples was that Jesus made this statement because they forgot bread.

Instead of asking Jesus what he meant, they used their own logic. That was a mistake. Proverbs 3:5-7

LEARNING THE TRUTH - Vss. 8-12

Jesus rebuked the disciples, reminded him of his power to feed, and explained what he really meant. He was warning against the false teaching of the Pharisees and Saducees.

Matthew 16:13-27 LEARNING FROM JESUS

Jesus is doing some very definite teaching of his disciples in the passage.

A STARTLING QUESTION - Vs. 13-15

The disciples may have been startled that Jesus was asking who people said he was.

They were probably more startled when Jesus turned the question around to ask who they thought he was.

That's really the key issue. Who do you say Jesus is?

A STRONG CONFESSION - Vs. 16

Peter delivers a very strong, definite response. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

A SURE PROMISE - Vss. 17-20

Jesus would build His church upon Himself. He is the rock.

A STRANGE REBUKE - Vss. 21-22

Jesus told of his death and resurrection. Peter rebuked Him! This is strange, when you consider that Peter just confessed that Jesus is the Son of God.

A STAGGERING CORRECTION - Vss. 23-27

Peter was put in his place. His rebuke of Jesus came from the devil, not God.

At that moment, Peter was not seeking the things of God.

Jesus continues by showing just how high a cost must be paid to be a disciple of Christ.

Matthew 16:13-28 THOUGHT-PROVOKING QUESTIONS

One of the reasons for the sermon is to make people think. A preacher's job is to "reprove, rebuke and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (2 Timothy 4:2) When the preacher is doing his job the congregation should respond by thinking about the preacher's words and obeying them. The passage before us prompts me, as a preacher, to ask you three thought-provoking questions.

1. WHERE DO YOU STAND? - Vss. 13-19

The Lord first asked the disciples, "Who do men say that I the son of man am?" Vs. 13

Then the Lord asked the disciples, "But whom say ye that I am?" Vs. 15

It is important that we know who Jesus is and where we stand concerning Him.

Peter had the right answer "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Vs. 16

Who do you say Jesus is? Where do you stand concerning Him?

If you have the same answer as Peter, you should have made a decision to trust Him as your Savior. John 1:12-13, Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8-9

2. WHAT DO YOU SAVOR? Vss. 20-23

Jesus began to warn the disciples concerning his impending death. Vs. 21

Peter rebuked the Lord. Vs. 22

Our Lord told Peter that he didn't "savor" or care about the things of God. He was more interested in the things of man than the things of God. Vs. 23

What do you savor? Are you interested in the things of man, or the things of God?

3. HOW (WELL) DO YOU SUBMIT? Vss. 24-28

To truly follow Jesus we must be submissive to Him. We must deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow Him. Vs. 24

We must seek to lose our lives for His sake. That takes submission! Vss. 25-26

Jesus will reward us later. Vs. 27

How well you submit to the Master?

Matthew 16:15-28 THE CHURCH

The "Church" appears in two forms. There is the local church made up of a body of believers in a specific area. There is the universal church made up of every born again Christian. I believe that the universal church is in view in this passage.

THE CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH Vss. 15-20

Notice in Vs. 18 that it is Jesus' Church and that He will build it.

The church has problems because it is made up of sinners, but the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

THE CROSS FOR THE CHURCH Vss. 21-23

Jesus went to the cross to die for the sins of the world. There is a church because Jesus gave His life.

THE COMMITMENT BY THE CHURCH Vss. 24-28

Salvation is the result of faith in Christ (Romans 5:1, 6:23).

After salvation, church members are to live lives of committed discipleship.

Matthew 16:27-17:9 GLORY!

There are different things that motivate us at different times in our lives.

Sometimes we are motivated by a deadline, such as a date a paper is due for school, or the date our taxes need to be paid, such as April 15th in the United States.

Sometimes we are motivated by a sense of responsibility. We do something, such as attend our children's school activities, because it's the right thing to do.

Sometimes we are motivated by fear, such as exiting quickly a building that is on fire.

Sometimes we are motivated by a sense of appreciation. This is what motivates cities to have parades in honor of heroes.

Sometimes we are motivated by an even higher sense of calling.

Sometimes we are motivated by the glory of God.

Such was the case of Peter, James and John when they saw the transfiguration of our Lord Jesus Christ. Seeing the transfiguration literally changed their lives (John 1:14, 2 Peter 1:16-18).

Studying this passage should also make us motivated by the glory of our Lord.

BACKGROUND - MATTHEW 16:13-17:1

THE WONDER OF HIS GLORY - Vs. 2

The word that is translated "transfigured" is the word from which we get our English word "metamorphosis".

A metamorphosis is a change that takes place from inside out.

When Jesus was transfigured, he showed us that the glory of God resided within him.

He let in radiate from the inside out. 1 John 1:5, Psalm 104:2, Malachi 4:2, Revelation 1:12-17

THE WITNESSES FROM SCRIPTURE - Vs. 3

Out of the pages of God's Word come two of its heroes, Moses and Elijah.

Moses represents the law that Jesus satisfied by his godly life and death.

Elijah represents the prophets, whose words Jesus fulfilled.

These two men discussed the future events concerning Jesus' death. Luke 9:30-31.

THE WORD OF THE FATHER - Vss. 4-5

In the Scriptures a cloud often indicates the presence of God, as it does here. Exodus 13:21, 1 Kings 8:10, Ezekiel 1:4

God the Father speaks to these men. He gives verification as to what they have already believed. He says, "This is my beloved Son." He also states that Jesus is doing what is right with the words, "in whom I am well pleased." Then, He gives a specific instruction, "Hear ye Him." To hear Him meant to obey Him as well. We need to hear and heed what Jesus has to say about salvation, discipleship, prayer, abiding in Him, and a host of other subjects.

THE WORTH OF THE EXPERIENCE - Vss. 7-9

There are at least three lessons that we can glean from this passage.

1. If our faith is in Christ, we have nothing to fear. Vs. 7

2. We are to see Jesus alone. Vs. 8

He alone is to be the focus of our lives and faith.

3. We have a testimony. Vs. 9

Just as the disciples would testify later, we need to give testimony of our experiences with the Lord.

Matthew 17:14-21 THE PERILS OF UNBELIEF

UNBELIEF STIRS PEOPLE UP Vss. 14-16

UNBELIEF SADDENS THE SAVIOR Vss. 17-18

UNBELIEF SLOWS THE WORK OF GOD Vss. 19-21

Matthew 17:24-27 LESSON BY THE SEA

A THOUGHTLESS ANSWER - Vss. 24-25a

A TEACHING SAVIOR - Vss. 25b -26

A TIMELY PROVISION - Vs. 27

MATTHEW 18:11-14 LOVE FOR THE LOST

God has a great love for poor lost sinners. This is seen in this teaching by God's Son.

JESUS' PURPOSE Vs. 11

He came to save the lost. That's why He went to Calvary. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

JESUS' PARABLE Vss. 12-13

He tells of the one lost sheep out of one hundred who went astray.

The shepherd goes out to find the lost sheep.

Jesus gave his life for all lost sheep.

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit and His followers, still seeks lost sheep today. He wants the lost to believe on Him. (John 16:8-11, Matthew 28:19-20)

JESUS' POINT Vs. 14

God's will is that nobody perish. (1 Timothy 2:3-4)

However, every person must believe on Christ, for salvation. (Acts 4:12)

Matthew 18:15-20 RECLAIMING A BROTHER

PERSONAL CONFRONTATION – Vs. 15

PRIVATE CONFERENCE – Vs. 16

PUBLIC CHARGE – Vs. 17

PAINFUL CORRECTION – Vs. 17

POSITIVE CONFIRMATION – Vss. 18-20

Matthew 18:21-35 A GREAT CHALLENGE

It is a challenge to witness, live a Godly life, walk in the Spirit, and to pray.

Perhaps even a great challenge is to forgive. As a pastor I have personally seen all too much unforgiveness on the part of Christians. In fact I would say that lack of forgiveness is the most frequent problem I've dealt with over the years. Our Lord often handles the topic of forgiveness.

THE STANDARD OF FORGIVENESS - Vss. 21-22

Peter thought that he was being generous forgiving someone seven times. Our Lord seems to be suggesting an unending attitude of forgiveness when he says that we should forgive "Seventy times seven".

THE STORY ABOUT FORGIVENESS - Vss. 23-33

A Great Debt - Vss. 23-25

A Great Deferment - Vss. 26-27

A Great Disappointment - 28-31

The man who had been forgiven of so much would not forgive someone who owed him far less. Eph 4:32

A Great Decree - Vss. 32-33

THE SERIOUSNESS OF FORGIVENESS - Vss. 34-35

God has made forgiving others a very high priority indeed!

Matthew 18:21-35 WHY CHRISTIANS SHOULD FORGIVE

Introduction - Vss. 21-22 - Peter asks how much forgiveness needs to be given to others. Jesus tells him that forgiveness is always to be practiced. The number 70×7 would indicate an unlimited number of times we need to forgive. Now, Jesus follows with a parable all Christians should take very seriously.

UNPAYABLE DEBT - Vss. 23-24 - The debt for the Christian's sin is greater than he could ever pay.

UNBELIEVABLE DEFERMENT - Vss. 25-27 - The payment for our sins on the cross by Jesus Christ makes this forgiveness possible.

UNACCEPTABLE DECORUM - Vss. 28-31 - If Jesus forgave us for so much, why shouldn't we forgive those who have done relatively so little against us?

UNDERSTANDABLE DECREE - Vss. 32-35 - Of course, a true Christian can not lose salvation, but can experience the Lord's hand of discipline upon his life.

Matthew 19:16-26 RIGHT, YET WRONG

It is possible to be almost right, and yet still wrong.

For instance, a pitcher for a baseball team can get almost everybody "out", and just make a few wrong pitches. Those few pitches can cost him hits and walks that allow the opposing team to score winning runs.. In a conversation, it is possible to say many right things, and just make one thoughtless, hurtful remark, that ruins the whole conversation.

We can do many right, good works, and yet destroy our testimonies with one act of sin.

In our text the "Rich Young Ruler" did many things right, and yet did one wrong thing that cost him his soul.

HE CAME TO THE RIGHT PERSON (JESUS) Vs. 16

HE ASKED THE RIGHT QUESTIONS Vss. 16B, 20

HE RECEIVED THE RIGHT ANSWERS Vss. 17-19, 21

HE MADE THE WRONG DECISION Vss. 22-26

Please Note: Salvation is through faith in Christ alone (John 1:12, John 3:16). However, certain things, such as money, can keep us from putting our faith in Christ. Jesus wanted the man to give up his possessions because it was keeping him from exercising faith in Christ.

Matthew 19:16-26 THE MAN WHO MADE THE WRONG DECISION

We all have made wrong decisions. (Give your own examples of wrong decisions which you or people you know have made.) Of course, the worst decision anyone can make is not trusting Christ as Savior. The man in our text was a rich man who made the wrong decision concerning Christ.

CONCERN LED THE MAN TO JESUS - Vss. 16

He was evidently under conviction concerning his soul. He wanted to know how to have eternal life.

COMMANDMENT KEEPING DID NOT BRING SATISFACTION - Vss. 17-20

Jesus told him to keep the commandments. Jesus knew that the man could not keep the commandments perfectly, but wanted the man to realize that he couldn't keep them. The man answered that he had always kept the commandments, but realized that he still was lacking.

THE CHALLENGE TO CHOOSE JESUS INSTEAD OF MONEY WAS TOO GREAT - Vss 21-22

Jesus realized that the man's sin was love of money. He simply told the man to sell all that he had and to follow Him. This does not mean that every person has to surrender their wealth in order to be saved. This man would not believe on Jesus as Savior until he gave up his wealth. Evidently, his wealth was his God! The man left, choosing his wealth instead of Jesus. He was sorrowful, but not sorrowful enough to repent and trust Christ.

JESUS' COMMENTARY SHOWS SALVATION TO BE THE WORK OF GOD - Vss. 23-26

Jesus explained how difficult it is for a rich man to be saved.

This amazed the disciples because they probably felt that the rich had special favor from God.

According to their thinking, if the rich could not be easily saved, who could be saved at all?

Jesus explains that salvation is impossible with man, but possible with God.

Matthew 20:17-28 JESUS, OUR ROLE MODEL

First of all, Jesus is to be our Savior. John 14:6, John 3:16

Secondly, Jesus should be the role model, whose example we follow daily. Luke 9:23

SACRIFICE OF THE MASTER - Vss. 17-19

Jesus went to Jerusalem, knowing that He would lay down his life as a sacrifice for sin.

We are to live our lives as a "living sacrifice" for Him. Romans 12:1

SIMILARITY TO THE MASTER - Vss. 20-23

James and John were willing to suffer for the sake of their master, although they were wrong to seek glory.

May we be willing to also suffer, if needed, for our Master's sake.

SERVICE LIKE THE MASTER - Vss. 24-28

Jesus served others while He was here on earth and then gave His life as a ransom for many.

If we are going to follow Jesus as a role model, our lives should be given in service to others.

Matthew 22:1-14 THE WEDDING

This parable tells of the great wedding feast.

God will hold the "Marriage Supper of Lamb in Heaven". Revelation 19:7,9

We are told in this parable of three groups of guests.

THE ONES THAT WON'T COME - Vss. 1-7

They are invited. Vss. 2-3

They make excuse. Vss. 4-5

Some persecute the messengers. Vs. 6

They will be judged. Vs. 7

THE ONES THAT WILL COME - Vss. 8-10

The King commanded that all be invited to the wedding.

The offer of free salvation is to be presented to the whole world and "whosoever will may come". Mark 16:15, Revelation 22:17

THE ONES THAT WRONGFULLY COME - Vss. 11-14

There are those who want to come to Heaven but insist on coming in their own righteousness.

They try to earn their way to Heaven.

This won't work. Salvation is "by grace through faith". Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5

Matthew 22:15-33 THE ANSWER MAN

The Jewish leadership was trying to find ways to entangle Jesus in his talk, so they would have reason to accuse Him. But Jesus is the "Answer Man", who as God, has an answer for every question.

JESUS ANSWERS THE PHARISEES

EVIL PLOT Vss. 14-17

EXCEPTIONAL PERCEPTION Vs. 18

EXPLICIT PROCLAMATION Vss. 19-22

JESUS ANSWERS THE SADUCEES Vss. 23-33

RIDICULOUS PROPOSAL Vss. 23-28

REASONS FOR ERROR Vs. 29

RIGHT EXPLANATION Vss. 30-33

Matthew 23:1-7 MARKS OF A HYPOCRITE

A HYPOCRITE IS:

INCONSISTENT - Vss. 1-3

The Scribes and Pharisees were great at telling others what to do, but didn't do it themselves.

INCONSIDERATE - Vss. 4

They placed great burdens on others, but didn't place the same burdens on themselves.

INSINCERE - Vss. 5-7

They wanted to be seen as holy and respected but did not want to earn the holiness or respect.

Matthew 23:23-28 IS THERE A PHARISEE WITHIN ME

The Pharisees were the religious fundamentalists of their day. Although they had stood for good things, they had fallen into the sin of hypocrisy. There is nothing wrong with being a "fundamental" Christian, but let's beware of making some of the same mistakes which the Pharisees made.

OUTWARD COMPLIANCE, INWARD FAILURE Vss. 23-24

OUTWARD CLEANLINESS, INWARD FILTH Vss. 25-26

OUTWARD COMELINESS, INWARD FAULTS Vss. 27-28

Matthew 24:5-14 WELCOME TO THE TRIBULATION!

Daniel the Prophet talked of 70 weeks in Daniel 9:24-27

These weeks were weeks of years.

69 weeks from the signing of the law to rebuild the temple (Nehemiah 2), the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, was cut off (crucified).

There is another week of years, yet to be fulfilled.

We know this period as The Tribulation.

The anti-Christ will sign a covenant with Israel for the first 3 1/2 years.

Then, after 3 1/2 years he will break that covenant (Daniel 9:27, Matthew 24:15).

In our text I believe that the Lord Jesus is telling us what it will be like during the first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation.

FALSE PROPHETS - Vss. 5,11

FIERCE WARS - Vss. 607a

FRIGHTFUL CATASTROPHES - Vss. 7b-8

FERVENT PERSECUTION - Vss. 9-10

FORSAKEN LOVE - Vs. 12

FAITHFUL SERVICE - Vss. 13-14

Matthew 24:42-47 A GOOD SERVANT

All those who are saved are servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, all of us can relate to our text. However, those of us who are pastors and missionaries need to take special heed to this passage. This might make a good ordination service message.

CALLING - "servant" - Vs. 45

CHARACTER - "faithful and wise" - Vs. 45

CHARGE - "lead" (rule) and "feed" (give meat) Vs. 46

COMMENDATION - "so doing" Vss. 46-47 (See Vss. 42-44 as well.)

Matthew 24:42-51 FAITHFUL SERVICE

The Lord wants us to be faithful until His return. How can you be faithful?

BE READY - Vss. 42-44

BE RELIABLE - Vs. 45

BE REWARDED - Vss. 46-47

BE RESISTANT - Vss. 48-51

(Resist acting like an evil servant.)

Matthew 25:1-13 PARABLE OF THE VIRGINS

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-2

THE WISE VIRGINS

1. They were prepared - Vss. 4-7

2. They were prudent - Vs. 9 - Sharing would have meant that there would have been no light.

3. They were participants - Vs. 10 - welcomed into the marriage

THE FOOLISH VIRGINS

1. They were unwise - Vs. 3

2. They were unprepared - Vs. 8

3. They were unacceptable - Vs. 10

Matthew 25:14-30 INVESTMENTS

The theme of this parable that Jesus told is investments.

When we invest we put something into something else.

When we invest money, we place it in a business, or a bank or the stock market.

When we invest time, we place it in a project, or work or some form of pleasure or responsibility.

When we invest energy we work on something.

Jesus told this story about a rich man who went on a journey, but before leaving, turned over his money to three of his servants, or slaves.

Two of the servants willingly invested the money on behalf of the master. One servant, who was unwilling, hid the money instead of investing it.

This particular story reminds us that God has turned over particular "riches" to us, and wants us to be willing investors of what He has given us to use. From this parable, we want to see three things:

WE ARE ASSIGNED. Vss. 14-15

A "talent" was a large sum of money equivalent to 20 years worth of salary for a common working man. This "talent" was worth thousands of today's dollars.

Just as the rich man in this story assigned responsibilities according to ability, our Lord has assigned us responsibilities according to our ability and his plan for our lives. He has assigned us various amounts of:

Treasure - Finances at our disposal to be used according to His will.

Talent - Here I'm using the word to refer to Spiritual gifts and natural abilities.

Testimony - An area of influence for Christ

Time - We each have an allotted number of years in which to serve the Lord.

WE TAKE ACTION Vss. 16-18

Each one of us, like the men in this story, will take action with the things God has given us.

We will invest them in some way. If we like the first two servants, we will be productive. If we are like the last servant, we will bury our gifts. Consider how we can wisely invest those things God has given us.

Treasure - Luke 16:9-13, 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Talent - Romans 12:3-8

Testimony - Matthew 5:14-16, Psalm 107:2, 1 Peter 3:15

Time - Ephesians 5:15-17, Psalm 90:12

WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE Vss. 19-30

Just as the men in the story answered to their master, we will answer to ours.

We must remember that there will be a time when we will be evaluated for what we have done for our Lord.

See 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Matthew 25:14-30 SERVING IN THE KINGDOM

Our Lord told a parable about 3 men who received "talents". A talent was a large sum of money. According to Warren Wiersbe, it was the equivalent of twenty years worth of wages.

Each servant of the Lord Jesus has received "talents". We are given natural abilities, spiritual gifts, and the opportunities to use them. How we use them is important.

RESPONSIBILITIES VARY Vss. 14-15

The man gave to his servants the talents based on their ability.

God has not made each one of His servants identical.

Our abilities vary, and so our responsibilities vary. God only expects us to perform based on the ability He has given us.

REACTIONS VARY Vss. 16-18

Two servants used their ability to multiply the master's wealth.

One servant buried the money he was given.

As Christians, we will either trust God and use the abilities which He has given them, or we will bury them so that they are not used.

REWARDS VARY Vss. 19-30

God will reward us based on what we have done with the abilities he has given us.

Matthew 26:6-13 A GOOD DEED

PRECIOUS OINTMENT - Vss. 6-7 cost her cash and criticism

PEEVED DISCIPLES - Vss.8-9

PLEASED SAVIOR - Vss. 10-12

PROMISED REWARD - Vs. 13

Remember, when disciples are peeved, Jesus is often pleased.

Matthew 26:6-13 A GREAT ACT OF KINDNESS

It was shortly before the death of the Lord Jesus. He was having dinner at the home of Simon the Leper. A woman, Mary of Bethany came and anointed the feet of Jesus. For more details see John 12:1-8.

AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE - Vs. 7

Remember that Jesus had recently raised her brother Lazarus from the dead.

AN EXCLAMATION OF RESENTMENT - Vss. 8-9

AN EXPLANATION BY JESUS - Vss. 10-13

Mary did this for Jesus' burial. I believe it is Warren Wiersbe who suggested that Mary was listening so closely to Jesus that she understood that He was going to die.

Matthew 26:6-13 DEVOTED!

Here was a woman (Mary of Bethany - John 12:1-8) who showed her devotion to Her Master!

THE CONDUCT OF THE WOMAN - Vss. 6-7

THE COST OF THE GIFT - Vss. 8-9

It cost her cash.

It cost her criticism.

THE COMPLIMENT OF THE SAVIOR - Vss. 10-13

She had done well. - Vss. 10-11

She had done it for His burial. - Vs. 12

She would be always be remembered. - Vs. 13

Matthew 26:47-56 ALWAYS THE TEACHER

Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Even to the very end

Jesus was a teacher of what was right.

JUDAS - CONFRONTED BY FRIENDSHIP - Vss. 47-50

To the very end Jesus taught kindness to one's enemies. Judas betrayed Jesus, and Jesus still calls him "friend".

PETER - CHASTISED FOR VIOLENCE - Vss. 51-54

Jesus was simply fulfilling the Scriptures and was in total control. He could have freed himself if he wanted to. Peter was chastised because he was reacting with violence.

THE CROWD - CHALLENGED BY INTEGRITY - Vss. 55-56

The crowd lacked integrity, treating Jesus like a thief when they could have arrested him publicly at the temple. Jesus showed His integrity.

Matthew 27:1-10 JUDAS

CONDEMNATION TO DIE - Vss. 1-2

Jesus was condemned by the Jews and taken to Pontius Pilate. Under Roman rule they could not put Jesus to death. He was taken to Pilate so Pilate could finish Jesus' condemnation.

CONVICTION OF JUDAS - Vs. 3

This was not Biblical conviction unto true repentance. It was the sorrow of the world, not Godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:10).

CONFRONTATION WITH THE PRIESTS - Vss. 3-4

They gave him no comfort.

CONCLUSION OF JUDAS' LIFE - Vs. 5

COMPLETION OF PROPHECY - Vss. 6-10

Zechariah 11:12-13

*****8*****

Matthew 27:1-26 GOOD FRIDAY CHARACTERS

JESUS - COMMITTED - Vss. 1-3

The Jewish leaders committed him to Pilate, hoping that he would condemn Him.

JUDAS - CONVICTED - Vss. 4-5

PRIESTS - CALLOUSED - Vs. 4, 6-10

PILATE - CONFRONTED - Vss. 11-14

He had to make a decision about Jesus. Would he condemn Him to death or release Him?

THE CROWD CORRUPTED - Vss. 15-23

The priests swayed the crowd against Jesus.

JESUS - CONDEMNED - Vss. 24-26

Matthew 27 IGNORED VOICES

Introduction – Vs. 24 – Although Pontius Pilate washed his hands of the murder of Jesus, he still gave his permission. He did this because he ignored “voices” that were speaking to him.

THE VOICE OF REASON – Pilate knew within himself that Jesus was innocent. Vss. 18, 23

THE VOICE OF REAFFIRMATION – Pilate's wife reaffirmed what Pilate knew. Vs. 19

THE VOICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS – Vss. 11-14, John 18:33-38, John 19:10-12

THE VOICE OF REASON says we are sinners in need of a Savior.

THE VOICES OF REAFFIRMATION are those who heard the Gospel, believed it, and are now sharing it.

THE VOICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS is the Lord Jesus calling us to faith in Him. Matthew 11:28-30

DON'T IGNORE THE VOICES! John 3:36

Matthew 27:11-26 JUSTICE?

Down through the years there have been many travesties of justice. Many innocent people have made to pay for crimes that hadn't committed due to a faulty justice system. In the case of our Lord Jesus, justice was certainly not carried out. However Jesus took this travesty of justice and turned into victory over sin on the cross. See Isaiah 53:3-6.

THE STATEMENT OF IDENTITY - Vs. 11

Jesus was simply asked if he was the King of the Jews. He told the truth, stating that He was. This was certainly not a crime worthy of death.

THE SILENCE OF JESUS - Vss. 12-14

Jesus quietly took the accusations of His enemies. Isaiah 53:7

THE SELECTION OF BARABBAS - Vss. 15-21

Pilate tried to get Jesus released. The high priests politicked to get Barabbas released. They won.

THE SENTENCING BY PILATE - Vss. 22-26

Pilate washed his hands of the proceedings, but still sentenced Jesus to die.

Matthew 27:11-28 PILATE ON TRIAL

We generally think of Jesus appearing before Pontius Pilate as Jesus being on trial. In reality, it was Pilate who was on trial. What would he do to a man who he knew to be innocent?

AFFIRMATION OF CHRIST'S IDENTITY Vs. 11

Jesus was asked if He was the king of the Jews. He answered in the affirmative.

ACCUSATION BY CHRIST'S ENEMIES Vss. 12-14

ATTEMPT AT CHRIST'S RELEASE Vss. 15-23

Pilate sought a political solution that would allow him to "save face."

AGREEMENT TO CHRIST'S DEATH Vss. 24-28

Washing his hands did not make Pilate innocent. He still consented to a death that he could have prevented.

Matthew 27:34-51 THREE THINGS PARTED, TORN, OR SEPARATED!
THE PARTED GARMENTS - Vss. 34-35 - THE SHAME OF THE CROSS
It was terrible that they publicly humiliated Jesus with the lowest possible form of execution, crucifixion. But to add insult the soldiers parted his garments, or divided them among themselves.
THE PARTED FELLOWSHIP - Vss. 45-49 - THE SORROW OF THE CROSS
This was the only time Jesus was "forsaken" by God the Father.
The punishment for our sins, He had to bear on His own.
THE PARTED VEIL - Vss. 50-51 - THE SUCCESS OF THE CROSS
The "Holy of Holies" was surrounded by a thick veil. Inside represented the place where God dwelled. The veil separated between God and man, and only the high priest entered. That entrance was only once a year. When the veil was torn it was torn from top to bottom. God tore the veil! Christ's death symbolized open access to the presence of God for all that come through His Son.

Matthew 28 EASTER - IT HAPPENED ON EASTER
SUPERNATURAL ACTIVITIES - Vss. 1-4
The earthquake - Vs. 2
The angel who rolled back the stone - Vss. 2-3
The frightened soldiers - Vs. 4
STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT - Vss. 5-8
Jesus was not there! He arose from the dead! Vs. 6
They were to examine his empty grave. Vs. 6
They were to tell the disciples that Jesus would appear to them in Galilee. Vs. 7
SUPERB APPEARANCE - Vss. 9-10
The risen Jesus appeared to the women.
SUSPICIOUS ANSWER - Vss. 11-15
When word got around of the empty tomb and the resurrection, the religious leaders needed an excuse to deny the resurrection. They bribed the guards.
SPECIFIC AGENDA - Vss. 16-20
The disciples were to fulfill the Great Commission.

Matthew 28 THE GREATEST SUNDAY IN HISTORY
MIRACLE - Vss. 1-4
The stone was rolled away, not to let Jesus out, but to let people in to see the empty tomb.
MESSAGE - Vss. 5-7
Jesus was risen from the dead and the disciples needed to be told.
MANIFESTATION - Vss. 8-10
Jesus revealed Himself to the women who came to the tomb.
MISINFORMATION - Vss. 11-15
There was a cover-up of the truth by the authorities.
MANDATE - Vs. 16-20
The world is to be reached with the Gospel.

Matthew 28:1-10, John 20:1-18 TOMB VISITORS
THE KEEPERS WERE SCARED - Matthew 28:1-4
THE WOMEN HEARD - Matthew 28: 5-8, 9-10
MARY MISUNDERSTOOD - John 20:1-2, 11-18
PETER WONDERED - John 20:3-7, 9
JOHN BELIEVED - John 20:8

Matthew 28:5-7 THE MESSAGE OF EASTER
Each holiday has a message.
The message of Mother's Day is "mom".
The message of Father's is "dad".
The message of Christmas is the birth of Christ. We aptly say "Jesus is the reason for the season."
The message of Good Friday is the death of Christ for our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21
And what about this holiday? What about Easter?
To celebrate this holiday the secular world has given us the Easter Bunny, Easter candy, Easter rabbits, Easter dinner and Easter bonnets. Are these the message of Easter? The answer of course is "no"!

What is the message of Easter? The answer to that question is found in our text. " And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for

he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you."

There are four words in this text which I feel sum up the message of Easter. There are others who have also expressed this idea.

The four words are imperatives.

They are commands.

COME!

By way of background, Jesus was dead! He had been betrayed by Judas, forsaken by His disciples, denied by Peter, tried by the Sanhedrin, condemned to die Pontius Pilate, crucified at Calvary, buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. On Easter morning women came to the tomb, concerned that they would be able to get in. Mark 16:3. But when they arrived they were in for the surprise of their lives! A great earthquake had taken place. Matthew 28:2 The angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and rolled back the stone.

Matthew 28:2-4 When the women arrived they were told not to fear. The angel knew they were seeking Jesus. Matthew 28:5

The angels told the women to "COME".

This was an invitation often given in the Scriptures.

Ever since the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned against a righteous and holy God, God has had His arms open, saying "Come".

He gave the promise of the Messiah who would have victory over Satan. Genesis 3:15

He used the ark build by Noah as a picture of coming to Him for the protection of salvation.

He invited the children of Israel to come out of Egypt. Later He invited them to come into the promised land.

He gives great invitations to come in Isaiah 55:1-3 and Revelation 22:17.

Jesus made that same great invitation in Matthew 11:28-30.

Have you labored under a load of guilt?

Have you been burdened with the awfulness of your sin?

Have you labored to get into Heaven, and are still not sure you're going to make it?

Have you been "heavy laden" with the load of trying to keep the Ten Commandments, or the precepts of a particular church?

JESUS SAYS "COME! COME UNTO ME!"

We come to Him who has left the tomb!

We come to Him that is risen from the dead!

We come to Him who is living right now in Heaven!

We come to Him who is offering forgiveness and salvation to all who believe! John 3:16

We come to Him who offers peace and power to all who have believed on Him! John 14:27, John 15:1-7

SEE!

I'd like to differentiate between the words "look" and "see". When I look at something, I may not grasp what I'm looking at. I may not comprehend or understand. But when I truly "see" something I grasp, comprehend, or understand it. I believe that's what the angel wanted the women to "see" or grasp, understand, and comprehend that the tomb was empty and that Christ had risen from the dead.

I believe God wants us to "see" that Christ is risen from the dead and is alive forever.

In seeing that God wants us to place our faith and trust in Him as our Savior. Romans 10:9-10

GO!

The women were told to go.

Jesus did not intend for anyone to stare continually into the empty tomb.

After we come to a point of seeing the empty tomb and trusting Christ as Savior, we are to go.

We are to go to learn more about Him. 2 Peter 3:18

We are to go to Him in prayer. John 14:13-14

We are to go with Jesus Christ, allowing Him to live through us. Galatians 2:20

We are to church and fellowship with other believers. Hebrews 10:24-25

We are to go to a lost and dying world. Acts 1:8

TELL!

The women were supposed to tell the disciples of the resurrection.
As someone has said, Christianity is one beggar telling another where to find bread.
There was once a demon-possessed man who was healed. He wanted to travel with Jesus.
Instead he was told to go home and tell the great things the Lord had done for him. Mark 5:19
It is our job to tell others what great things the Lord has done for us. Psalm107:2, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, 1 Peter 3:15

The message of Easter is "COME AND SEE. GO AND TELL!"

Matthew 28 A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY

Easter and Christmas are the 2 greatest holidays for Christians. Matthew 28 shows why Easter is so great.
THE MOVEMENT OF THE STONE - Vss. 1-4 - The stone is rolled away, not to let Jesus out, but to let the world in to see the empty tomb.

THE MESSAGE OF RESURRECTION - Vss. 5-8 - Jesus was not in the tomb. He had risen from the dead.
The disciples needed to hear the great news.

THE MASTER OF COMPASSION - Vss. 9-10 - He appears to the women and encourages them during a time of great confusion.

THE MOCKERY OF DECEPTION - Vss. 11-15 - The Jewish leaders try to discredit the resurrection.

THE MANDATE OF EVANGELISM - Vss. 16-20 - Jesus appears to the disciples, and assigns them to the task of world evangelism.

Matthew 28:18-20

THE "ALL" COMMISSION

Have you noticed that the word "all" appears in the "Great Commission" three times.

Vs. 18 - ALL POWER (Comes from the Lord Jesus.)

Vs. 19 - (To reach) ALL PEOPLES (nations)

Vs. 20 - (To teach) ALL PRECEPTS ("...all things whatsoever I have commanded you...")

Mark 1:1-8 GOD INTERVENES

The great news of the Gospel is that God intervened in men's lives through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
John 1:14, John 3:16 In this passage which introduces the Gospel of Mark we again see God's intervention into our world through the arrival of the Lord Jesus.

A PROCLAMATION - Vs. 1

Mark leaves us with no doubt. He proclaims that Jesus is the Son of God.

A PROMISE - Vss. 2-3

God promised that Jesus' prophet, John the Baptist, would come before Jesus. See Mal 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3

A PROPHET - Vss. 4-6

John baptized people, preparing them for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

His ministry was a great success.

A PROPHECY - Vss. 7-8

John's prophecy was that someone mightier than he would come.

He would baptize with the Holy Ghost.

Mark 1:1-8 THE MESSAGE OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

PROCLAMATION OF COMING MESSIAH Vss. 1-3

PARTICIPATION BY THE HEARERS Vs. 4-6 (Baptism)

PREEMINENCE OF THE ONE WHO WOULD FOLLOW Vss. 7-8

Mark 1:1-8 A PROPHETABLE (PROFITABLE) MINISTRY

THE PREDICTION OF JOHN'S COMING MINISTRY – Vss. 1-3

THE PERFORMANCE OF JOHN'S MINISTRY – Vss. 4-6

THE PURPOSE OF JOHN'S MINISTRY – Vss. 7-8

The purpose of John's ministry was to point to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:1-8 JESUS IS COMING!

John the Baptist had an exciting message. The Messiah, the Lord Jesus was coming!

THE PROPHECY ABOUT JESUS' MESSENGER Vss. 1-3

THE PROCEDURE OF JOHN'S MINISTRY Vs. 4

THE POTENCY OF JOHN'S MESSAGE Vss. 5-6

THE POWER OF JOHN'S MASTER Vss. 7-8

Mark 1:9-20 SEE JESUS!

As Jesus begins his ministry, we can see Him doing some important things.

SEE JESUS REJOICING THE FATHER - Vss. 9-11

We see the Trinity present at the Baptism of the Lord Jesus. We also note that the Father was pleased that Jesus took the step of obedience, associating Himself, through baptism, with sinful mankind. The Father rejoiced at the obedience of the Son.

SEE JESUS RESISTING THE DEVIL - Vss. 12-13

For more detail about the temptation of Christ see Matthew 4:1-10 and Luke 4:1-13

SEE JESUS RECRUITING THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 14-20

Note that following Jesus, learning to know Him, and about Him, will be the basis for Jesus making us "fishers of men." We can't "fish" for Jesus, unless we learn from Jesus. See Vs. 17

Mark 1:9-20 GETTING STARTED

JESUS WAS BAPTIZED BY JOHN - Vss. 9-11

JESUS BATTLED SATAN - Vss. 12-13

JESUS BEGAN PUBLIC MINISTRY - Vss. 14-20

Preaching - Vss. 14-15

Recruiting - Vss. 16-20

Mark 1:14-28 BEGINNINGS

Most of us recognize the value of a good start! To begin in the right way and with the right effort and attitude increases the potential of success. In this passage we see Jesus beginning his ministry in a great way, that continued throughout his life here on earth.

HIS MESSAGE Vss. 14-15

HIS MEN Vss. 16-20

1. His Recruitment
2. Their Response

HIS MIGHT Vss. 21-28

1. In The Word Vss. 21-22
2. Over Satan Vss. 23-28

Mark 1:21-34 WHO'S IN CHARGE HERE?

A small business I was acquainted with changed hands from the father to the son. The Son bought the business, but the father did not retire. This created a problem for one of the employees who used to receive conflicting orders from the two men. The employee rightly asked the question, "Who's in charge here?"

Have you ever served on a committee that had no appointed chairman, or a chairman who didn't give any leadership? There is often confusion because nobody is in charge. But when somebody takes charge and the other committee members cooperated things start to get accomplished. The question, "Who's in charge here?" must be answered.

"Who's in charge here?" is also a question that must be answered within your life. Someone or something is going to be in charge of the decisions that you make and the actions that you take. It can be yourself, a habit, a person, a hobby, an organization, or any number of things.

So, "Who's in charge here?" Who runs your life? Allow me to remind you of the one should be in charge of your life. The one you should allow to run your life is none other than the Son of God. Why should he run your life? He has the authority to lead and guide you better than anything or anybody.

According to Webster's Dictionary, authority is "The power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action or make final decisions." In our text we find that Jesus has that type of authority.

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY OVER DOCTRINE (TEACHING) - Vss. 21-22

Jesus taught with authority because He is God. Mark 13:31

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY OVER THE DEVIL AND DEMONS - Vss. 23-27

1 Peter 5:8-10

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY OVER DISEASE - Vss. 28-31

If Jesus has this kind of authority, shouldn't you submit to Him?

Mark 1:35-45 IN TOUCH!

I have a fairly large phone bell (But please don't try to sell me long distance service!).
One of the reasons my phone bill is large is because Dottie (my wife) and I like to talk to our children. We want to know what is going on in the lives of our children, and want them to know what's happening to us. We feel that it is very important to keep in touch!

More important than keeping in touch with those we love is keeping in touch with God. Our Lord Jesus Christ gives us a needed example in this passage. He kept close to His Heavenly Father. He was in touch!
PRIVATE CONNECTION - Vs. 35

Jesus was often busy, but Jesus did not neglect his time with God. He did not let an active day and night before (Mark 1:23-34) keep Him from fellowship with God in the morning.

Notice that he got up early to be in touch with God.

Also notice that he went to a private place.

Let us remember that the morning is an important time for prayer. Psalm 5.

Let us also remember that as much as possible, we should spend time alone in prayer. Matthew 6:5-6

PERSONAL DIRECTION - Vss. 36-38

Peter wanted Jesus to return to minister to the same crowds from the day before.

Jesus had spent time with God the Father. He had his directions from God. He moved on.

There will always be people who will want to tell us how to spend our time. Remember that time spent with God will help us know what God wants us to do with our time. Psalm 32:8, Ephesians 5:15-17, James 1:5-8

PUBLIC MANIFESTATION - Vss. 39

Jesus public ministry was proof that He had been with God in private. He preached publicly, cast our demons, and healed the sick. Our powers to preach, teach, witness, live Godly lives, and serve will only be present if we abide in Him. We must be in touch! John 15:1-8

Mark 1:35-45 THE ULTIMATE SERVANT

Jesus' purpose on earth was to do the will of God. John 4:34

Jesus came and acted as a servant. Philippians 2:5-8

JESUS PRAYED - Vs. 35

He arose early and got his directions from God the Father.

JESUS WAS PURSUED - Vss. 36-37

Jesus had performed great miracles the previous day. The crowds were seeking him again.

JESUS WAS PREPARED - Vs. 38

He knew God's will because He prayed. It was time to move on. A clamoring crowd could not convince him to stay.

JESUS PREACHED - Vs. 39

Jesus faithfully taught God's Word.

JESUS WAS POWERFUL - Vss. 39-45

Demons were cast out a leper was healed.

Mark 2:1-12 THE GREAT DIAGNOSTICIAN

As God Jesus knows the secrets of men's hearts.

Therefore, he can diagnose exactly where a person is in his Spiritual walk.

JESUS CAN DIAGNOSE FAITH Vss. 1-5a**JESUS CAN DIAGNOSE SPIRITUAL NEED Vs. 5b****JESUS CAN DIAGNOSE AN ATTITUDE OF UNBELIEF Vss. 6-12**

Mark 2:1-12 JESUS AT WORK

JESUS' PROCLAMATION - He Preached the Word! - Vss. 1-2

JESUS' PLEASURE - The faith of those who brought the sick man. - Vss. 3-5

JESUS' PRONOUNCEMENTS - He proclaimed forgiveness and healing. - Vss. 5-11

JESUS' POWER - The sick man was healed. - Vs. 12

Mark 2:1-12 THE BELOVED PHYSICIAN

HIS METHOD - Vss. 1-2 - He preached the word.

HIS MESSAGE - Vss. 3-5 - Forgiveness

HIS MAJESTY - Vss. 6-12 - He forgave and He healed.

Mark 2:1-12 WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR

Amos 3:3 - *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

Here is a situation when friends did the best they could do for their buddy. They brought him to Jesus!

DIFFICULT SITUATION - Vss. 1-3

DILIGENT FRIENDS - Vs. 4

DECISIVE PROCLAMATION - Vs. 5

DOUBTFUL CRITICS - Vss. 6-7

DEFINITIVE RESPONSE - Vss. 8-12

Mark 2:13-17 LOVING THE SINNER

We are generally kind to those we truly love. We express our loving kindness in many ways. Sometimes we do nice things for the ones we love. Sometimes we listen carefully to those we love.

Sometimes we rejoice or weep with those we love. Sometimes we give gifts to those we love.

It is usually easiest to love those who love us, or who have been kind to us.

Jesus showed his love to sinners (That includes all of us. Isaiah 64:6).

INVITATION TO SINNERS - Vss. 13-14

As Jesus traveled, He went by a tax collector named Levi, or Matthew. The Jews hated tax collectors because they worked for the occupying Roman Government. They were considered to be traitors. The tax collectors were considered traitors. Jesus invited Levi to follow Him. I believe that this was first an invitation to salvation. Jesus and His followers were constantly giving invitations for people to trust Him as Savior.

John 3:16, Matthew 11:28, Acts 16:31, Revelation 22:17

The invitation to Levi was also an invitation to discipleship. He became one of the twelve apostles.

True salvation is followed by discipleship. Luke 9:23-26

INVOLVEMENT WITH SINNERS - Vs. 15

Jesus ate a meal with those who were noted publicans (tax collectors) and sinners.

He associated with them so He could reach them.

As Christians we should isolate ourselves from the sinful habits of the world, not doing what the world does.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17, 1 John 2:15-16

However, we should not isolate ourselves from contact with unsaved people. We need to involve ourselves with the unsaved by:

Having them visit our homes and visiting their homes.

Giving them a helping hand in times of need.

Allowing them to help you.

Telling them how Christ changed your life.

Inviting them to church.

INSTRUCTION TO CRITICS - Vss. 16-17

There will always be self-righteous people who think that Christians should have nothing to do with those who are noted for their sin or who are not professing Christians. Jesus instructed His critics by explaining that as a physician of souls He needed to go to the ones who were spiritually sick. The Pharisees and self-righteous people today do not consider themselves to be sinners, or sick, therefore they do not think they need the Savior.

Always remember that the church is a hospital. We deal with hurting people, both saved and unsaved, and need to minister to their needs.

Mark 2:13-17 JESUS - EVANGELIST!

The greatest evangelist who ever lived was not Dwight L. Moody, Billy Sunday, or even Billy Graham. It was the Lord himself. Although we might not be full time evangelists, if we follow these principles, we will see souls come to Christ.

HE TAUGHT Vs. 13

For people to make a decision for Christ, they must be taught the truths of the Gospel.

HE CALLED Vs. 14

Just as Jesus called Levi (Matthew), we should call on people to put their faith and trust in Christ.

Invitations should be given for people to trust Him.

HE SOCIALIZED Vss. 15-17

Jesus went where the sinners were in order to bring folks to Himself.

He was not afraid to have a meal with an unbeliever. Are we?

Mark 3:1-6 BAD ATTITUDE

It's easy for us as sinners to develop bad attitudes.

The Pharisees in this story show us three ways of developing a bad attitude.

A CRITICAL EYE Vss. 1-2

A CONCRETE (HARDENED) HEART Vss. 3-5

A CONNIVING MIND Vs. 6

Mark 3:1-6 DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE

We use an expression when someone is sick in a crowded area. We will ask, "Is there a doctor in the house?" In other words, "Is there a physician available to meet the needs of a sick person?"

When the man with the withered hand went to the synagogue one day, he discovered that, indeed, there was a doctor in the house! The doctor was the Lord Jesus Christ!

AWARENESS OF JESUS - Vss. 1-2 - Jesus knew the man was there and that he had a need.

It is comforting to know that Jesus is aware of our needs.

AVAILABILITY OF JESUS - Vs. 3 - Not only was Jesus aware of the need, but He was available to help. Let us find comfort in Jesus' availability to help God's children.

ANGER OF JESUS - Vss. 4-5 - Jesus was being watched to see if He would violate (in their opinion) the law by healing on the Sabbath. Jesus asked if it was legal to do good on the Sabbath.

The silence of those watching indicated the hardness of their hearts. Jesus was grieved and angered.

ACTION OF JESUS - Vs. 5 - Jesus healed on the Sabbath, establishing the correctness of doing good to others any day of the week!

ARROGANCE OF JESUS' ENEMIES - Vss. 2,6 - They watched Jesus to see if He would heal on the Sabbath. They wanted to accuse Him. The Pharisees, instead of marveling at Jesus' miracle, took counsel to destroy Him!

Mark 3:1-6 etc. THE FOUR LOOKS

We can tell a lot from the eyes of another person. We can spot the look of anger, joy, love, peace, frustration and confusion, to mention a few. In the Gospel of Mark, it says four times that the Lord looked around. We find that He had.

THE LOOK OF EXASPERATION (Anger) Mark 3:1-6 (Vs. 5)

Jesus was angered and grieved at the hardness of the Pharisee's hearts.

THE LOOK OF EXPOSURE Mark 5:24-24 (Vs. 32)

The Lord exposed the quiet faith of this woman. Sometimes the Lord will expose our faith so others will be encouraged.

THE LOOK OF EMPHASIS Mark 10:17-27 (Vs. 27)

Jesus was making a very important point that what is impossible with man is possible to God. He looked around to get the attention of those to whom he was speaking. He used His eyes to make a point.

THE LOOK OF EVALUATION Mark 11:11

As God, The Lord evaluated His temple. The next day, he returned to clean it out. (See Mark 11:15-19) We are the temple of God today. The Lord has every right to evaluate us. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Mark 3:7-22 THE MASTER

THE MASTER'S MINISTRY - Vss. 7-12

THE MASTER'S MEN - Vss. 13 -19

Here is the list of men who stood with Jesus and learned from Jesus.

THE MASTER'S MENACES - Vss. 20-22

Some friends thought he was crazy. Vss. 20-21

Some Pharisees thought he was demon possessed. Vs. 22

Mark 4:1-20 WHICH HEART IS YOURS?

This is the parable of the sower and the soils. Think of each soil as a type of heart in which the Word of God is sown (Vs.,14). Which heart best describes your response to God's Word?

A DECEIVED HEART Vs. 15

A DISTURBED HEART Vss. 16-17

(Offended by persecution and affliction.)

A DISTRACTED HEART Vss. 18-19

(Distracted by "...the cares of this world, the deceitfulness and the lust of other things.")

A DISCERNING HEART Vss. 20

(They "hear the word... receive it... bring forth...")

Mark 4:1-20 A FAMOUS PARABLE

THE PRESENTATION OF THE PARABLE - Vss. 1-9

THE PURPOSE OF PARABLES - Vss. 9-13

THE POINT OF THE PARABLE - Vss. 14-20

Sick soil - Vs. 15

Shallow soil -Vss. 16-17

Scratchy soil - Vs. 18-19

Superb soil - Vs. 20

Mark 4:14-21 REACTIONS TO THE WORD

Jesus told the parable of the sower and the soils in Mark 4:1-13.

In verse 14 Jesus tells us that the seed is representative of the Word of God.

When the Word of God is sown, there are four basic responses.

THE WORD REMOVED - Vs. 15

Satan snatches the Word away before it germinates.

THE WORD RESISTED - Vss. 16-17

Rocky soil here is actually a rocky ledge underneath the surface. Seed can not put its roots down deep into the soil. This type of soil produces results that sprout quickly but whither at the first sign of hardship.

THE WORD RESTRICTED - Vss. 18-19

Thorny soil means that as the Word is preached it is choked off with cares, love of riches, and other things.

THE WORD RECEIVED - Vs. 20

Good soil produces good fruit. The Word sown in a good heart produces fruit.

Mark 4:35-41 STORMY WEATHER!

There will be storms in life. Make sure that you are equipped to face them when they come.

THE PASSENGER WITH A PLAN Vss. 35-36

1. Make sure Jesus is a passenger in your boat. Vss. 36

2. Make sure that Jesus you are following Jesus' plans for your life Vs. 35

THE PROBLEM THAT CAUSED A PANIC Vss. 37-38

1. Storms are real, dangerous, and scary. Vss.37

2. We should call on the Lord in the storms, but not in the panicky way which the disciples did. They even questioned his care. That seems easy to do when things are not going well. Vs. 38

THE PRIORITY (FAITH) THAT PRODUCES PEACE Vss. 39-41

1. Peace came when Jesus stilled the waters. Vs. 39. Jesus does not always remove the problem, but will give you peace through the problem.

2. Jesus rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith. It is faith that keeps us from panic. Vs. 40

3. The disciples had a new appreciation for the ability of the Lord. We will also, as we trust Him. Vs.41

Mark 4:35-41 PRACTICAL REACTIONS TO A FAMILIAR STORY

Since childhood, most of us have heard the story of Jesus stilling the storm on the sea. There are some practical applications for each of our lives that come out of this story.

WHEREVER I GO, MAY I GO WITH HIM. Vss. 35-36

Jesus instructed the disciples to go by way of boat across the sea, and went with them. First, Jesus must be in the boat called my life. I must receive Him as my Savior. Second, I should follow his leadership, going wherever I go because He is guiding me there. Psalm 32:8

WHATEVER THE PROBLEM MAY I REMEMBER THAT HE IS IN THE BOAT. Vss. 37-38a

Even though Jesus was asleep, He was still in the boat and still in control. When our Lord seems silent as I face trials, may I remember that He is with me and will never leave me. Hebrews 13:5

WHATEVER THE THREAT, MAY I TRUST HIM. Vss. 38b-41

The disciples panicked, & even questioned whether the Lord cared for their safety. May I simply trust Him, even when things seem to be at their worst. May I listen for words, "Peace, be still!"

Mark 4:35-41 THE STORM

DIRECTION FROM THE MASTER - Vs. 35

DANGER FROM THE STORM - Vss. 36-37

DISMAY OF THE DISCIPLES - Vs. 38

DECLARATION OF PEACE - Vs. 39

DISAPPROVAL BY THE MASTER - Vss. 40-41

Mark 5:1-20 WHAT A MIRACLE!

MISERY – Vss. 1-5 – This demoniac was in bondage to Satan.

MASTERY – Vss. 6-13 – The legion of demons was cast out of the man and into the pigs.

MERCY – Vss. 14-17 – The man was delivered and “...sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind...”

MINISTRY – Vss. 18-20 – The man who received mercy was sent home to tell others what God had done.

Mark 5:1-20 SEASIDE CONQUEST

CONFUSION WITHOUT CHRIST - Vss. 1-5

CONFRONTATION BY CHRIST - Vss. 6-14

CONVERSION TO CHRIST - Vs. 15-17

COMMISSION FROM CHRIST - Vss. 18-20

Mark 5:1-20 SALVATION'S STORY

I see this story of the demon possessed man as a picture of salvation. Consider:

THE PROBLEM OF SIN - Vss. 1-7

Sin is associated with death. - Vs. 3 - This man was dwelling in the place of the death. Before a person knows Christ as Savior, he is among the dead (Ephesians 2:1-3, Romans 6:23).

Sin can not be controlled - Vss. 4-5 - Man can not control his sin or atone for it! (Romans 3:1-23)

Sin separates between man and God - Vss. 6-7 - Just as this demon had nothing to do with God, or His Son, our sin has separated us from our holy God. (Isaiah 59:2)

THE POWER OF THE SAVIOR - Vss. 8-15

Jesus used His power to cast out the demon. - Vss. 8-13 - Jesus also used His power to pay for our sins. (2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:6-9)

The man was changed because of Jesus' Power. - Vss. 13-15 - We are changed when we place our faith in Christ and become born again (2 Corinthians 5:21).

He was sitting - We are seated in "Heavenly Places" in Christ and are citizens of heaven (Eph 2:6, Phil 3:20)

He was clothed - We are clothed with the righteousness of Christ. (Romans 8:1) The word justified means to be declared righteous.

He was in His right mind - We have the mind of Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:16

THE PROCLAMATION OF SALVATION - Vss16-20

This man was sent home to tell his friends what God had done for him.

We are sent to a dying world to tell all what Christ has done for us. Ps 107:2, Mark 16:15, 1 Peter 3:15

Mark 5:1-20 CONFLICT BY THE SEA

UNCONTROLLABLE SINNER Vss. 1-5

UNDEFEATABLE SAVIOR (SOVEREIGN) Vss. 6-14

UNBELIEVABLE SALVATION Vss. 15-20

Mark 5:1-20 CONFRONTATION

All through life, we have confrontations with other people. These confrontations are often between people who love each other, and other times they are between people who don't love each other.

In Mark 5, our Lord Jesus has a confrontation with a demon-possessed man. In reality, this confrontation is with Satan.

I. Satan's Control Vss. 1-5

II. The Savior's Victory Vss. 7-17

III. The Saint's Responsibility Vss. 18-20

The new believer was truly changed. He wanted to follow Jesus.

Instead, Jesus wanted him to go home and testify.

The responsibility is to do as Jesus says.

This man did!

Mark 5:21-43 DELAYS

Those of us who live in the United States do not like to be inconvenienced. One of the great inconveniences that we face are delays. With the exception of school opening delays on an icy, snowy morning, we usually do not like delays! Delays are a part of life.

Even the Christian life is full of delays.

God does not work as fast as we think He should.

We ask God to change a situation, and He seems to delay in answering.

We ask God to save an unsaved loved one or friend, and God seems to delay His work of salvation. We experience misery, cry out for physical, spiritual, or emotional deliverance, and God seems delay. God loves us and cares about us. God is working to develop character in our lives. And God does not think the same way we do. Isaiah 55:8, Romans 11:33-34

Because God's ways and thinking are superior to ours.

We have to believe that when there are delays God has good reasons for them.

Some delays are due to our own stubbornness and sin. Psalm 66:18

Other delays have nothing to do with sin, but with God's timing. When God delays, we are instructed to learn the fine art of waiting. Psalms 27:14, 37:7, 62:5, 130:5-6

In our text we meet a man who was forced to wait on the Lord Jesus while his daughter was close to death. We learn some important facts about delays.

DELAYS ARE UNAVOIDABLE - Vss. 21-24

Jesus just returned by boat. Immediately a crowd met him. Vs. 21

Jairus comes to Him and requests that he come heal his daughter. Jesus consents to come. Vss. 22-23

On the way to the sick daughter the crowd thongs Jesus. Progress would have been slow. It was an unavoidable delay.

We must realize that some delays are unavoidable. They will occur whether we want them in our lives or not. We must remember that delays are in God's plan. All things work together for good for the Christian according to Romans 8:28. Even delays can be good!

DELAYS ARE UNCONTROLLABLE - Vss. 25-32

A sick woman in the crowd exercises faith and touches the hem of Jesus' garment. She is healed. Vs. 25-28

Jesus stops and asks who touched his clothes. He begins looking for the person who touched His garment.

Here is another delay. Jairus could not control Jesus' activity. He was with the Master, and had to travel at the Master's speed. If the Master wanted to stop and look for someone, the Master had the right to do so.

We cannot control delays. We cause trouble when we get impatient and try to control delays by taking matters into our own hands. Abraham and Sarah made this mistake when they decided to have a child with the help of Hagar, instead of waiting for God. Genesis 16:1-3

DELAYS ARE UNDERSTANDABLE - Vss. 33-34

The woman confesses to what she had done. Jesus encourages her because of her faith.

We will not understand all delays, but if we had God's knowledge, we'd see that every delay is understandable in the eyes of God.

In the case of this woman, Jesus needed to be assured that she was permanently healed. Also, there needed to be a public testimony for the sake of the crowd. Thirdly, the testimony was being given as Jairus was about to hear of the death of his daughter. The woman's testimony would have strengthened his faith.

DELAYS ARE UNNERVING - Vss. 34-36

Jairus' daughter was dead. He could have looked back at the delays and said,

"If only Jesus hadn't been stuck in traffic!"

"If only that woman had waited another day to get healed!"

"If only Jesus had been more sensitive!"

Jesus, however says to an unnerved Jairus, "Be not afraid, only believe."

When we are unnerved by delays, let us remember to continue to trust Christ!

DELAYS RESULT IN UNBELIEVABLE BLESSING! - Vss. 37-43

In the end, Jesus healed Jairus' daughter. God worked in spite of the delays.

Let us remember that delays are a part of God's plan. God will work through the delays and still answer prayer.

Mark 5:21-43 JAIRUS
SEARCHED FOR HELP - Vss. 21-23 - His daughter was ill.
SLOWED BY CIRCUMSTANCES - Vss. 24-34 - The crowd and another person in need delayed Jesus.
SADDENED BY NEWS - Vs. 35 - His daughter was dead.
STRENGTHENED BY JESUS - Vss. 36-43 - He was encouraged to believe. Jesus healed his daughter.

Mark 5:21-43 DESPERATION!
There are many different things that will make people desperate.
I suggest you use illustrations of desperate people with whom you are familiar.
In this passage we find two desperate people.
The Lord was able to help them both.
A DESPERATE MAN IS DELAYED BY A DESPERATE WOMAN Vss. 21-28
A DESPERATE WOMAN IS DETECTED BY A DIVINE SAVIOR .Vss. 29-34
A DESPERATE MAN IS DELIGHTED BY THE RESULTS OF FAITH IN THE MASTER. Vss. 35-43

Mark 5:21-43 TWO OF A KIND
A father with a sick daughter and a sick woman had much in common.
BOTH APPROACHED JESUS - Vss. 21-28
Jairus approached Jesus in the conventional way, asking for help. Vss. 21-23
The woman approached Jesus by reaching out and touching his garment. Vss. 25-28
Both expressed their faith.
BOTH WERE ASSURED BY JESUS - Vss. 30-36
The woman was assured that her faith had made her whole. Vs. 34
Jairus was told not to be afraid, but to believe - Vss. 35-36
BOTH WERE ASSISTED BY JESUS - Vss. 29, 37-43
The woman was healed. - Vs. 29
Jairus' daughter was healed - Vss. 37-43

Mark 6:1-6 A SAD STORY
GREAT TEACHING - Vss. 1-2a
Jesus arrived in Nazareth and taught in the Synagogue on the Sabbath day. His teaching was that of the Son of God. It was always great.
GREAT TRAVESTY - Vss. 2b-3
The townspeople were offended by Him.
GREAT TRUTH - Vs. 4
A prophet does not have honor in his home area.
GREAT TRAGEDY - Vss. 5-6
Jesus was limited and surprised by their unbelief. Matthew 13:58
Jesus moved on.

Mark 6:1-6 RESTRICTING THE WORK OF GOD
It is possible for God's people to restrict His work. Such was the case when Jesus visited His hometown.
THE PEOPLE WERE OFFENDED - Vss. 1-3
THE POWER WAS LIMITED - Vss. 4-5
THE PROPHET (JESUS) WAS AMAZED - Vs. 6
How limited and amazed is Jesus at the unbelief of his own followers today?

Mark 6:1-6 REJECTED!
One of the greatest negative feelings we will ever experience is that of rejection!
People have been rejected by their spouses, their children, their parents, their friends, their fellow workers, their fellow church members, and a host of others!
The saddest rejection of all is when someone rejects the Lord Jesus!
Jesus is rejected every time a person does not trust Him as their Savior. John 3:17-18, 36
In our text Jesus visits his hometown. Jesus is rejected!
OFFENSE OF THE PEOPLE - Vss. 1-3
OBSERVATION BY JESUS - Vs. 4
OBSTRUCTION OF BLESSING - Vss. 5-6

Mark 6:1-6 FACTS ABOUT UNBELIEF

Introduction: The story, as recorded in Vss. 1-4

JESUS IS LIMITED - "And he could do no mighty work, save that he laid hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them."

JESUS IS AMAZED - "And he marveled because of their unbelief."

JESUS MOVES ON - "And he went round about the villages teaching."

Mark 6:7-29 VOICES

Every day we are "bombed" with the sound of voices.

Voices we hear come from family, friends, and foes.

There are also voices we hear from within. There is the voice of the Holy Spirit, and yes, the voice of Satan. We can't avoid hearing voices, but we can avoid obeying to the wrong ones. A man who listened to and obeyed the wrong voices was King Herod.

Introduction: Vss. 7-13

Jesus commissions the disciples to go and preach. They are successful.

THE VOICE OF CONVICTION - Vss. 14-16, 20

Herod was convicted by the memory of John. Vss. 14-16

Herod was convicted by the voice of John. Vs. 20

THE VOICE OF CONVENIENCE - Vss. 17-19

Herod's wife hated John because John stood for righteousness.

It was convenient for Herod to lock John up to please his wife.

THE VOICE OF COMPROMISE Vss. 21-29

Herod listened to the wrong voice in order to look good in front of others.

He knew it was wrong, but would not lose face.

Mark 6:7-13, 30-32 THE TWELVE

COMMISSION OF THE TWELVE - Vss. 7-11

Jesus gave the Apostles authority (power) and sent them out to preach in pairs.

CONDUCT OF THE TWELVE - Vss. 12-13

They went, preached, cast out demons, and healed through anointing with oil.

COMMENTARY BY THE TWELVE - Vs. 30

They reported to Jesus what they said and what they did.

CONSOLATION OF THE TWELVE - Vss. 31-32

Jesus took them apart for a rest.

Mark 6:30-44 COMPASSIONATE JESUS

STEERED THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 30-32 - "Come Apart"

SHEPHERDED THE SHEEP - Vss. 33-34

SUPPLIED THE FOOD - Vss. 35-44

Mark 6:30-52 LESSONS

We are never too old to learn lessons. I knew a lady over 70 years old, named Ella, who just delighted when she learned how to do something new, like taking meals to someone else in need, feeding college students, or having over-night guests.

In our Spiritual walk with the Lord, it's always good to learn new lessons, or to relearn ones that we might have forgotten. Here are some lessons for us to apply to our lives this week from Mark 6:30-52:

1. REPORT - I SHOULD MAKE MYSELF ACCOUNTABLE DAILY TO GOD. Vs. 30

The disciples returned from a missions trip. They reported to Jesus what they had done and what they had taught. They were accountable! It would be a good policy to examine our lives each evening before the Lord, reporting to Him, thanking Him, and confessing our failures.

2. REST - I SHOULD TAKE TIME FOR PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL REST. Vs. 31

My body needs rest. My Spirit needs rest and revitalization in the Word, prayer, and fellowship.

3. REALITY - I SHOULD HAVE COMPASSION ON OTHERS. Vss.32-34

Jesus saw that these people were like "sheep without a shepherd", so He had compassion on them and taught them. How much compassion do we have for the physical and Spiritual needs of others?

4. RESPONSIBILITY - I SHOULD SHARE WHAT I HAVE SPIRITUALLY. GOD WILL MULTIPLY IT Vs 35-44

Just as the little boy with 5 loaves and 2 fishes shared his lunch and saw it feed 5,000, as we share what we have Spiritually, God will multiply that to bless others.

5. RELIANCE - I SHOULD LOOK FOR JESUS IN THE STORM. Vss. 45-52

Just as the disciples saw Jesus coming to help them in the midst of trouble, let's realize that Jesus will come to help us in the midst of our troubles. Hebrews 13:5

Mark 6:30-34 BREAK TIME!

Most jobs in the United States come with "breaks" built in.

There are breaks for lunch and usually coffee breaks.

Also, most jobs give days off each week, personal days and vacations.

As Christians, we must realize that although we might be very busy serving our Lord Jesus, the Lord does want us to take breaks!

We take breaks, like the disciples did, when we:

REPORT TO THE MASTER Vs. 30

We should bring our reports to Him in prayer.

REFRESH WITH THE MASTER Vss. 31-32

Let Him take us apart to physical and spiritual rest. Spend time in prayer and reflection in the Word of God.

REMEMBER THE MASTER Vss. 33-24a

Even when He was to be resting, He had compassion on those in need.

We should remember and imitate his compassion

RETURN FOR THE MASTER Vs. 34b

As Jesus and his disciples returned to ministry after only the brief rest or the boat ride, let us plan to return to ministry after rest. Some rests will be longer than others, but our view should always be to return to service

Mark 6:32-56 SEE JESUS

SEE HIS MINISTRY - Vss. 32-34, 53-56

He had compassion.

He taught.

He healed.

SEE HIS MULTIPLICATION - Vss. 35-44

Jesus took five loaves and two fishes and multiplied them.

Jesus takes the abilities we have and multiplies them as we use them. Romans 12:3-8

SEE HIS MAJESTY - Vss. 45-52

Jesus was able to walk on the water and calm the raging sea.

Mark 6:34-56 HE IS LORD!

Jesus Christ is Lord. In our test we see that He is:

LORD OVER STARVATION - Vss. 34-44

Those who came out to hear Jesus were starving spiritually. He fed them. Vs. 34

Those who came out to hear Jesus became hungry physically. He fed them. Vss. 35-44

LORD OVER STORMS - Vss. 45-52

Jesus walked on the water and calmed the storm. He still calms storms today. John 14:27, Matt 11:28-30

LORD OVER SICKNESS - Vss. 53-56

Those who reached out to Jesus were healed.

Mark 6:35-44 GETTING THE JOB DONE

We usually admire the person how can take on a project and finish it successfully. In Christianity, there is much to be accomplished. We can get things done for Christ, if we go about it, His way.

POTENTIAL FOR HIM Vss. 35-38

The crowd needed to be fed. Jesus says, "Give ye them to eat."

This statement tells me that the disciples should have seen the potential of what Jesus could do through them, if they would let Him. They had potential to be used of God. Notice, also that Jesus used what was available, 5 loaves and 2 fishes. There is potential for each believer to accomplish great things for Christ.

We should remember that He uses those who are available.

POWER IN HIM Vss. 39-41

It is not our power that works miracles, but God's power.

PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH HIM Vss. 41-44

The disciples did actually end up feeding the multitude (They served.).

They did it through Him. We too, can be productive as we do all things through His power, and not our own.

MARK 6:45-52 IN TROUBLE?

We all face times of trouble. This account of Jesus coming to the disciples in the midst of the storm is a reminder that when we are in trouble:

JESUS COMES Vss. 45-48

JESUS CHEERS Vss. 49-50

JESUS CONTROLS Vss. 51-52

Mark 7:1-13 TRADITIONS

All churches, even those who do not follow a liturgy do some things just about every week in their services. Some of these things include singing the Doxology, taking an offering, greeting each other with a time of hand shaking, and making announcements. These things can be called traditions. There is nothing wrong with tradition, unless they become more important to us than obeying the Word of God. This was the problem the Pharisees had when they talked to Jesus about a violation of one of their traditions.

THE REALITY OF TRADITIONS - Vss. 1-4 - Everyone has traditions. The Pharisees had traditions for ceremonial washing.

THE RESPONSE TO VIOLATORS - Vs. 5 - It's easy to find fault with those who do not follow the same traditions that we follow. The Pharisees found fault with the disciples for not following prescribed tradition.

THE REBUKE OF JESUS - Vss. 6-13 - Jesus points out that the keeping of tradition was important to them than obeying God's Word.

Mark 7:1-23 DEALING WITH PHARISEES

The Pharisees were the religious fundamentalists of their day. They added much tradition to the law of God, and placed on the same level of importance.

THE TRADITION OF THE PHARISEES - Vss. 1-5

The Pharisees were concerned, not because the Word of God was being violated, but because the traditions were being violated.

The traditions were oral laws delivered by well-known rabbis. They were compiled in a book called the Mishna. The Mishna was said to be "a fence around the law", supposedly keeping Jews from violating God's Word. Instead the Mishna ended up giving the Jews excuses for violating God's Word.

THE TROUBLE WITH PHARISEES - Vss. 6-13

The Problem Identified - Vss. 6-8

Hypocrisy of lip service - Vs. 6

Replacing of God's Word with Man's Tradition - Vss. 7-8

An Example Given - Vss. 9-13

God's Teaching - Vs. 10

Man's Tradition - Vss. 11-12

According to the rabbis, a man could neglect the care of his parents by claiming that he was setting the resources aside as a gift to God. See Matthew 23:23 for another example

The Sad Result - Vs. 13

THE TRUTH ABOUT PURITY - Vss. 14-23

WARNING FOR THE PEOPLE - Vss. 14-16

Call To Hear - Vss. 14, 16

Clarification - Vs. 15

EXPLANATION FOR THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 17-23

Question and Rebuke - Vss. 17-18

The Route of Food - Vss. 18-19

The Condition of the Heart - Vss. 20-23

Jesus pointed out that defilement is in the heart and comes out in our behavior.

Mark 7:24-30 LADY IN NEED

SHE WAS HURTING - Vss. 24-25

SHE WAS HUMBLE - Vss. 25-26

SHE WAS HOPEFUL - Vss. 27-28

SHE WAS HELPED - Vss. 29-30

8

Mark7:24-30 A COMPARISON

Begin the message with some illustrations of how God answers prayer. A common illustration is that of George Mueller, great man of prayer and faith, who prayed for over 50 years for five of his friends to be saved. All five came to Christ. The last was saved after Mueller had gone to Heaven.

The lady in our story is an example of prevailing prayer. She had much against her because she was a Gentile. However, she persisted in requesting healing for her daughter.

We should compare our prayer lives to the way this woman requested help from the Lord Jesus.

SHE CARED, DO I CARE? Vss. 24-25

Jesus was resting, and was seeking privacy in the Gentile area of Tyre and Sidon. We know the area as ancient Phoenicia. This Gentile woman cared enough to seek out Jesus for help.

How much do we care about the lost, about the Spiritual condition of our friends, our own holiness, or our own needs? Sometimes we say we care, but in reality, we do not care enough to pray hard and long!

SHE CAME, DO I COME? Vs. 26

She came to God, the Son, for help! Her daughter was demon possessed! So many Scriptures tell us to do what this woman did. Matt 7:1-11, John 15:16; 16:24, Eph 6:18, Phil 4:6-7, 1 Pet 4:7; 5:7, 1 John 5:14-15
Do we obey these scriptures, and come to God for help?

SHE WAS CONSISTENT, AM I CONSISTENT? Vss. 27-28

Compare Matthew 15:21-25.

The Lord was evidently testing this lady, but she wouldn't give up.

She kept asking until Jesus would grant her request.

When Jesus said that it was not fit to give the children's food to the dogs, he was referring to "doggies" or "little dogs." He meant the family pets. The children's food was not given to the pets. He meant that Israel was first to hear the message of the Gospel before the Gentiles.

The lady, by faith, pointed out that the little doggies ate the crumbs which the children dropped. In essence, she was saying, "I am only asking for a crumb."

This lady was persistent in her request. Am I? See Luke 18:1-8.

SHE WAS CONFIDENT, AM I CONFIDENT? Vs. 29. Matthew 15:28

The woman went her way, believing. How confident am I that God will answer my prayers?

SHE WAS CONSOLED, AM I CONSOLED? Vs. 30

Mark 8:1-9 GETTING INVOLVED

There is a world that needs Christ. How can be involved reaching my world for Him?

MY RESPONSE - COMPASSION - Vss. 1-3

Jesus had compassion on the multitude, not only their physical needs but for their Spiritual needs. Mark 6:34
I will do nothing to reach the multitude unless I care that those without Christ are bound for eternity in Hell.

Psalm 126:5-6, John 3:16-18, Revelation 20:11-14

MY RESPONSIBILITY - FEED THEM

Jesus has placed the Gospel in our hands to share with the world. Psalm 107:2, Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Rev 20:11-15

MY RESOURCES - FROM GOD - Vss. 4-5, 7

The disciples had a few loaves and fishes. Jesus has given us many resources in order to reach the world.

1. The Holy Spirit - Acts 1:8

2. Prayer - Matthew 7:7-11

3. Faith - Hebrews 11:6

4. Spiritual Gifts - Romans 12:3-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11

5. Word of God - Isaiah 55:7-11

6. Good Works - Matthew 5:14-16

7. Money - 2 Corinthians 9:6-12

MY RELIANCE - ON GOD - Vss. 6-9

Just as the disciples brought their resources to Jesus and trusted Him to use them, we must do the same. We must bring our resources to Jesus and trust Him to reach the multitudes through us.

Mark 8:1-7 GETTING THE JOB DONE!

It's very easy to start projects. I have a few which I started a long time ago but have never finished. In order to please God, we should finish the projects that He has called us to do.

We should want to be able to say with Paul in 2 Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." In our text our Lord Jesus gives us an example of how to get a job done.

COMPASSION FOR PEOPLE - Vss. 1-3

The reason our Lord wanted to feed the multitude was out of compassion for those who had been listening to Him. He was concerned for their wellbeing. When we take on projects it should be because we have concern for the spiritual and physical needs of others.

CONSIDERATION OF THE RESOURCES - Vss. 4-5

The disciples only thought of the impossibility of feeding the multitude.

The Lord looked to see what resources were on hand to get the job done.

When challenged by the Lord to accomplish something for Him, we need to consider what resources He has provided. The resources might include people with time, physical talents and/or Spiritual gifts. There might be some money or goods available. Don't overlook the power of God as a key resource.

COMMUNICATION WITH GOD - Vss. 6-7

Jesus talked to God. He gave thanks and blessed what He had.

If we are going to accomplish anything for God we must be in prayerful dependence upon Him.

See John 14:12-14 and John 15:1-8.

CONDUCT BY FAITH - Vss. 6-9

Jesus completed the project by faith.

We must go to work by faith on the projects God has given us to complete. (Nehemiah chapters 1-6)

Mark 8:27-29 etc. PETER'S TONGUE

The Apostle Peter was a great man. The characteristic of Peter that stands out in my mind was Peter's consistent use of the tongue. It seems that whenever we meet Peter he is talking. Sometimes his use of the tongue is very good, other times it is very bad. When God controlled Peter's tongue the results were good. When Satan controlled Peter's tongue the results were bad.

Peter's experience with the tongue can show us several different ways the tongue can be used. So using incidents out of the life of Peter we can see:

THE CONFESSING TONGUE

We should make confession of our faith in Christ. Mark 8:27-29, Rom 10:9-10, 1 Pet 3:15, Psalms 107:2 Peter confessed his faith in Christ when Jesus asked the disciples who they said that he was. Mark 8:27-29 Peter confess his faith in Christ during sermons preached in the Book of Acts, including his great sermon on the day of Pentecost found in Acts 2:14-36

THE CONTRARY TONGUE

Peter often "stuck his foot in his mouth".

Mark 8:31-33 - Peter rebuked the Lord Jesus for teaching that He would be killed. The Lord ended up rebuking Peter.

Mark 14:27-31 - Peter argued with the Lord, claiming that he would never deny Jesus. He argued, but Jesus was right!

THE COWARDLY TONGUE

Mark 14:66-72 - As Jesus had promised, Peter denied his Lord. He took the part of the coward.

Galatians 2:11-14 is another instance in which Peter should have spoken up and taken a stand, but he again played the coward's part.

Of course, Peter repented of his sin of denying Jesus and was forgiven.

THE CORRECTING TONGUE

In Acts 15 there is a debate over the circumcision of Gentile believers. It was Peter's correcting tongue that helped others make the right decision. See Acts 15:1-12

There are times when our tongue needs to be used to correct others in love. Galatians 6:1

Our speech should always be edifying. Ephesians 4:29, Romans 15:2

THE COURAGEOUS TONGUE

Acts 4:18-22, Acts 5:29-32 - Peter and the other apostles refused to be silenced by their enemies.

Mark 8:27-38 CONSIDERATIONS

There are three things which each of us should consider in this passage.

1. CONSIDER THE IDENTITY OF JESUS Vss. 27-30

Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, "the son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16)

2. CONSIDER THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CROSS Vss. 31-33

Peter was looking for the Messiah to set up an immediate kingdom.

Jesus rebuked him, because the things of God included the death, burial, and resurrection of the Messiah.

3. CONSIDER THE INSTRUCTIONS FOR DISCIPLESHIP Vss. 34-38

Just as Jesus was willing to suffer that we might have forgiveness of sins, the disciple of Jesus must be willing to "deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Mark 8:27-38 PETER IN ACTION

PETER'S GREAT MOMENT - Vss. 27-30

With the help of God, Peter was able to identify the true identity of Jesus. See Matthew 16:13-19

PETER'S GREAT MISTAKE - Vss. 31-33

Peter rebuked Jesus for talking about his death. Peter was totally out of the will of God.

PETER'S GREAT MISSION - Vss. 34-38

Peter and the other disciples were to forsake all and follow Jesus as disciples.

Mark 8:34-38 DISCIPLESHIP

CONSIDER THE COST Vs. 34

CONSIDER THE CONTRASTS Vs. 35

CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES Vss. 36-38

Mark 9:1-8 A STRENGTHENING EXPERIENCE

Three men saw Jesus in the glory of his deity.

Three men heard the Father say, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

I believe these three men received a special measure of strength from this experience.

PETER - STRENGTH TO LEAD - He guided the early church.

JAMES - STRENGTH TO DIE - He was the first martyr.

JOHN - STRENGTH TO ENDURE - He was the last Apostle to die, and experienced imprisonment on Patmos.

As we see Jesus in all his glory, we will have the strength to lead, die, and/or endure.

Mark 9:10-12 ZEALOUS FOR GOD

Introduce the sermon by talking about some examples of people who were zealous for the things of God. True zeal is not manufactured but must come from God.

As we look at the story of the transfiguration, we can find some guidelines for allowing God to give us zeal for Him. The outline is the words from old fashioned railroad crossings, which said "Stop! Look! Listen!" STOP! Vss. 1-2

The Lord promised that some would of the disciples would see the kingdom. Peter, James and John did get a glimpse of that kingdom.

(2 Peter 1:16-17)

In order for them to have this experience, they needed to stop what they were doing, and spend quiet time with the Lord Jesus. Through history, God isolated his servants, so they could spend time alone with him (Moses, David, Paul, Elijah, Enoch, etc.). In order for us to be zealous, we must get alone with God in the Word and prayer.

LOOK! Vss. 3-8

As Jesus was transfigured before them, the disciples got to look at 3 different things.

1. Look At His Glory Vs. 3

2. Look At His Fulfillment Vs. 4, Luke 9:31-32

The Lord did all He needed to do to fulfill Scripture and to provide for all our Spiritual needs.

3. Look At Him Alone, Vss. 5-8

When all was said and done, the disciples saw Jesus only.

May we keep focused on Him alone! (Hebrews 12:2-3)

LISTEN! Vs. 7

The Father told the disciples to "Hear Him".

When we hear Jesus we listen with intense attention.

When we hear Jesus we actually do what he says.

Mark 9:10-12 MESSAGE FROM THE CLOUD

God's message from the cloud (Vs. 7) was to:

A SEPARATED GROUP - Vs. 2

A SPECIAL GROUP - Vss. 1, 3-4

A SCARED GROUP - Vss. 4-7

A SILENCED GROUP - Vss. 8-10

Some things are for the eyes and ears of Christians only.

Mark 9:12 WORDS ON THE MOUNT

PROMISING WORDS – Vs. 1

This is the promise of Jesus fulfilled on the Mount.

PROPHETIC WORDS – Vs. 4

Three prophets had a consultation.

PROPOSING WORDS – Vss. 5-6

Peter made a proposal that was unnecessary.

PREEMINENT WORDS – Vs. 7

God has the final word. Jesus was to be heard because He is God's Son.

PRIVATE WORDS – Vss. 9-10

They were not to be shared until Jesus rose from the dead.

Mark 9:14-27 THE GREAT PHYSICIAN

We have a great physician to call upon, The Lord Jesus Christ.

READ THE TEXT

JESUS IS A SPECIALIST - Vss. 14-19

A specialist is an expert in a particular field of medicine. Jesus is an expert and a specialist in every field of medicine and sphere of life.

JESUS IS DIAGNOSTICIAN - Vss. 20-22

He asked questions here to see what the problem was. Jesus is able to correctly diagnose every difficulty.

JESUS IS A CARDIOLOGIST - Vss. 23-24

Jesus even took care of the "heart problem" that the father had. He needed to believe! Jesus knows our hearts. He's the only one that can give us a new heart through salvation. Ezekiel 36:26-27

JESUS IS AN INTERNIST - Vss. 25-27

He was able to remove the demon that was on the inside of this boy. Jesus can always take care of our inner problems.

JESUS IS A GENERAL PRACTITIONER - Matthew 11:28

No matter what the problem, Jesus can take care of the need.

AND, BEST OF ALL, JESUS MAKES HOUSE CALLS! Hebrews 13:5

Few doctors make calls in a person's home anymore. However Jesus comes to where we live to meet our needs.

Mark 9:14-29 OVERWHELMED!

There are jobs for us to do and problems for us to face that make us feel so overwhelmed. In ourselves we do not have the strength to solve them. While Jesus, Peter, James and John were away (See Vss. 1-13), the other disciples are faced with a challenge that leaves them overwhelmed.

A GREAT DILEMMA - Vss. 14-18 - They could not heal.

A GREAT DEMAND - Vs. 19 - Bring the problem to the Lord.

A GREAT DESIRE - Vss. 20-22 - The man was desiring help from Jesus. We should have that same desire, and not try to tackle the problem ourselves.

A GREAT DISTINCTIVE - Vss. 23-24 - The great distinctive, or quality which Jesus requires is faith.

A GREAT DELIVERANCE - Vss. 25-29

Mark 9:14-29 GOD AT WORK

CONFUSION IN THE CAMP Vss. 14-18

CHALLENGE CONCERNING FAITH Vss. 19-20

CONVERSATION WITH THE PARENT Vss. 21-24

COMMAND TO THE ENEMY Vss. 25-27

CONSULTATION WITH THE DISCIPLES Vss. 28-29

Mark 9:30-41 LESSONS FROM THE MASTER

JESUS TAUGHT:

ABOUT THE FUTURE - Vss. 30-32

Jesus was teaching his disciples about his future death, burial and resurrection.

ABOUT BEING FIRST - Vss. 33-37

The disciples struggled for superiority among themselves. Jesus taught that the greatest is the one who is servant of all. A humble servant of Christ will receive those who are children and child-like.

ABOUT FORBEARANCE - Vss. 38-41

Somebody who was not part of Jesus' group was casting out demons. The disciples tried to stop him.

Jesus told the disciples not to forbid such activity. What is done in the name of Jesus will receive reward.

We are reminded that there will be those who don't agree with us receiving rewards in Heaven. We need to have attitude of Psalm 119:63.

Mark 9:33-37 LEARNING FROM THE MASTER

The disciples were constantly with the Lord Jesus. When situations developed, Jesus was quick to use them as learning experiences.

DEBATE OVER GREATNESS - Vss. 33-34

DECLARATION OF RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 35

DEMONSTRATION OF A CHILD - Vss. 36-37

Mark 10:1-12 A SACRED COMMITMENT

Other than letting the Lord save me, the smartest thing I ever did was marry Dottie, who has been my wife for over 26 years! As I look around however, I see many folks who have not been as fortunate. We live in a society plagued with a lack of marital bliss and commitment. The Lord Jesus had some very strong things to say concerning marriage. It would be beneficial to take them to heart.

THE CHALLENGE BY THE PHARISEES - Vss. 1-2

The Pharisees, hoping to give Jesus a hard time (as usual) tested Jesus concerning divorce and remarriage.

THE COMMAND OF MOSES - Vss. 3-4

Jesus asked the Pharisees what Moses said in the law, and they observed that Moses gave permission for divorce.

THE COMMENTARY BY JESUS - Vss. 5-9

Moses permitted divorce because of the hardness of man's heart.

Jesus makes it clear, though, that divorce was not God's original intent.

When a man and woman are married they become one flesh.

Therefore, whatever God has joined together, man should not tear it apart.

THE CLARIFICATION FOR THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 10-12

Jesus is very clear about the seriousness of divorce.

He calls divorce and remarriage "adultery."

Mark 10:13-16 BRING THE KIDS!**REFUSAL BY THE DISCIPLES - Vs. 13****REBUKE BY JESUS - Vss. 14-15****RECEPTION OF THE CHILDREN - Vs. 16**

Mark 10:13-16 DON'T FORGET THE CHILDREN!

I once heard a story about Dwight L. Moody. He had held evangelistic meetings and was asked about the results. He answered that 2 1/2 had gotten saved. "You mean two adults and one child?" asked the inquirer. "No," said Moody, "I mean two children and one adult." It is great to see people saved no matter how old or young they are. But let's remember that children won to the Savior have a whole lifetime of service to offer. The disciples in our text made the mistake of neglecting, or limiting the children. Let us not make the same mistake!

RESTRICTERS - Vs. 13

Young children were brought to Jesus, but the disciples said "no".

There are people today who don't think children can understand the Gospel at an early age. They can. All three of our children made professions of faith before they were five years of age.

By not reaching out to the children, we are restricting them.

RECEIVER - Vs. 14

Jesus was "much displeased" when the children were restricted and insisted that the children be brought to Him. He blessed them.

We should be receiving the children and bringing them to faith in Christ.

REMINDER - Vss. 15-16

One must have the faith of a child to enter the kingdom of Heaven. So what is the easiest time for a person to be saved? When they are young and naturally have the faith of a child.

Mark 10:17-27 DECISION TIME

Life is full of decisions. Each day we decide what we will eat, what we will wear, where we will go and how we will spend our time. Life is full of many small decisions and a few big ones, including who to marry, and what career to follow. The biggest decision, of course, is what to do about Jesus. Each person must decide to accept Christ as Savior. If he doesn't decide to accept Christ, he has rejected Him, and will face Hell fire. See John 3:16-18, 36 and 1 John 5:11-12.

A man we call "The rich young ruler" once came to Christ, wanting to know what he had to do to inherit eternal life. Jesus gave the man an answer. It was time for him to make a decision concerning Christ.

HE WAS UNDER SERIOUS CONVICTION. - Vs. 17

The man had no assurance of eternal life. He was convicted that he needed help.

HE CLAIMED TO KEEP STRICT COMMANDMENTS. - Vss. 18-20

In Vs. 18, Jesus said that there was none good but God. I believe the implication is that the man called Jesus "good" and only God is good. If Jesus is good, than Jesus is God.

Nobody has ever kept the Ten Commandments perfectly. He was claiming to have kept some of them. Yet he knew he still lacked something.

HE HAD TO MAKE A SPECIFIC CHOICE. - Vss. 21-22

Notice that Jesus loved the man. He loves all sinners. This man had an idol in his life. Jesus knew that the idol was his riches. The man could not turn to Christ unless he turned away from his idol of money. He had to make a choice! Not everyone who comes to Christ has to give up his money. In this case the money was the thing holding him back. He chose to keep the money and not choose Christ! Every person has to make a decision to believe on Christ in order to have eternal life!

HE BECAME THE SUBJECT OF A SAD COMMENTARY. - Vss. 23-27

It is very difficult for rich people to be saved. However, because of the work of God, it is not impossible.

***** **Mark 10:17-27 ONE MAN'S PILGRIMAGE**

When a person is on a pilgrimage he is searching for something. The rich young ruler was on a pilgrimage to Jesus, looking for eternal life.

THE SEARCH - Vss. 17

THE SCRIPTURES - Vss. 18-20

The man comes looking for life and Jesus points him to the 10 Commandments. The man needed to realize that he couldn't keep the commandments before he could be saved. The man claimed to have kept all the commandments Jesus mentioned. Romans 3:23, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23

THE STANDARD - Vs. 21

Nothing or nobody can be loved and trusted more than the Lord Jesus. Not every rich man must give up his money to be saved, but in this case it was the man's money that was keeping Him from trusting Jesus as Savior. John 14:6

THE SADNESS - Vs. 22

The man walked away! He loved his riches more!

THE STRUGGLE - Vss. 23-25

In the culture of the day it was thought that the rich people had an inside track on getting to Heaven. Jesus explains that it is a struggle for rich men to get to Heaven. Their riches get in the way!

THE STRENGTH - Vss. 26-27

The disciples figured if it was so hard for a rich man to be saved, who else could be saved.

The strength for salvation comes from God. The Holy Spirit convicts and people are saved by faith. John 16:8-11, Ephesians 2:8-9

***** **Mark 10:32-45 GLORY SEEKERS**

HIGH AMBITION - Vss. 35-37 - In the Lord's Kingdom, James and John wanted to sit on the right and left hand of Jesus.

HIGH COST - Vss. 38-40 - For the position they had to accept the same cup and baptism of suffering and death that Jesus would experience.

HIGH STANDARD - Vss. 41-45 - The chiefest is to be servant of all.

Jesus set the example. See Vs. 45.

***** **Mark 10:32-45 TWO AGENDAS**

We all have our agendas. Often our agendas conflict with the agendas of others. It is normal for each of us to have conflicts with others concerning agendas, because most of the time our agendas are different.

Often our agendas conflict with the agenda our Lord has set for us. When that conflict occurs, we know the Lord is right. In our text we see two agendas. There is the Lord's agenda, and the disciples.

THE LORD'S PROGRAM Vss. 32-34

A. Suffering Vss. 32-34

B. Service Vs. 45

THE DISCIPLES PLANS

A. Glory Vss. 35-37

Although the Lord was telling them all along that He was going to die in Jerusalem, the disciples were still expecting Him to set up His kingdom right then. James and John wanted the prominent positions in the kingdom. They were looking for the glory.

B. Greatness Vs. 41, Mark 9:33-34

The other disciples were upset with James and John. Each considered himself to be the greatest.

THE LORD'S PRONOUNCEMENT

Here our Lord tells the disciples what brings about greatness in the Kingdom. He tells them to:

A. Suffer - Vss. 38-39

Jesus asks James and John if they can drink the same cup and experience the same baptism of suffering that he would experience. They answered "Yes", and indeed they did.

B. Serve - Vss. 41-45

The greatest in the Lord's Kingdom are the ones who are the best servants. The truly great servant in his Master's eyes are the ones who serve unselfishly.

What is your agenda? Is it greatness and glory or suffering and service?

Mark 10:32-45 TRUE GREATNESS

THE PLAN OF GOD - Vss. 32-34

Jesus informed the disciples of God's plan of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

THE PRIDE OF THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 35-40

The disciples fussed over who was the greatest.

THE PRINCIPLE OF HUMILITY - Vss. 41-45

Jesus informed the disciples that true greatness was found in humility.

Jesus himself was that example of humility by giving His life *a ransom for many*.

Mark 10:35-45 CLIMBING THE CORPORATE LADDER

There are many in business today that are trying to climb the corporate ladder, beginning at entry level and striving to end up at the top of the company's leadership. Two disciples attempted such a climb among the disciples.

GREAT REQUEST - Vss. 35-47

GREAT REQUIREMENTS - Vss. 38-40

GREAT RESENTMENT - Vs. 41

GREAT RESPONSIBILITY - Vss. 43-45

Mark 10:46-52 BLIND BART

(If Bartimaeus had lived now, he probably would have been nicknamed "Blind Bart.")

A GREAT ANNOUNCEMENT - Vss. 46-47a - "Jesus is coming!" Bartimaeus was blind, and needed help.

A STUBBORN APPEAL - Vss. 47b-51 - Bartimaeus could not be silenced until he had talked to the Lord

Jesus face to face. This reminds me of the persistence with which we should pray according to Luke 18:1-8

A WONDERFUL ANSWER - Vs. 52 - He was healed!

A LOYAL AMBITION - Vs. 52 - To follow Jesus out of appreciation.

Mark 10:46-52 HAPPY ENDING!

We all like happy endings to stories. This is a Bible Story with a Happy Ending.

A VICTIM OF CIRCUMSTANCE - Vs. 46

Bartimaeus was blind.

A VOICE IN THE CROWD - Vss. 47-51

Bartimaeus persistently cried out to Jesus for help.

A VICTORY THROUGH FAITH - Vs. 52

Bartimaeus was healed according to his faith.

Mark 12:1-12 A POINTED PARABLE

It was shortly before the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Jewish leaders had come to Jesus (Mark

11:27) questioning Him. Jesus told this parable that actually condemned the Jewish Leadership.

THE RESPONSIBILITY WAS GIVEN - Vs. 1

Israel was the vineyard.

The leaders were the husbandmen.

THE REMUNERATION WAS SOUGHT - Vss. 2-6

The prophets were the messengers who came looking for fruit.

Finally, the beloved Son, the Lord Jesus was sent.

THE REJECTION WAS OBVIOUS - Vss. 6-8

Jesus would be rejected by the religious leaders and killed.

THE RETRIBUTION WAS PROMISED - Vss. 9-11

Judgment would come upon Israel. Jerusalem was destroyed and the blessing of salvation was given to the church.

THE REACTION WAS NEGATIVE - Vs. 12

Instead of repenting, the religious leaders chose to continue to reject Jesus.

Mark 12:1-12 THE PLAN OF GOD

ISRAEL PLANTED AS GOD'S VINE - Vs. 1

THE PROPHETS PREACHED AS GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES - Vss. 2-5

THE SON PERSECUTED AS GOD'S HEIR - Vss. 6-8

THE CHURCH PROVIDED AS GOD'S ALTERNATIVE - Vss. 9-12

Mark 12:13-17 BALANCE!

God has always been in favor of Government. Romans 13:1-4

In this passage the Lord Jesus shows us the balance between government and religion.

PRETENDERS Vss. 13-15A

There will always be those who fake seeking righteousness in order to carry out alternative motives. In this case they were trying to catch Jesus in His words.

PERCEPTION Vs. 15B

There is no fooling God. Jesus immediately perceives hypocrisy.

PERSPECTIVE Vss. 16-17

Give the government what belongs to it, and give to God the things that belong to Him.

Mark 12:13-34 ON THE FIRING LINE

Today, as Christians, there are times when we are support personnel.

We pray for missionaries and pastors. We contribute to the Lord's work, including missions, and we help out around the church. But, there are times when we are on the firing line. We either face opposition, persecution, or direct confrontation with the enemy, Satan.

Sometimes, because we witness, preach, teach, or pray, we find ourselves in the middle of a Spiritual battle.

One of the times that Jesus was on the firing line was just before his death. The Sanhedrin, the counsel of 70 religious leaders in Israel, was opposed to the Lord Jesus, and sought to destroy Him. They sent representatives to try and discredit him. In this passage we see:

RESPONSIBILITIES - Vss. 13-17

The Pharisees and Herodians, who would usually oppose each other, joined together to trip Jesus up in his words. After using what they thought was flattery (But was actually the truth.), they asked Him about paying tribute, a poll tax to Caesar. They figured that however Jesus answered the question, they could accuse Him. Jesus' answer was very simple, yet profound. We are to be responsible to government for the things that belong to government, such as taxes. We are to be responsible to God for the things that are God's, such as our love, faith, and service. When the two principles clash, we are to honor God above government (Acts 5:29).

RESURRECTION - Vss. 18-27

The Saducees did not believe in the resurrection. "So, they were sad, you see." :-)

In Israel, if a man died without being a father, his brother was to go in to the widow and father children in the name of his brother. The Saducees' story gives the example of a woman who ended up having no children in spite of the fact that she married all seven brothers. The question was, whose wife would she be in the resurrection?

Jesus pointed out that the Saducees' error was a result of not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God (Vs. 24). Many still make the same mistakes today. Jesus gives answer to their questions in Verses 25-27.

REQUIREMENTS - Vss. 28-34

A scribe sincerely asks Jesus about the most important law of all. Jesus answers with a summary of the law which gives two requirements. We are to love God totally, and our neighbors as ourselves. (Deuteronomy 6:4-5, Leviticus 19:18)

The Scribe agrees with Jesus, and He states that the scribe was not far from the kingdom of God. Of course, all the scribe needed to do was place his faith in Christ.

Mark 14 FORSAKEN

During a great trial, there is probably nothing sadder than being forsaken, or left alone by friends and loved ones. Jesus was forsaken by his closest friends as He began to face the cross.

JESUS FORSAKEN EMOTIONALLY AND SPIRITUALLY - Vss. 33-42 -

Instead of watching in prayer with Jesus, Peter, James, and John fell asleep.

JESUS FORSAKEN PHYSICALLY - Vss. 43-50 - The disciples all forsook Him and fled.

JESUS FORSAKEN VERBALLY - Vss. 66-72 - Peter denied his Lord three times.

Do we, as Christians, ever forsake Jesus emotionally, spiritually, physically, or verbally?

Mark 14:12-31 THE LAST SUPPER

PREPARATION FOR THE LAST SUPPER - Vss. 12-16

PRONOUNCEMENT OF BETRAYAL - Vss. 17-21

PARTICIPATION IN A MEMORIAL - Vss. 22-26

PROCLAMATION OF WARNING - Vss. 27-31

Mark 14:32-50 IN THE GARDEN (Gethsemane)

GREAT TRIAL - Vss. 32-40

Jesus agonized over His persecution and death, even asking God if He could be excused. However, his prayer was always in submission to God.

GREAT TRIUMPH - Vss. 41-42

Jesus was totally yielded to God's Plan

GREAT TREACHERY - Vss. 43-46

GREAT TRAVESTY - Vss. 47-49

GREAT TRAGEDY - Vs. 50

MARK 15:1-15 PILATE'S PREDICAMENT

PILATE'S SURPRISE - Vss. 1-5

PILATE'S SUGGESTION - Vss. 6-13

PILATE'S SURRENDER - Vss. 14-15

Mark 15:1-38 FOR ME!

In Galatians 2:20 Paul states that Jesus loved him and gave Himself for him. Jesus loved and gave Himself for us as well. Mark shows us what terrible trouble Jesus faced for me!

ACCUSATION - Vss. 1-3 - He was falsely accused before Pilate by the chief priests, who should have received Him as their Messiah.

REJECTION - Vss. 6-14 - His own people rejected Him in favor of a convicted criminal, Barabbas.

HUMILIATION - Vss. 15-28

1. From the soldiers - Vss. 15-23

2. On the cross - Vss. 24-33

SEPARATION - Vss. 34-36 - Because He was bearing the sin of the world, even God the Father separated Himself from His Son during this time.

VINDICATION - Vss. 37-38 - When the veil was torn in two it indicated that God had accepted the sacrifice of Jesus for sin. The way was open to the "holy of holies" through Christ.

Mark 15:1-38 THE FINAL HOURS

Mark tells us of the last hours of Jesus by telling us about:

PILATE'S RELUCTANT CONSENT - Vss. 1-15

Pilate gave in to the demands of the Jewish leaders. He tried to find a way to not crucify Jesus, but in the end yielded to their demands.

THE SOLDIERS' REPULSIVE CONDUCT - Vss. 16-28

They mocked and beat Him. Vss. 15-18 They crucified Him. Vss. 19-28

THE PEOPLE'S REBELLIOUS CHALLENGE - Vss. 29-32

Those who didn't believe on Him challenged Him to come off the cross.

Staying on the cross secured forgiveness for all that trust Him as Savior.

THE SAVIOR'S RIGHTEOUS CONQUEST - Vss. 33-38

Our Lord died for our sins and secured forgiveness. The torn veil showed that God had accepted Jesus' sacrifice, and that there was now, through Jesus, access into the Father's presence.

Mark 16 EASTER EVENTS

THE WOMEN WERE CONCERNED - Vss. 1-4

THE ANGEL WAS COMFORTING - Vss. 5-7

THE LORD WAS CONSPICUOUS - Vss. 9-10

THE APOSTLES WERE CALLUSED - Vss. 11-14

THE PLAN WAS MADE CLEAR - Vss. 15-20

Mark 16 EASTER

MISSION OF LOVE - Vss. 1-4

MESSAGE OF VICTORY - Vss. 5-7

MEETINGS WITH MEANING - Vss. 8-14

Mary Magdalene - Vss. 9-11

Disciples on the road to Emmaus - Vss. 12-13, Luke 24:19-32

The Eleven - Vs. 14

MANDATE FOR EVANGELISM - Vss. 15-18

Mark 16:9-15 THE FIRST EASTER

REVELATION - Vss. 9 and 12

Mark mentions Mary Magdalene and the two disciples who traveled on the road to Emmaus Luke 24:13-35) as those to whom Jesus appeared after resurrecting from the dead.

RESPONSE - Vss. 10, 11 and 13

The disciples did not initially believe the reports of Jesus' resurrection.

REBUKE - Vs. 14

Jesus appeared to the disciples and rebuked them for their unbelief.

RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 15

After belief comes the responsibility of sharing the Good News with others.

Mark 16 THE GREATNESS OF EASTER

Easter is a great holiday. Mark shows us some of the greatness of Easter.

THE GREAT KINDNESS Vss. 1-3

The women come to the tomb to anoint his body.

THE GREAT DISCOVERY Vss.4-5

The tomb is empty!

THE GREAT ANNOUNCEMENT Vss. 6-8

"He is not here!"

THE GREAT APPEARANCES Vss. 9-14

Mary Magdalene Vss. 9-11

Disciples on Road to Emmaus Vss. 12-13

The Eleven Vs. 14

THE GREAT COMMISSION Vss. 15-18

THE GREAT CONCLUSION Vss. 19-20

The Ascension. Vs. 19

The preaching of the Gospel. Vs. 20

Luke 1:1-4 etc. LUKE: THE MAN BEHIND THE MESSAGE

I want you to meet a man. A man so humble that he never mentions himself by name in his writings. When he is present as an eyewitness at an event he writes about "we" and "us" instead of "I" and "me". This man we only know of as a companion to the Apostle Paul, as an author, and as "the beloved physician."

This man wrote 2 books of the New Testament, his gospel and the Book of Acts. In writing these, he gave us about 28% of the content of the New Testament. This man God used by His Holy Spirit to communicate love and devotion for Jesus Christ.

The man that I am referring to is Luke who wrote the Gospel according to Luke. Who was this man? We do not know a lot about him.

We do know that he was Gentile, not a Jew.

We do know that he was a doctor by profession.

We do know that he was a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul.

As far as we know, he never saw Jesus personally during Jesus' life on earth.

There are not many references to Luke in the New Testament. In fact, in only three cases is Luke mentioned by name. He was an eyewitness to many events found in the Book of Acts. You can tell that he was present when he refers to "we" and "us".

Although the content about Luke is limited, we can find out some very important things about the character of this man. These are important things worth duplicating in our own lives.

HIS DEPENDABILITY - Luke 1:1-4

We can tell a lot about a person from their writings. In the introduction to Luke's Gospel, we find out something very important about Luke. He was dependable! You could count on Luke to do the job, and to do it right! You could also call this faithfulness.

Vss. 1-2 - Luke was saying "Others have written accounts of these things which we believe." Perhaps Mark and Matthew had already written their Gospels. Perhaps other accounts that were not inspired were also written.

Vs. 3 - Luke decided to write because he had "perfect understanding" of what had taken place.

Vs. 4 - Luke's purpose was for Theophilus and all those who read his Gospel would know the certainty of what they had been taught about Christ.

Luke was saying, "You can depend on me to get my facts straight. You know that what you have been taught about Christ is true because I have given you an accurate account."

The fact that we read of Luke being so much with Paul in the Book of Acts is another indication that Luke was a dependable man. Every Christian is to be dependable. 1 Corinthians 4:2, 2 Timothy 4:2, Luke 16:10-11

HIS MINISTRY - Philemon 1:24

Just as Paul paid bills by being a tent maker, Luke could have paid his bills by being a doctor. But being a doctor was a sideline for Luke.

In this passage Paul calls Luke a "fellow laborer". Just as Paul was a servant of Jesus Christ, so was Luke. In Acts 16:9-13 it is evident that Luke also felt the call of God to preach in Macedonia and also helped to speak to the women by the river. Luke was not the principle speaker but a speaker nonetheless.

Paul never wrote a Gospel to our knowledge or a book of history of the early church. Luke did. Luke never wrote a doctrinal epistle. Paul did that. They were fellow laborers, each doing what God had called them to do. Being a fellow laborer does not mean that we do exactly what the other person is doing. It means that we do what God wants us to do, cooperating with others who are also serving the Lord.

HIS TESTIMONY - Colossians 4:14

Here is a one-word testimony to the character of Luke. He was beloved!

He had a good reputation among the saints. He was well thought of, well liked, deemed special by other believers.

How did Luke accomplish this? I feel it was a result of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23.

HIS LOYALTY - 2 Timothy 4:11

Paul was at the end of his life. He was in prison.

Nobody else was around to meet his needs except Luke.

It was Luke who was with Paul when he was shipwrecked.

It was Luke who stayed around as a dear friend.

It was Luke who was faithful to the end.

I realize the words loyal and dependable are close in their meanings. When I think of dependability I think of being trusted with things. When I think of loyalty I think of being trusted with people.

Luke 1:5-25 ABOUT GOD'S WILL

GOD EXERCISES HIS WILL IN THE LIVES OF THE GODLY Vss. 5-7

GOD EXPLAINS HIS WILL THROUGH HIS WORD Vss. 10-17

(Zacharias received the spoken word, we have received the written word.)

GOD EXPECTS THE GODLY TO BELIEVE HIM Vss. 18-25

Luke 1:5-25 BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

When children are born into the family, we like to announce the arrival of the new family member. Usually when a birth announcement is made, the child has already arrived. In the case of John the Baptist, his birth was announced to his father.

A RIGHTEOUS COUPLE - Vss. 5-6

Zacharias and Elizabeth were godly people.

A REAL PROBLEM - Vs. 7

Although they were godly, Elizabeth was barren.

A REVEALING VISIT - Vss. 8-17

Gabriel tells Zacharias about the birth and ministry of his son, John.

A RESTRICTING PRONOUNCEMENT - Vss. 18-20

Zacharias fails to believe what God has revealed to him. Therefore a judgment of silence was pronounced!

A REMARKABLE OCCURANCE - Vss. 21-25

Elizabeth conceived.

I wonder how many times we disappoint our Lord, when we fail to believe His promises in the Bible?

Luke 1:39 THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

Imagine taking a friend to your favorite restaurant. The waiter brings out the appetizer, and your friend says, "This fruit cup is great!" And you answer, "You haven't seen nothing yet. The best is yet to come!"

Next, out comes the soup, and your friend says, "Why this is the best soup I've ever eaten!" You answer your friend, "Just wait. The best is still yet to come."

The same thing happens for the salad and the main course. In each case you assure the friend that "The best is yet to come!" And sure enough, when the dessert comes, it turns out to be better than all the good things the man had already tasted at this terrific restaurant. The best was yet to come.

Now imagine a fan of music that has never heard the Messiah. He hears the first few choruses and raves to you how great the music is. You would assure him to "Just wait. The best is yet to come." The best does come at the end with the Hallelujah Chorus.

On a lighter note there's an old story about a preacher who was stealing his messages from a book by Charles Haddon Spurgeon (a great preacher of the past). Unknown to him one of the church deacons had the same book. After listening to the man preaching Spurgeon's sermons without giving him any credit, the deacon took action. On one Sunday morning the deacon shook hands with the pastor at the end of the service, and said "Great message pastor!" And then the deacon leaned over and whispered, "Wait until you see next week's sermon. It's even better!" The best was yet to come. (I am unaware of the source of this story, but it is not original.)

In keeping with the season, our message is found in Luke 1. Here we find the announcements of the births of two men. The first announcement was the announcement of the birth of a great man by the name of John The Baptist. Although John was great, the second birth announcement in this chapter was about the birth of a greater man, The Lord Jesus Christ. Although John was great, THE BEST WAS YET TO COME!

THE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING JOHN

Background Material - Vss. 5-10

A Great Birth - Vss. 11-13

Although Elizabeth had been barren, she would conceive. The child born to Zacharias and Elizabeth would be named "John"

A Great Life - Vs. 14

John would be great in the sight of the Lord!

He was the equivalent of an Old Testament Nazarite, who drank no alcohol. (Numbers 6:1-8)

He was filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb. (Luke 1:41)

A Great Ministry - Vss. 16-17

He would turn many to the Lord. (Vs. 16)

He was the messenger promised in Malachi 3:1. (Vs. 17)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING JESUS

In verses 26-31, Gabriel made a great announcement to Mary.

Mary was puzzled how these things could be. Vs. 34

A Greater Birth - Vs. 35

The birth of the Lord Jesus was the work of the Holy Spirit of god within the body of Mary.

This virgin birth was a greater miracle than the birth of John.

A Greater Life - Vs. 32

Jesus would be called "The Son of the Highest" He was God in the flesh. See John 1:14

A Greater Ministry - Vss. 31-33

According to Vs. 31, the child's name would be JESUS. This word means "Jehovah-salvation".

He accomplished His greatest ministry on the cross when He died for your sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21

He would reign as Israel's Messiah according to Vss. 32-33 (This prophecy will be fulfilled in the future!)

Psalm 89:3-4)

Luke 1:13 etc. "FEAR NOT!"

One of the great messages of the Bible is that those who fear and trust God completely have nothing to fear. Many times God says to his followers, "Fear Not". Consider that this message is stated four different times in the Christmas Account. God says "Fear not" to:

1. A DESPERATE OLD MAN - Luke 1:13 (Luke 1:5-25)

Zecharias so desperately wanted a son that he was probably praying for one, when he was supposed to be praying for the people. When we are desperate, God says to us "Fear not".

2. A DISTINCT YOUNG WOMAN - Luke 1:30 (Luke 1:26-38)

Mary was distinct because she was chosen to be the mother of the Messiah. We are distinct as Christians because we the children of God, and have nothing to fear except God (Luke 12:4-5). Because we are distinct, God says to us, "Fear not".

3. A DISAPPOINTED YOUNG MAN - Matthew. 1:20 (Matthew. 1:18-25) - Joseph was disappointed because he thought his bride to be was unfaithful. God's message to "fear not", assured Joseph that all was well. Often through our disappointments we will hear God say, "Fear not."

4. DEDICATED SERVANTS - Luke 2:10 (Luke 2:8-14)

The shepherds were just doing their jobs, watching their flocks by night. Something special happened to them on the job. The angel appeared, and they were told to "fear not". As we faithfully serve the Lord, and a surprise occurs, we will hear the Lord saying "Fear not."

Luke 1:26-38 GOOD NEWS!

THE SPECIAL MAIDEN IS VISITED - Vss. 26-30

THE COMING MESSIAH IS ANNOUNCED - Vss. 31-33

THE WONDERFUL METHOD (OF CONCEPTION) IS EXPLAINED - Vss 34-38

Luke 1:26-38 A SURPRISE VISIT

Probably every lady in Israel would have liked to be the mother of the promised Messiah. The privilege came to a young lady by the name of Mary. She was visited by the angel, Gabriel.

MARY WAS SPECIAL IN GOD'S EYES. Vss. 26-28

Although we do not hold to the deity of Mary in any way (She was a sinner saved by grace. Luke 1:46-47), she was a very special lady.

MARY WAS SHOWN GOD'S PLAN Vss. 29-37

Although Mary didn't doubt Gabriel, she did need some explanation. Vss. 34-35

MARY WAS SURE THAT GOD TOLD THE TRUTH. Vss 38

Luke 1:26-38 etc. MARY, MARY, MARY – GOOD FOR MOTHER'S DAY

A very common name for women in the New Testament appears to be Mary. Three of the women named Mary have much to teach us about how to relate to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

AN EXAMPLE OF LEANING - MARY, MOTHER OF OUR LORD

Mary leaned on God in faith.

Luke 1:26-38 - When Mary was told she would be Mother of the Messiah, she trusted God.

John 2:1-9 - When there was a need for wine at a wedding, she trusted Jesus.

AN EXAMPLE OF LOVING - MARY OF BETHANY

Luke 10:28-32 - She sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

John 12:1-8 - She expressed her love for the Lord by anointing the Lord's feet.

AN EXAMPLE OF LIVING - MARY MAGDELENE

Luke 8:1-3 - Here is a woman who was under the bondage of sin.

The Lord Jesus changed her life.

She went on to live for Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17, John 20:11-18)

Luke 1:76-80 ABOUT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Under the control of the Holy Spirit, Zecharias tells us about the ministry of his son, John.

JOHN WAS A PROPHET Vs. 76a

JOHN HAD A PURPOSE Vss. 76b-79

1. To Prepare Jesus' Ways Vs. 76b
2. To Give Knowledge Vss. 77-78
3. To Give Light Vs. 79a
4. To Give Guidance Vs. 79b

JOHN MADE PROGRESS Vs. 80

ONLY ONE CHRISTMAS Luke 2:25-31

People celebrate Christmas in different ways. Some of you will have big Christmas dinner at home. Others will go out to eat either to a restaurant or someone's home. Some of you will open presents Christmas Eve, others will open them Christmas morning. Some will read the Christmas story. Some will have a real tree, while some will have an artificial tree. Some have no tree. Many will hang stockings and/or mistletoe. Some of you will Christmas carol and/or visit shut-ins.

However, how would you celebrate Christmas if it you only had one? That's right. You would know in advance that say, this Christmas would be the only Christmas that you would ever celebrate? In the Bible there is such a man. His name was Simeon, who was promised that he would not die until he saw the Lord's Christ, that is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Most of us believe that Simeon was an old man. After seeing the Lord Jesus he proclaimed, *Now let thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.*

This can be said for Simeon: He was a man with only one Christmas, but he was a man who celebrated Christmas in a way that was honoring and pleasing to God. Simeon's Christmas is a model of how you and I, who have more Christmases than he did, can and should celebrate.

SIMEON HAD A CHRISTMAS CHARACTER – Vss. 25-31

SIMEON HAD A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE – Vss. 32-35

We will examine Simeon's Christmas Character and think about making it our own character.

Let's set the scene from earlier verses in Luke 2.

Vss. 1-3 – Caesar Augustus, issued a decree that the whole world should be registered for taxation.
Vss. 4-5 – Joseph and Mary went together to be taxed in the city of Joseph's ancestors, Bethlehem.
Vss. 6-7 – Mary had the Baby in a stable, & layed Him in the manger, because there was no room in the inn
Vss. 8-17 – Shepherds received the message of Jesus' birth, made a visit, and told others.
Vs. 21 – Jesus was circumcised on the eighth day.
Vss. 22-24 – The wife was considered ceremonially impure for 40 days after the birth of a male child. She could not enter the temple. A sacrifice was to be offered. In this case, it was the sacrifice of a poorer person. Also, Jesus was presented or dedicated in the temple, redeemed by a payment of 5 shekels.

Now Simeon enters the picture.

We do not know that he was a priest, or a Levite, or a scribe, or a ruler.

We only know that he was a godly man.

Very possible, he was what we would call a "layman".

This reminds me that one does not have to have a bunch of degrees in the back of his name, or a title in front of his name to be used of God.

Be Godly! Serve Him faithfully, and God will use you!.

SIMEON HAD A CHRISTMAS CHARACTER – Vss. 25-31

Have you noticed how people get what we call "Christmas Spirit"?

People who are grouchy all year round manage to be jolly at Christmastime. People who are stingy all year round, find some generosity at Christmastime. People who never go to church show up on Christmas Eve. Simeon had Christmas spirit, but I'd call it Christmas character. He didn't just have it at Christmastime. He had it all year round. We should follow Simeon's example. God would be pleased if you and I had Christmas Spirit or character 365 days a year.

Let's analyze this character:

SIMEON WAS RIGHTEOUS

Luke 2:25 - And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

The word in the KJV is "just". This means "righteous".

A man who is righteous in the Bible is not sinless. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are sinless. Man is not.

A man who is righteous is a man who is first right with God. What better way to celebrate Christmas than to be right with the one who sponsors Christmas, God the Father. He sponsored Christmas by sending His Son.

You probably realize that nobody is naturally righteous in God's eyes. You probably realize that we've all failed God. Isaiah 64:6 It is only a person's faith that makes a person righteous.

Four times in the Bible the statement is made, "The just shall live by faith."

It is faith in Christ that saves. Romans 5:1

Those of us who have trusted Christ as Savior should not stop living righteously by faith. The walk of faith is to be a daily experience. 2 Corinthians 5:7, Hebrews 11:6

SIMEON WAS RIGHTEOUS

SIMEON WAS DEVOUT

He was serious and reverent about his commitment to God.

We need to practice the presence of our Savior, listening for Him, and talking to Him, 365 days a year, but especially around the celebration of His birthday.

We sing a great hymn, "In the Garden". However do we practice what we sing?

And He walks with me, and He talks with me,

And He tells me I am His own;

And the joy we share as we tarry there,

None other has ever known.

I think of being devout as practicing the presence of God in my life. The more I am cognizant of Christ's presence in and through me, the more devout I will be.

SIMEON WAS RIGHTEOUS

SIMEON WAS DEVOUT

SIMEON WAS WAITING

Who was Simeon waiting for? He was waiting for the "consolation of Israel".

Who or what was that? It is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

The prophecy in Daniel 9 concerning Israel's Messiah was close to the time of fulfillment. Simeon evidently knew this. So, he was waiting for Israel's Messiah.

Just as Simeon was waiting for the first coming of Jesus, the Messiah, we should be waiting for the second coming of Jesus the Messiah. John 14:2-3, Titus 2:11-13

SIMEON WAS HOLY SPIRIT CONTROLLED

and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

The Holy Ghost rested upon Simeon. Today, each child of God has the Holy Spirit living inside of him. John 14:16-17

Today we are to be filled or controlled by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16

Luke 2:26 - And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

The Holy Ghost had told Simeon that death would not come until he, Simeon, had seen the Messiah.

Today God's Holy Spirit has a teaching ministry.

As we study God's Word, hear it preached and pray, the Holy Spirit will instruct us. John 16:13

Luke 2:27 - And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

God's Holy Spirit guided Simeon to be in the right place at the right time and led him to the right child.

As we are guided by God we will be at the right place at the right time.

SIMEON WAS GRATEFUL

Luke 2:28 - Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

He blessed God!

He showed his gratitude.

He had seen the Lord's salvation in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

He knew that God was faithful to Israel.

He knew that God was faithful to keep His promises.

He had much for which to be grateful, and knew it.

I fear that this is one part of the Christmas character that we often overlook.

We fail to say "thank you" to God and to praise Him.

We forget to be truly thankful for the gift of His Son at Christmastime.

But we also forget to be grateful year round. Things go wrong and we do not give thanks or worship. If we look around at what others are facing, very often we recognize God's good hand upon us.

When we fail to look around and God continues to bless us, we often fail to recognize just how good God has been to us and we fail to say thank you. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

SIMEON WAS SUBMISSIVE

Luke 2:29 - Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

The word "now" is stressed here. He was ready to go according to the plan of God. There were no complaints, no begging God for more time. He had seen what God had promised and he was satisfied.

Simeon recognized that God was his absolute owner. "Lord"

Think of yourself.

Can you say that God has rights of ownership in your life? Of course He does!

But do you admit it? Do you submit to it?

God owns you because of creation. God owns you because of redemption. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

The best gift we can give to God is to recognize and accept His ownership and absolute rule in our lives.

Simeon only had one Christmas. But He celebrated it with a Christmas character.

SIMEON WAS RIGHTEOUS

SIMEON WAS DEVOUT

SIMEON WAS WAITING

SIMEON WAS HOLY SPIRIT CONTROLLED

SIMEON WAS GRATEFUL

SIMEON WAS SUBMISSIVE

Let us follow His example and display a Christmas character all the year round.

Luke 2:1-20 GOD'S TOOLS

It is amazing how God will use different people to accomplish his purposes. When God uses a person, he is a tool in God's hand.

GOD USED A SOVEREIGN - Vss. 1-3

Caesar Augustus decided to register everyone for another round of taxes. Joseph went to Bethlehem, and Jesus was born in the right town, so that prophecy would be fulfilled. Micah 5:2

GOD USED HIS SAINTS - Vss. 4-5

A saint is a person who has trusted in Christ. Mary and Joseph were used of God to raise and protect His Son.

GOD USED HIS SON - Vs. 7

Jesus came to be the Savior of the world. John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21

GOD USED SUPERNATURAL BEINGS - Vss. 8-14

They were used to announce the birth of God's Son and to shout God's praise.

GOD USED SHEPHERDS - Vss. 15-20

The shepherds went to visit the newborn child and to share with others what they had heard and seen.

Luke 2:1-20 PERFECT!**GOD'S TIMING WAS PERFECT - Vss. 1-3****GOD'S PLACE WAS PERFECT - Vss. 4-7****GOD'S ANNOUNCEMENT WAS PERFECT - Vss. 8-14****GOD'S WELCOMING COMMITTEE WAS PERFECT - Vss. 15-20**

Luke 2:1-20 GOD AT WORK!

You have seen the signs next to construction sites and gas, electric, & telephone company vehicles. The signs say, "Men at work!" Next to Luke 2:1-20 we could place a sign, "God at work!" Here God is at work in various ways & thru various people

CAESAR AUGUSTUS - GOD'S TOOL, Vss. 1-2

To get Mary and Joseph out of Nazareth and into Bethlehem at the right time, he used the decree of a Roman Emperor, calling for a registration for taxation.

STABLE IN BETHLEHEM - GOD'S PLACE, Vss. 4-5, Micah 5:2**MARY AND JOSEPH - GOD'S SERVANTS, Vss. 6-7**

By faith Mary accepted her duty as Mother to the Lord Jesus Christ. Luke 1:30-38

By faith Joseph accepted his role of guardian to our Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 1:18-25

THE ANGELS - GOD'S MESSENGERS, Vss. 9-14**THE SHEPHERDS - GOD'S EXAMPLES, Vss. 15-20**

Hearing, they believed. Vs. 15

Believing, they came. Vs. 16

Coming, they saw. Vs. 16

Seeing, they shared. Vss. 17-18

Sharing, they praised. Vs. 20

Luke 2:1-20 LET'S MEET THE ORIGINAL CAST!

Each year at this time there are countless Christmas programs. There have been many people who have played the parts of Mary and Joseph, angels, and shepherds. But we can't improve on the original cast of characters who played themselves one night almost 2,000 years ago. Let's meet them, and their roles.

GOD'S PERFECTED PLAN Vss. 1-3, 6-7**JOSEPH'S SUBMISSIVE SERVICE Vs. 4****THE ANGELS' PRAISING PROCLAMATION Vss. 8-14****THE SHEPHERDS' ENTHUSIASTIC EVANGELISM Vss. 15-18, 20**

1. They heard.

2. They believed. Vss. 15-16

3. They shared. Vss. 17-18

4. They rejoiced Vs.20

MARY'S REFLECTIVE REMEMBRANCES Vs. 19

Luke 2:1-20 DR. LUKE TELLS US ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Luke was a doctor, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, a great story teller.

THE BABY ARRIVES Vss. 1-7**THE ANGELS ANNOUNCE Vss. 8-14****THE SHEPHERDS ATTEND Vss. 15-20**

Luke 2:1-20 THAT'S MARVELOUS!

THE MARVELOUS ACT OF GOD Vss. 1-7

THE MARVELOUS ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE ANGELS Vss. 8-14

THE MARVELOUS ACTIVITY OF THE SHEPHERDS Vss. 15-20

Luke 2:1-20 GOD COMPLETES HIS PLAN

The birth of the Lord Jesus was a completion of God's plan that had been promised in the Old Testament (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, Micah 5:2).

GOD'S PRODUCTION - Vss. 1-5

God had promised that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. God used Caesar Augustus in order to get Joseph and Mary to the right place at the right time. God's timing is always perfect.

GOD'S PRESENT - Vss. 6-7

God's greatest gift to man was born! Isaiah 9:6, John 3:16

GOD'S PROCLAMATION - Vss. 8-14

Like any proud father, God made sure that the right people knew about the birth of His Son! He used angels to tell the humble shepherds out on the hillside.

GOD'S PRESENTATION - Vss. 15-20

God presented the shepherds with a look at His baby boy. They spread the word!

Luke 2:1-35 WHEN GOD INTERFERED!

We don't think of God interfering with our plans, but He often does. And when God interferes with our plans, it means that He has a better plan. So it was in the lives of certain people involved in the Christmas Story.

AN INCONVENIENCE THAT FULFILLED PROPHECY - Vss. 1-7

I'm reasonably sure that Mary and Joseph were expecting the Baby Jesus to be born at home in Nazareth. Then the inconvenience took place. Because of a governmental proclamation, Joseph had to register for taxation in Bethlehem. The couple had the inconvenience of birth in a strange, uncomfortable place away for home. But out of that convenience came the fulfillment of prophecy from Micah 5:2.

AN INTERRUPTION THAT WAS A PRIVILEGE - Vss. 8-20

The shepherds were quietly doing their jobs, when they were interrupted with a scary appearance by an angel, and then a heavenly host of angels. They were interrupted, but had the privilege of being the first to see God's Son.

AN INTERLUDE (WAITING PERIOD) THAT BROUGHT PEACE - Vss. 21-35

Simeon was a godly man who was promised that he wouldn't die until he saw the Lord's Christ. Vss. 25-26 He had to wait. The wait was worth it, as we see in verses 29-35.

Luke 2:8-20 SHEPHERDS' TALE

THE WATCH OF THE SHEPHERDS - Vs. 8

THE WORDS OF THE ANGELS - Vss. 9-14

THE WALK TO BETHLEHEM - Vss. 15-16

THE WITNESS FOR CHRIST - Vss. 17-19

THE WORSHIP OF GOD - Vs. 20

Luke 2:10-11 BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Every once in a while you will look at a store window or display board, and find an announcement reading "It's a girl!", or "It's a boy!"

Other times we will hear an announcement on radio or TV announcing the birth of a child to a celebrity. In the U.S.A. we recently enjoyed the announcement of the birth of 7 babies to one family.

When our Lord Jesus was born there was also an announcement made.

The birth of a very special person, the son of God, required a very special announcement. Angels made the birth announcement to the shepherds near Bethlehem (Luke 2:8-9).

A PERSONAL BIRTH - "...good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you..." - The birth of the Lord Jesus was for every living being. It is through his birth and subsequent death that each and every person who believes on Him can have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

A PHYSICAL BIRTH - "...is born..." - The Son of God literally had a physical birth. He came to live among us. (Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6, John 1:14)

A PROVIDENTIAL BIRTH - "...a savior..." - Man is a sinner, with no hope within himself. (Isaiah 64:6, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 3:9-19, 23)

God provided His Son as our savior to die for us. (Romans 5:6-9, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

A PREEMINENT BIRTH - "...who is Christ the Lord..." - He is the promised "anointed one", the Christ, the Messiah. He will one day reign over all the earth. (Isaiah 9:5, Isaiah 11:1-16, Micah 5:2)

Luke 2:10-14 MESSAGE OF THE ANGELS

A PEACEFUL MESSAGE - "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy..."

A PERSONAL MESSAGE - "...for unto you..."

A PRACTICAL MESSAGE - "...is born...a savior, which is Christ the Lord."

A PRAISE WORTHY MESSAGE - Vss. 13-14

Luke 2:8-20 SHEPHERDS' FAITH

There are many great people involved in the Christmas story (Elaborate on God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna, angels etc.)

But there is a group of seemingly insignificant men to whom the Angels appeared. These were the shepherds who watched their flocks by night. They are especially important because they were men of faith. They show us some great qualities of faith.

FAITH HEARS - Vss. 8-14

FAITH BELIEVES - The shepherds believed the message they received from God.

FAITH ACTS - Vss. 15-16

FAITH SHARES - Vss. 17-19

Luke 2:21-35 SIMEON

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 21-24

A PROMISE - Vss. 25-26

A Godly man, Simeon was promised that he would not die until he saw the Messiah.

A PERSON - Vss. 27-33

Please note that God's salvation is found in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

When Simeon saw God's salvation, he had seen Jesus. Vs. 30

A PROPHECY - Vss. 34-35

Luke 2:25-35 ONE MAN'S CHRISTMAS

People celebrate Christmas in various ways. (Elaborate on the different ways people celebrate the holiday.) There was one man who celebrated the first Christmas in a very fitting way. His name was Simeon.

HE WAS A GODLY MAN Vs. 25

HE HAD A GODLY MOTIVATION Vss. 26-27

The Spirit had told him he would not die until he had seen the Messiah. Also, the Spirit guided him to the baby Jesus in the temple.

HE HAD A GODLY MESSAGE Vss. 28-35

Luke 2:36-38 ANNA

SHE SERVED FAITHFULLY - Vss. 36-37

SHE SAW JOYFULLY - Vss. 38a

SHE SHARED SELECTIVELY Vs. 38b

Anna shared with those who had like faith.

Luke 2:41-52 LESSONS FROM THE FIRST FAMILY**LESSONS FOR PARENTS**

1. Be Partners In Spiritual Things Vs. 41

(Mary and Joseph both involved in Spiritual things.)

2. Give your children Spiritual direction. Vs. 42

3. Be concerned for well being of your children. Vss. 43-48

LESSONS FOR CHILDREN

1. Devotion Vs. 46

2. Submission Vs. 51

3. Development Vs. 52 (Mental, physical, Spiritual, Social)

LESSON FOR ALL - Be about your Father's business. Vs. 49

Luke 2:41-52 JESUS, THE BUSINESSMAN

We normally do not think of Jesus as a businessman, although he was involved in carpentry work. In reality, however, Jesus was a great businessman. In v. 49 He was concerned about His Father's business THE PLACE - Vss. 41-42 - The events took place in Jerusalem. It was Passover. THE PROBLEM - Vss. 43-45 - Mary and Joseph left. Jesus didn't.

THE PRIORITY - Vss. 46-50 - The most important thing to the Lord Jesus was doing His Father's will.

THE POSITION - Vs. 51 - Luke makes it very clear that our Lord was not rebellious towards his earthly parents. He went back to Nazareth in a position of submission to his parents.

THE PROCESS - Vs. 52 - Jesus continued to grow:

1. Mentally - "wisdom"
2. Physically - "stature"
3. Spiritually - favor with God
4. Socially - favor with man

Luke 2:18-19 etc. NEW TESTAMENT MOMS

THE ATTENTIVE MOM - Luke 2:18-19, 2:51, John 2:1-10

Mary observed her child and knew Him as well as anyone on this earth. She recalled things he said & did. An attentive Mom will be able to attend to the physical and spiritual needs of her children.

THE AMBITIOUS MOM - Matthew 20:20 -23

The mother of James and John was certainly ambitious for her children.

Many a child has been pushed too far by parents who wanted them to achieve more than the child was capable of or more than he desired to do.

THE ARTICULATE MOM (AND GRANDMOM) - 2 Timothy 1:5, 3:15

His Mother and Grandmother communicated faith and the scriptures to Timothy when Timothy was very young. We need to articulate the Scriptures to our children as well.

THE ADOPTED MOM - Romans 16:13

The mother of Rufus was not Paul's literal mom. She had acted towards him in a motherly way. Praise God for those Godly older women who have "mothered" us when we needed it. Praise God when God allows you to nurture younger Christians as kind of an adopted mother.

Luke 2:36-38 ANNA - TOO YOUNG TO RETIRE

An older congregation might appreciate this mother in the faith. Although she had no children, she is a godly example to those who wish to "retire" from Christian service prematurely.

HER AGE - Vs. 36-37

She lived with a husband for seven years and had been a widow for 80 years!

Assuming that she married as a young teen, she had to be around a hundred!

HER ACTIVITY - Vs. 37

She did what she could to serve God. She fasted and prayed! Most older people can't do what they once could. But every Christian can do something.

HER ASSOCIATIONS - Vs. 38

She spoke of Jesus to those who were looking for His coming. In our old age, may our associations be with those who are looking for Jesus' Second Coming!

Luke 3:1-18 COUNTRY PREACHER

Country preachers in the United States have historically been known for being simple, forthright, powerful, Godly men. They are a lot like a preacher in the wilderness (country) in Jesus' day. His name was John the Baptist. John brought the Word of God concerning the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ (Vss. 1-2).

JOHN'S CHALLENGE - Vss. 3-9

1. Purposeful - Vs. 3 - He preached a baptism of repentance, preparing people for the coming Messiah.
2. Prophetic - Vss. 4-6 - His coming had been predicted in the Old Testament (Isaiah 40:3-5).
3. Practical - Vss. 7-9 - John was looking for "fruit" that repentance had taken place. He also warned of coming judgment.

JOHN'S CLARIFICATION - Vss. 10-14

John explained what repentance meant for each group that inquired.

1. People in general were to share - Vss. 10-11

2. Publicans (tax collectors) were to be honest - Vss. 12-13

3. Soldiers were not to be violent, not to accuse falsely, and to be content with their wages. - Vs 14.

JOHN'S CHAMPION - Vss. 15-18

John stated clearly that he was not the Christ and pointed to one who would come of whom even John was not worthy. This champion would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire instead of water.

Luke 3:1-18 JOHN - MESSENGER FROM GOD

JOHN RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD - Vss. 1-2

JOHN REPORTED WHAT HE HEARD - Vss. 3-6, 15-18

JOHN REBUKED SIN - Vss. 7-9

JOHN RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS - Vss. 10-14

Luke 3:1-18 THE ADVANCE MAN

And advance man comes before someone who is important and prepares for his coming.

John the Baptist was such an advance man for the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE SETTING - Vss. 1-3

John is introduced in the context of those who were in power when he began to preach and baptize.

THE SERVANT - Vss. 4-6

John's ministry was predicted in Isaiah 40:3-5

THE SERMON - Vss. 7-18

His Call - Vss. 7-9 - for proof of repentance

His Conversation - Vss. 10-14 - He told each group that asked what was required.

His Christ - Vss. 15-19 - He pointed to one greater than he who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.

Luke 4:1-13 LESSONS FROM THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

ABIDE BY GOD'S WORD - Vss. 1-4

ADORE GOD ALONE - Vss. 5-8

ACCEPT GOD'S PLAN - Vss. 9-13

Don't tempt God through disobedience.

Luke 4:1-13 TEMPTATION

According to 1 John 2:16 there are three types of temptations. These three types of temptations will lead us to sin when we give in to them. Our Lord Jesus had victory over all three types of temptation.

THE TEMPTATION OF PHYSICAL NEED - Vss. 1-4 - THE LUST OF THE FLESH

Jesus was hungry, but had he turned rocks into bread he would have disobeyed God to meet His own needs

THE TEMPTATION OF PRIORITIES - Vss. 5-8 - THE LUST OF THE EYES

Jesus knew he was headed towards death for our sins. Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms of the world and offered him a kingdom without a cross.

THE TEMPTATION OF PRIDE - Vss. 9-13 - THE PRIDE OF LIFE

Pride expects God to do something that is not in His plan.

Luke 4:1-13 LEARNING TO SAY "NO!"

Of course, we are all sinners. Because of this, we do not live sinless lives.

However, the sinless Savior does teach us some lessons on how to say "No!" to temptation.

ENLIST THE SPIRIT'S CONTROL Vs. 1

EXPECT SATAN'S TEMPTATION Vss. 3, 5-7, 9-11

EXCLAIM SCRIPTURE'S AUTHORITY Vss. 4, 8, 12, 13

Luke 4:1-13 SATAN'S CHALLENGE

When Satan tempts us he is challenging God's authority in our lives. He wants us to say "yes" to himself and "no" to God. Jesus was tempted with three challenges in Luke 4:1-13 and in each case He established God's authority by referring to God's Word.

GOD'S PROVISION CHALLENGED - GOD'S PRIORITY ESTABLISHED - Vss. 1-4

Jesus had been baptized in Luke 3. He was commended by God and visited by the Holy Spirit. Luke 3:21 - 22. The Holy Spirit led Jesus to the wilderness where Satan tempted Him.

After 40 days without eating Satan challenged God's provision for food by tempting Jesus to take matters into his own hands and make bread out of stones. Jesus answered that man did not live by bread alone "but by every word of God." He established the fact that God's Word was more important than eating or anything else.

GOD'S PREEMINENCE CHALLENGED - GOD'S PRAISE ESTABLISHED - Vss. 5-8

Satan showed Jesus the kingdoms under his domains as the "prince of this world." Satan offered Jesus a "kingdom without the cross". Satan would give Jesus a kingdom without going to the cross if Jesus would bow down and worship Satan. In His answer Jesus established the fact that God alone should be praised.

GOD'S PLAN CHALLENGED - GOD'S PROMINENCE ESTABLISHED - Vss. 9-13

Satan challenged Jesus to do something that was not in God's plan for Jesus life. Satan even quoted Scripture to make his point. Jesus established the fact that God has prominence in our lives and we should not do anything foolish that would test that prominence.

Luke 4:16-30 RESISTANCE AT HOME

FULFILLED PROPHECY - Vss. 16-21

FAITHLESS PEOPLE - Vss. 22-24

FERVENT PROTEST - Vss. 25-30

Luke 4:14-45 WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Sometimes we are born into a family that lives in a certain place.

Sometimes we move to a certain place because a job requires it or we are going to school there.

Sometimes we move to somewhere because we are moving back with family.

Other times we move somewhere out of choice. People often retire to a place like Florida.

Two of the places that Jesus lived were two towns mentioned in our text. One place was his hometown of Nazareth. We can assume that he lived there over 25 years. The other place was Capernaum. Matt 4:13 Now these two towns were different in a very important way.

NAZARETH WAS RESISTANT TO JESUS

CAPERNAUM WAS RESPONSIVE TO JESUS

And I want to suggest to you tonight that, figuratively speaking, you live in one of these two towns.

In Luke 3 there is the ministry of John the Baptist as the forerunner to Jesus and there is also the Baptism of the Lord Jesus. Luke tells us in Luke 3:21-22 - "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

In Luke 4 we are told about the temptation of Jesus.

Luke 4:1-2 - "And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered."

Of course Jesus successfully resisted the temptation by Satan and then began his ministry.

Luke 4:13-15 - Now we come to our text. Jesus will visit two towns where he lived or had lived. One was resistant to Jesus and the other was responsive to Jesus. My question is where do you live Spiritually? Do you live in Nazareth, resistant to Jesus or in Capernaum, responsive to Jesus?

DO YOU LIVE IN NAZARETH? - Vss. 15-31

THEY WERE FAMILIAR - Vss. 15-22

Jesus gave a wonderful introduction of himself as Messiah through the presentation in the synagogue.

Although the people admitted that they noted his gracious words, they could not get past the fact that he was someone that they knew. They thought that they knew Jesus well, but they didn't.

Today many have a similar problem.

They have heard about Jesus all their lives.

They have gone to church all their lives.

And yet they really don't know Him. Mention Jesus, and they'll say, "Oh, I know who He is."

But they don't act like they know Him and teaching about Him is just shut off. "Oh, I've heard that before!"

Christian we are in great danger when we get so familiar with Jesus that we take Him for granted or ignore Him. Don't let Jesus become so familiar to you that you ignore Him or take Him for granted.

In Nazareth they were familiar.

THEY WERE FAITHLESS - Vss. 23-24

Jesus knew what these people were thinking.

They were using a saying of that day, "Physician heal thyself."

They wanted to see Him perform some miracles as He had done in Capernaum.

Jesus used another saying of the day on them. "No prophet is without honor except in his own country."

They had had the very Son of God living among them for years, and they gave Him no honor. Other places, including Capernaum, did!

Why did Jesus not work miracles in Nazareth?

Matthew 13:58 - "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't do more around here?

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't do more in your life?

Could it be that we are just as unbelieving in some ways as the people of Nazareth.

THEY WERE FRUSTRATED Vss. 25-30

Vss. 25-27 - In these verses Jesus mentions two Gentiles who received miracles. There were plenty of Jewish widows and leprosy men, but God chose to heal these two.

Perhaps there are two things to consider here. One would be the general state of unbelief of Israel in the days of Elijah and Elisha.

The people of Nazareth were showing the same unbelief. Therefore, there were no miracles.

The other thing to consider is that God is not obligated to act just because some one thinks that He should!

These People now took their unbelief to the outer limits.

They got angry, frustrated with Jesus. Why?

Because He told them the truth and they didn't want to hear it.

We can get that way sometimes. We can angry or frustrated with people who tell us the truth about God or about our behavior, or lack of faith, and we don't want to hear it. We can get angry or frustrated with God because He is confronting us with His truth and we don't want to hear it!

DO YOU LIVE IN NAZARETH?

OR DO YOU LIVE IN CAPERNAUM? - Vss. 31-41

DOCTRINE WAS RESPECTED - Vss. 31-32

Jesus did the same thing in Capernaum that he did in Nazareth.

He taught them. He taught them with authority, something rabbis of that day didn't do. They just quoted other rabbis! Jesus also taught them with power! There was conviction and strength in His words.

Why was that? Yes, He was the Son of God, but also remember that the Spirit of God had descended on Him at His baptism and that according to vs.14, "he returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee. "

Now, what was the difference between Nazareth and Capernaum?

Luke tells us about one Sabbath Day and Sabbath Days in Capernaum. There was one Sabbath in Nazareth, several in Capernaum. What was the difference? On one Sabbath Day in Nazareth the people rejected Him and His word. Capernaum was evidently receptive to His teaching. That's why He stayed longer!

How receptive are you to the Word of God?

Do you listen with interest?

Do you listen with enthusiasm?

Do you pay attention?

Do you care?

Sometimes people get nothing out of God's Word because they are not receptive to God's Word.

SATAN WAS RELEASED - Vss. 33-37

The people were receptive and the devil was released.

In this situation the devil, through one of his demons, had a man bound.

Of course, the devil is no match for the Son of God!

Oh that we would realize this! The Lord Jesus came to give us victory over sin and to release the power of Satan from our lives! Romans 6:10-14

SICKNESS WAS REMOVED - Vss. 38-41

Jesus healed Peter's Mother-in-law.

There was a great victory! Notice out of gratitude she got up and served.

Does Jesus heal disease today? He does, according to His perfect will.

But more importantly He heals the diseases of the heart.

Only the one who is receptive to Jesus will experience His healing touch of the heart.

Capernaum was a responsive town for a while.

Unfortunately Capernaum eventually showed its unbelief. Matthew 11:23

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

Luke 5:12-32 JESUS IS WILLING

Our Lord has a tremendous attitude of willingness towards men. Here we discover that Jesus is willing:
TO CHANGE A MAN'S CONDITION - Vss. 12-16

Jesus was willing to make changes in this man as a result of the man's faith. Think of how much Jesus would change us Christians, if we just trusted Him to do so!

TO CLEANSE A MAN'S SIN - Vss. 17-26

The paralytic's biggest problem was His sin. Jesus assured him that his sins were forgiven. Jesus will cleanse any sinner who will come to Jesus as Savior and any saint who will come to Him confessing his sin. Matthew 11:28, 1 John 1:9

TO CALL A MAN TO SERVICE - Vss. 27-28

Levi (Matthew), a tax collector was called by Jesus to follow Him. The tax collectors were considered to be the worst of sinners. Yet Jesus calls the worst of sinners to serve Him. Galatians 1:13-16

TO COMMUNICATE WITH MEN IN NEED - Vss. 29-32

Jesus came to minister to those who are Spiritually sick.

Luke 5:16-21 THE DANGER OF RICHES

Introduction - Vss. 13-15 - Jesus was asked to play "referee" in a money issue. In the following parable, he shows the problem of being rich without being rich towards God.

THE RICH MAN CONSIDERED HIS BUSINESS - Vss. 16-18

THE RICH MAN CONSIDERED HIS COMFORT - Vs. 19

THE RICH MAN DIDN'T CONSIDER GOD - Vss. 20-21

Luke 5:17-26 THE MEN WHO CARRIED THE STRETCHER

THEIR CONCERN - Vss. 17-18

THEIR CONDUCT - Vs. 19

THEIR CONFIDENCE - Vs. 20 - Jesus could see their faith!

THEIR CONFIRMATION - Vss. 21-26 - Jesus forgave and healed the man.

Luke 5:17-26 ON STAGE!

Think of this passage as a real life play!

We have!

THE AUDIENCE - Vs. 17

THE ACTORS -

Jesus - Vs. 17

A man with palsy - Vs. 18

Four of the man's friends - Vss. 18-19

THE ACTION - Vss. 20-25

THE APPLAUSE - Vs. 26

Luke 5:17-26 HOUSE CALL

A SURPRISE VISITOR - Vss. 17-19

A STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT - Vs. 20

A SEARCHING RESPONSE - Vss. 21-24

A STIRRING RESULT - Vss. 25-26

Luke 2:8-20 SHEPHERDS' FAITH

There are many great people involved in the Christmas story (Elaborate on God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Zacharias, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna, angels etc.)

But there is a group of seemingly insignificant men to whom the Angels appeared. These were the shepherds who watched their flocks by night. They are especially important because they were men of faith. They show us some great qualities of faith.

FAITH HEARS - Vss. 8-14

FAITH BELIEVES - The shepherds believed the message they received from God.

FAITH ACTS - Vss. 15-16

FAITH SHARES - Vss. 17-19

Luke 5:27-32 REACHING THE UNLOVELY

When I was growing up in New Jersey, I was unlovely in the eyes of many of my classmates. I was often teased and ridiculed. The sad thing was, I knew how to be cruel to others whom I viewed as unlovely. There was a fellow named Dennis that most viewed as unlovely. In history class my senior year, I would sit behind him and knock over his big, ugly book bag, just to get him upset. I regret that my maturity level was not very high at all!

We must remember that the Lord Jesus loves those that we might view as unlovely. He has compassion those who are in need. Jesus demonstrated this when he reached out to unlovely tax collectors.

JESUS' CALL TO LEVI (MATTHEW) - Vss. 27-28

LEVI'S CELEBRATION WITH HIS FRIENDS - Vs. 29

THE PHARISEES' CRITICISM OF JESUS - Vs. 30

JESUS' COMMENTARY ON HIS MINISTRY - Vss. 31-32

Jesus came to reach the spiritually "sick" or unlovely.

Luke 5:27-32 FRIEND OF SINNERS

Jesus came to "seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10) We see his:

CALL OF SINNERS Vss. 27-28

COMPANY WITH SINNERS Vs. 29

COMPASSION FOR SINNERS Vss. 30-32

Luke 5:27-32 AN UNPOPULAR ACTION

Many of the things that Jesus did were not popular, especially with the religious leaders.

Jesus did what was right and didn't worry if what he did was popular.

A SINNER RECRUITED - Vss. 27-28

Jesus is always calling sinners to trust Him and follow Him. Matthew 11:28-30

Matthew (called Levi here), a tax collector, was recruited by the Lord Jesus.

A SAVIOR'S RECEPTION - Vs. 29

A reception was held for the Lord Jesus. Matthew wanted others to meet his new master.

After being saved, we should want to introduce our friends to our Savior.

A SCATHING REACTION - Vs. 30

The religious people were upset with Jesus because He associated with sinners.

A STARTLING REMARK - Vss. 31-32

Jesus makes it clear that He didn't come to call to repentance those who considered themselves righteous.

Jesus came to save sinners.

Luke 5:33-39 OH NO! SOMETHING NEW!

The strictly conservative Pharisees of Jesus' day were much like us in that they did not like change.

Sometimes something new poses a real threat to us.

INQUIRY - Vs. 33 - The Pharisees wanted to know why Jesus' disciples did not fast like they and John the Baptist's disciples did. They were doing something new.

INSIGHT - Vss. 34-35 - Jesus explained that just as a wedding was not a time for fasting, neither was it appropriate to fast while Jesus (who is the Son of God) was in their presence.

ILLUSTRATIONS - Vss. 36-38 - New cloth sewn on an old garment will rip the old. New wine placed in old wineskins will burst the wineskins. To place the Gospel of grace into a system of law does not work!

INDICTMENT - Vs. 39 - Most people do not like change. They will say, "The old is better!" before they have tried the new. Christianity is a radical change from Judaism, and the Pharisees deeded the old way better.

Luke 6:1-11 SABBATH SHOCKERS

Jesus shocked the religious legalists with his behavior on the Sabbath.

INTERROGATION - Vss. 1-2

Jesus was asked why he allowed the disciples to eat grain in a field on the Sabbath. To them this was a violation of religious law. It was not, however, a violation of God's law.

INSTRUCTION - Vss. 3-5

Jesus used David as an illustration of violation of the law in order to meet human needs. 1 Samuel 21:1-6

INSPECTION - Vss. 6-7

The scribes & Pharisees watched to see if Jesus would heal a sick man on the Sabbath to indict Him.

INTERVENTION - Vss. 8-10

Jesus, after asking a question about the legality on the Sabbath, healed the man.

INDIGNATION - Vs. 11

Jesus' enemies were livid and wanted to punish the Lord Jesus.

Luke 6:17-26 NOW OR LATER?

In the past, you've seen him on television. You remember the garage mechanic who told of his customer who did not change his oil regularly, and did not put in Fram Oil Filters? The end result was an expensive motor job. The commercial ended with the famous words, "You can pay me now, or you can pay me later."

In Luke 6:17-26, our Lord Jesus uses the same principle of "now or later". He tells us that we are blessed, if we experience certain things now, because if we don't do them now, we'll do them later. Jesus tells us:

YOU CAN BE POOR NOW OR LATER - Vss. 20, 24

According to James 2:5 the poor have an advantage over the rich. It's easier for them to have faith.

In Mark 10:23-37, Jesus mentions the difficulty a rich man has getting into heaven.

Matthew 5:3 tells us that Jesus wants us to be "poor in spirit". The poor in spirit admit their own inability to save themselves, and trust Christ as Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9 After being saved the poor in spirit will rely on Christ for the ability to live the Christian Life (Galatians 5:16, 22-23,Ephesians 5:18).

In Vs. 24, our Lord pronounces a "woe" on the proud, self-sufficient rich.

They refuse to be poor (in spirit) now, so they will be poor later for all eternity. See Luke 12:15-21 and Luke 16:19-25

YOU CAN BE HUNGRY NOW OR LATER - Vss. 21a, 25b

Vs. 21a is explained by Matthew 5:6. We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness now (Psalm 27:8, Psalm 63:1-2).

First we must hunger and thirst after God for salvation.

Second we must hunger and thirst after God and His Word (1 Peter 2:1-3) for fellowship and learning. We should pattern our lives after the Bereans (Acts 17:10-12), Jeremiah (Jeremiah 15:16), and the Lord Himself (Hebrews 10:7). If we hunger now, we will be filled!

If we are not hungry now, Vs. 25a tells us that we will be hungry later! Of you are not hungry for salvation now, you will be hungry for relief in hell! If you are not hungry as a Christian now, you will be hungry for rewards later.

YOU CAN WEEP NOW OR LATER Vss. 21b and 25b.

The parallel to this verse is Matthew 5:4. The ones that mourn now shall laugh and be comforted later.

If you sincerely mourn over sin now you will probably come to Christ as you Savior.

As a Christian, if you sincerely mourn over the sins you commit, you will have the joy of forgiveness (2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 John 1:9). If you do not mourn over sin, you will mourn later. The one who is not a Christian will mourn in hell. The one who is a Christian will mourn at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10-11).

YOU CAN BE REWARDED NOW OR LATER Vss. 22, 23, 26

True Christians will suffer for Christ sometime in their lives (John 15:18-21).

But God promises them great reward later. The false prophet has received all the reward he'll ever get in this life. If we are constantly well spoken of, without any criticism or persecution for Christ's sake, we should be concerned. See Vs. 26.

Luke 6:37-42 THE JUDGMENT GAME

We meet someone and we right away judge what kind of a person that individual is. Often we as Christians form opinions about the actions and words of other Christians, and again, the motives of other Christians. Although there are times when we need to be judges, it seems that we probably spend more time judging than we should.

When should we as Christians act as judges?

1. We should judge our own lives for sin, especially when we come to the communion table. 1 Cor.11:27-28
2. We should judge disagreements between brothers and sisters in Christ.1 Corinthians 6:1-2
3. We should confront our brothers and sisters when there is obvious sin. Galatians 6:1
4. When there is blatant sin, without repentance, there should be church discipline. Read Matthew 18:15-17

One of the major themes of this passage, Luke 6:37-42 has to do with judging others.

PROPORTION Vss. 37-38

Although there is only one way to Heaven, that's through believing on Jesus Christ as personal Savior, and one way to hell, by rejecting Christ, God does award us in proportion to our activities.

Vs. 37 - Jesus tells us that if we don't want to be judged by others, we should refrain from judging ourselves. It is apparent, the more we evaluate others, the more likely we are to be evaluated by others. If a brother or sister sins, that matter should first be between you and that brother or sister. Then, if necessary, involve the church.

If our judgment involves motives, let us leave that for God to judge. If it involves use of time or methods of ministry, let us let God judge that.

If it involves success of ministry, let us let God be the judge. 1 Corinthians 4:3-5

Why does God want us to refrain from judging?

We do not know all the facts.

We are biased in our opinions, we are never totally objective.

We are often wrong.

We are judged in proportion to our judgments.

I have noticed that when I criticize someone for a specific type of failure, it isn't long before I'm tempted in the same area. It is as if God is saying, "Okay, Jack, let's see how you do in this same area."

In Luke 6:37, we are next told that in proportion to our condemning spirit, we will be condemned.

He is not talking here about eternal life.

But it is easy not only to judge someone but to condemn or censor him.

I think condemnation is a step further than passing judgment. It is more than saying someone shouldn't do something. It is pronouncing the punishment with the judgment.

We are also told that the ones who forgive are the ones who are forgiven. If you truly forgive others you will be forgiven, especially by God. Matthew 6:12,14-15 - Read and comment.

Vs. 38 gives us our last example of proportion.

However you give to others, that is how it will be given to you.

The middle of the verse tells us how that giving should be.

Think of a measure as a bushel basket.

A bushel basket can be filled very loosely.

But if you push down on the contents, and shake the container, you can get more in.

Also, if you pile it on top you can get more in.

If you give this way, that's how you will receive.

We should never give to get.

But the more generous we are now, the more generous God is with now, and when rewards come.

PERFECTION Vss. 39-40

Perfection should be our goal. We will never be perfect in this life, but I think we should die trying.

With the enabling of the Holy Spirit we could all be more perfect than we are.

Vs. 39 - This is a pretty obvious parable.

A blind man can not lead a blind man.

They'll both end up in a ditch!

Let's apply that in two ways.

1. Watch who you are following.

If you are following the leadership of a person who is stumbling in the dark, going in the wrong direction, away from the Lord, then you will stumble in the dark, go in the wrong direction and away from the Lord.

2. Watch how you are leading.

We cannot expect others we want to lead to do better spiritually than we do ourselves. In our homes and in the church we must be able to say "Do as I say, and as I do!"

I can't expect to lead you into spiritual maturity, if I don't progress into spiritual maturity myself!

Vs. 40 - The disciple is not above his master.

Who is your master?

Is it not the Lord Jesus?

We can't expect to be better than our master, although, sometimes we try, by avoiding some of his examples.

Jesus prayed, but we do not pray the way we should.

Jesus trusted and obeyed His Father, but we don't.

Jesus suffered for others, but we refuse to.

We act like we are better than Him.

But if you want to be perfect, spiritually mature, and non-judgmental, simply imitate the Lord Jesus. The best way to do that is by following Galatians 6:20.

PROPORTION

PERFECTION

PRACTICE Vss. 41-42

We often want to correct the faults we find in others. In fact our vision is so clear that we can find a speck of a fault in the other person. What's amazing about this is that we don't see the beam, or the 2x4 that is in our own eye! We see the faults of others much quicker and easier than we see our own.

Vs. 42 - Jesus is saying, "How can you be of spiritual help to someone else, when you don't deal with your own problems first?"

Notice what Jesus calls people who do this.

He calls them HYPOCRITES!

First, we are to remove the beam from our own eyes. When we have done that, we will see clearly enough to help someone else.

I venture to say that we will find many times that the speck we saw in someone's else's eye was our own 2x4 that we were seeing!

Luke 6:43-49 SELF EVALUATION

It is good for us to reflect and evaluate what we are doing for the Lord.

WHAT IS MY FRUIT? Vss. 43-45

A good heart produces good fruit and an evil heart produces evil fruit.

WHO IS FIRST? Vs. 46

If Jesus is Lord, you will do what Jesus says to do.

WHAT IS MY FOUNDATION? Vss. 47-49

A person who hears and obeys the Lord Jesus has built his house on the rock. This house will stand.

A person who hears and disobeys the Lord Jesus has built his house on the sand. This house will fall.

Luke 6:45 IT'S UNAVOIDABLE

As you go through life, you will find that there are some things that are just unavoidable. And when we look in the Word of God, we find that God tells us that there are certain things that are definitely unavoidable.

The most obvious thing that is unavoidable is death. The old saying is that there are two things you can't avoid, death and taxes. I've seen people avoid taxes, but never death.

Hebrews 9:27 - And as it is appointed unto men once to die,

Have you ever considered that you have an appointment with death? It may be soon, or it may not be for years, but unless the Lord Jesus returns, each one of us sooner or later will pass through the veil of death.

There is another unavoidable thing according to God. That's judgment. I only quoted part of Hebrews 9:27 a moment ago. Here's the whole verse - And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

No matter who you are, you will be judged after you die.

You personally will appear at what is called the "The Great White Throne Judgment" or "The Judgment Seat of Christ". Those who have failed to trust the Lord Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sin will be present at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15).

Just think, if you don't know Christ as Savior, the Great White Throne Judgment is unavoidable. If your friends, your loved ones, your neighbors, your co-workers don't know Christ as Savior, this judgment is unavoidable. Things go better for the ones who know Christ as Savior. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

We shall have eternal bliss with the Lord, but there will also be an unavoidable time of reckoning, of judgment. Romans 14:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11a Of course, there are other unavoidable things in the Bible, and our text is one of them.

Luke 6:45 - A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Eventually and inevitably whatever is in your heart will be revealed by your lips. For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. It's unavoidable! So if a good man brings forth good things out of a good heart, and if an evil man brings forth evil things out of an evil heart, and it's unavoidable. What then, should be our desire and our goal?

Our desire and our goal should be to have a good heart!
How can we accomplish that?

Proverbs 4:23 - Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

1. A GOOD HEART IS A SAVED HEART

The trouble all of us have is that none of us begin with a good heart! Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 3:10-12, Ezekiel 18:4

So we need a "heart transplant". We need a new heart, a saved heart, because the old heart is rotten. Enter the Lord Jesus, God's Son.

You and I deserve eternal punishment. Instead, Jesus took that punishment upon his own shoulders on the cross. 2 Corinthians 5:21

All we need to decide is to transfer our sin to Jesus' account.

That is, we trust that He has taken care of it.

We do that by trusting Christ as our Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9

And when we put our faith in Christ we receive a new heart, a saved heart! 2 Corinthians 5:17

A new creature, or a new creation includes a new heart!

Don't expect to have a good heart until you have a new or saved heart!

2. A GOOD HEART IS A SANCTIFIED HEART

1 Peter 3:15 - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: The word "sanctify" means to "set apart".

My friend a good heart, after being saved, has solved the Lordship problem. The Lordship problem is simply "Who is going to run my heart and my life?" For the Christian there is only one right answer to that question. The answer is the Lord Jesus Christ! Someone has well said, "If Jesus isn't Lord of all, He isn't Lord at all."

How many of us stop short of allowing Jesus to be boss in our hearts? How can hearts be entirely good unless Jesus is in control?

So how do we get a sanctified heart? Romans 12:1

3. A GOOD HEART IS A SPIRIT-CONTROLLED HEART

If Jesus is truly Lord of your life, you will allow Him to control you through his Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 - And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

When the Spirit is in control of your heart, the mouth will reflect it. For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. What is in your heart when the Spirit is in control?

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, [23] Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

A good heart is a spirit-controlled heart.

When the heart is spirit-controlled, the words coming out of the mouth will be:

Loving words

Joyful words

Peaceful words

Longsuffering words

Gentle words

Good words

Faithful words

Meek words

Self-controlled words

How do I make sure that I am spirit-controlled?

First, I must neither grieve the Holy Spirit by my sin, nor quench the Spirit by my unbelief. This means I must examine my life for sin and forsake it.

Second, being filled with the Holy Spirit is God's will. We are told in 1 John 5:14-15 - And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: [15] And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

Because being filled with the Holy Spirit is God's will, I must ask God to fill me with His Spirit.

4. A GOOD HEART IS A SINGING HEART

Another result of being spirit filled is a singing heart.

Ephesians 5:19 - Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Worship does not begin with the mouth. It begins in the heart!

For of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

True worship with the lips is a result of true worship in our hearts. I personally feel that we actually give little praise with our lips to the Lord, because our hearts are not praising Him from within.

5. A GOOD HEART IS A SPEAKING HEART

Very often, the words that come out of our mouths are worried, anxious words.

We need a confident heart if we are going to have confident words.

A confident heart comes from prayer, the words we speak to God. 1 Peter 5:7, Philippians 4:6-7

Luke 7 TOUCHED BY JESUS

The Lord Jesus touched the people mentioned in this chapter in some way.

Each received something with his "touch".

A CONFIDENT CENTURION WAS GIVEN HONOR Vss. 1-10

"I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." Vs. 9

A CONCERNED WIDOW WAS GIVEN HELP - Vss. 11-17

A CONFUSED PROPHET WAS GIVEN HOPE - Vss. 18-23

A CONTRITE SINNER WAS GIVEN HEALING - Vss. 36-50

The woman in this story was truly converted.

A CRITICAL PHARISEE WAS GIVEN HONESTY - Vss. 36-50

Jesus pointed out his host's rudeness and lack of sorrow for sin.

Luke 7:1-10 MODEL OF FAITH

CALL FOR HELP Vss. 1-4

CONVICTION OF UNWORTHINESS - Vss. 5-6

CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST - Vss. 7-8

COMMENDATION OF FAITH - Vss. 9-10

Luke 7:1-10 WHEN IT HURTS

Life is full of hurts. Nobody avoids them. There are times when despair can really get hold of us. We are affected by hurts in the family, hurts in church, hurts on the job or in school, and by hurts inside that others might never know. When it hurts we need to follow the example of the centurion in this passage.

TAKE YOUR BURDEN TO THE BURDEN BEARER Vss. 1-3

HUMBLE YOURSELF BEFORE THE HUMBLE ONE Vss. 4-7

(Jesus said that He was "meek and lowly of heart.")

TRUST THE ONE WHO IS TRUSTWORTHY Vss. 8-10

Luke 7:11-17 MINISTRY TO THOSE WHO HURT

There are 3 instances in Scripture where the Lord raised people from the dead.

There is the raising of the ruler's daughter from the dead.

There is the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

And there is the instance before us now, the raising of the son of the Widow of Nain from the dead.

As we study this passage it is an opportunity to examine the ministry we might have to those who are hurting. There are principles here that we can discover that will help us in our ministry to those around us.

WE ENCOUNTER THE HURTING IN THE COURSE OF LIFE - Vss. 11-12

Vs. 11 - Our Lord had just healed the servant of a centurion. Now in the course of his travels he came to the City of Nain, probably about 35 miles southwest of Capernaum.

Vs. 12 - Just as they were entering the city a funeral procession for a young man came out.

You will find that the hurting will come upon you at all different times in life.

You will find that they will come from a various assortment of backgrounds and that they will often show up unexpectedly.

Personally I've discovered hurting people in all sorts of situations. I've often been called in the wee hours of the night. I've encountered hurting people at church, hospitals, funeral homes, and a host of other places. Even when I have made a routine pastoral call, I've found people hurting.

Of course the source of hurt is sin. As long as there is sin in the world there will be hurting people. But God has compassion on hurting people and wants us to help them when possible. That's why He puts hurting people into our paths.

THOSE WHO HURT HAVE REAL PROBLEMS - Vs. 12

It might be easy for us to downplay events in someone else's life, and say, "Why that's not so great a problem." However we should not be quick to judge.

This widow had real difficulties. She had already buried her husband and now she was burying her only son. Perhaps the woman's only source of income was her son.

Down through the years I've encountered people with real problems. (I suggest you itemize a few, but be careful not to break confidentiality.)

THOSE WHO HURT HAVE NEEDS - Vs. 13

When our Lord came and saw what the situation was, he had compassion.

Compassion is something that the hurting need. As representatives of the Lord Jesus it is our job to show compassion.

Those who hurt also need comfort, and again, it is our responsibility to share that comfort. As our Lord comforted this woman, let us comfort others. Galatians 6:2, Romans 12:15

WE ARE REQUIRED TO DO WHAT WE CAN TO HELP THOSE WHO HURT - Vss. 14-15

Our Lord, of course, had some dramatic results when he helped people. He did what He could to help this poor woman and her son was raised from the dead.

Although we do not have the same abilities that our Lord, had, we are to do what we can to help relieve the hurt. Galatians 6:10

Sometimes we can sit with someone.

Sometimes we can just listen.

Sometimes we can do work projects around a person's home.

Sometimes we can go to the hospital or to court with someone.

Sometimes we can give financial assistance or groceries.

The important thing is that we do what we can.

OUR HELP CAN BRING SURPRISING RESULTS - Vss. 15

The surprising result in this case was the young man's return to life.

And we never know what surprising results we will see when we help those who hurt.

People will be encouraged.

People will have their physical needs met.

And sometimes people will come to know Christ as Savior.

OUR HELP CAN BRING GLORY TO GOD - Vss. 16-17

God was glorified as a result of this miracle.

God will be glorified as we minister to those who hurt. Matthew 5:14-16

Luke 7:11-16 THE MASTER CARES

THE WITNESSES OF SORROW AND JOY - Vss. 11-12, 15-16

There were two crowds, one with Jesus and the other with the widow. They saw the sorrow. They experienced the joy.

THE WIDOW WHO LOST HER SON - Vs. 12

THE WARMTH OF THE MASTER - Vs. 13

Jesus has compassion for those who hurt, especially those who are His.

THE WONDER OF THE MASTER'S TOUCH - Vss. 14-16

Jesus still touches lives today with His wonderful salvation, and intervention in the lives of believers.

Luke 7:11-17 PRESENT TO HELP!

The Widow Of Nain was hurting! The Lord was present for her, and He is for us when we are hurting.

CROWD AND CRISIS Vss. 11-12

COMPASSION AND COMMAND Vss. 13-14

CHANGE (Life!) AND COMMENDATION Vss. 15-17

Luke 7:11-30 HANG IN THERE!

My wife, Dottie, says that the whole Bible can be summed up in three words, "Hang in there!" And indeed that's exactly the message that the Lord Jesus gave John the Baptist, when he expressed some doubts.

A TERRIFIC MIRACLE - Vss. 11-16

A TROUBLED MESSAGE - Vss. 17-20

John heard about Jesus' miracles. However, John was in prison and was probably depressed. I believe He asked his doubtful question because of his depression and because he expected Jesus to establish His kingdom on earth in a more rapid manner.

A TRIUMPHANT MANDATE - Vss. 21-23

The messengers sent to Jesus were witnesses of many miracles which the Lord performed. Then the Lord sent a message to John giving a brief summary of Jesus' ministry and encouraging John to "Hang in there!"

A TERRIFIC MAN - Vss. 24-28

Jesus tells the crowd what a great man of God John was. I believe that truly great people usually do not grasp how great they really are. John didn't.

Luke 7:19-30 WHEN DOUBTS ARISE

Even the greatest of the Lord's servants are attacked with times of doubt. John the Baptist was not immune from times of doubt. He had stood mightily for God (Luke 3:1-18). As a result, Herod had thrown him into Jail (Luke 3:19-20). As John sat in prison, he began to doubt. Evidently, he expected the Messiah to set up His kingdom immediately. He did not understand that Jesus must first die for sins, and then set up the kingdom at a later date.

THE CONCERNED PROPHET - Vss. 19-20

John sends representatives to ask Jesus if He is the one who is the Messiah, or if they should they look for someone else.

THE CHALLENGED PROPHET - Vss. 21-23

First Jesus worked miracles before the eyes of John's disciples. He showed that He was Messiah by His deeds.

Second, He sent a message to John encouraging Him to continue believing.

THE COMMENDED PROPHET - Vss. 24-30

The crowd is made to understand what a great man of God John really was! At that moment John, in prison, may have felt like a complete failure. Instead, John thru his obedience to God, was a total success! Many will be surprised at what great successes they were when they stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Luke 7:36-50 PICK ONE!

Call up two people from the audience and have a small prize in each hand held behind your back. Let each "Pick one!" I used candy bars.

Life is full of choices. Every day you are invited to pick. You pick what you are going to eat, what you are going to wear, how you are going to act, what you are going to do, and where you are going to go.

In this message you also have a choice.

I am inviting you to pick one! You chose who you are like in this story, the Pharisee or the woman. It is your pick. The good news is, if you want to change your choice at the end, you can.

NOTE: If you are teaching or preaching in this passage you will need to begin by telling the story of the woman and the Pharisee as described in Vss. 37-42. You will want to point out that the woman was already

saved, but coming to show her appreciation. You will also want to point out that the Pharisee was very self-righteous and resentful of the woman. Give attention to Jesus' parable and how both of the debtors could not pay. You will probably want to point out that every sinner is equally lost and in debt to God. Jesus died to pay that debt. It was the woman's faith that saved her. Vs. 50

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - Vs. 44

It was a common courtesy of that day to have a servant wash the feet of a guest. They wore open sandals, and though every other body part might have been clean, feet very easily got dirty. A servant was sent around to wash the feet. Simon failed to do this for Jesus.

The woman, on the other hand, not only washed Jesus feet, but used her own tears, and dried the feet with her own hair.

I believe this action of the woman speaks of acknowledgement.

This woman looked back at her past life.

This woman looked back at her failures.

This woman looked back at the forgiveness which Jesus gave her and shed tears of sorrow and gratitude.

I wonder how many of us have been forgetful about how much the Lord Jesus has done for us.

We need to remind ourselves of what we were before we were saved. We need to remind ourselves that we had past failures, many of them, but Jesus has forgiven every last one of them.

We need to remind ourselves that even today, when we sin we have a Savior who forgives us, and restores us to fellowship as we confess. 1 John 1:9

It wouldn't hurt us to shed some tears of sorrow and gratitude for what He has done.

AFFECTION - Vs. 45

Another custom of that day was to greet a guest with a kiss on the cheek. Simon did not offer that kiss. The woman however covered Jesus feet with kisses!

This woman not only acknowledged her sin, but she showed her affection for the Lord Jesus. She loved Him for what He had done for her! The kisses were the sign of her affection.

How does your Lord Jesus know that you love Him?

Do you tell Him that you love Him?

Do you sing songs of praise and worship from the heart?

Do you thank Him for all that He's done?

Are you loyal to Him?

Do you spend time with Him?

Do you speak up for Him?

Are you there when needed?

Will you do anything that He asks?

Do you obey Him? John 14:15

APPRECIATION - Vs. 46

Another custom was for a host to anoint his guest's hair with oil. Simon had offered no oil!

The woman took a flask of expensive perfume and anointed Jesus' feet. She showed her appreciation for all that Jesus had done for her. Has it occurred to you that what we give to the Lord is an indication of how much we appreciate Him?

When we give our tithe to the local church, we are showing our appreciation.

When we give to missions we are showing our appreciation.

When we give to those in need, we are showing our appreciation.

CONCLUSION - Vss. 47-50

Vs. 47 - The woman's love for Jesus was a reflection of how much she had been forgiven.

She realized just how great a sin debt had been paid!

Oh, may we realize the great debt of sin that has been paid for us, and may we love Him accordingly!

Have you been forgiven much?

Do you love the Lord Jesus accordingly?

Vss. 48-50 - The woman was reassured, and those who didn't believe didn't understand that Jesus could forgive sin.

But now it's time for you to Pick One!

Are you like the Pharisee or the woman in the story? You can change, and become like that woman.

Luke 7:36-50 APPRECIATION

Tell a story that shows true appreciation for something someone has done. Also tell a story about someone who showed a lack of appreciation. Our text tells the story of two people. One was repentant and showed appreciation for what Jesus had done for her. The other was unrepentant and showed no appreciation.

May we, by our words, thoughts, and actions always show appreciation for our Lord Jesus!

THE PEOPLE, Vss. 36-39

A Repentant Sinner, Vss. 37-38

A Self-Righteous Pharisee, Vss. 36, 29

THE PARABLE Vss. 40-43

The one who is forgiven the most is the most appreciative.

THE POINT Vss. 44-50

The Pharisee had not sought for, nor received forgiveness of his sins, therefore, he showed no sign of appreciation.

The woman had sought for and received forgiveness by faith. She showed her appreciation in her actions.

Luke 8:1-15 WHERE HAVE ALL THE CONVERTS GONE?

I imagine that many of us have been suspicious when someone raises their hand, or comes forward professing salvation. Although we rejoice, we secretly wonder if the person making the decision is going to "stick with it."

We think this way because we have seen many people make professions of faith, and then disappear. Many have walked the isles evangelistic meetings and in church services, no to be seen ever again. Others start off strong, enthused about the things of God, and then after awhile, they either slow down to nominal Christianity, or walk away from it all together.

We often wonder where the converts have gone. This parable of the Lord answers that question. Not everyone who professes belief in Christ is truly saved!

THE STORY PRESENTED - Vss. 4-8

The seed that fell by the wayside was probably the footpath between fields. It was hard because it had not been plowed. Vs. 4

The seed that fell on rocky ground fell on soil that sat on a rocky ledge. Because the sun could easily heat the soil, the seed germinated quickly, but because roots could not go through rock, they shriveled up quickly for lack of moisture. Vs. 5

THE STORY QUESTIONED Vss. 9-10

Through the help of God's Spirit, God's children will be able to learn the truth of God's word. John 16:13

Those who reject Christ, will not be able to understand the parables which Jesus spoke. 1 Corinthians 2:14

THE STORY EXPLAINED Vss. 11-15

The seed is the Word of God. The sower in this story is The Lord Jesus. However, any Christian who preaches or teaches the Word of God becomes the sower. Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Timothy 4:2

The different soils are explained:

HARD HEART - Vs. 12 - No real interest in the Gospel, even though a profession of faith may have been made. Satan quickly snatches away the seed.

HEAVY HEART - Vs. 13 - Quick initial response, but when persecution comes, the convert fails to follow Christ. Mark 4:16-17,

2 Timothy 3:12

HEATHEN HEART - Vs. 14 - Matthew 6:31-32, - Cares, riches, and pleasures of this life "choke" the "converts". There is no fruit.

HEALTHY HEART - Vs. 15 - Hears the word, keeps it, endures, and brings forth multiplied fruit. Only one kind of "convert" is a truly saved convert. If a person has truly trusted Christ, God will change Him. 2 Cor 5:17

Luke 8:11-15 WHERE WILL IT FALL TODAY?

One of the best known parables is the "Sower and the Soils" as told by our Lord Jesus in Luke 8:5-8.

Jesus explains the meaning of this parable in Luke 8:11-15. When the Sower went out to sow, he sowed the Word of God according to verse 11.

The Word of God is sown when a person hears the Word of God preached.

The Word of God is sown when a person listens to the Word of God read.

The Word of God is sown when a person reads the Word of God for himself.

When the Word of God is sown it falls into one of four types of soil. The soil would be symbolic for the heart.

The Four Types of Heart Where the Word falls:

THE STUBBORN HEART - Vs. 12

There is no time for, or true interest in the Word of God.

THE SHALLOW HEART - Vs. 13

There is an instant, joyous response to the preaching of or reading of God's Word. However, it is surface level response. The minute something arises in the way of temptation, the results of the seed being planted fall away.

THE STRANGLED HEART - Vs. 14

The seed starts to grow but is strangled by "cares, riches, and pleasures of this life".

THE SUBMISSIVE HEART - Vs. 15

The submissive heart is more than a hearer of the Word. He is a doer also. He keeps it and bears fruit. See James 1:22-25.

Where does the word fall in your life? What kind of heart does it hit?

Luke 8:22-25 FOLLOWING JESUS

We are called on, as disciples, to follow Jesus (Luke 9:23, 14:26-27).

This story about the storm on the Sea of Galilee teaches us some lessons about following Jesus.

JESUS KNOWS WHERE HE IS GOING - GO WITH HIM! - Vs. 22

JESUS RESTS DURING THE STORM - REST WITH HIM! - Vs. 23

JESUS ANSWERS WHEN ASKED - ASK HIM! - Vs. 24

JESUS WANTS US TO HAVE FAITH IN HIM - TRUST HIM! - Vs. 25

Luke 8:15, 22-39 BENEFITS OF OBEDIENCE

God has always approved of obedience to Him. 1 Samuel 15:22-23, John 14:15

There are benefits to obedience as we see in Luke 8.

BE OBEDIENT AND BE FRUITFUL - Vs. 15

Jesus was explaining the parable of the Sower and the Soils. It is the person who obeys the Word of God who will end up being productive.

BE OBEDIENT AND BE CLOSE - Vs. 22

The disciples were close to the Lord Jesus because they did as they were told. They went with Him.

We will remain in close fellowship with the Lord as we obey Him.

BE OBEDIENT AND BE TRUSTING - Vss. 23-25

It is the person that obeys God that will trust God.

BE OBEDIENT AND BE SUBMISSIVE - Vs. 39

This man who had been healed of demon possession (Vss. 26-38) wanted to follow Jesus.

Jesus sent him home to do evangelistic work. The man submitted, doing as he was told.

Submission to God and man is an indication of obedience (1 Peter 5:5-6)

Luke 8:22-25 EXAM TIME!

Exams are very important tests, usually taken in high school and college. We also encounter exams as we live our Christian lives. Often, the Lord will decide that it's time for us to have an "exam" that will test our faith and make us to mature in our walk with God (James 1:2-4). One evening the disciples were given an "exam" in faith through a boat ride across the Sea Of Galilee. They didn't get very good grades this time, but would we have done any better?

DECISION - Vs. 22 - When the disciples received their "exam" in faith, they were following the decision of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we face our exams because we are simply doing what the Lord has told us.

DISTRACTION - Vs. 23 - As the disciples did as they were told, a large distraction appeared. A fierce storm threatened the very lives of the disciples. As we strive to obey the Lord, we will also face distractions. It is not a question if distractions (trials) will occur. The question is how will we handle distractions when they come?

DISTRESS - Vs. 24a - In a panic, the disciples awoke the Lord Jesus.

They allowed themselves to become distressed by the storm. They were filled with fear.

DECLARATION - Vs. 24b - Our Lord awoke and rebuked the wind and waves. His declaration brought total calm. Our problems may never go away until we reach Heaven, but if we trust Him, Jesus will declare peace for us in the midst of our storms. We can relax in the calm of His presence.

DENUNCIATION - Vs. 25 - Our Lord rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith, not for disturbing His nap! It was not wrong to ask Jesus for help. It was wrong not to have faith in the midst of the storm.

Luke 8:22-25 THE LEADER

Jesus was the leader of the disciples. This story of His calming the storm makes it evident that He was in charge. The question each believer needs to ask is, "Is Jesus leader in my life?"

We know Jesus was the leader because:

THE PLAN WAS HIS - Vs. 22

He said, "Let's go". Do I follow the Lord's leading?

THE PROBLEM WAS HIS - Vss. 23-24

The disciples came to Him for help. Do I bring my problems to him before I'm in a panic?

THE POWER WAS HIS - Vs. 24

He calmed the storm. Do I let Jesus calm the storms in my life?

THE POINT WAS HIS - Vs. 25

He did the rebuking and the teaching. Do I listen when Jesus rebukes or teaches me?

Luke 8:26-38 MIRACLE BY THE TOMBS

A DEFEATED MAN - Vss. 26-29

A DELIVERED MAN - Vss. 30-37

A DIRECTED MAN - Vss. 38-39

Luke 8:38-56 THREE KINDS OF FAITH

There are three people who each show us a different aspect of the faith which we should have in Christ.

1. RESIGNED FAITH - The healed demoniac. Vss. 38-39

This man from who Jesus cast out a legion of devils wanted to go with Jesus. Jesus told him to go home and tell what great things God had done. He obeyed. This man was resigned to doing the will of his new master. (See Vss. 26-37 for background information.)

2. REACHING FAITH - The woman with the issue of blood. Vss. 43-48

3. RELIANT FAITH - Jairus - Vss. 41-42, 49-56

Especially see Vss. 49-50. Jairus had to trust Jesus even though he had just received tragic news.

Luke 8:41-56 FAITHING IT

Faith is such an important quality. Hebrews 11:6 It is emphasized in these two miracles found in our text.

THE REQUEST OF FAITH - Vss. 41-42

THE REACH OF FAITH - Vss. 43-48

THE REST OF FAITH - Vss. 49-50

THE REWARD OF FAITH - Vss. 51-56

Luke 9:1-9, 18-22 MINISTRY MOMENTS

COMMISSION OF THE DISCIPLES – Vss. 1-5

COMPLETION OF THE ASSIGNMENT – Vs. 6

CONTROVERSY OVER CHRIST'S IDENTITY – Vss. 7-9

CONFIRMATION OF THE TRUTH – Vss. 18-22

Luke 9:10-17 THERE'S A TIME

"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:" Ecclesiastes 3:1

THERE'S A TIME TO REST Vs. 10

Even the strongest and most dedicated of Christian workers need time to rest.

THERE'S A TIME TO RECEIVE Vs. 11

Even though it was "rest time", Jesus received those who had spiritual and physical needs.

THERE'S A TIME TO BE RESPONSIBLE Vss. 12-17

The disciples would have sent the crowd away hungry. Jesus took the responsibility of meeting their needs. There will be many times when Jesus will want us to take the responsibility of helping others

Luke 9:10-17 MIRACLE!

RETREAT TO REFRESH - Vs. 10

The disciples had been away performing ministry. Jesus took them aside for a time of rest.

RESPONSE TO THE CROWD - Vs. 11

A crowd followed Jesus. He received them, taught them, and healed them.

RESPONSIBILITY TO NOURISH - Vss. 12-13

The crowd was growing hungry. The disciples would have sent them away. Jesus gives the disciples the responsibility of feeding the crowd. He tells them "Give ye them to eat."

RELIANCE ON JESUS - Vss. 14-17

The disciples needed help. They relied on Jesus and the crowd was fed.

Luke 9:18-26 MAN WITH A PLAN

As the Son of God, God in the flesh, our Lord Jesus knew exactly whom He was, where He was going, and what He expected of His disciples.

IDENTITY OF JESUS - Vss. 18-21

ITINERARY OF JESUS - Vss. 22

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JESUS' DISCIPLES - Vss. 23-26

Luke 9:18-26 A PRIVATE MEETING

In a private meeting with His disciples we discover that:

JESUS ESTABLISHES HIS IDENTITY - Vss. 18-20

JESUS EXPLAINS HIS MINISTRY - Vss. 21-22

JESUS EXPECTS LOYALTY - Vss. 23-26

Luke 12:22-31 HOW TO RELAX

It is very easy for us to get anxious, uptight, or bent out of shape when we think about making a living. Here is a sure way to relax as we obey Jesus' advice found in this passage.

CHECK YOUR THOUGHTS - Vss.22-23

CONSIDER GOD'S EXAMPLES - Vss. 24-28

The Ravens - Vs. 24 Your Height - Vss. 25-26 The Lilies - Vss. 27-28

CONCENTRATE ON GOD'S KINGDOM - Vss. 29-31

Luke 9:23 DARE TO BE A DISCIPLE!

A disciple is a follower of the Lord Jesus. To be a true disciple, one must be born again! (John 3:1-18) In Luke 9:23, our Lord tells us what is involved in true discipleship.

DISCIPLESHIP IS A MATTER OF DECISION - "If any man will..."

DISCIPLESHIP IS A MATTER OF DIRECTION - "...come after me..."

DISCIPLESHIP IS A MATTER OF DENIAL - "...let him deny himself..."

DISCIPLESHIP IS A MATTER OF DEATH - "...and take up his cross daily..." (Galatians 2:20)

DISCIPLESHIP IS A MATTER OF DEVOTION - "...and follow me."

Luke 9:27-36 THE TRANSFIGURATION

THE COUNTENANCE OF THE SAVIOR - Vss.29

THE CONVERSATION WITH MOSES AND ELIJAH - Vss. 30-31

THE CONFUSION OF THE DISCIPLES - Vss.32-33

THE COMMAND OF THE FATHER - Vss. 34-36

Luke 9:27-36 HELP FOR THE WEARY

Often Christians get weary. They get weary physically, emotionally, and spiritually. To handle weariness, we need to "look unto Jesus" (Heb. 12:2-3) We need to meditate on Christ and His Word when we are weary. One great place to look when we are feeling weary is this text concerning the transfiguration of our Lord. In this passage there are three things we should do when weariness overtakes us.

INTRODUCTION - Vs. 27

The Kingdom of God centers around Jesus Christ. He will reign in the Kingdom in the future. Jesus said that some standing with him would not taste death until they had seen the Kingdom of God. A few days later Peter, James and John saw the glorified Christ. It was a preview of what the Kingdom of God will be like.

REALIZE CHRIST'S GLORY - Vss. 28, 29, 32

They saw Jesus' glory as God! See Revelation 1:12-16.

We need to realize that not only is Jesus Savior and Lord, but He is God! The one, who made such great and wonderful promises, has the power to keep them!

When we are weary, start to feel defeated, or are ready to give up, we need to see the Glorified Christ!

REMEMBER HIS GRACE - Vss. 30-31

Two men appear. Moses represents the law. Elijah represents the prophets. Jesus fulfilled all the law and the prophets. They talk about his coming death at Jerusalem. That death was the means of God's grace towards us. Without the cross there would be no salvation by grace. 2 Corinthians 5:21

When we feel weary, we can look to the cross, and see that the one who died there willingly gave His life for us out of His grace. He made His own departure voluntarily, and fulfilled all that had to be for our salvation.

REVERENCE HIS GREATNESS - Vss. 33-36

Peter doesn't know what he's saying in Verse 33. His suggestion of building 3 tabernacles suggests equality. God's message in Vss. 34-35 is "This is my beloved Son: Hear Him!"

There is certainly a place for Moses and the Prophets, but Jesus is their fulfillment. He needs to be heard, obeyed and revered! When we are weary, let's listen to the one who is worth listening to!

WE WOULD SEE JESUS Luke 9:28-36

INTRODUCTION: People come to church for different reasons.

Someone makes you come. Some come out of habit.

Some come to hear a sermon. Some come to see their friends.

Some come to learn. Some come for the music.

Some come to make someone happy.

While some of these reasons for church attendance have some validity, one of the best reasons for coming to church is stated in John 12:21 -
"WE WOULD SEE JESUS."

I Invite you to see Jesus during this service.

SEE HIS IDENTITY Vss. 28-29

(He is God!)

SEE HIS DESTINY Vss. 30-31

(The Cross)

SEE HIS AUTHORITY Vss. 32-36

(",,,This is my beloved Son, Hear Him.")

Luke 9:37-45 THE MASTER PROBLEM SOLVER

There is no problem too big for the Lord Jesus Christ!

INABILITY OF THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 37-40

There was a problem too big for the disciples because of their lack of faith. We need to realize that every problem is too big for us to solve. It is only as we trust the Lord that we will have any solution. John 14:13-14 John 15:4-7,

INTERVENTION BY THE MASTER - Vss. 41-42

It is only when Jesus intervened that the problem was solved.

IMPACT ON THE CROWD - Vs. 43

The crowd for the moment was impressed. And there will be times when the crowd is impressed today with what Jesus does through His disciples.

INSIGHT FROM JESUS - Vss. 44-45

Jesus was not fooled. He realized that the tide of popularity would turn and that He would be nailed to the cross. We must realize that there will times, when the tide will turn against us also and we will suffer persecution for the Lord's sake. 2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:18-27

Luke 9:46-56 MY PURPOSE

Through the events of this passage, we are reminded what our purpose should be as a child of God.

I AM HERE TO SUBMIT NOT TO BE PROMINENT - Vss. 46-48

I AM HERE TO SERVE NOT TO BE EXCLUSIVE - Vss. 49-50

I AM HERE TO SAVE (SHARE CHRIST) NOT TO DESTROY - Vss. 51-56

Luke 9:46-56 PRACTICAL LESSONS FOR DAILY LIVING

Here are three practical lessons for Christians who truly want to please their Lord.

DO NOT EXPRESS YOUR GREATNESS - Vss. 46-48

Instead of arguing over who is the greatest, true disciples should reach out to the insignificant and humble in the world's eyes. Those who humbly do God's will as "the least" are indeed great in God's eyes.

DO NOT EXCLUDE OTHER BELIEVERS - Vss. 49-50

Others who sincerely do things in Jesus' name as fellow believers should not be stopped. Psalm 119:63, Amos 3:3, John 13:34-35

DO NOT EXPLODE WHEN WRONGED - Vss. 51-56

The man who would later be known as the "Apostle of love" had not yet learned the lessons of love, forgiveness, and turning the other cheek. Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:18-21

Luke 9:57-62 TRUE DISCIPLESHP

A TRUE DISCIPLE HAS NO (PERMANENT) HOME - Vss. 57-58

By this we mean that a true disciple of Christ will consider his true home to be in Heaven. Earthly accommodations mean nothing compared to the importance of following Christ wherever. See 1 Timothy 6:6-8, Hebrews 13:14 and Luke 9:23-24.

A TRUE DISCIPLE HAS NO HINDRANCE - Vss. 59-60

When this man requested a delay in following, the father was probably not even dead yet.

He was using family as an excuse, a hindrance for not doing what he was told.

A TRUE DISCIPLE HAS NO HESITATION - Vss. 61-62

There is no unnecessary delay on our part when we are truly following the Lord.

Luke 10:2 ON OUR KNEES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

You might like to quote a little known, but very wise lady, Dottie Peters (My wife of 25 years.). She said "It's our generation that's blown it!" She means the "baby-boomers" and refers to the fact that we (as a generation) have failed to train our children properly. We've blown it in other way. We in the church have failed to bring the message of the Gospel to others our own age, and to the children who will follow us in leadership. There is a solution to this problem given by our Lord in Luke 10:2

THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT SUPPLY - "The harvest truly is great..."

THERE IS A SEVERE SHORTAGE - "...but the laborers are few:"

THERE IS A SURE SOURCE - "...the Lord of the harvest..."

THERE IS A SIMPLE SOLUTION - "Pray ye...that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

Luke 10:2 A MINISTRY FOR ALL CHRISTIANS

Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest.

Not everyone is going to be a pastor.

Not everyone is going to be a missionary.

Not everyone is going to teach Sunday School, sing in the choir, or serve on a church board.

But there is a ministry that every Christian should have.

This ministry is the ministry of prayer that recruits workers for our Lord and Master.

POTENTIAL - "The harvest truly is great..."

PROBLEM - "...but the labourers are few:"

PRAYER - "pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest."

PARTICIPATION - As you pray, the Lord may recruit you to:

Pray for specific missionaries.

Give to the support of missionaries.

Go yourself.

Luke 10:25-37 MY NEIGHBOR - WHO IS HE?

Vss. 25-28 - Jesus agreed with a lawyer of religion that he should "love his neighbor as himself". The lawyer wanted to know who should be considered his neighbor. We Christians need to have that question answered ourselves. The story of the "Good Samaritan" teaches us that our neighbor is:

SOMEONE GOD BRINGS TO MY ATTENTION Vss. 30-33

The priest, Levite and Samaritan all saw the wounded man.

SOMEONE GOD GIVES ME ABILITY TO HELP

Anyone of the men who passed by could have helped in some way.

SOMEONE TO WHOM I MAKE MYSELF AVAILABLE Vss. 33-37

Luke 10:31-41 VICTORY IN JESUS!

The following found their victory in Christ:

A DISTURBED MAN - Vss. 31-37

A DISEASED WOMAN - Vss. 38-39

A DESTITUTE CROWD - Vss. 40-41

Luke 10:38-42 LEST WE FORGET

In our modern society, it is so easy to get so busy, we don't know if we are coming or going. Sometimes we need to look back at the story of Mary and Martha to remember to keep our priorities straight.

DECISION Vs. 38 - Martha made the right one. She received Jesus into her house. The most important decision we can make is to receive Jesus as our Savior.

DEVOTION Vs. 39 - Mary had her priorities right. She sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

DISTRACTION Vs. 40 - Martha let her service for Jesus get her upset. She was distracted by much serving. She got angry with her sister, and demanded that Jesus make her help.

DISTINCTION Vss. 41 - Jesus explains the difference between Martha and Mary. Martha was anxious and troubled about many things. Mary chose the one thing that was necessary.

Luke 10:38-42 MARY AND MARTHA - A COMPARISON

TWO GOOD SISTERS - Vss. 38-39

Martha was a doer! She got things done!

Martha was a dreamer! She had time for Spiritual things.

We call these girls good because they had trusted Christ as their Savior.

TWO GOOD PRIORITIES - Vss. 39-40

Martha's priority was serving. Luke 9:23

Martha's priority was sitting. She sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

ONE GREAT CHOICE - Vss. 41-42

Martha's choice to serve brought her frustration.

Mary's choice brought her favor. Time spent with Jesus is valuable for all eternity.

It's important to serve the Lord, but only after we have spent time with the Lord!

Luke 10:38-42 etc. SISTERS

SISTERS WHO WERE DIFFERENT - Luke 10:38-42

SISTERS WHO WERE DISAPPOINTED - John 11:1-6, 17-37

SISTERS WHO WERE DELIGHTED - John 11:38-44

SISTERS WHO WERE DEVOTED - John 12:1-8

Martha's Service - Vs. 2

Mary's Sacrifice - Vss. 3-8

Luke 11:1-4 PRAYER PATTERN

The disciples ask our Lord to teach them how to pray. Here is a prayer pattern for us to follow.

GOD'S PRAISE - "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name."

GOD'S PREEMINENCE - "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth."

GOD'S PROVISION - "Give us day by day our daily bread."

GOD'S PARDON - "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us."

GOD'S PATHWAY - "And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

Luke 11:1-13 THE CHRISTIAN'S GREATEST PRIVILEGE

After being saved, the greatest privilege you have is to talk to God.

PRAYER PATTERN Vss. 2-4

PRAYER PARABLE Vss. 5-8

PRAYER PROMISE Vss. 9-13

Luke 11:1-13 PRAYER PRIMER or ABOUT PRAYER

As the Son of God, Jesus was a man of prayer. He knew how to communicate with his Heavenly Father. On a day when Jesus was praying, one of the disciples wanted lessons in prayer (Vs.1). John the Baptist had evidently taught his disciples. Would Jesus also instruct those who followed Him in the important discipline of prayer? Of course He would!

A SYSTEMATIC PATTERN - Vss. 2-4

The Lord's Prayer (There's a longer version in Matthew 6:7-13) is a "skeleton" or pattern for prayer. We are to put the "meat" on the skeleton or elaborate on the basic ingredients of prayer here. When we pray we should remember:

God's Presence - "Our Father"

God's Praise - "Hallowed be they name"

God's Preeminence - "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done..."

God's Provision - "Give us this day our daily bread."

God's Pardon - "And forgive us our sins..."

God's Pathway - "And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

(Most of the above "p's" are part of the outline that has been shared before.)

A STUBBORN PERSISTENCE - Vss. 5-8

God wants to answer our prayers (Jeremiah 33:3). God also wants us to sincerely seek His face for all that we need. God is not reluctant to act like the neighbor in this story, but God does want to see us be as persistent in asking as the man making the request in this story.

Although there are times when God will show us that what we are asking is not His will, all too often we give up asking God before He sends the answer. Let's continue to pray and continue to believe that He'll answer, even if the answer seems long in coming. James 5:16-18

A SUPERNATURAL PROMISE - Vss. 9-13

As we continue to ask, seek and knock, God will respond. Vss. 9-10

God is kinder than any parent. Vss. 11-12

God will answer our prayers. Particularly mentioned here is the giving of the Holy Spirit. Although we do not need to ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit today, we should ask for the power of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9, Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16

Luke 11:11-17 OPPOSING GOD

As God, the Lord Jesus worked many mighty miracles that helped many people. He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, calmed the sea, fed the hungry and raised the dead. Today the Lord is still working many miracles. I feel the greatest miracle He works today is giving new life to anyone who will turn to Christ as Savior! John 3:1-8, 2 Corinthians 5:17 It is hard to believe that anybody opposed Jesus' miracles, but they did. He was especially criticized when He worked these miracles on the Sabbath Day. Today, people still oppose the miracles that our Lord performs. We must remember that when we oppose the work of the Lord Jesus we are opposing the work of God! We have an example of the opposition Jesus received in this story.

INFIRMITY RELIEVED - Vss. 11-13

IGNORANT RESPONSE - Vs. 14

INSIGHTFUL REBUKE - Vss. 15-17

Luke 12:1-7 GOOD REASONS

In this passage we see 3 good reasons to do what God tells us to do.

1. A REASON FOR TRANSPARENCY(HONESTY) - GOD WILL PUBLISH OUR SINS. - Vss. 1-3
2. A REASON FOR TREMBLING - GOD WILL PLACE UNBELIEVERS IN HELL. - Vss. 4-5
3. A REASON FOR TRUST - GOD WILL PRESERVE HIS CHILDREN. - Vss. 6-7

Luke 12:1-7 WHEN GOD IS FEARED

We get confused. So often we fear men and do not fear God.

Instead we are to fear God and not fear men. Proverbs 29:25

When God is feared:

BEHAVIOR IS CONSISTENT Vss. 1-7

The Pharisees were hypocrites. They taught one thing but practiced another. Jesus warns of the day when the truth about everything will be revealed. When God is feared hypocrisy is shunned.

GOD IS CONSIDERED Vss. 4-5

The concern is not what does man think, but what does God think.

It is God who has final say about the soul of man He needs to be feared.

WE ARE CONFIDENT Vs. 6

When we fear God, we have nothing else to fear.

God says "Fear not" to the ones who trust Him and live for Him.

GOD IS COMPASSIONATE Vss. 6-7

God knows us and cares about us.

He knows each sparrow, and we are more valuable than many sparrows.

The very hairs on our head are numbered. That's how intimately He knows us.

Luke 12:13-21 NEED OR GREED?

God has promised to provide our "needs", not what we are greedy for. Matthew 6:33, Philippians 4:19 God does not honor greediness, as this teaching from Jesus shows us.

A REQUEST - Vs. 13

A REBUKE - Vss. 14-15

A REMINDER - Vss. 15-21

1. Not all plans are of God. - Vss. 17-19

2. God is judge. - Vs. 20

3. Priorities are important - Vs. 21

Luke 12:13-21 THE MONEY ISSUE

"For the love of money is the root of all evil..." 1 Timothy 6:10

THE PETITION - Vs. 13 - Someone asked Jesus to arbitrate over a money issue, an inheritance.

THE PRINCIPLE - Vss. 14-15 - Wealth is not the most important thing in the world.

THE PARABLE - Vss. 16-20 - The story of the rich man with big plans.

THE POINT - Vs. 21 - It is more important to be rich towards God than to be rich in personal wealth.

Luke 12:22-31 ANXIETY RELIEF

Christians tend to worry or be anxious about many things. One of the things that they are most anxious over is physical need. In this passage Jesus address our anxieties about physical things.

CAUTION - Vss. 22-23

Jesus tells us not to be worried about how what we eat or what we wear. Life itself is more important than these.

CONSIDERATIONS - Vss. 24-28

1. Consider the Ravens - They do no work and God provides for them. Vs. 24
2. Consider our Height - All the worry in the world can not change how tall we are. Vs. 25-26
3. Consider the Lilies - God clothes them magnificently, although they do not labor. Vss. 27-28

COMFORT - Vss. 29-30

Our Father knows our needs.

CONDUCT - Vs. 31

We are to put God first, and trust Him to take care of our needs.

Luke 12:31-40 THY KINGDOM COME

WORK FOR THE KINGDOM - Vss. 31-34

WATCH FOR THE KING - Vss. 35-38

WARNING ABOUT THE KINGDOM - Vss. 39-40

Jesus is coming at a time when people will not be thinking that he's coming.

Luke 12:35-40 THE WATCH

(Can be used any time, but would make a nice New Year sermon, especially at a watch-night service.)

THE ACTIVE WATCH Vss. 35-36

THE AWARDED WATCH Vs. 37

THE ALERT WATCH Vss. 38-40

Luke 13:10-17 SKIRMISH ON THE SABBATH

There were many times when Jesus did things that provoked the "religious" leaders of His day. On a certain Sabbath Day Jesus had a confrontation with one of those leaders.

A WOMAN SET FREE – Vss. 10-13

A RULER'S SEETHING ANGER – Vs. 14

THE MASTER'S STRONG REBUKE – Vss. 15-16

THE ADVERSARIES' SERIOUS SHAME – Vs. 17

THE PEOPLES' STUPENDOUS JOY – Vs. 17

Luke 13:10-17 SABBATH DAY MIRACLE

A REMARKABLE HEALING - Vss. 10-13

A RIDICULOUS COMPLAINT - Vs. 14

A RIGHTEOUS ANSWER - Vss. 15-16

A REASONABLE RESPONSE - Vs. 17

1. Jesus' enemies were ashamed.

2. The people rejoiced.

Luke 13:23-30 GAINING HEAVEN

Have you ever given much thought about whether the people you know are going to Heaven or not? One person once asked Jesus in Luke 13:23, if many would be saved.

Jesus' response is sobering.

THE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT - Vs. 24

The entrance requirement to Heaven is very simple, and yet so many people miss it because it is so simple.

The "straight gate" is through faith in Christ. John 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:14-18, 36

THE END OF ELIGIBILITY - Vs. 25

There will be a day when it is too late to enter the straight gate. It must be done in this lifetime.

THE EXCLUSION OF MANY - Vss. 26-28a

Many people, including most Jews of Jesus' day, will claim to have known Jesus, and yet Jesus will claim he never knew them. Those who are familiar with Jesus but have not trusted Him as Savior, will be told by Him, "I never knew you."

THE ENTITLED WHO ENTER - Vss. 28-30

Those who are excluded will watch famous "saints" enter, and ever those from many countries. But those who should have been "first" in the kingdom, because of their exposure to Christ, will be "last" if they have not trusted Him as Savior.

Luke 13:24-30 SOBERING WORDS

Every once in a while we hear sobering words, which make us think about the seriousness and/or severity of a situation. Here are some examples:

"You're pregnant!"

"You're bankrupt."

"Your mother only has a few days to live."

The Lord Jesus was certainly capable of delivering sobering words like the ones in our text. Although these words applied to the Jews of His day, they can certainly apply to anyone who claims to have been familiar with Christ, but never born again.

THE WAY - Vs. 24 - Jesus challenged his hearers to enter the straight gate of salvation. Matthew 7:13-14, John 14:6

THE WARNING - Vss. 25-27 - There will be a time when it will be too late to be saved. Many will knock on the door of heaven wanting to get in, but will be turned away, because they had not trusted Christ. Even though they will claim to have known Christ, he will reject them.

THE WON - Vss. 28-30 - The true believers in Christ will enter into Heaven. The pretenders will be rejected.

Luke 14:1-14 ALWAYS APPROPRIATE

Cracking jokes at the Lord's Table (Holy Communion) is not appropriate.
Leaving a tip for a waitress at a restaurant is appropriate.
Wearing a bathing suit to a worship service is not appropriate.
Complimenting people who do a good job is appropriate.
Insulting your host, hostess, or guests at dinner is not appropriate.

There are things that are appropriate and things that are not. In Luke 14:1-14, our Lord shows us three things that are always appropriate.

HELP (HEALING) - Vss. 1-6

Jesus was a guest at a dinner on the Sabbath Day.

He was being watched by the Pharisees.

A sick man was there. To the Pharisees, no work was acceptable on the Sabbath Day.

Jesus asked if it was appropriate (lawful) to heal and then did. Then Jesus pointed out that everyone there would give help to one of his own animals on the Sabbath Day. The implication was, if they would help an animal on the Sabbath, why shouldn't he help an individual who is sick.

We must remember that helping those in need is part of Christianity. Ephesians 2:10, Matt 5:16: 25:31-46

HUMILITY - Vss. 7-11

Instead of seeking places of prominence, we are to seek humble places.

We are to let others exalt us and not exalt ourselves.

HOSPITALITY - Vss. 12-14

When we show hospitality, we are not to do it so that others will pay us back.

We are to show hospitality so that we are a blessing to those who can really use it.

Luke 14:1-14 LESSONS

Here are some practical lessons from our Lord's behavior and teaching.

SERVE CONSISTENTLY - Vss. 1-6

The day of the week does not matter. We are to serve God and relieve suffering when we can.

This is what Jesus did for the man with the dropsy. Jesus cited the fact that an ox would be rescued on a Sabbath day. The implication was that people are more important than oxen.

SHOW HUMILITY - Vss. 7-11

We are not to seek the spotlight, but rather we are to act humbly.

SHARE UNSELFISHLY - Vss. 12-14

We should care enough to invite the needy to meals instead of those who can pay us back.

Luke 14:15-24 EXCUSES!

People make excuses every day. I'm sure you can find some examples to share! The Jewish people, as well as Gentiles have often made excuses for not trusting Christ. This parable illustrates the tragedy of excuse making.

A GREAT SUPPER Vss. 15-17

GREAT STORIES Vss. 18-20 (They were stories because they were excuses)

A GREAT SUMMONS (Invitation) Vss. 21-24

A GREAT SERVANT - Notice the obedience of the man's servant. He proclaimed his master's message. He is to be imitated by all Christians, who carry the message of salvation.

Luke 14:15-24 MISSING THE BEST

THE ANNOUNCED SUPPER - Vss. 16-17

THE ALLUSIVE GUESTS - Vss. 18-20

THE ALTERNATE ATTENDEES - Vss. 21-24

Luke 14:25-35 DISCIPLESHIP

A PRICE TO PAY - Vss. 25-27

A true follower of the Lord Jesus will have such a love for the Lord Jesus that, by comparison, all other loves seem like hatred. Vs. 26

A true follower of the Lord Jesus will bear his cross. The cross was symbolic for death. A true disciple is dead to himself, but alive to God. Galatians 2:20

A PLAN TO CONSIDER - Vss. 28-33

These two stories show that the plan of discipleship must be considered carefully before starting. Otherwise, the disciple will quit.

A PROBLEM TO AVOID - Vss. 34-35

If salt loses its saltiness, it's useless! If a disciple is not completely committed to Christ, he loses his effectiveness.

Luke 15 LOST AND FOUND

This 3-part parable shows us the work of the Trinity in salvation.

THE SINNER IS LOST AND DISTRESSED - Vss. 4-6

THE SINNER IS FOUND THROUGH THE WORK OF THE SON - Isaiah 53:6, Luke 19:10

THE SINNER IS LOST AND DEAD - Vss. 8-10

THE SINNER IS FOUND THROUGH THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT - John 16:8-10, Ephesians 2:1

THE SINNER IS LOST AND DEFILED - Vss. 11-32, Isaiah 64:6

THE SINNER IS FOUND UNDER THE WATCH OF THE FATHER - John 1:12

Luke 15:1-10 JOY IN HEAVEN

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-3

The self-righteous scribes and Pharisees found fault with Jesus because he received and ate with sinners. Using the stories of the lost sheep and the lost coin, Jesus shows that there is joy in Heaven when a sinner repents.

TRAGEDY - Vss. 4, 8

One sheep out of 100 is lost.

One coin out of 10 is lost.

Neither the shepherd nor the woman was satisfied with one even being lost.

The Lord Jesus is concerned for all those that are lost. Christians should be concerned for all those that are lost.

TENACITY - Vss. 4, 8

The shepherd and the woman were tenacious in their search for what was lost.

The Lord Jesus continues his search for lost people today.

We must be tenacious in our outreach to those without Christ.

TRIUMPH - Vss. 4, 8

The lost sheep and the lost coin were both found.

Jesus finds lost sheep, especially through the evangelistic outreach of Christians.

TESTIMONY - Vss. 5-7, 9-10

The shepherd and the woman joyfully call for others to rejoice with them when what was lost was found.

CONCLUSION - Any time a person repents and comes to Christ there is joy in Heaven.

Luke 15:1-24 LOST AND FOUND!

I have lost many things in my time. Among the missing there have been lost hats, coats, socks, gloves, glasses, keys and a host of other things. On many occasions I have been able to rejoice because what was lost, was ultimately found.

The reason Jesus came to earth was because we sinners were "lost". Because of our sin against God, we were destined to an eternity in hell (Ezekiel 1:4). Jesus arrived to die for our sins and make it possible for anyone to have salvation (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Romans 5:1).

In Luke 15, I see the work of God, the Trinity in seeking and finding the lost.

BACKGROUND - Vss. 1-3 - Jesus ministered to the despised people of His day. The Pharisees found fault. Jesus told three stories which illustrate God's work in winning the lost.

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP SPEAKS OF THE DIRECTION OF THE SINNER FOUND BY THE SEEKING SAVIOR. Vss. 3-7

The sheep had wandered away. We sinners have done the same thing (Isaiah 53:6). Our Lord came to earth seeking us (Luke 19:10), and dying to save us (Romans 5:6-9).

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN SPEAKS OF THE CONDITION OF THE SINNER, FOUND BY THE SEARCHING SPIRIT. Vss. 8-10

A coin is an inanimate object. It could not cry out, "Here am I!" in order to be found. You and I were dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). We were helpless! However the Spirit of God searched for us. He convicted us of our sin, and gave us an opportunity to be saved through trust in Christ (John 16:8-11, Ephesians 2:4-7).

THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SON SPEAKS OF THE DECISION OF THE SINNER WELCOMED BY THE SEEING FATHER. Vss. 11-24

Tell the story. The lost son comes to his senses and decides to return to his father. The Father was evidently looking for Him all the time (Vs. 20). When a lost sinner decides to come to Christ, the Heavenly Father is watching, and ready to receive him (Vss. 21-24, John 1:12).

Luke 15:11-24 HOMECOMING

During the summer and fall many churches in the United States celebrate "Homecoming", when people are welcomed back for a visit at the home church. A good homecoming story is that of the Prodigal Son.

HE LEFT HOME - Vss. 11-14

HE DREAMT OF HOME - Vss. 15-19

HE CAME HOME - Vss. 20-24

Luke 15:11-32 – PICTURE OF THE FATHER

This parable shows us some facts about our Heavenly Father which are worth remembering.

THE FATHER ALLOWS CHOICE, ALTHOUGH OFTEN DISAPPOINTED. Vss. 11-19

THE FATHER AWAITS CHANGE THAT BRINGS SOMEONE BACK TO HIM. Vss. 20-21

THE FATHER APPROVES CONFORMITY TO HIS WILL Vss. 21-32

Luke 15:11-32 THE PRODIGAL

RETREAT FROM THE FATHER'S PRESENCE Vss. 11-16

RETHINKING THE FATHER'S GOODNESS Vss. 17-19

RETURN TO THE FATHER'S FAVOR Vss. 20-21

REINSTATEMENT BY THE FATHER'S GRACE Vss. 22-32

Luke 15:20-32 FAMILY SQUABBLE (DISAGREEMENT)

There are often disagreements in families. Some are minor. Some are major. In our Lord's parable about "The Prodigal Son" there is a story about a family disagreement between the "righteous son" and the Father.

RETURN OF A SON - Vss. 20-24

The Prodigal Son had taken his portion of the family inheritance and spent it on wild living.

When out of money and in desperate straits, he decided to return to his father in repentance. (Vss. 11-19)

The Father, however, gave the son a royal welcome. He was so delighted that the son had returned.

Part of the welcome was a party where the "fatted calf" was killed.

RESENTMENT OF A BROTHER - Vss. 25-30

The brother who hadn't left refused to celebrate. He was jealous and angry.

REMINDER OF A FATHER - Vss. 31-32

The righteous son always had the joy of the Father's presence. All that the Father had was his.

It was right to rejoice, because someone, who was as good as dead, returned to life! He was lost, but was now found.

As Christians we should rejoice when people come to Christ! We should not be resentful that they get attention. The Father has been with us since we came to Christ. All that He has is at our disposal. When a person comes to Christ a person who was spiritually dead is now alive and a person who was Spiritually lost is now found! We are to rejoice!

Luke 16:19-31 THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

DIVERSE ROLES ON EARTH - Vss. 19-21

DIFFERENT RESULTS FOR ETERNITY - Vss. 22-26

DISTINCT REQUEST OF THE UNSAVED - Vss. 27-31

Luke 16:19-31 THE SERIOUSNESS OF UNBELIEF

All of us have problems – some are not very serious – some are. The most serious problem a person can have is unbelief. See John 3:36. The rich man in this story told by Jesus found himself in hell, not because he was rich, but because he was an unbeliever! His story shows us the seriousness of unbelief!

COMFORT ON EARTH Vss. 19-21

CRY FROM HELL Vss. 22-26

CONCERN FOR FAMILY Vss. 27-31 People in hell are very evangelistic. Shouldn't we be?

Luke 17:3-10 FROM THE MASTER'S TONGUE

THE CALL TO FORGIVENESS – Vss. 3-4

THE CHALLENGE OF FAITH – Vss. 5-6

THE CONSISTENCY OF FAITHFULNESS – Vss. 7-10

Luke 17:11-19 MATH LESSON

I once was once on a commercial flight and asked by a young lady to switch seats so she and the girl could sit in my seat and the one next to me.

I would be moved up to a rather uncomfortable seat in the front of the plane, looking at the wall that separated coach from first class. The thing that bugged me was the girl did not say "thank you" until I hinted. I was doing her a favor, but there was no real gratitude. Ironically enough, a few minutes later, the stewardess made us switch our seats back!

We all have met ungrateful people and have, at times, shown a lack of gratitude ourselves. Lest we forget, our Scripture gives us a math lesson in gratitude.

THERE WERE TEN HURTING, TEN HEALED Vss. 11-14

THERE WERE NINE GOING, ONE GRATEFUL Vss. 14-16

THERE ARE FOUR STATEMENTS, ONE SAVED Vss. 17-19

1. "Were there not ten cleansed?"
2. "Where are the nine?"
3. "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger?"
4. "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Luke 17:11-19 ETC. EVIDENCES OF A THANKFUL HEART

You can tell how thankful someone is by what they do.

Here are three who show their thankfulness by their actions.

ONE WHO WORSHIPPED Luke 17:11-19 - Ten were healed, only 1 came back to worship and thank God.

ONE WHO WALKED (FOLLOWED JESUS) Luke 18:35-43 - Bartimaeus followed Jesus and worshipped God as a result of his healing.

ONE WHO WITNESSED Luke 8:26-39 - The healed Demonic was sent home to tell others what the Lord had done for him.

Luke 18:1-8 PRAYER PARABLE

THE JUDGE HAD PROBLEMS - Vss. 2-3

1. He didn't fear God
2. He didn't regard Man
3. He had pesky woman troubling him.

THE WOMAN WAS A PAIN - Vss. 4-5

She would not stop pestering him until he gave her what she wanted.

THE PARABLE HAS A POINT - Vss. 1, 6-8

1. Men should always pray and not faint. Vs. 1
2. God will answer the prayers of his own as they persist in prayer. Vss. 7-8

Luke 18:1-8 DILIGENT PRAYER

A PURPOSEFUL PARABLE - Vs. 1

A PERVERTED JUDGE - Vs. 2

A PERSISTENT WOMAN - Vss. 3-5

A PERCEPTIVE CONCLUSION - Vss. 6-8

Luke 18:1-8 BEYOND TODAY

Today something will bother you.

It might be a minor thing.

It might be a major thing.

But something will bother you.

You might be bothered that a friend has said an unkind word.

You might be bothered that your job is leading nowhere.

You might be bothered by your health or the health of another.

You might be bothered by problems at school or on the job.

You might be bothered by the problems of a friend.

You might be bothered by your husband or wife, son or daughter, brother or sister.

You might be bothered about the inconsistencies in your Christian walk with God and in your testimony.
You might be bothered by the inconsistencies of fellow Christians.
You might be bothered that so few people seem to be saved through our church.
You might be bothered at a general lack of interest in Spiritual things by some of those in this church and their sporadic attendance habits.
There is a lot about today that can bother us.
I've only mentioned a few possibilities.
There is a lot about today that can get us down.

In a literal sense we can not see beyond today and its problems.
But today's problems will defeat us unless we learn in a spiritual sense and in a real sense to look beyond today.

In Luke 18:1-8 Jesus tells a parable. I see this parable as my Lord Jesus showing us how we can see beyond today, not letting today's circumstances defeat us.

WE CAN SEE BEYOND TODAY THROUGH PRAYER - Vs. 1

Vs. 1 - And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

Jesus knew that when times were tough, and especially when Christians were being persecuted, that we would faint, or lose heart and want to give up.

I'm sure that there have been times when you wanted to just quit.

So how do we see beyond today so that we don't faint, lose heart or quit?

Jesus tells us that we are always to pray. This doesn't mean that we have to twist God's arm and plead desperately in order to have our prayers answered. But it does mean that we are to be in continual prayer until the answer comes. It also means that prayer is to be a habit! Whatever happens today in my life, I should be praying about it. 1 John 5:14-15

Notice that our confidence is in God, not in ourselves and not in our "clever" solution to problems.

Notice that when we ask we are to ask according to God's will.

If I know that something is God's will, I can ask for it.

When I am not sure what God's will is, I can ask Him to show me His will.

And I should always be yielded enough to say "nevertheless, thy will be done."

I want to encourage you that as you pray, don't neglect to ask God for Spiritual things. Ask God to save specific individuals. Ask God to change you spiritually. And what you know to be God's will in the way of Christian behavior, ask Him to make it real in your life.

And pray for other Christians that God will work in their spiritual lives as well. In Ephesians 1, Ephesians 3, Philippians 1, and Colossians 1, you will find prayers that Paul prayed for other Christians. You can pray them for Christians you know.

Mark 11:22-24 - The disciples had just witnessed Jesus telling a fig tree to "dry up" and it did! Jesus tells the disciples of the importance both of prayer and faith.

WE CAN SEE BEYOND TODAY THROUGH PERSISTENCE - Vss. 2-5

Vs. 2 - Jesus tells His story.

In a certain city there was a judge, who was supposed to administer justice.

But he had no regard for either God or man.

That would probably mean that he could be easily bribed.

He was not concerned as much with doing right as he was doing what was convenient or profitable.

Vs. 3 - In the same city there was a widow who had a legitimate case. She was asking for justice. Widows in those days had very little rights. They could easily be taken advantage of. It would have been very easy for this woman to give up in despair.

This woman however was very persistent. She kept on asking.

Vs. 4 - For a while, the judge just ignored the woman. But then, after a while she began to grade on him. It was becoming obvious that this woman was not going to quit asking.

This judge begins reasoning within himself. He says, "I don't regard God or man." In other words, he wasn't afraid of what God or man would do or say.

Vs. 5 - The widow was troubling him. I've had some people trouble me when they have been persistent. He concludes "I'll give her justice lest she weary me by her continual coming." The word means to "give a black eye". He wasn't thinking of a literal black eye, but that it would make him look bad. Although the judge didn't regard God or man, he was concerned about his own reputation, and the persistence of this woman was not making him look good.

This woman did not faint. This woman did not lose heart or quit.
Why was that? She was looking beyond today to see, in her mind, the judge giving her justice. So, she could persist until she won her case.

We are told to persist in prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Philippians 4:6-7, Ephesians 6:18

WE CAN SEE BEYOND TODAY THROUGH PROMISE - Vss. 6-8

Vs. 6 - Jesus tells us to listen to what the unjust is saying. The unjust judge didn't care about justice and still answered the woman's request.

Vs. 7 - God is not like the unrighteous judge.

God cares about His elect.

Who are God's elect?

God's elect are the people who have come to God, God's way. They have been born again. They are God's children. Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:12

If you are a Christian, you are one of God's elect and you are a child of God. The promise here is that God will act much more graciously towards His children, than an unjust judge.

Even though there are times when we need to wait for God to act, we must realize that God has not forgotten us. He works out His answers in His time according to His will. God's silence is not an indication that He has not heard or that He is ignoring us.

As we persist faithfully in our prayers, God will "avenge" us or bring us justice.

Vs. 8 - When God acts, he will do so speedily and decisively. There will be no doubts.

Luke 18:9-14 TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS

THE CAUSE FOR THE PARABLE - Vs. 9

Some were trusting in their own righteousness and despising others.

THE CHARACTERS INTRODUCED - Vs. 10

THE CONCEIT OF THE PHARISEE - Vss. 11-12

THE CONFESSION OF THE PUBLICAN - Vs. 13

THE CONCLUSION OF JESUS - Vs. 14

Luke 18:35-43 ON THE JERICHO ROAD

THE GOOD NEWS - Vss. 35-37

Jesus is passing by.

THE GREAT CRY - Vss. 38-41

The blind man continually cried out for help. Jesus stopped and asked what he wanted. The request was for his sight.

THE GRACIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT - Vs. 42

Jesus, based on the man's faith, granted his request.

THE GRAND RESULTS - Vs. 43

The man was healed. He continually glorified God.

Luke 18:35-43 BY THE WAYSIDE

When Jesus came to Jericho, there was a blind man along the wayside.

He had some very special qualities which we should imitate. He was:

A MAN WHO WAS IN A PREDICAMENT - Vs. 35 - He was blind.

A MAN WHO WAS PERSISTENT - Vss. 36-39 - He continually cried out to Jesus for help. He would not be silenced.

A MAN WHO WAS PARTICULAR - Vss. 40-42 - He knew exactly what he wanted from the Lord and asked for it. We should be specific with our prayers.

A MAN WHO WAS IN PURSUIT WITH PRAISE - Vs. 43 - He followed Jesus, and gave the honor and glory to Him.

Luke 18:35-43 INCIDENT BY JERICHO

MAN IN NEED - Vs. 35

There was a blind man along side of the road begging.

MOUTH IN MOTION - Vss. 36-39

The blind man would not be silenced. He cried out to the Lord Jesus, seeking His mercy.

MASTER IN CONFERENCE - Vss. 40-42

Jesus listened to the man's appeal and pronounced that the man was to receive his sight because of his faith.

MIRACLE ON DISPLAY - Vs. 43

The former blind man followed Jesus and gave God the glory. This led to others glorifying God as well.

Luke 18:35-43 MAKING THE BLIND TO SEE!

This is the story of "Blind Bartimaeus" (Mark 10:46)

THE GOOD NEWS - JESUS IS PASSING BY Vss. 35-37

THE GREAT CRY - Vss. 38-41

Bartimaeus continued to cry out to Jesus for mercy.

When Jesus summoned him and asked what he wanted, he asked for his sight.

THE GRACIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT - Vs. 42

It was Bartimaeus faith that brought him his sight.

It was faith in the Lord Jesus.

For spiritual sight, we must also put our faith in Christ.

THE GRAND RESULTS - Vs. 43

Not only was he healed, but he followed Jesus and "glorified God".

Luke 22:1-23 THE UPPER ROOM

PERVERSTY OF JUDAS - Vss. 1-6

PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER - Vss. 7-14

PRESENTATION OF THE LORD'S TABLE - Vss. 15-20

PRONOUNCEMENT ABOUT THE TRAITOR - Vss. 21-23

Luke 22:1-23 A THURSDAY TO REMEMBER

THE PLOT - Vss. 1-7

Judas conspired to betray the Lord Jesus.

THE PREPARATIONS - Vss. 8-13

Preparations were made for the final Passover before Jesus was crucified.

THE PASSOVER - Vss. 14-20

At this Passover the Lord's Supper is instituted.

THE PITY - Vss. 21-23

It's a pity that someone would betray Jesus.

It's a pity that all the disciples seemed to consider themselves capable of such a thing. Vs. 23

Luke 23 INNOCENT!

2 Corinthians 5:21 - "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Luke 23 verifies the innocence of the sinless Son of God.

HEROD FOUND HIM INNOCENT - Vss. 4, 15 - RELEASE PURSUED

THE THIEF FOUND HIM INNOCENT - Vss. 41-42 - REQUEST FOR HELP

THE CENTURION FOUND HIM INNOCENT - Vs. 47 - REMARK ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

GOD FOUND HIM INNOCENT - Vs. 45 - RENDING OF THE VEIL

Luke 23 THANK GOD FOR CALVARY!

The Easter season is a time to be thankful for six things concerning Christ's work on Calvary:

1. JESUS CHRIST SUBMITTED TO GOD'S PLAN Luke 22:39-46

2. JESUS CHRIST STAYED ON THE CROSS Luke 23:35-38

He was challenged to come off the cross if He was the Son of God.

He didn't so that He might pay for our sins.

3. JESUS CHRIST SPOKE IN LOVE

Concerning His persecutors. Luke 23:33-34

To His mother John 19:25-27

To The Thief On The Cross

To The Father Luke 23:46

4. JESUS CHRIST WAS SEPARATED FROM THE FATHER

Matthew 27:45-46

5. JESUS CHRIST SATISFIED SIN'S DEBT John 19:28-30, 2 Corinthians 5:21

6. JESUS CHRIST SAVES THOSE WHO BELIEVE Romans 5:1

*****8*****

Luke 23:32-56 AT THE CROSS

THE SAVIOR'S FORGIVENESS - Vss. 34-38

THE SAVIOR'S FORECAST - Vss. 39-45

THE SAVIOR'S FINISH - Vss. 46-56

Luke 23: 33-47 OBSERVATIONS AT CALVARY

THE LORD SAW THE IGNORANCE OF THE PEOPLE - Vss. 33-34

THE CROWD SAW THE INABILITY OF JESUS - Vss. 35-38

THE THIEF SAW THE IMPORTANCE OF JESUS - Vss. 39-44

THE SOLDIER SAW THE IDENTITY OF JESUS - Vs. 47

Luke 23:33-49 WORDS FROM THE CROSS

The "Seven Last Words" from the cross are great words. The 3 "words" found in Luke.

A WORD OF COMPASSION Vs. 34

"Father, forgive them..."

A WORD OF COMFORT Vss. 39-43

"Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

A WORD OF CONFIDENCE Vs. 46

"...Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit..."

Luke 24 LUKE'S EASTER STORY

PRECIOUS PROCLAMATION - Vss. 1-10

The angels made it clear that Jesus had risen from the dead.

PERPLEXED PEOPLE - Vss. 11-24

Both the Twelve and the disciples on the road to Emmaus expressed their doubts about the resurrection.

PROCLAIMED PRECEPTS - Vss. 25-37, 44-45

Jesus held "Bible Class" first on the Road to Emmaus and then in the Upper Room.

PERSONAL PRESENCE - Vss. 28-36

Jesus revealed himself first to the those on the Road to Emmaus, then to Peter, and then to The Twelve.

POWERFUL PROOF - Vss. 37-43

His hands and side

He was able to eat

PRESCRIBED PLAN - Vss. 46-49

They were to take the Gospel to the world.

Luke 24:13-32 THREE FOR EMMAUS

A COMPASSIONATE QUESTION - Vss. 13-17

Jesus wanted to know why the two on the road to Emmaus were sad.

He cared about His followers. He still does.

A CONFUSED ADMISSION - Vss. 18-24

The two had thought that Jesus was the one who would redeem Israel. Now He was dead. They did not understand true redemption that Jesus secured on the cross.

They were also confused about the reports of an open sepulchre and the appearance of angels.

A COMPLETE EXPLANATION - Vss. 25-27

Jesus explained the events of his suffering and resurrection according to the OT Scriptures.

A CLEAR REVELATION - Vss. 28-32

Jesus made it clear that He had indeed risen from the dead.

Luke 24:13-35 JESUS DREW NEAR

When Jesus rose from the dead He ministered to hurting people.

He appeared to Mary Magdalene who was hurting because of the loss of her Master.

He appeared to Peter who was hurting because he had denied his Lord three times.

He appeared to 10 of the disciples who were hurting because they ran when Jesus was arrested.

He appeared to Thomas who was hurting because of his unbelief.

He appeared to as many as 500 disciples at one time. Many of these hurting for some reason.

As we see our text, Jesus also appeared to two of His followers on the Road to Emmaus. They were also hurting. It says in Luke 24:15, "Jesus himself drew near, and went with them."

Even today, when we are hurting, we find that Jesus draws near."

JESUS DRAWS NEAR DURING CONFUSION - Vss. 1-14

Jesus drew near to these disciples during confusing times. Just that week they probably had been involved with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

Then there was the betrayal, arrest, trial, conviction and crucifixion of their Lord.

Added to this were the events of Verses 1-14. These men were certainly confused!

It is during our times of confusion that Jesus will draw near to help us.

When we hurt because of sickness, death, marital or family problems, financial difficulties or employment or school problems, Jesus will draw near to help us. Matthew 11:28-30, Romans 8:38-39, Hebrews 13:5

JESUS DRAWS NEAR WITH CONCERN - Vss. 15-17

He wanted to know why the disciples were sad.

He was desirous to help.

Even today, Jesus is present, always ready to listen and always concerned. Hebrews 4:15-16, 1 Peter 5:7, JESUS DRAWS NEAR WITH CORRECTION - Vss. 18-27

Notice that Jesus listened to their concerns and then corrected them!

He taught them about Himself so that they would better understand the events that had just taken place.

As we pray and study our Bibles during times of trouble, Jesus will correct us as well, and put us on the right path. 2 Timothy 3:16

JESUS DRAWS NEAR WITH COMFORT - Vss. 28-35

These disciples were comforted by Jesus' appearance. Vs. 31

Actually as Jesus taught the Scriptures to them their hearts "burned". This was a good heartburn. Vs. 32

Notice how quickly they shared their comfort with others.

Jesus will comfort us. As we get into the Word of God and prayer, we will see Him clearly and be comforted.

Luke 24:13-32 JESUS IS THE ANSWER

JESUS IS THE ANSWER FOR SORROW - Vss. 13-24

When there is sorrow, Jesus is there to listen. (Hebrews 13:5-6, Revelation 3:20)

JESUS IS THE ANSWER FOR CONFUSION - Vss. 25-27

He can take what confuses us and explain it. He uses His Word. When we are confused we must not only pray for guidance but read the Bible.

JESUS IS THE ANSWER FOR JOY - Vss. 28-32, 41

If we want to be joyful, we must realize that we serve a risen Lord!

Luke 24:33-53 EASTER EVENTS

REPORTS OF THE RESURRECTION - Vss. 33-35

REVELATION TO THE DISCIPLES - Vs. 36

RESPONSE OF TERROR - Vs. 37

REASSURANCE THROUGH TOUCH AND TASTE - Vss. 38-43

Jesus showed them His body and ate food.

REVIEW OF THE SCRIPTURES - Vss. 44-46

RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVANGELISM - Vss. 47-49

RETURN TO HEAVEN Vss. 40-53

Luke 24:41a TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

"And while they yet believed not for joy..."

Sometimes God presents things to us and we think that they are "too good to be true". The disciples thought that Jesus being alive was too good to be true and had trouble believing. There are some things that seem to be too good to be true, but are anyway.

REDEMPTION IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, BUT IT IS TRUE!

1 Peter 1:18-19, Romans 5:6-9

Jesus shed His blood on Calvary to redeem us!

REGENERATION IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, BUT IT IS TRUE!

John 3:1-7, John 1:12-13, 1 Peter 1:3, 23

Anyone who truly trusts Christ as Savior is "born again".

RESPONSIBILITY IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, BUT IT IS TRUE!

Matthew 28:19-20, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:11-12

God has chosen to use us in his ministry. Some will be missionaries, evangelists, pastors & teachers. Some will be lay leaders in the church. All of us have a Spiritual gift to use, and all of us can be witnesses for Christ

REWARDS ARE TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, BUT THEY ARE TRUE!

1 Cor 4:5, 9:25, 2 Cor 5:10, 1 Thess 2:19, 2 Timothy 4:8, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4, Rev 2:10

Jesus will reward his faithful servants. What will we do with our crowns? Lay them at the feet of Jesus!

Revelation 4:11-12

RESURRECTION IS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, BUT IT IS TRUE!

1 Corinthians 15:20-28, 51-58 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

We will be risen from the dead!

John 1:1-5 WHO IS HE?

We get a better understanding of the identity of the Lord Jesus in the first 5 verses of John's Gospel.

JESUS IS ETERNAL GOD Vss. 1-2

JESUS IS CREATOR Vs. 3

JESUS IS LIFE AND LIGHT Vss. 4-5

John 1:1-5 THE WORD

Jesus is the "Word" of God. Words express thoughts. Through Jesus we have the very thoughts of who God is, because Jesus is God in the flesh.

THE PRESENCE OF THE WORD - Vss. 1-2

He has been around since the beginning. He is eternal.

THE POSITION OF THE WORD - Vs. 1

He is God!

THE POWER OF THE WORD - Vs. 3

He is creator. See Colossians 1:16 and Hebrews 1:2.

THE PARTICULARS ABOUT THE WORD - Vss. 4-5

He is life and light!

John 1:1-5, 14 THE SUPERIOR SON

I have been to some good ball games, and to some superior ball games.

I have had some good steak dinners, and I've had some superior steak dinners.

I have met some good people, and I have met people who were superior in their Godliness.

When it comes to superiority however, there is none more superior than the sinless Son Of God.

Our Lord Jesus is:

SUPERIOR IN HIS IDENTITY Vss. 1-2

He is eternal in His existence. Micah 5:2

He is God!

SUPERIOR IN HIS INITIATIVE Vss. 3-5

When someone takes initiative, it means that he or she gets something started.

1. Jesus initiated creation. Vs. 3, Hebrews 1:1-2, Colossians 1:16

2. Jesus initiated life. Vs. 4 (1 John 5:11-12)

In Him was both physical and spiritual life. You can explain the Gospel here by using three words –

SIN (Romans 3:23), SAVIOR (1 Corinthians 15:3-4), SELECTION (John 3:16)

3. Jesus initiated light. Vss. 4-5

SUPERIOR IN HIS INVOLVEMENT Vs. 14

Jesus left heaven to involve Himself in our lives.

He became flesh and dwelled among us. You might say "He pitched His tent with us."

John 1:6-13 THE LIGHT

THE LIGHT ANNOUNCED - Vss. 6-9

THE LIGHT AVOIDED - Vss. 10-11

THE LIGHT ACCEPTED - Vss. 12-13

John 1:6-14 AND THERE WAS LIGHT!

The "light" here is the Lord Jesus Christ.

LIGHT REPRESENTED (By John) Vss. 6-8

LIGHT REVEALED Vss. 9,10,14

LIGHT REJECTED Vs. 11

LIGHT RECEIVED Vss. 12-13

John 1:10-14 THE GREAT ARRIVAL

Jesus came to earth and it was a great arrival. While He was here He experienced:

THE GREAT REJECTION - Vss. 10-11

THE GREAT RECEPTION - Vs. 12

THE GREAT REGENERATION - Vs. 13

THE GREAT REVELATION - Vs. 14

John 1:10-14 WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH JESUS?

Everyone who has heard the Gospel will do something with Jesus.
Here are three possibilities.

THERE ARE REJECTERS - Vss. 10-11

Some will refuse to believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior.

A person who makes no decision concerning Christ has actually decided not to believe in Christ.

THERE ARE RECEIVERS - Vss. 12-13

Every person who believes in Christ becomes a child of God and has been born of God. See John 3:1-8

THERE ARE REFLECTORS - Vs. 14

John saw Christ's glory and believed on Him. After that he reflected that glory through His words and his actions. We who have seen Christ's glory through salvation are to do the same. Matthew 5:14-16, Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15

Are you a rejecter, or are you and a receiver and a reflector?

John 1:15-18 ENCOURAGED BY JESUS

There is so much that discourages us (Use your own examples.).

God wants us encouraged and encouraging others. Isaiah 41:10, Hebrews 24-25

There is no greater encourager than the Lord Jesus. John 14:16, 12-18, 26-27.

Our text shows us 3 ways that we can be encouraged by Jesus.

ENCOURAGED BECAUSE HE IS FOREMOST - Vs. 15

John the Baptist is speaking in this verse.

He is telling us that Jesus is foremost.

In the human time frame, John was first in birth and ministry. However, John is saying that Jesus is first. He was before John in power, glory, deity, and preexistence. Micah 5:2&4, John 1:1-5, 27, Colossians 1:15-18, Hebrews 1:1-4

We should be encouraged by this truth about the Lord Jesus.

Because He is foremost:

There is no problem that He does not understand.

There is no problem too big for Him to solve.

There is no task that He cannot enable you to perform.

There is no trial too great for Him to get you through it. Philippians 4:13, 1 John 4:4

ENCOURAGED BECAUSE OF HIS FULNESS - Vss. 16-17

Vs. 16 - Perhaps you've heard the expression "That's all there is, and there is no more."

Jesus is all that there is. He is complete. He is full. Colossians 1:19

Jesus is all there is of holiness, righteousness, love, joy, peace, mercy, power, redemption, and sanctification.

Jesus is speaking of all believers when he says, John 1:16 "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace."

Jesus Christ lives inside of us, and we have experienced His fullness at work in our lives. Out of His fullness comes His grace. We received grace at salvation, but God continues to pour out "grace upon grace" through Christ. We never run out of grace as we walk with Him. 2 Peter 3:18

Vs. 17 - God gave the law through Moses. The law was good. Jesus Christ is better than the law, because in Him is found grace and truth. He fulfilled the law.

Jesus Christ satisfied the truth of the law through His perfect life, substitutionary death, and resurrection. We have grace because of His work on the cross. Ephesians 2:8-9

ENCOURAGED BECAUSE OF HIS FAITHFULNESS - Vs. 18

No man has literally seen God at any time.

Jesus Christ, God's Son, has been faithful to reveal God to us. John 14:8-11

Because we see Jesus, we see God.

We understand God, because Jesus came in a form we can understand. This is why studying the Gospels is so important.

God wants us to know Him, so He sent His Son to us. Be encouraged!

John 1:19-34 HERE COMES JESUS!

THE PHARISEES' REQUEST - Vss. 19-22, 24

The Pharisees were questioning the identity of John.

They wanted to know just who he claimed to be.

JOHN'S REPLY - Vss. 23, 25-28

John's reply centered on the coming of the Lord Jesus.

John was only a servant to the one who would truly baptize with the Spirit.

JESUS REVEALED - Vss. 29-34

1. As Savior (Lamb of God) - Vs. 29

2. As Superior - Vs. 30

3. By the Spirit - Vss. 31-34

John 1:19-34 POINTING TO CHRIST

The ministry of John the Baptist was to point people to Christ.

JOHN'S POSITION - Vss. 19-24 - He was asked his identity. He replied with a quote of Isaiah 40:3 John was a "voice crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord..."

JOHNS PROPHECY - Vss. 25-28 - John predicted that the Messiah to come was greater than John himself. Compared to Him, John was not even worthy enough to untie Jesus' shoes.

JOHN'S PROCLAMATION - Vss. 29-36

1. Jesus is the Lamb of God. Vss. 29,35-36

2. Jesus was identified as Messiah when the Spirit of God came upon Him. Vss. 30-33

3. Jesus is the Son of God. Vs. 34

John 1:40-42 etc. ENLISTED!

In October of 1970 I enlisted in the U.S. Army. Anyone who knows me will say, "Wait a minute, Jack! You were drafted!" Yes, I was drafted, but at the request of the military I signed on the dotted line. I didn't have to go in the army. I could have chosen to go to jail. I am one of many, who over the years has been enlisted to serve either through the draft or through voluntary enlistment.

Before ever being enlisted into the U.S. army, I was enlisted in the Lord's army, sometime in early 1964. Listening to Billy Graham on the radio, I knelt by my bedside and trusted Christ as my Savior. Anyone who is saved has been enlisted to serve the Lord. One of the first people enlisted was the Apostle Peter.

HE WAS COMPELLED BY HIS BROTHER. Vss. 40-42

After Andrew found the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, he brought Peter to meet Him.

I believe that it was at this time that Peter believed on Him. Please note:

1. The PRIORITY that Andrew places on finding his brother.

2. The PRONOUNCEMENT that Andrew makes to Peter. "We have found the Messiah..."

3. The PROJECTION that Jesus makes concerning Peter. Peter's name was Simon. The Lord had plans for Peter that would make him to be a stone, or a rock. He would be solid. Peter was anything but that when he started. The Lord has plans, a projection for each one of our lives. He plans to use us in specific ways.

HE WAS CALLED BY HIS MASTER. Matthew 4:18-20

Peter is now shown God's plan for his life. He was to follow the Lord Jesus, and the Lord would make Him a fisher of men. The Lord is still calling us today to follow Him so, we too, can be made fishers of men.

HE WAS CONVICTED BY HIS SAVIOR. Luke 5:1-11

First Peter was saved. Next, he was called to follow Jesus. Evidently Peter wasn't following the Lord full time. In this passage we find him back at the fishing nets. The end result of this experience with Jesus is that Peter is convicted of just what a sinner he is. He is now ready to follow Jesus full time. "They forsook all, and followed him." (Vs. 11)

John 1:35-41 etc. WHAT SHALL I BRING?

Bringing is very much a part of our daily lives. If we are invited to someone's house or to a church event we ask, "What can I bring?" If we are going to a special event, we often think about who we can bring along with us. In fact that's why some of you are here this morning.

Perhaps the most important question we can ask ourselves is, "What can I bring to Jesus?" After all, He is God, and one day every one of us is going to bow before him. Philippians 2:9-11 We will also answer to Jesus as our judge - 2 Timothy 4:1

One of the twelve apostles seemed to be very adept at bringing the right things to Jesus. His name was Andrew, and he is probably best remembered as the brother of Simon Peter. Everyone knows about Peter,

not as many know about Andrew. Andrew was one apostle who seemed to have a good grasp of what to bring to the Lord Jesus. He is seen in three different places trying to bring somebody to Jesus.

Now before Andrew could bring anything to Jesus, someone had to bring Him to Jesus. The person responsible for that was a man named John the Baptist. John the Baptist was a mighty prophet who had the job of preparing the Jewish people for the coming of their Messiah, the Lord Jesus. John preached a baptism of repentance. The baptism was testimony that people had confessed their sins and were waiting for their coming King.

John did not claim to be the Messiah. He wasn't. Mark 1:8, John 1:26-27 When Jesus did show up, John made this stunning announcement in John 1:29 - ...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John was actually alluding to the reason that Jesus came to earth the first time. He came to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world. Lambs were used as sacrifices in the temple for the sins of the people. God's lamb that would pay for the sins of the world was the sinless Son of God! He died to pay for your sins and mine. Romans 5:6-8,

My friend God loved you so much that He sent His Son to die for you. 1 John 4:10

Of course, Jesus did rise from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

We are told that the next day John again identified Jesus. John 1:35-39

Andrew was one of those two disciples that followed Jesus, talked to Him, and believed on Him. The reason we try to bring people to Jesus is so that they too will believe on him.

To believe on Jesus is trust in Him, to put all our dependence on Him as the one who died for our sins and gives us eternal life. John 3:16

When someone truly believes in Jesus from the heart their life is changed forever. They become what the Bible calls "born again", and because of the presence of God, the Holy Spirit in the life, they are different. Bringing things to Jesus begins by bringing yourself. Have you trusted Him as your Savior?

ANDREW BROUGHT A RELATIVE John 1:40-42

Have you ever discovered something you wanted someone else to know about? Sometimes we find a great restaurant or a great bargain, and we can't wait to tell people. Andrew found the Messiah and he couldn't wait to tell Brother Peter. Right away he went out and found his brother, and let it be known that he had found the Messiah!

What motivated Andrew to be so aggressive?

A. He was convinced.

Andrew was convinced that he had found the one that was promised in Old Testament Scriptures. If we are going to bring relatives and friends to Jesus as Andrew did, we too need to be convinced. We need to be so convinced that we ourselves have trusted the Lord Jesus as Savior. And we need to be convinced that Jesus is the only way to Heaven. John 14:6, Acts 4:12

B. He was concerned.

Andrew was concerned that Peter knew whom he knew. Andrew wanted Peter to be part of the family of God.

If we are going to be good about bringing people to Jesus, we need to be concerned about their Spiritual wellbeing.

Why should we be so concerned as to whether someone trusts Christ or not? John 3:36

Are you convinced and concerned that someone you know is without Christ? How will you go about sharing the Gospel with that person?

1. Pray for the person's salvation.
2. Ask God for opportunity to share.
3. Share the Gospel, telling the person what Christ has done for you.
4. Give them a tract, ask them to read it, and then discuss it with them.
5. Bring the person to a church where the Gospel is preached.

Andrew brought a relative to Christ. Who will you bring?

ANDREW BROUGHT A RESOURCE - John 6:1-12

This is a great story, and we like to think of a little boy who came to see Jesus. His mother might have packed him a lunch, and in the end Jesus used his lunch to feed thousands of people. While Philip was

doing the math to figure out how much it would take to feed such a crowd, Andrew had found the boy with his lunch. Andrew knew the resources that were available, although he didn't think they were very many. What Andrew didn't think as much, "what are they among so many," it was enough for Jesus to work.

Have you ever done recruiting for Jesus? You might see a job that needs to be done around this church. And you might see just the person who could do the job. You could quietly suggest to them that it is something they might want to do. Recruit these people to use their resources.

And while I'm at it, Andrew found resources and you could do some finding of resources in others. But the most important resource you can bring to Jesus is yourself and your abilities. Begin by surrendering yourself to the Lord, to do whatever He wants you to do. Romans 12:1 After surrendering yourself to the Lord Jesus, ask yourself, "What abilities has God given me?"

Our job in this dark world without Christ is to let our lights shine for Him. Mark 5:14-16

So, what abilities has God given you?
Can you sing? Jesus can use you!
Can you do plumbing, carpentry, or electrical work? Jesus can use you!
Can you bake? Jesus can use you!
Can you cook? Jesus can use you!
Can you organize? Jesus can use you!
Can you show compassion?
Jesus can use you!
Can you watch children? Jesus can use you!
Can you teach? Jesus can use you!
Can you drive? Jesus can use you!

There is at least one thing you can do for the Lord. Are you doing it?

There was once a young pastor named Timothy. He was told by the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 1:14, That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. Whatever ability, job, or talent you have received from God use it with the help of God's Holy Spirit. 1 Peter 4:10-11

ANDREW BROUGHT A REPORT John 12:21-22

Somebody wanted to see Jesus. Phillip told Andrew, who was probably known for bringing people to Jesus. Somebody had a need, had a desire, and Andrew reported it to Jesus.

How much reporting do you do to the Lord?
Do you report it to God when someone has a Spiritual need?
Do you report it to God when someone has an emotional need?
Do you report it to God when someone has a physical need?

When we see needs, we are to report them to God. It isn't that God doesn't know about them, but He wants us to be asking Him for His help.

There's another word used for reporting to God. The word is prayer. Psalm 81:10 If God has delivered you from the bondage of Satan and translated you into the Kingdom of Christ, GET YOUR MOUTH OPEN so He can fill it!

What's the best gift that you can give a friend or a loved one? The best gift you can give a friend or a loved one is to mention their names before the throne of Heaven, and bring their specific needs before God. 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Matthew 7:7-8

So, who needs your report before the Throne of Grace? Make sure that you bring it.

John 1:35-51 TOUCHED BY JESUS

John Newton was a slave trader who came to faith in Christ. He was touched by Jesus. He wrote:
"Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see."

Martin Luther was a monk trying to earn his way to Heaven. Then he discovered justification by faith. He was touched by Jesus, and the Protestant Reformation began.

Many people have been touched by Jesus, including four of the Apostles mentioned in this passage.

ANDREW, THE SOUL WINNER - Vss. 35-42
Andrew came to know Jesus. - Vss. 35-40
Andrew looked for His Brother, Peter, and brought him to Jesus. Vss. 41-42

PETER, THE STONE - Vs. 42
Peter was renamed. Although Peter was not very solid at the beginning, the Lord worked with Him until he became a strong testimony for Jesus Christ. See stories about Peter in Acts 2, 3, 4, 5, and 12.

PHILIP - THE SOUGHT - Vss. 43-44
Jesus sought Philip as a disciple.
Each believer is to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus. Luke 9:23-24, Luke 14:26-27

NATHANIEL - THE STRAIGHTFORWARD - Vss. 45-51
Nathaniel said what was on his mind and heart. He was an honest man. There was no guile, or deceit in his heart (Vs. 47)
He was quick to place his faith in Christ (Vs. 49).

John 1:35-51 ON THE LOOKOUT

If you have ever watched any old cowboy movies or television shows, you have seen a certain character, who usually stood on a mountain or hill. His job was to watch and see if anyone was coming, while others were able to go about their business. His job was to alert the others, usually the "bad guys", if the "good guys" were coming. He was called the "lookout".

In the text we find some early followers of Jesus who were on the lookout in a good way.

LOOKING TO JESUS - Vss. 35-39

This was Andrew and probably John.

LOOKING FOR A BROTHER Vss. 40-42

Andrew probably lived in the shadow of his brother's extroverted personality all his life. However, when Andrew discovered the Lord Jesus, the first thing he did was look for his brother to bring Him to Jesus.

LOOKING FOR A FRIEND Vss. 43-51

Philip came to Christ, and he went out looking for his friend, Nathaniel.

John 2:1-11 WHEN THINGS LOOK BLEAK

JESUS IS AVAILABLE - Vss. 1-4

There was no wine, but Jesus was there.

JESUS HAS AUTHORITY - Vss. 5-8

Jesus not only has authority over men but over nature as well.

JESUS IS ABLE - Vss. 9-11

When things are at their darkest, Jesus can shine through with help.

John 2:1-11 WHEN JESUS WORKS A MIRACLE

JESUS IS INVITED - Vss. 1-2

The greatest miracle of all is salvation.

Jesus must be invited into the life for the greatest miracle. John 1:12-13

Jesus must also be invited to be a vital part of our daily lives and problems. John 15:1-7

JESUS IS INFORMED - Vss. 3-4

Just as Jesus was made aware of the difficulty with the wine, we must make Him aware of all our troubles, turning to Him in prayer for help. Philippians 4:6-7, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 7:7-11

JESUS IS IMPORTANT - Vss. 5-11

He is obeyed. - Vss. 5-8

He is glorified by the results. - Vss. 9-11

John 2:12 MIRACLE CONDITIONS

What is a miracle? A miracle is anything which God does, which man can not do! God is capable of doing above and beyond what we could ask or think. Jeremiah 32:17, 27, Luke 1:37. Genesis 18:14.

There are many examples of miracles in the Bible (Name some of your favorites.). People often wonder are there miracles today. The answer of course, is yes. Every new life in Christ is a miracle (2 Corinthians 5:21). Every answer to prayer is a miracle! Every victory in our lives, in the lives of others and in the world in general, is a miracle. People often wonder what conditions are needed to see miracles. I believe we have the answer in this text where we see the conditions necessary for God to work miracles. We can ask ourselves the following questions:

1. IS GOD PLEASED? - Vss. 1-2 - Jesus, by His attendance, showed approval on the wedding. For us to be in a position to see God work miracles we must be pleasing Him. First we must be saved. Second we must live a Godly life. Isaiah 59:2, Psalm 66:18.
2. IS THERE A NEED? - Vs. 3 - There was a need for wine, a symbol of joy. To be out of wine was a disgrace. God works miracles when there is a need to work miracles, not just to please the whims of people. Also, remember that God works according to His own will and plan, not ours!
3. IS THERE PRAYER? - Vs. 3-4 - Mary's motives may not have been right, judging by Jesus' response. However, she had the right idea. She was asking the right person. We need to ask God, when we have needs. Jeremiah 33:3, 1 John 5:14-15, Luke 18:1
4. IS THERE FAITH? - Vs. 5 - Mary showed her faith by instructing the servants to obey the Lord. When we ask God for help, we must have faith to believe that he will answer. James 1:5-8, Mark 11:23-24
5. IS THERE OBEDIENCE? - Vss. 5-10 - Jesus worked the miracle as the servants obeyed. Some miracles God will work without any help from man. Other times, He will call on us to fulfill His will. As we obey His leading, He will work.
6. IS GOD GLORIFIED? - Vs. 11 - God will work miracles to bring glory to Himself. Will the miracle that is being sought bring glory to God or man? If it is designed to bring glory to man, don't expect a miracle!

John 2:13-22 JESUS AND THE TEMPLE

CONCERN FOR THE TEMPLE - Vss. 13-14

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE - Vss. 15-16

COMMITMENT TO THE TEMPLE - Vs. 17

CONFRONTATION CONCERNING THE TEMPLE - Vss. 18-22

The Jews asked for a sign that Jesus had authority to do the things He did.

He predicted his death (destroying the temple) and resurrection.

John 2:13-22 AT THE TEMPLE

A POLLUTED TEMPLE - Vss. 13-14

The temple in Jesus' Day was polluted with those who were busy making a profit and even cheating those who made purchases.

Christian, your body is the temple of God according to 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.

Is it polluted with the things of the world? 1 John 2:15-17

A PURGED TEMPLE - Vss. 15-17

Jesus came in and cleansed the temple.

Christian, Jesus will cleanse your temple, if you let Him. 1 John 1:9

A PERMANENT TEMPLE - Vss. 18-22

The sign Jesus gave of his authority to do what He did was his own resurrection. The permanent temple referred to here is His body.

Christian, your body will be a permanent temple for the Lord Jesus. You will be resurrected. Maintain that temple properly now! 1 John 3:1-3

John 3:1-13 NIGHT TALK

Nicodemus came to Jesus at night. The conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus shows us that:

NICODEMUS WAS SEARCHING - Vss. 1-2

Although we can't be sure exactly why Nicodemus came at night, it is obvious that Nicodemus is searching for something. Give Nicodemus credit for recognizing that he had a need and for coming to the right person.

JESUS WAS DEFINITE - Vs. 3

Nicodemus needed to be born again to see the kingdom of God.

NICODEMUS WAS STUMPED - Vs. 4

He did not grasp that Jesus was talking of a Spiritual birth.

JESUS WAS DESCRIPTIVE - Vss. 5-8

He gave more information about the new birth.

NICODEMUS WAS SURPRISED - Vs. 9

JESUS WAS DEMANDING - Vss. 10-13

Nicodemus as a master teacher in Israel (perhaps the master teacher) should have grasped what Jesus was talking about.

John 3:1-16 NICODEMUS

NICODEMUS WAS CONCERNED - Vss. 1-2

That's why he came to Jesus!

NICODEMUS WAS CONFRONTED - Vss. 3, 5-8

NICODEMUS WAS CONFUSED - Vss. 4, 9

NICODEMUS WAS CHALLENGED - Vss. 10-13

NICODEMUS WAS COMFORTED - Vss. 14-16

Jesus was to be offered as a sacrifice for sin. Vs. 14

Belief in Jesus brings eternal life. Vss. 15-16

John 3:13-16 GOD'S PLAN FOR LIFE

GOD'S MESSENGER - Vs. 13

The Lord Jesus is God's messenger who came from Heaven.

GOD'S METHOD - Vss. 14-15

God allowed Jesus to be lifted up on the cross to die for our sins, so that those that believe in Him might have eternal.

GOD'S MESSAGE - Vss. 16-17

If you believe on the Lord Jesus as Savior you will have eternal life.

God's purpose in sending Jesus was not to condemn, but to save.

GOD'S MANDATE - Vs. 18

He that believes in Christ is not condemned.

He that fails to believe in Christ is condemned.

John 3:14-18 THE GRAND MESSAGE OF SALVATION

THE CROSS FOR SIN Vs. 14

THE CHOICE OF LIFE Vss. 15-16

THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNBELIEF Vss. 17-18

John 3:14-18 etc. CHOOSE LIFE

Life is full of choices. Some choices are fun, like the flavor of ice cream to select for a cone, the color of a new car, or the type of new furniture. Other choices are hard, like what to do with my life, who to marry, or where to go to school. Some choices are sad, like how to treat a sick loved one, or how to handle disappointment or failure.

Many choices are between life and death. We should always choose life. There are four kinds of life we should choose.

1. CHOOSE ETERNAL LIFE John 3:14-18

2. CHOOSE ABUNDANT LIFE John 10:10, 15:1-7

3. CHOOSE FAMILY LIFE Psalm 127, Joshua 24:15, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4

4. CHOOSE CHURCH LIFE Acts 2:41-47

John 3:14-20 NEW LIFE

People who have never been born again are "dead in trespasses and sins". (Ephesians 2:1)

They need "new life" that is only found in Christ.

COMMITMENT OF CHRIST - Vss. 14, 16a, 17

In order for people to have new life, Jesus was lifted up to die for sin like the serpent in the wilderness. Vs. 14, Numbers 21:4-9

God gave His Son over to death that we might have eternal life. Vs. 16a

Jesus' purpose for coming to earth was to bring salvation. Vs. 17

CONFIDENCE IN CHRIST -Vss. 15, 16b, 18a

Belief in Christ brings eternal life. There is no condemnation for the one who trusts Christ as Savior.

CONDEMNATION WITHOUT CHRIST - 18b-20

The person who has not trusted Christ as Savior is condemned.

CONDUCT THROUGH CHRIST - Vs. 21

When a person trusts Christ as Savior his life changes. He deals with his sins and acts in truth.

John 3:14-21 THE CHOICE IS YOURS!

Life is full of choices. We chose what to eat, where to go, what to wear and what to do every day of our lives.

We make major choices concerning schooling, marriage, employment, and housing. But the biggest choice we make concerns the Lord Jesus Christ.

A SIMPLE PLAN - Vss. 14-16

Vs. 14 - See Numbers 21:4-9

Israel had sinned. Fiery serpents were sent as judgment. Moses was instructed to make a brass serpent and put it on a pole, whoever looked at the serpent lived. In similar fashion, Jesus was lifted up on the cross. He died for our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21

Vss. 15-16 - Whoever looks to Jesus in faith, trusting Him as Savior, has eternal life.

A SINGLE PURPOSE - Vs. 17

Because Jesus was sinless, He could have condemned us all! However, Jesus came to earth not to condemn but to save.

A SPECIFIC PRONOUNCEMENT - Vss. 18-21

Vs. 18 - He that believes on Christ is not condemned.

He that doesn't believe on Christ is condemned.

Vss. 19-21 - Men love darkness rather than light.

John 3:16 GOD'S LOVE

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

THE EXTENT OF GOD'S LOVE - *For God so loved the world,*

He loved the whole world.

THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S LOVE - *that he gave his only begotten Son,*

Jesus was sent to die on the cross for our sins. Romans 5:6-9, 2 Corinthians 5:21

THE ETERNALITY OF GOD'S LOVE - *that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

The one who trusts Christ as Savior will live forever.

John 3:16 IT CAN'T GET ANY SIMPLER THAN THIS

Folks try to complicate the message of salvation. Simple faith in Christ is what saves.

The plan of salvation is very simple because God has done the work of redemption for us on the cross. It just requires faith. (Of course, if a person is truly born again, there will be change in his life. 2 Cor 5:17)

GOD'S MOTIVE FOR SALVATION - LOVE

GOD'S METHOD OF SALVATION - GAVE HIS SON

GOD'S MANDATE FOR SALVATION - BELIEVE

John 3:22-30 FADING STAR

For a brief time John the Baptist was in the limelight. However, as Jesus grew in popularity, John's ministry began to fade. John's shows a great attitude of submission and willingness to let Jesus have the attention.

JOHN'S MINISTRY CONTINUED - Vss. 22-24

John continued to do what he had been called to do until he was silenced.

JOHN'S MESSAGE WAS CONSISTENT - Vss. 25-28

He continued to point people to Jesus.

JOHN'S MASTER WAS COMMENDED - Vss. 29-30

He wanted Jesus exalted and himself to decrease in importance.

John 4:1-30 CUSTOM EVANGELISM

JESUS WENT TO A SPECIFIC PLACE - Vss. 1-6

JESUS WENT TO A SPECIFIC PERSON - Vs. 7

JESUS FOLLOWED A SPECIFIC PATTERN - Vss. 8

1. He caught her interest. Vss. 7-15

2. He related to her. Vss. 16-18

3. He answered her specific questions. Vss. 19-26

JESUS SAW SPECIFIC PROGRESS - Vss. 27-30

She believed in Christ and told others about it.

John 4:4 SAMARIA!

There are times in our lives when we face difficult conditions, work through difficult situations, and deal with difficult people. These do not appear to be the most pleasant of times. Our Lord faced a real challenge when "...he must needs go through Samaria." Like Jesus we will face our own "Samarias".

SAMARIA WAS A LAND OF OPPOSITION

Samaria was at one time a part of Israel (Samaria). When Assyria conquered Israel it deported everyone but the poor of the land. Then Assyria brought other people from other lands into Samaria. These people half learned the customs of the Jews, and intermarried with the Jews who remained. The Samaritans had a form of religion similar to the Jews, but it was not the Jewish religion. The Jews and Samaritans hated each other. See John 4:9

There will be times when, we as Christians will face all sorts of opposition as we strive to do the will of God.
2 Timothy 3:12, James 1:2-4.

SAMARIA WAS A LAND OF OBEDIENCE

Jesus had to go through Samaria because this is where God the Father wanted Him to go.
We must remember that some of our toughest times will come as we strive to live obediently. 1 Samuel 15:22-23, John 14:15.

SAMARIA WAS A LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

Jesus won the Woman at the well and other Samaritans to Himself.
Without facing opposition and being obedient, He would not have had these opportunities. See the rest of the chapter for details.
Our opportunities to bless other Christians and to win the unsaved to Christ will come as we face our Samarias through opposition and in obedience.

John 4:4-30 SOUL WINNER

We know, that as Christians, it is our responsibility to witness or to be "soul winners." See Psalm 107:2, Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15.

The greatest soul winner of all was our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only did He win every soul that is saved through his death on the cross, but He was also effective in personal evangelism. In this text we see the master soul winner at work. As Jesus dealt with the woman at the well, please note:

HE CAUGHT HER ATTENTION Vss. 4-9

While the disciples went for food, Jesus rested by a well.

The woman came for water at unusual time because she was probably an outcast because of her immoral behavior.

Jesus asked her for a drink of water. This was unusual because he was a Jew and she a Samaritans. "For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."

HE CREATED AN INTEREST Vss. 10-15

Although she didn't understand what Jesus was talking about, his offer of living water certainly got her attention.

HE CHALLENGED HER HEART Vss. 16-26

Concerning her past. Vss.16-19

Concerning worship. Vss. 20-24

Concerning His identity. Vss. 25-26

HE CAUSED RESULTS Vss. 27-30

Obviously, the woman believed.

She went to the village and called the man to come meet the one she was sure was the Messiah.

May we remember that it is our duty to witness, but it is always the Spirit of God who works when people believe. (John 16:8-11)

John 4:27-38 THE UNUSUAL

Introduction: Give examples of people who did unusual things.

JESUS DID THE UNUSUAL Vss. 27-30

He reached out to someone who was despised.

JESUS SOUGHT THE UNUSUAL Vss. 31-34

He made doing the will of God more important than food.

JESUS COMMANDED THE UNUSUAL Vss. 35-38

He caused the disciples to look at the fields white with harvest.

He implied that they needed to be "reapers" of the harvest.

John 4:28-29, 39-42 STEPS TO SAVING FAITH (An evangelistic message)

Jesus had won a sinful Samaritan woman to Himself. John 4:7-26

There would be others in her village who also came to Christ as Savior.

The steps they took should be the steps we take to saving faith.

1. HEAR THE REPORTS - Vss. 28-29 - The woman gave her testimony. We should hear the testimonies of others we know or have met that have found salvation in Christ and have experienced change in their lives. (Use your own illustrations.)
2. HEAR HIS WORD - Vss. 39-41 - Jesus' word convinced many to be saved. By hearing the Word of God, you should place your faith in Christ. (Share appropriate salvation verses.)
3. HEED THE EVIDENCE - Vs. 42 - Based on the Word of God, place faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior.

John 4:31-38 EVANGELISM
In our day and age people want to be left alone concerning religion, even though they are in need of a relationship with Christ (John 3:36). Jesus' plan however is far different than the initial reaction people often give when they feel that someone wants to convert them to faith in Christ. Jesus wants us as disciples to be those actively involved in evangelism. As we work at winning souls we will discover that indeed there are people who are ready to come to Christ.

WHAT'S ESSENTIAL? - Vss. 31-34 - Doing God's will and finishing God's work is more important than even eating. When Jesus made this statement he had just finished talking to the "woman at the well" about her soul.

WHAT'S EVIDENT? - Vs. 35 - The harvest is evident. Look around you and you will see people who are in great need for Christ.

WHAT'S EVALUATED? - Vs. 36 - Those who labor at bringing people to Christ will be rewarded.

Daniel 12:3, 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

WHAT'S EXPECTED? - Vss. 37-38 - We are expected to reap. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8

John 4:46-54 A FAITH ADVENTURE

When we think of the word, "adventure", we think of lots of excitement. (You might refer to some adventures you, or members of your congregation have had.) The greatest adventures of all are those which God leads us through. These adventures usually require faith, as seen in this Bible story.

The nobleman approaches Jesus. He would like Jesus to come and heal his son. Vss. 46-47

HIS FAITH WAS CHALLENGED - HE WAS DESPERATE - Vss. 48-49

Jesus tested this man. He simply clung by faith to Jesus in desperation.

HIS FAITH WAS CONFRONTED - HE WAS DEPENDENT - Vss. 50

He was told to go home because his son lived. He was dependent on what God had told him. He believed what the Lord had told him.

As we study God's Word, we are responsible to go on with life and be dependent upon what God has told us.

HIS FAITH WAS CONFIRMED - HE WAS DELIGHTED - Vss. 51-54

We will also have our faith confirmed, and be delighted when God does what He tells us He will do in His Word.

John 4:46-54 JESUS AT WORK

This is the story of a nobleman who had a sick son.

THE NOBLEMAN WAS CRYING - Vss. 46-47

THE NOBLEMAN WAS CHALLENGED - Vss. 48-49

THE NOBLEMAN WAS CONFIDENT - Vs. 50

THE NOBLEMAN WAS CONVERTED - Vss. 51-54

John 5:1-15 A PICTURE OF SALVATION

This story gives us a beautiful picture of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-5

A SIMPLE QUESTION - Vs. 6

Jesus wanted to know if the man wanted to be made whole. That simple question applies to any sinner.

Because of our sin, we need cleansing (Isaiah 64:6). The cleansing has been made available because of the work of Christ on the cross. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 2 Corinthians 5:21)

A STANDARD EXCUSE - Vs. 7

This man said, "I have nobody to help me.", and yet his help was talking with him.

There will always be excuses for not being saved! People today have many of them.

A STRIKING DEMAND - Vs. 8

Jesus told the man "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."

To the sinner Jesus says "Believe!" Both of these demands require faith. Faith in Christ is the only demand that God makes for salvation.

See John 3:16, Acts 16:31, and Ephesians 2:8-9.

A STUPENDOUS RESULT - Vs. 9

Just as this man was healed, we are also healed (saved) when we place faith in Christ. A tremendous change takes place (2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Corinthians 6:11)

A STRENUOUS EXAMINATION - Vss. 10-16

After a person is saved, unbelievers will inquire as to "what happened?"

John 5:19-29 VERILY, VERILY!

In the Gospel of John, Jesus often quoted as saying "Verily, verily". When Jesus used those words, it meant He had something important to announce. In our text Jesus used the words "Verily, verily" three times.

THE VERILY OF RELATIONSHIP - Vss. 19-23

Jesus is talking about His own personal relationship with God the Father.

THE VERILY OF RESPONSE - Vs. 24

The proper response to Jesus' words is belief!

THE VERILY OF RESURRECTION - Vss. 25-29

John 5:24-30 A SNEAK PEEK

When reading a book, some of us like to take a "sneak peek" of how the book ends by reading the last few pages of the book. People like to know what is coming in the future. In these verses, He gives a sneak peek at what is ahead.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD - Vss. 25, 26, 28, 29a

REVIEW BY THE JUDGE - 28, 30

(Remember, there are two judgments. There is the Judgment Seat of Christ for the saved. There is the Great White Throne for the unsaved. See 2 Corinthians 5:10 and Revelation 20:11-15)

RETRIBUTION FOR ALL - Vss. 24 & 29.

The saved receive eternal life. The unsaved are condemned.

John 5:44 etc. THE AUDIENCE

I'm sure that all of us have been in situations when we didn't know we had an audience and said or did things we were sorry for later. We've also probably have been in situations when we didn't understand who our audience really was. In those situations, it's very easy to put our foots in our mouths. We need to remember, that whatever we do, God is our audience. We need to consider Him above all others.

THE PRESENCE OF THE AUDIENCE - Psalm 139:7-10

God is always with us.

THE PERCEPTION OF THE AUDIENCE - Proverbs 5:21, Proverbs 15:3

God understands or perceives everything we say do. This is one audience who is never fooled!

THE POWER OF THE AUDIENCE - Luke 12:1-5

God is to be feared because He has the power to cast into hell. He is also to be feared because He is the judge.

THE PARTICIPATION OF THE AUDIENCE - 2 Corinthians 5:21, John 3:16, John 14:16-17, Matthew 7:7-8
God, the audience, has chose to participate in our lives. First, He sent His Son to save us, now He involves himself through the work of the Holy Spirit and by answering prayer.

THE PLEASING OF THE RIGHT AUDIENCE - John 5:44, John 3:36, Proverbs 3:5-6, Colossians 3:17

We fail to have faith because we are trying to please others instead of trying to please God. - John 5:44

John 6:1-13 LITTLE IS MUCH WHEN GOD IS IN IT!

A TESTED DISCIPLE Vss. 1-7

A TINY RESOURCE Vss. 8-10

A TREMENDOUS BLESSING Vss. 11-13

John 6:1-14 THERE IS A LAD HERE!

The main job of a child is to learn. A child learns to crawl, stand, and walk.

A child learns to talk, learns the alphabet and learns to read. A child should learn to obey, and then do things himself. A child should learn to think. A child should learn Spiritual truths. Pro 22:6, Psalm 92:13, Eph 6:4
A child is capable of being saved and learning about prayer, Bible reading and memorization, Bible stories, and giving. As children learn, they start to teach us. While growing up, our son, David, taught us about giving. Our son, Mark, taught us about trusting. Our daughter, Donna, taught us about witnessing.

In the Scriptures there are those children and young people who learn lessons, and, consequently, teach us. Andrew states in John 6:9, "There is a lad here."

Often in the Bible there is a lad or young lady who is present to learn, and through learning, instructs us.

THERE IS A LAD HERE AND HE IS LEARNING TO LISTEN TO FOR GOD - 1 Samuel 3:1-10, 19-4:1

THERE IS A LAD HERE AND HE'S LEARNING TO LEAN ON GOD - 1 Samuel 17

David's motive - the glory of God - Vss. 26-27

David's memory - past victories - Vss. 34-36

David's method - trust God, Do what you know how to do, Go in the Lord's name. - Vss. 46-50

THERE IS A LAD HERE AND HE'S LEARNING TO LOAN TO GOD - John 6:1-14

Proverbs 19:17 Matthew 6:19-21

Luke 21:1-4 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

John 6:1-13 A GREAT MIRACLE

A GREAT CROWD - Vss. 1-4

A tremendous crowd (At least 5,000.) followed Jesus.

A GREAT CHALLENGE - Vss. 57

They needed to be fed. Jesus tested Philip but Jesus knew what He would do.

Sometimes the Lord allows us to be challenged by problems, but he knows what He will do.

A GREAT CONTACT - Vss. 8-9

One little boy with a lunch that would hardly begin to feed a multitude. However, Jesus didn't need much.

The food only needed to be available. What little we have in the way of gifts and talents might not seem much, but if it is available Jesus can use it.

GREAT CONDUCT - Vss. 10-13

Jesus multiplied the food and fed the multitude.

Let Jesus multiply your efforts and watch Him build His kingdom!

John 6:15-21 RESCUE AT SEA

GREAT ASSIGNMENT - Vss. 15-16

Jesus had sent the disciples across the Sea of Galilee. Mark 6:46

Even what appears to be a small assignment is great when Jesus is the one doing the assigning.

GREAT ALARM - Vss. 17-19

GREAT ASSURANCE - Vs. 20

GREAT ASSISTANCE - Vs. 21

John 6:15-21 AVOIDING WORRY

Perhaps more than you, I have been victim one of the Christian's biggest problems, worry. I have been taught and have taught that worry is sin. I have also taught and been taught that sin breaks fellowship with God. I have also taught and been taught that when I sin, I cannot be effectively used of God. It is no wonder that Satan tempts you and I to worry! When we worry we cannot be effectively used of God, because worry is sin!

In this message, based on the account of Jesus walking on the water, let us see some things that will help us avoid worry. There are three steps that if taken, will help us lick worry in our lives.

REFUEL - Vs. 15

Jesus had just fed 5,000 men plus women and children.

Jesus knew that the miracles of healing performed that day and the great miracle of feeding would work on some to try to make Him a king. They wanted to be fed! They wanted victory over the Roman government. But they were not looking for salvation. It was not time for Jesus to reign as king. He first had to go to go Calvary's cross to secure salvation for us. So the first reason Jesus went to the mountain was to avoid a confrontation over his being made a king.

Mark 6:45-46 gives us some more information. Jesus was going to refuel! He was physically tired having healed, taught, and fed the multitudes. He would have been emotionally tired having dealt with so many people. Jesus needed the strength that only prayer would give. It was his habit. Mark 1:34, Luke 6:12 If we are going to "refuel" we also need to pray. Luke 18:1, Jeremiah 33:3, Philippians 4:5-7, 1 Peter 5:7, Isaiah 26:3

When Jesus went to the mountain, not only would He talk to his Father, but the Father would have talked to Him. If we are going to refuel, we must let God speak to us through His Word. Jeremiah 15:16, 2 Timothy 3:16, Psalm 119:15-16

REMEMBER - Vss. 16-20

The disciples were on their way across the Sea of Galilee. Vss. 16-7

A storm came up suddenly, as they do upon Galilee. You and I will have storms of life come upon us suddenly. Things will look absolutely hopeless.

Vs. 19 - They had rowed 3-4 miles and saw Jesus drawing near. Not knowing who it was, they were scared.

Vs. 20 - Here is the great truth to remember during our storms. Jesus comes to us. We need not be afraid because He is with us. Hebrews 13:5, Romans 8:35-39

If we remember that Jesus is with us, we can remain calm and not worry. Hebrews 4:14-16

RECEIVE - Vs. 21

Notice that the disciples immediately received Jesus into the boat. This is exactly what we should do. When Jesus was allowed entrance they were safe. If you do not know Christ as Savior, you need to receive Him as Savior. John 1:12

If you do Christ as Savior, we need to allow Him to have charge of the boat, to be captain of the ship. As we do this, He will control our worries.

John 6:15-21 THE RESCUE

There are times in our lives when we sense real danger. It might be physical danger, emotional danger, situational danger (e.g. divorce, loss of a loved one, etc.) or Spiritual danger. As Christians, if we are alert, we will sense our Savior coming to the rescue, as He did for these disciples.

DANGEROUS SITUATION - Vss. 15-18

DEPENDABLE SAVIOR - Vs. 19-20

He came to them. He encouraged them that it was their master coming. They were not to be afraid.

DELIGHTED SERVANTS - Vss. 20-21

They gladly received Him into the boat and were safe.

John 6:35-40 A GREAT OFFER

If you watch television, listen to the radio, visit commercial web sites or read the newspaper, you will have seen what advertisers call "a great offer" or "an offer you can't refuse". The trouble with many of these offers for you to make a purchase is that the offers really aren't that good. I've seen many "great deals" that weren't so great!

In our text today, the Lord Jesus is making a great offer. It is an offer that you can refuse, but you will be sorry if you do. Jesus is talking to critics who want him to repeat his great miracle of feeding the five thousand (John 6:1-13, 26-34). He makes a very clear and great offer to them.

RESOURCE - Vs. 35

Jesus offers Himself as "the bread of life". Just as bread is a basic ingredient in most diets around the world, Jesus is the basic ingredient for eternal life. Jesus is the resource we need for eternal life (John 14:6). Those who truly believe on Him will never be Spiritually hungry or thirsty.

REBUKE - Vs. 36

These people had seen Jesus and the way He fed the five thousand. Although they had seen, they had not truly believed on Him for eternal life.

REASON - Vs. 38

Jesus came down from Heaven to do the Father's will. This included going to the cross to pay for our sins, and to save all those that would believe on Him.

REASSURANCE - Vss. 37, 39-40

Jesus will not reject any that sincerely come to Him by faith. Vs. 37

All those who truly believe in Christ will be saved and resurrected. Vss. 39-40

John 6:35, 47-51 CONTENTED?

I probably don't need to tell you that there are many discontented people in this world. You meet them everywhere.

Discontented people are found in grocery stores when lines are too long or the product they want is not available.

Discontented people are found in homes when the husband is not making enough money to make ends meet or his income is only adequate and does not allow for a new car or all the "toys" that the children want. Sometimes the husband is not happy because the wife or the children are not doing what he thinks they should do. The children might be discontented because Mom or Dad are perceived as too strict, or in some cases, too lenient.

Discontented people are found on jobs where certain employees are not happy with the boss, the working conditions or perhaps the pay. Or maybe the boss is unhappy with his workers, his boss or the company he works for.

Discontented people are found in schools where students think that the rules are too strict, or that teachers are unreasonable, or too demanding or too lazy. There are also discontented teachers unhappy with administration or the students.

Discontented people are found in churches where church members are not happy with all that a pastor does or doesn't do. They are sometimes unhappy with the church's music, the church's doctrinal stand or the church's programs. Pastors are sometimes discontented with the size of their congregations, the lack of loyalty, or with their church leaders.

The world is full of discontented people! Have things changed since the days of our Lord Jesus? No they haven't! Luke 12:13-15, Mark 9:34-35, John 3:1-3 (I believe that Nicodemus came to Jesus because he was discontented.)

I want us to look at a specific instance of discontentment this morning found in John 6. To begin with, Jesus works a very famous miracle in this chapter. Using a little boy's lunch He feeds 5,000 men plus women and children. That was quite an accomplishment.

Vs. 15 shows us one of the responses of some of the crowd. They wanted to take him by force to make Jesus a king.

Here was a man who could heal people and provide food, why not make Him king? Of course, we know why. Jesus is King but the time for establishing His kingdom on earth was not then.

Jesus came the first time to save sinners by dying for them. The next time Jesus comes his Kingdom will be established.

I feel that this movement to make Jesus King shows discontentment. They were discontented with the Roman government. And many followed Jesus as Messiah thinking that He would establish His kingdom right away and overthrow the Roman government.

Another reason for discontentment was the very fact that they had to work for a living! They wanted free food so they didn't have to work. If Jesus were King, they probably thought, he could put the whole country on welfare!

Jesus dispersed the crowd and went into a mountain to pray.

Later that evening He met the disciples on the lake, walking on water. That was another miracle that showed His power and deity.

Vss. 22-26 - Some of these discontented people showed up the next day. Jesus revealed their selfishness and their laziness. They were looking for Jesus because they ate and were satisfied.

Vs. 27 - Jesus warns these people not to labor for food that is temporary, but for food that endures for eternal life.

Jesus then proceeds to point these people to Himself.

Using Vss. 35 and 47-51 of John 6, I would like to show you how to have true contentment. In the center of our thoughts this morning is Jesus' statement saying "I am the Bread of Life". This is one of seven "I am" statements that Jesus makes in the Gospel of John.

The phrase "I am" was definitely a reference to Jesus' dignity. God referred to Himself by that term when talking to Moses. Exodus 3:14 God is dependent on nothing and nobody for His existence. He is just there. He is! Revelation 1:8 Jesus, the Son of God very clearly shows us that He is the answer for all discontent because He is the Bread of Life.

As we look at Jesus as the source of true contentment in a discontented world I want us to consider:

A PROMISE - Vs. 47

Humanly speaking, man's biggest problem and the greatest source for his discontentment is his mortality.

Psalm 90:10

Into this fear of death comes another problem. Hebrews 9:27

The discontentment caused by death is complicated by the fact that we must stand before God and give an account. We are all sinners deserving of judgment and condemnation.

Romans 6:23, Ezekiel 18:4, Isaiah 64:6

Jesus answers this discontent caused by death by making a promise. John 6:47

Jesus is saying, "There is an alternative to eternal death. There is an alternative to punishment. There is an alternative to discontent caused by the fear of death."

Why is there an alternative to eternal death?

Why is there an alternative to the fear of dying?

It is because Jesus took your place, dying for your sins on what has been called the "Old Rugged Cross". (You may quote the hymn if you like. Words are found at <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/o/r/oruggedc.htm>)
Romans 5:6-8, 2 Corinthians 5:21

You see, Jesus died for your sins on the cross.

Jesus died for you so that you don't have to die eternally.

Jesus' promise is that anyone who will simply believe on Him can have forgiveness of sins and eternal life.
John 6:47

Believing on Jesus for eternal life means trusting Him instead of trusting yourself. When you trust Him, He provides eternal life in the future and a new life now. That's His promise!

2 Corinthians 5:17

A PERSON - Vss. 35 and 48

Here is Jesus' first "I Am". He is the bread of life.
I think that just about has some sort of bread.
I think of bread as basic food.

Bread gives nourishment.
Bread helps maintain physical life.

Jesus is the "bread", the basic for eternal life.
Without the "bread of life", there is no eternal life.

The person who finds the "bread of life" no longer has the gnawing pain and sorrow associated with being separated from God. He comes to Jesus no longer has to suffer from Spiritual hunger and thirst that leads to eternal death.

Trusting Jesus, or eating the "bread of life" leads to no more fear of what is beyond the grave.

John 6:48 - Notice that Jesus is that bread of life.
There are no other alternatives.
If you want life you must come to Jesus, believing on Him.
It's that simple.

Christian, Jesus was your answer to discontent concerning death.
But, Jesus is also your answer for contentment in every other area of your life.
Hebrews 13:5-6

Christian, true contentment is not found in your possessions.
True contentment is not found in money.
True contentment is not found in alcohol, sex, or drugs.
True contentment is not found in being loved or popular.

True contentment is found in your personal daily walk with Jesus. John 10:10, John 15:4-5, John 15:9-11

Christian, allow Jesus to control your life now. As you do, you will experience true contentment daily. The Apostle Paul did: Philippians 4:11-13

Contentment is found in a person, the Lord Jesus Christ.

A PERSPECTIVE - Vss. 49-51

Jesus gives some perspective to what He has just said. In Vs. 49, He reminds his listeners that their ancestors had eaten manna, supernaturally provided bread.
They ate this manna when they were with Moses in the wilderness, traveling between Egypt and the Promised Land.
As good as the manna was, it did not provide Spiritual life.

Vs. 50 - Jesus is that bread that came from Heaven. If a person eats this bread, that is, believes on Him, he will not die. Oh, he will probably die physically, but his spirit lives on. Death is only a shadow.

Vs. 51 - Men and women who trust Jesus will live forever because of His flesh given as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

When a person believes on Jesus Christ, there is a whole new perspective on death.
Philippians 1:21

So what is the point of this morning's message?
There is no reason for anyone to fear what is the greatest source of discontentment of all - death!

Have you placed your faith in Christ?
If not do so now!
Are you a Christian?
Find your contentment in abiding in Him!

JOHN 6:47-48 A GOOD OUTLOOK

If we approach life with a positive outlook, we are far more likely to be happy than if we have a bad outlook. Unfortunately, there are enough bad things that happen in our lives and in the lives of our friends and loved ones, that can often dampen our spirits, and cause us to develop a bad outlook.

The Lord Jesus, however, gives us good reasons to have a good outlook on life. We find three of these reasons for this good outlook as we look at our text.

WE HAVE THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

Verily, verily, I say unto you...

The words "Verily, verily" are literally the words "Amen, Amen" in the original language. I think of Jesus saying, "surely, surely". Jesus is serious when he uses these words and He is pointing out to his listeners that whatever He is saying is absolute truth.

Jesus' teaching style was different from those of his day. At the end of His famous *Sermon on The Mount*. Matthew 7:28-29

Indeed, during the Sermon on the Mount Jesus would quote teachings of the past and then say, "but I say unto you", and then give a clarification to the teaching. An example of this is found in Matthew 5:27-28

Why could Jesus speak with such authority?

Jesus can speak with such authority because of who He is.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Jesus is wonderful! -

By nature, He is God.

His miracles were wonderful.

His teachings were wonderful.

His death on the cross for our sins was wonderful.

His resurrection was wonderful.

The work He does now as our intercessor before God is wonderful.

Jesus is counselor!

Jesus is the counselor in that He comes to us as the revealer of the Father's will.

A counselor is one who gives advice and direction.

A counselor is one who gives help when needed.

More than once a counselor has gotten someone out of trouble.

As God, there is none that can give better counsel than the Lord Jesus. No wonder He tells us to abide in Him in John 15:4-5.

Jesus is mighty God!

He created everything. Colossians 1:16

Jesus is mighty God! He knows everything.

Jesus is mighty God! He is all-powerful. There isn't anything that Jesus can't do. Just think of His mighty miracles, including the calming of storms and the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus is everlasting father or "father of eternity".

Jesus is eternal.

He said in John 8:58 ...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus is alive now and will be forevermore.

Because He is eternal, every promise He makes He is capable of keeping.

JESUS IS PRINCE OF PEACE

Jesus is prince of peace because He secured peace with God for us. Romans 5:1

Jesus is Prince of Peace because He promises His followers peace. John 14:27

So there you have it. Jesus is ... Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. You have no greater authority than the Lord Jesus!

So when He says something here in John 6:47-48, you can believe it.

When He says something in the Sermon on the Mount, you can believe it.

Anywhere you see the red letters in your Bible you can believe the words, because they are the Words of Jesus.

Actually you can believe and accept, and trust in the whole Bible, because the whole Bible is God's Word. It is authority! 2 Timothy 3:16-17

WE HAVE THE SIMPLICITY OF SALVATION

I have a computer sitting on my desk and it amazes me. It can do two or three things at once, allow me to do word processing, store everything in files and connect me to the internet. It can find just about anything it has in store. It can play music and even video clips. I would say the computer is complex. And I only know how to use a computer, not what makes it work or how to fix it.

We have just passed the deadline of April 15th for filing our taxes. The tax code is complex. I don't understand the tax code, and as a result I rely on somebody who does to do my taxes.

Many people have made salvation leading to eternal life complex.

They think that they have to do good deeds to get into Heaven.

They think that they have to light candles, be baptized, do penance, go to purgatory, pay money, take communion, keep the ten commandments, and/or be a totally nice person in order to get into Heaven.

Jesus, our authority makes it much simpler.

John 6:47 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

Have you ever stopped to think how simple salvation is?

The trouble is, too many people think that the message of salvation is too simple. They think they must do something to earn forgiveness and eternal life.

My friend, God simply didn't make it that hard. Ephesians 2:8-9

You are a sinner, who isn't good enough to go to Heaven.

God is a righteous God who demands payment for your sin.

God in his love sent the Lord Jesus to die for your sins.

Jesus paid for your sins on the cross and rose from the dead.

Whoever believes, that is, trusts Jesus for forgiveness and eternal life becomes saved.

At the point of true belief, the Holy Spirit comes into your life and makes you a "new creature" in Christ.

2 Cor 5:17

If you have not availed yourself of God's simple plan of salvation, I invite you to do so this morning. It will change your life.

If you have believed on Christ, may I encourage you that this simple message of salvation that changed your life can change the lives of your friends and loved ones? You actually need to know very little in order to share your faith with someone else.

Coupled along with telling someone how Christ changed your life you can simply explain what I've just explained to you.

WE HAVE THE STAPLE OF LIFE

John 6:48 - I am that bread of life.

Staples are the basic groceries you need. You know, bread, milk, flour, butter or margarine, salt, pepper, ice cream. Probably the most common staple throughout the world is bread. In many places, even around here, bread is very much a part of the diet. I have heard a lot more people say "I don't eat meat, or much meat." I can't recall anybody saying, "I don't eat bread."

Bread helps to keep alive.

Jesus tells us in our text that he is "that bread of life."

He's the staple. He's the basic. He's needed. John 3:36, 1 John 5:12

Without the staple of Jesus Christ as Savior, you don't have life.

And let me tell you something else, Christian, unless you make Jesus a staple in your life daily, you're not going to have much of a life right now.

Jesus didn't just come to give you eternal life, but He came to give you abundant life, now! John 10:10

Do you want to know what kind of an abundant life you can have right now with the Lord Jesus? As James Montgomery Boice pointed out in his commentary on The Gospel of John, the 23rd Psalm is a beautiful picture of abundant life in Christ.

READ AND COMMENT ON THE 23RD Psalm. Show the abundant life we have when Jesus is our shepherd

John 6:47-51 FOOD FOR LIFE
Most of us like to eat. However, if we didn't eat we wouldn't live.
For eternal life we also need "food".
Our Lord Jesus Christ is that "food" for eternal life.
A PROMISE - Vs. 47 - He that believes on Jesus has eternal life.
A PERSON - Vs. 48 - The bread of life is a person, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.
A PERSPECTIVE - Vss. 49-51 - Those who ate manna eventually died. Those who eat of the bread of Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, will never die. Jesus gave his life so we might have life.
To believe on the Lord Jesus for salvation is to "eat" the bread of life.

John 8:1-11 CONFRONTATION
CONDEMNING LEADERSHIP Vss. 1-5
CONVICTING COMMAND Vss. 6-9
COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR Vss. 10-11
COMMANDING GOD Vs. 11
"Go and sin no more."

John 8:1-11 IT'S EASY
Some things are hard to do, while others things seem to be pretty easy. One of the easy things to do is to have a critical spirit. Especially in church you will find people who have the "gift of criticism". No matter what you do in church, someone will criticize. Jesus certainly dealt with his share of critics, and we meet some of them in this passage.

IT'S EASY TO FIND FAULT - Vss. 1-6
The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who had been caught in the act of adultery. Look around and you will find it easy to identify the sins of others. That's because we have all sinned (Romans 3:19, 23).

They suggested to Jesus that Moses said that such a person caught in such an act should be stoned (Vs. 5). The interesting thing is that they were suggesting this, so they could accuse Jesus after he gave an answer.

IT'S EASY TO FORGET OUR OWN SINS - Vss. 7-9

Jesus simply told them that whoever was not guilty of sin to cast the first stone.
They were willing to condemn the woman caught in sin, but were not remembering their own sins (Matthew 7:1-2). They were so convicted that each one of them left without throwing a single stone.

IT'S EASY TO BE FORGIVEN - Vss. 10-11

Jesus could have condemned this woman, but He didn't.
Instead, He told her to go and sin no more.

It is easy to receive forgiveness from the Lord Jesus, because it is He who died for our sins (Romans 5:6-9). When a person trusts Christ as Savior forgiveness and eternal life comes (John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 1:9-11). When Christians confess their sins, they are forgiven (1 John 1:9).

John 8:1-11 APPEARANCE BEFORE THE SAVIOR

There was once a woman who committed adultery.
The last person she probably wanted to see was the Son of God.
However, the meeting before the Savior not only showed Jesus' superiority over His enemies, but also gave the woman forgiveness.
ACCUSATION BY THE ENEMY - Vss. 1-6
ANSWER OF JESUS - Vss. 7-8
APPRAISAL OF SELF - Vs. 9
ASSURANCE OF MERCY - Vss. 10-11

John 8:12 THE LIGHT OF LIFE

(This outline was adapted from the writings of Alexander MacLaren's Expositions of Holy Scriptures. The notes are my own.)

DARKNESS! Making decisions in the dark can lead to some regrettable consequences. Back in the days before electricity, a tightfisted old farmer was taking his hired man to task for carrying a lighted lantern when he went to call on his best girl. "Why," he exclaimed, "when I went a-courtin' I never carried one of them things. I always went in the dark." "Yes," the hired man said wryly, "and look what you got!"
<http://www.bible.org/illus/I/I-34.htm#TopOfPage> Source unknown

DARKNESS! Go to one of the news pages such as <http://foxnews.com> and to your local newspaper. Mention several headlines that show that we live in a dark and sinful world.

Darkness! This world is full of it. There's the occult, there's murder, there's suicide, there's infidelity, there's abortion, there's lying, there's stealing, there's drugs, and there's a host of other things that attest to this world's spiritual darkness.

What does the Bible say about darkness? John 3:19, Jeremiah 17:9, Romans 1:20-22, Romans 3:10-12. The world is full of the darkness of sin. That's the bad news. The good news is found in our text. John 8:12 - "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Light is the opposite of darkness. Jesus said, I am the light of the world.

So, if you are disturbed by the wickedness that surrounds you, and the wickedness you sense in your own heart, Jesus in the second of his "I Am" statements found in the Gospel of John, presents you with the solution to the problem of darkness.

As the light of the world, we want to see:

CHRIST'S GLORY

CHRIST'S GUIDANCE

CHRIST'S GREATNESS

In order to better understand John 8:12, we need to understand the context in which Jesus is speaking. When Jesus was speaking he was probably at the temple in Jerusalem.

He was there for the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles commemorated the wilderness wanderings of the Jewish people as they left Israel and traveled to the Promised Land.

At least on the first night of the Feast of Tabernacles, and perhaps on other nights a huge candelabra was lit in the Court of the Women at the temple. This huge candelabra gave a tremendous amount of light. The light was a reminder that God had guided and protected his people with a pillar of fire. Exodus 13:21. Just as the pillar of fire was the light for the Israelites and the candelabra was the light for the temple, Jesus is saying that He is the light of the world.

Also, at the beginning of this chapter some of the Jewish leaders, the scribes, and some of the fundamentalists of that day, the Pharisees, had brought a woman caught in the very act of adultery to Jesus. John 8:4-11. In the midst of the moral darkness as represented by this woman and by those who would condemn her, Jesus says, "I am the light of the world." The world is morally corrupt and dark but Jesus is the light that answers the darkness.

CHRIST'S GLORY - "I am the light of the world."

Here's a quick quiz for you. What is the first thing that God created in Genesis 1? He created light!

Genesis 1:1-5

Why did God create light first? I can't say for sure, but I believe it has to do with his nature! God is light!

Psalms 104:1-2, 1 John 1:5, Revelation 21:23

Jesus, as God, announces in our passage, I am the light of the World.

As God, Jesus came to bring light. John 1:4-5

Peter gave testimony that he and others had witnessed Jesus' majesty.

2 Peter 1:16-17 When did Peter witness this majesty? At the transfiguration of Jesus.

Matthew 17:2

See the glory of Jesus Christ!

He is the light of the world!

He came to this old earth darkened with sin.

He came to this old earth and died for the sins of the world.

He came to this old earth and rose from the dead.

He left this old world bodily to sit at the right hand of God.

Through His Holy Spirit He is still present in this world, and inside of each person who has trusted Him as Savior.

As light in this dark world He offers forgiveness of sin.
As light in this dark world He offers eternal life.
As light in this dark world He offers hope.

Think of your unsaved friends. Think how they walk in the darkness and depravity of sin. Think of them as in a dark tunnel.
At the end of that dark tunnel is light, and it's not a train. Jesus is that light for those in the darkness. They need to come to that light in faith!

The sad thing is that many chose to remain in darkness rather than coming to the light. John 3:19 What can we do? We can't make people come to the light, but we can show them the light. In fact, Jesus has shared some of His light with us, and He wants our lights to shine! Matthew 5:14-16

CHRIST'S GUIDANCE - John 8:12 - "...he that followeth me..."
So how does a person follow Jesus.
To follow Jesus means first to trust in Him for eternal life.
You can't truly follow Jesus until you trust Him has Savior. John 14:6
He must be trusted as the way to Heaven. 1 John 5:11-12

One of the ways you know that you have truly trusted Christ as Savior is because you are following the Lord Jesus. John 10:27

You say you've trusted Jesus as your Savior. That's great.
But let me ask you, other than showing up for church when it's convenient, are you following him?
Other than just praying when you or a loved one has a problem are you following him?
Are you looking to Him for guidance in the decisions you make?
Are you looking to Him for guidance as you try to read and understand His Word?
Are you allowing Him through His Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth?
Have you come to a point in your life where following Him is the most important thing in your life?

Here are two important scriptures for you to consider: Luke 9:23 - ARE YOU DOING THIS?
1 John 2:6 - If we are following Jesus, we are allowing Him to be our guide!
Christian, are you accepting Christ's guidance.

CHRIST'S GREATNESS -John 8:12 - "...he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."
If you follow the Lord Jesus you will not walk in darkness because Jesus will light the way. But the choice is ours. Even as Christians, we can chose to walk in darkness.
Turn please to 1 John 1:5-7.

Vs. 5 - God is light! In him is no darkness. That means there is no darkness of sin found in God!
Vs. 6 - If we say that we are having fellowship with God. That is communion or communication with God. If we say we are walking with God or know God, and walk in darkness, we are lying!
Vs. 7 - How do we walk in the light? We follow the Lord Jesus.

We let Him expose the sin in our lives.
According to Vs. 9, we confess that sin.

When we do this, we then have fellowship with others of like faith. It is impossible to have true Christian fellowship if you are walking in darkness.

If we are honest before God in our Christian lives, allowing Jesus to be our guide, we will experience constant cleansing from sin. I believe this is so because as the light of Jesus exposes the sin, we will confess it.

Follow Jesus and you will no longer walk in the darkness of habitual sin.
Follow Jesus and you will have the light of life!
Yes, you will have the light of eternal life because of your faith in Christ.
But you'll also have the light of real life now.
In John 10:10 Jesus called it "more abundant life".
No longer will you live in habitual sin and defeat.
You will have the light of victory and the light of joy because of your fellowship with Christ and His followers.

John 8:30-36 SUCCESSFUL DISCIPLESHIP

THE PREMISE OF DISCIPLESHIP - BELIEF - Vs. 30

THE PROOF OF DISCIPLESHIP - CONTINUATION IN HIS WORD - Vs. 31

THE POWER OF DISCIPLESHIP - VICTORY OVER SIN - Vss. 32-36

John 8:31-36 FREE INDEED

COMFORTING PROMISE Vss. 31-32

CONTENTIOUS PEOPLE Vs. 33

CHALLENGING PRINCIPLES Vss. 34-36

John 8:31-32, 36 TRUE!

TRUE DISCIPLES - Continue in His Word - Vs. 31

TRUE DELIGHT - Knowing The Truth - Vs. 32

TRUE DELIVERANCE - The truth sets us free - Vs. 32

We are free indeed - Vs. 36

John 9 THE SEEING BLIND MAN

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-4

HE TRIED GOD'S WAY - Vss. 5-7

HE TOLD WHAT HAPPENED Vss. 8-12

HE TOOK A STAND Vss. 13-34

HE TRUSTED CHRIST Vss. 35-38

John 9 THE WONDER OF IT ALL!

THE WONDER OF HEALING - Vss. 1-7

THE WONDER OF HARRASSMENT - Vss. 8-34

Jesus' miracle described - Vss. 8-12

Jesus' miracle dissected - Vss. 13-23

Jesus' miracle detested - Vss. 24-29

Jesus defended - Vss. 30-34

THE WONDER OF HOPE - Vss. 35-37

This healed blind man was asked if he believed on the Son of God.

He did.

He received eternal life.

John 9:1-11 MY LIFE

This story about Jesus healing the blind man also teaches me some lessons about my life.

GOD HAS A PURPOSE FOR MY LIFE - Vss. 1-3, 5

God's purpose for this blind man was that God would be revealed in him.

God also wants to reveal His Son through me. John 10:10

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR MY LIFE - Vss. 4, 6-7

Jesus said that He was to work the works of God. Hebrews 10:7

That is God's plan for my life as well. I am simply to do God's will. Romans 12:1-2

God's plan for the blind man was to give him his sight. That was unique.

God's plan for me is also unique, just for me.

GOD WANTS A PROCLAMATION FROM MY LIFE - Vss. 8-11

Just as this man proclaimed what Christ had done, I am also to proclaim what Christ has done for me.

Psalm 107:2

John 9:4 ON TIME

We all have the same amount of time each day. As Christians we should use it wisely by serving Christ.

We should follow the example of Jesus.

YOU HAVE A JOB - OBLIGATION

"I must work the works of him that sent me."

Walking - Ephesians 4:1-3, Ephesians 5:2, John 13:34-35

Working - Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 2:10

Witnessing - Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15

DAY IS HERE - OPPORTUNITY

"...while it is day."

Now is the time that we have to work for Christ.

We need to labor for him while we are still able. Ephesians 5:15-17

NIGHT IS COMING - OUTLOOK

"the night cometh when no man can work."

Each of us have a certain amount of time.

There will be a day when it will be all over and every Christian will stand accountable to God.

Eph 5:10 Every unbeliever will also stand accountable to God. Revelation 20:11-15

"Only one life, twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."

John 10:1-15 ABUNDANCE!

We like it when there is an abundance of good things. We are happy when there is an abundance of things to eat, things to do, clothes to wear, etc. The best abundance, however, comes from the Good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus Christ. He provides:

ABUNDANT LEADERSHIP, Vss. 1-5

He comes. Vss. 1-2

He calls. Vs. 3

He chaperones. Vss. 4-5

ABUNDANT LIFE, Vss. 7-10

Salvation - Vss. 7-9

Sanctification - Vs. 10

ABUNDANT LOVE Vss. 11-15

Sacrifice for the sheep. Vss. 11, 15

Knowledge of the sheep. Vs. 14

John 10:7-10 WHAT AN OFFER!

JESUS OFFERS:

AN AUTHENTIC DOOR - Vss. 70-9a

"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. [8] All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door:"

AVAILABLE SALVATION - Vs. 9b

"...by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved..."

ABUNDANT LIFE - Vss. 9c-10

"...and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

John 10:7-10 WHAT A DOOR!

I have walked through many doors in my lifetime.

I arrived here coming through the "door" of birth.

I walked often through the doors of my growing up home.

I walked through the door of education.

I entered the door of fatherhood with the birth of David, our oldest child.

I entered the door of pastoral ministry through ordination.

I entered the door of being a grandparent when David and his wife Carletta brought Nicole home from the adoption agency. Later she was "officially" adopted.

I walked through the door of the Mount Union Bible Church as a candidate.

I walked through the door of the Mount Union Bible Church as the pastor.

A door is an entranceway.

For all the doors I mentioned I left out the most important one.

I was a good religious boy going to church every Sunday. I thought that if I did more good things than bad I'd make it to Heaven. Then, one day in spite of all my religiosity, I realized that I was not good enough to go to Heaven. While listening to Billy Graham on the radio in bed one evening I knelt by my bedside and trusted Jesus Christ as my Savior. I came to God through faith in Him. Jesus Christ is my door to forgiveness of sin and everlasting life.

John 10:9 - "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

In the beginning of John 10 Jesus is speaking of himself the true shepherd. He was the true religious leader, the Messiah that God had promised and that many were waiting for. The religious leaders of his day were not true shepherds to the sheep. They were thieves and robbers.

Read Vss. 7-8 - In verse 7 Jesus announces that he is the "door of the sheep." He is the true entranceway compared to the "thieves and robbers" in verse 8. By the way in verse 8 Jesus is not saying that the Old Testament prophets were thieves and robbers. He was saying that the current leaders of his day, some of whom were probably standing in front of him, were thieves and robbers. Instead of leading the Jews to true faith they were leading them astray.

When Jesus says I am the door, He is saying that He is the entranceway. As I meditated on this passage of Scripture I realized that Jesus is the door to many exciting things that should encourage you.

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PROTECTION

John 10:9 - "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,"
A few months ago Harold and Emma Schrack had a fire in their home. Someone woke them up before the fire got to their bedroom and they were able to escape, ultimately through a door that led to the outside of the house.

I was at one point in my life in great danger of being consumed by fire. I was in danger of facing what we call "hell fire", and what Revelation 20 calls "The Lake of Fire". It is a terrible place Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched according to Mark 9:46.

Why would a loving God send any person to such a place as that?
It is because our loving God is also a holy and righteous God.
It is because of our iniquities and sins.
A holy and righteous God demands that someone be punished for our sins. We are the logical choice to be punished.
We have failed God so greatly that the book of Ephesians tells us that without Christ we are dead in trespasses and sins. Isaiah 64:6, Ezekiel 18:4
So we need protection. We need a door to protect us from the fire of hell and everlasting damnation.

That's where God's love enters the picture.
That's how Jesus became your door of protection.
Jesus came to earth.
Jesus led a sinless life.
Jesus died on the cross bearing the punishment for your sins and mine.
Romans 5:6-8, Hebrews 10:12, 14

So Jesus died for our sins. He arose from the dead. He's living in Heaven. He says, I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved,

How do you enter in Jesus as the door?
You enter in by faith! Romans 5:1, Ephesians 2:8-9
When you enter in the door of faith, you are saved or protected from the punishment you deserve.

When Jesus said that He was the door, He was referring to the door of a sheepfold. That's where sheep were kept at night. It was a protective place made for the sheep. After the sheep were gathered into the sheepfold, the shepherd would lay down in the doorway and literally be the door for the sheep. No sheep could get out and no thieves, robbers, or predators like wolves could get in without dealing with the shepherd.

Christian, I want you to realize something.
When Jesus is your Savior, not only is He your door to protection for eternal life and against wrath to come, but He is also your door to protection right now as you face the bumps and bruises of life.
John 10:27-28, Psalm 34:7, Hebrews 13:5-6, Deuteronomy 33:27

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PEACE

We live in a world full of troubles and cares.
We face challenges to our physical, emotional and Spiritual wellbeing every day.

Things are so hectic, so out of control, so worrisome and so burdensome that we need to enter a big door labeled "PEACE". That big door labeled peace is none other that the Lord Jesus. John 14:27

How do we keep our hearts from being troubled or afraid? Philippians 4:6-7

Quote the words to the hymn His Eye Is On The Sparrow - <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/h/i/hiseyeis.htm>

Christian, next time you feel anxious and worried, and a lack of peace wells up in your soul, take that problem to God in Jesus' name. Let Him be the door to your peace.

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO POWER

John 10:9 - I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out...

Going in and out carries the idea of power.

You can't go in and out unless you have the power to do so.

If you are a Christian you have power that comes through the shepherd the Lord Jesus. He is the door to power.

John 14:12 - That's a pretty weighty promise isn't it? Jesus says that those who believe on him will do the works that He did, and that they would do greater works.

I believe that the works that we can do as followers of Jesus are greater in quantity, but not greater in quality. We can accomplish great things for the Lord if we allow him to work through us.

John 14:13 -14 - And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. [14] If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

I told you earlier that you should be praying when you need peace. These verses tell me that you should be praying when you need power!

We fail to witness.

We fail to be victorious over sin.

We fail to help others effectively.

We fail to persevere.

We fail to have Jesus' strength, largely because we fail to pray and believe.

And notice why we should pray these prayers for power. We should pray for power so that Jesus will be glorified!

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PASTURE

John 10:9 - I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

What do sheep need to be healthy sheep?
They need to be fed. They need pasture.

Jesus provides pasture to His sheep.

First there is the pasture of His word.

As we feed on His word we will grow.

John 15:7, Joshua 1:8, Jeremiah 15:16

I believe that there is another kind of pasture as well.

I would call it the pasture of God's Spirit.

He has to be in control of our lives.

As we allow that control we will be victorious. Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16, 22-23

What is the end result of good pasture? I believe John 10:10 answers that question.
The result of good pasture is more abundant life.

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PROTECTION

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PEACE

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO POWER

JESUS IS THE DOOR TO PASTURE

John 10:7-11 THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP

THE DOOR TO SALVATION - Vss. 7, 9

THE DECEIVERS OF THE SHEEP - Vss. 8, 10a

THE DELIGHT OF THE LIVING - Vs. 10b

THE DEVOTION OF THE SHEPHERD - Vs. 11

John 10:11 THE GOOD SHEPHERD

I have been in stores of various kinds literally thousands of times, and over the course of my 54 years I have had literally thousands of cashiers wait on me. For the most part the cashiers have been competent. Many times I have met good cashiers that were extremely helpful and just this past week one who gave me the extra dollar back that I'd given her by mistake. I've also run into some bad cashiers in my time. There was one that I had to tell how much change I was to get back. She didn't have a clue. There have been others who have been lazy or shown a very bad attitude towards me the customer.

Let's face it, no matter what the occupation, you find those who are good at what they do and those who are bad at what they do.

There are good secretaries and there are bad secretaries.

There are good schoolteachers and there are bad schoolteachers.

There are good doctors and there are bad doctors.

There are good singers and there are bad singers.

There are good state workers and there are bad state workers.

There are good pastors and there are bad pastors.

And on and on we could go.

When people serve us we want the best we can get. We want those who are good or even great at what they do. When a person serves God, He wants our best too. Colossians 3:17, 23

God actually does what He asks of us. He wants our best, but He gives us His best.

Whatever God does is good. Whatever the Lord Jesus does is good.

Jesus views himself as a shepherd.

A shepherd takes care of sheep.

Jesus' sheep are those who trust Him as savior. Those who trust him as Savior follow Him. John 10:27

Now notice that Jesus does not just say that he's a shepherd. He tells us that He's the good shepherd.

Jesus takes His occupation seriously and does the best job.

He's not a good shepherd, He's the good shepherd!

What helps to make any person in any occupation good?

It is when the person gives of himself or herself.

What makes Jesus the good shepherd? Yes, He is God and that certainly helps.

But beyond that, Jesus as the good shepherd gives of himself for His sheep.

I want you to appreciate Jesus as your good shepherd. I want you to see that,

JESUS IS INVOLVED WITH HIS SHEEP

In order to be a good shepherd for literal sheep, one must be involved in the life of the sheep. There needs to be contact. Jesus involved himself in the lives of His sheep long before the sheep ever existed. The plan of God from the beginning was that Jesus, God's Son would be involved in the lives of those who would be God's sheep.

And remember, Jesus did not just start existing when He was born in Bethlehem. Isaiah 9:6, Colossians 1:15-17

Now please turn to Philippians 2:5-8

In this passage we see just how involved Jesus became as our shepherd.

Vs. 6 - Before Jesus came to earth he was in the "form of God".

This word "form refers to the inner, essential, and abiding nature of a person or thing."

Jesus' inner, essential, and abiding nature is that of God.
Paul here is attesting to the deity of Christ.

When it says that He thought in not robber to be equal with God, it means that Jesus did not consider His equality with God something to be selfishly hung on to. He could have stayed in Heaven and enjoyed all the splendor which comes with being God the Son. Instead, He chose to leave behind the glory that was His to come to earth.

Vs. 7 - "But made himself of no reputation..." This literally means that He "emptied himself."
He surrendered. What exactly did Jesus empty Himself of? What did He surrender?

Did he give up his deity?
No, when He came to earth, He was still God. His nature had not changed. Perfect man and perfect God joined together.

He did give up His Heavenly glory.
He did give up His Heavenly riches.
He did give up the independent use of His Godly authority and became subservient to and dependent on the Father.

Vs. 7 - not only did Jesus surrender his rights in humility, "and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man."

Jesus became a servant in humility. He got involved with the sheep!
Here's that word "form" again. Jesus took on the "inner, essential, and abiding nature..." of a servant! Jesus was a servant through and through. He served by coming to earth.
He served by teaching and training men. He served by performing miracles.
He served by praying. He served by washing the feet of his disciples.

Here was the very Son of God, stooping to the job of a slave or servant, washing the very feet of sinful men.
And of course, Jesus served when He went to the cross. Jesus served by going to the cross!

As a servant Jesus took on the likeness of man.
He took on the human nature, although he never let go of the divine nature.

Vs. 8 - And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here is where the good shepherd literally gave His life for the sheep. There are stories of shepherds who sacrifice themselves for the good of the flock. Here is Jesus doing that for you and I.

The good news is this good shepherd rose from the dead!
The good news is that this good shepherd is still involved!
This good news is that this good shepherd will still save and forgive anyone who will trust in Him.
Matthew 11:28 - Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

And this good shepherd is still involved in our lives. 1 John 2:1-2
When we sin Jesus is there to plead our case. He is our lawyer.
He is the one called aside to help.

JESUS INTERCEDES FOR HIS SHEEP

Hebrews 4:14-16
Not only do we have a divine lawyer, but we have a divine priest.
Among other things a priest prays.
Vs. 14 - We can hold on to our faith, no matter how bad the circumstances, knowing that in Heaven, we have a great high priest. We can be strong in faith knowing that there is someone there who will speak up for us.

Vs. 15 - This high priest, the Lord Jesus, understands our infirmities, our troubles, our woes, our temptations. Why? Because as the Good Shepherd he got involved by coming to earth and was tempted in every way that you and I were tempted.
The only difference is that Jesus never sinned.

Vs. 16 - So what are we to do? When troubles come, and they do, come to God's throne of grace. Bring the problem there, knowing that in Christ we have mercy and grace to help in our time of need!

JESUS INTERVENES FOR HIS SHEEP

In Jesus day, there was a blind man named Bartimaeus. Old Blind Bart was a beggar. Then one day, Bart called on Jesus and Jesus intervened. Jesus gave Him sight. In Jesus day, there was a terrible storm on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was asleep in the boat. The disciples woke Him up. Jesus intervened. In Jesus' day, there were 5,000 men plus women and children who were in need of a meal. Jesus intervened. Using 5 loaves and two fishes, He fed the multitude. In Jesus' day, there was a man who couldn't walk lowered down from the roof into a room where Jesus was. Jesus intervened and the man walked out of there.

In Jesus' day, Jesus the Good Shepherd intervened in the lives of the sheep.

A good shepherd dealing with literal sheep intervenes to protect, to comfort, to feed and to water his sheep.

Jesus as the Good Shepherd still intervenes today. He will intervene as we ask Him to.

John 14:13-14, Matthew 7:7-11

JESUS INSTRUCTS HIS SHEEP

While He was on earth, Jesus was constantly teaching His disciples. And Jesus still teaches today. He does His teaching through His Holy Spirit. John 16:12-14

One of the characteristics of sheep is that they need to wander. That's why Isaiah said, "All we like sheep have gone astray..." A good shepherd guides his sheep. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, will guide you and I. Psalm 32:8

Psalm 32:8 - I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

Jesus does not hide His will from us, He reveals it to us.

For Guidance:

1. Ask for guidance
2. Read the Scriptures
3. Look at the circumstances
4. Listen for inner direction

And remember, nothing that Jesus leads us to will be contrary to His Word.

My friend, Jesus is the Good Shepherd, who gives His life for the Sheep. Is He your good shepherd?

JESUS IS INVOLVED WITH HIS SHEEP

JESUS INTERCEDES FOR HIS SHEEP

JESUS INTERVENES FOR HIS SHEEP

JESUS INSTRUCTS HIS SHEEP

John 10:7-11 THE GOOD SHEPHERD

PERSONALITY OF THE SHEPHERD - Vss. 7-9 –

He is the "door". When people place their trust in Him, He is their way to eternal life.

PURPOSE OF THE SHEPHERD - Vs. 10 - He has come to give abundant life.

PRACTICE OF THE SHEPHERD - Vs. 11 - He gives his life for the sheep. Not only did He give His life on the cross, but Jesus gives His life now as our "great high priest", (Heb 4:14-16) and our "advocate" (1 John 2:1-2).

John 10:27-31 THE SHEEP

THE FAITH OF THE SHEEP - "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

THE FUTURE OF THE SHEEP - "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish..."

THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE SHEPHERD - "...neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (See verses 29-30 too.)

John 10:27-28 ABOUT THOSE SHEEP

If you know this Psalm, please recite it with me. Psalm 23

The best known Psalm is Psalm 23.

Many can recite it when they can recite no other Scripture.

Many a pastor has shared this Psalm in the sick room or next to a deathbed.

Psalm 23 is the favorite Psalm of many people including me.

Who is the "Lord" in Psalm 23? It is the Lord Jesus Christ!

How do I know?

John 10:11 - "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

As the good shepherd, Jesus came to earth to give His life for the sheep.

He gave His life by teaching the sheep how to live.

He gave His life by being the sinless example of how to live.

He gave His life by working great miracles.

He gave His life by leaving Heaven and taking on a human body, with all its inconveniences and pains.

He gave His life by suffering indignity and persecution. As creator He suffered at the hands of His creatures.

He gave His life to train and pray for His disciples.

Most of all, He gave His life by dying on the cross for our sins. He took the punishment that we deserved!

Isaiah 53:5-6

Jesus as the good shepherd died for the sheep but rose again on the third day from the dead!

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Jesus is still the good shepherd, and He is very active as Psalm 23 just showed us. For a shepherd to be an active shepherd, He must have one thing. He must have sheep!

In John 10:24-26 we see that not everyone is one of Jesus sheep. Also see Matthew 7:21 and Matt 25:31-33

So if not all people are sheep, it is important that we know who the sheep are, and it is most important that we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that we are Jesus' sheep.

Jesus teaches us some very important things about His sheep this morning in John 10:27-28.

JESUS' SHEEP ARE SENSITIVE - "My sheep hear my voice,"

A sheep knows the call of his shepherd. As Jesus' sheep, we know the call of the master.

First of all, Jesus' sheep have been sensitive to heed His call to salvation. They listened to His voice when He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28

As we already shared, Jesus died for your sins, was buried and rose again. The price has been paid for you to have sins forgiven and He paid it! He gave His life for the sheep.

Salvation is a gift. Jesus wants you to accept the gift by faith. John 3:16

When you, at a specific moment in time, accept the gift of salvation, believing that Jesus died for your sins and that He is your way of forgiveness and only hope of eternal life, you are sensitive to His call, and become one of His sheep!

The invitation is open for anyone to come to Jesus and become one of His sheep! Revelation 22:17

What about you? Are you one of Jesus' sheep?

If not, you can become one of His sheep today by accepting His offer of the free gift of eternal life.

Now there is another challenging thought here for those who know Christ as Savior.

If we are His sheep, we above all others are to be listening to His voice!

How do we listen to His voice as His sheep?

First we must be sensitive to His Word!

If you are one of Jesus' sheep you must be interested in what Jesus has to say in this Book!

We should be able to say with the Psalmist, "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97

If you don't care about reading the Bible, and hearing God's Word preached and taught, what kind of a sheep are you? You are not sensitive to your Master's voice!

Another way we can be sensitive to the voice of Jesus is to heed the nudging of His Holy Spirit.

There was a day when the Elijah the Prophet was depressed, and he ended up by himself on a mountain. 1 Kings 19:11-12

Jesus still speaks today in the still, small voice, if we just take time to listen. We are so busy running here and there and everywhere that we fail to take the time to just listen! Often we sheep know how to talk to God, but we haven't learned to quietly listen to God, meditating on His Word and letting Him speak quietly to us.

JESUS' SHEEP ARE SPECIAL - "and I know them,"

As God Jesus knows everyone. But there is an intimate way that Jesus knows those who have trusted Him. He calls us His friends! John 15:15, Proverbs 18:24

As a good friend, Jesus will never leave or forsake us. Hebrews 13:5

JESUS SHEEP ARE SMART - "and they follow me:"

As sheep following the good shepherd, we are smart when we follow Him. In fact, following Jesus is proof that we are one of His sheep!

As a child I was smartest when I did what I was told by my parents. When I accepted their leadership I was at my best!

Now, I show just how smart I am when I follow and obey my wonderful Lord and Savior.

And Jesus does call us to follow Him! Luke 9:23

Why should we follow Jesus?

1 John 4:19 - "We love him, because he first loved us."

John 14:15 - "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Every time we follow and obey Jesus, we are saying to Him, "I love you."

Every time we follow and obey Jesus, we are also saying, "I trust you. I believe that you know what is best for me."

JESUS' SHEEP ARE SAFE - And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, Jesus told a story about a rich man and a poor beggar named Lazarus. The rich man had a terrific life, but he was unsaved.

Lazarus suffered a poor and miserable life, but he was saved.

Both died. Luke 16:22-26:

This poor old beggar was safe from the fire of hell, because he was saved. He was one of Jesus' sheep. The rich man was not safe from the fires of hell, because he was not one of Jesus' sheep.

It is a great comfort to know that we are safe from sin's punishment. But is disconcerting to think that there are so many without Christ who are not safe. John 3:17-18

This is why I urge you to witness to your friends and family.

This is why I urge you to bring unsaved friends and loved ones to church. Those who are not yet Jesus' sheep need opportunities to trust Christ before it is too late.

Recently I preached at an ordination service for my friend Wade Prime. When I gave the invitation I led in the sinner's prayer. I then asked Wade to come up and watch as I asked those who just prayed the prayer to raise their hands. Jesus' uncle and second cousin both raised their hands. Wade had been praying for and had talked some with his uncle, and God answered.

If you are safe in the arms of Jesus because you are His shape, be concerned about those who are not, and take action. Begin with prayer!

JESUS' SHEEP ARE SECURE - "neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Please understand something. If you are truly saved, there is no way the Son of God is going to let you go.

The very hand of God the Son holds you.

And if that isn't enough, the very hand of God the Father holds on to us as well. John 10:29

God the Father and God the Son love Jesus' sheep too much to ever let them go or to let them wiggle out of their hands!

TAKEN FROM OUR DAILY BREAD, PUBLISHED BY RADIO BIBLE CLASS - "When Pastor Thomas Collins called on a family from his church, he found the mother to be very despondent and feeling that god had forsaken her. Looking at the baby in the woman's arms, Pastor Collins said to her, 'Drop that baby on the floor.'"

"Startled by the suggestion, she looked at him in disbelief.

"Well,' he said, 'for what price would you do it?' Indignantly she replied, 'Not for as many dollars as there are stars!'

"He then said kindly, 'Tell me, do you really think that you love your child more than the Lord does His?'

"That truth broke through the woman's despair."

Romans 8:37-39 - Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 11:1-45 LESSONS DURING HEARTBREAK

JESUS LOVES US DURING OUR TRIALS – Vss. 1-5

JESUS LETS US WAIT FOR HIS PERFECT TIMING – Vss. 6-16

JESUS LEADS US TO BETTER UNDERSTANDING – Vss. 17-25

JESUS LONGS FOR US WHEN WE HURT – Vss. 28-37

JESUS LEAVES NO DOUBT ABOUT HIS POWER – Vss. 38-45

JOHN 11:1-27 WHEN IT HURTS!

Lazarus was very sick. Mary and Martha sent for Jesus. He didn't come right away. The worse thing that could happen, happened! Lazarus died! Mary and Martha were hurting.

There are times when we will hurt the way Mary and Martha did.

Let's remember:

THE LORD'S DESIGN Vss. 1-5

The Lord has a plan, a design for each of our hurts.

It is very clear that although Lazarus was sick, and that Jesus would not do what the family wanted (come right away), He loved them very much. However, Jesus knew there was a greater design in all of this.

It is good to remember that although the Lord does not always do what we want Him to do, He has a plan, and He loves His children very much.

THE LORD'S DELAY Vss. 6-15

The Lord delayed his trip to see Mary and Martha.

The delay would have given the disciples all the more reason to believe on Him. Vs. 15

The Lord's delays in our lives will strengthen our faith as well.

THE LORD'S DECLARATION Vss. 16-27

Martha's challenge of the Lord. Vss. 20-22

The Lord's comfort to Martha. Vss. 23

The Lord's confrontation of Martha. Vss. 24-26 ("Believest thou this?")

Martha's confession of faith. Vs. 27

John 11:1-45 VICTORY OVER DEATH

DIFFICULTY OF LAZARUS' ILLNESS - Vss. 1-4

DELAY OF JESUS' COMING - Vss. 5-7

DEATH OF LAZARUS - Vss. 8-17

DISCUSSION OF THE RESURRECTION - Vss. 18-27

DEMONSTRATION OF JESUS' POWER - Vss. 28-45

John 11:32-45 VICTORY AT THE TOMB!

Lazarus was dead!

Jesus had delayed his visit (See last week's Sermon Seeds for outline on earlier events in John 11.)
Jesus and Martha had talked.

Now, Mary is on the scene.

THE SAVIOR'S COMPASSION Vss. 32-37

THE SAVIOR'S COMMANDS Vss. 38-43

"Take ye away the stone."

"Lazarus, come forth."

THE SAVIOR'S CONQUEST Vss. 44-45

John 11:46-53 WHEN PEOPLE JUST DON'T GET IT!

When we use the expression "I don't get it", we mean that we don't understand.

When we say "He (or she) just doesn't get it", we mean that in spite of clear, overwhelming evidence or explanation the person still doesn't understand or grasp something.

The enemies of Jesus did not believe in Him or trust Him.

They just didn't get it! When people don't just don't get it:

THE EVIDENCE BECOMES A PROBLEM Vss. 46-47

In John 11:32-44, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead.

This was an undeniable proof of His deity. Some went to the leaders, and instead of believing because of the miracle, they had a problem with the miracle!

THEIR END IS SELF-PRESERVATION - Vs. 48

Those who were in power wanted to stay in power.

They were afraid of losing position if Jesus was believed upon as Messiah.

EVIL IS PLANNED - Vss. 49-53

Because they refused to believe the evidence, they plotted to harm Jesus.

When an unsaved person "just doesn't get it", it is like likely that he will make the evidence a problem, defend himself, and think and plan evil against those who believe in and share the Gospel.

John 12:1-8 STATEMENTS

Jesus had risen Lazarus from the dead.

There is a meal in Bethany.

The characters in this story make statements, either by their words or their actions.

STATEMENTS OF DEVOTION Vss. 1-3

Martha served Jesus. Vs. 2

Lazarus had fellowship with Jesus Vs. 2

Mary spent for Jesus. Vs. 3

STATEMENT OF DECEIT Vss. 4-6

Judas appeared to be very dedicated. He said that the money could have been spent to help the poor.

Although he sounded good, in reality he was a thief, and wanted the money for himself.

STATEMENT OF DEFENSE Vss. 7-8

Jesus understood the heart of Mary.

He also understood the significance of the act. She was anointing him for burial. The poor would always be with the church. But Jesus was only going to be present for a precious short time.

John 12:1-8 GUESS WHO CAME TO DINNER?

Any dinner party has a variety of guests with a variety of backgrounds. This dinner held after the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead had a variety of people involved. These people will teach us many lessons. There was:

MARTHA, WHO SERVED - SHE WAS FAITHFUL - Vs. 2

LAZARUS, WHO SAT - HE HAD FELLOWSHIP - Vs. 2

MARY, WHO SHARED - SHE WAS FERVENT (IN HER DEVOTION) - Vs. 3

JUDAS, WHO STOLE - HE WAS A FAKE - Vss. 4-6

JESUS, WHO SAVED - HE IS FANTASTIC! - Vss. 7-8

Mary understood that Jesus was going to die. She anointed Him in anticipation of what was going to happen. Jesus went to the cross to die for our sins. Faith in Him brings eternal life. John 3:16

John 12:12-19 A SPECIAL DAY

THE WORSHIP OF JESUS Vss. 12-13

THE WORD ABOUT JESUS - Vss. 14-16

THE WITNESS FOR JESUS - Vss. 17-19

John 12:23-33 LOOKING TO CALVARY

Time was short. Jesus knew why He was in Jerusalem. He was there to die for our sins. Here is an explanation of what would happen at Calvary.

THE CROSS Vss. 23-24

Jesus would be glorified through His death.

THE COST Vss. 25-26

True disciples would follow Jesus' example and lose their lives for His sake.

THE CONVERSATION Vss. 27-28

Jesus asks the Father to glorify His name.

The Father answers, assuring that He had and would again.

THE CONCLUSION Vss. 29-33

The conclusion of the matter was that if Jesus was "lifted up" on the cross, He would draw all men to Himself.

John 12:24-26 TRUE DISCIPLESHIP

The only way to Heaven is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 14:6, John 3:36, 1 John 5:11-13

A person who is truly saved is a disciple of Jesus Christ. A true follower of Christ will demonstrate in his life

that true discipleship:

IS A MATTER OF DEATH - Vs. 24 - Luke 9:23, 14:27, Galatians 2:20

IS A MATTER OF DEVOTION - Vs. 25 - Luke 14:26

IS A MATTER OF DIRECTION - Vs. 26 - Luke 9:23

John 13:1-17 THE UPPER ROOM

THE CONFIDENCE OF JESUS - Vss. 1-3

THE CONDESCENSION OF JESUS - Vss. 4-5

THE CONVERSATION WITH PETER - Vss. 6-11

THE COMMAND TO FOLLOW - Vss. 12-17

John 13:18-30 BETRAYED! (1)

THE BETRAYER ANNOUNCED Vss. 18-21

THE BETRAYER IDENTIFIED Vss. 22-26

THE BETRAYER DISPATCHED Vss. 27-30

John 13:18-30 BETRAYED! (2)

We have all been hurt by our friends from time to time. Many of those hurts were not given to us intentionally. Being hurt by a friend is bad, but being betrayed by a friend is far worse. When someone we have trusted, breaks that trust, turns on us and does us harm, we are betrayed. Of course the greatest betrayal in all of history was Judas' betrayal of Jesus.

THE TRAITOR DECLARED - Vss. 18-21

Jesus announces to all that one of the twelve would betray him (Vs. 18). He told them in advance, so they would believe in Him as the omniscient Son of God (Vs. 19)

Judas was allowed to be present with the twelve so that Scripture would be fulfilled (Vs. 18, Psalm 41:9)

THE TRAITOR DEFINED - Vss. 22-26 (Compare Matthew 26:20-25)

It is interesting that all the disciples thought themselves capable of betraying Jesus. Perhaps, when Judas asked if he was the traitor, it was done in such low tones, nobody but he and Judas could hear.

Jesus took a choice morsel (sop) of food and offered it to Judas. This indicated that he was the traitor.

Usually this act was used for giving honor to a guest. Even as Jesus identified Judas, he was also reaching out to him in love.

THE TRAITOR DISMISSED - Vss. 27-30

John 13:34-35 RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIANITY

There are those who are know Christ as Savior, but do not act responsibly as Christians. Christianity is more than "fire insurance from hell". It is a lifestyle to be lived before the world. A good way to start living responsibly as a Christian is to practice John 13:34-35

IT'S A COMMAND - Vs. 34 - "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another;"

IT'S A COMBINED EFFORT - Vs. 34 - "...love one another;" - This is a reciprocal relationship. I am to love other Christians. They are to love me. We are to work together at it. Even if I am not loved in return, I am still responsible to love.

IT'S A CHALLENGE - Vs 34 - "...as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." - Here are some of the ways Jesus loved, which we should imitate:

1. He Accepted People. (Fishermen, tax collectors, Nicodemus, the poor, the wealthy.)
2. He Acted With Compassion. (Widow Of Nain, Mary & Martha, the blind, the sick, the hungry.)
3. He Had a Servant's Attitude. (Luke 22:24-27)
4. He Answered Our Problem By Offering Himself. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

IT'S A COMMERCIAL - Vs. 35 - "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

John 13:34-35 THE BADGE

Several years ago I had the pleasure of going to a pastors' conference at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. While at this conference, which featured many great speakers, we were required to wear a badge. This badge indicated that we were a part of the conference and entitled to meals and other privileges at the conference. The badge gave us authority to participate.

In the old west, or at least in the old west portrayed on the television screen and in the movies, many lawmen such as Matt Dillon and Wyatt Erp wore badges to symbolize who they were. Even the Lone Ranger was known for his badge, a mask.

Today, policemen still wear or carry badges. They serve as identification.

Right now we want to talk about your badge. You have a badge that you are supposed to wear if you are a born again Christian. Your badge serves as identification. It tells the world that you are a Christian. I am talking about the badge of love.

"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."

THE BADGE EXTENDED (Issued to the disciples.) - "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another;"

THE BADGE EXEMPLIFIED - "as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

THE BADGE EVALUATED - "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

The "badge" of Christianity is only genuine when Christians love each other. The world is evaluating our badges to see if they are real or phony.

John 15:1-7 LIFE IN THE VINE

LIFE'S POWER - Vss. 1-3 - IN THE VINE (CHRIST)

LIFE'S PROCESS - Vs. 4 - ABIDE

LIFE'S PRODUCTIVITY - Vs. 5 - FRUIT

LIFE'S PROBLEM - Vs. 6 - FAILING TO ABIDE

LIFE'S PROMISE - Vs. 7 - ANSWERED PRAYER

John 15:1-8 LIFE!

THE SOURCE OF LIFE - Vs. 1

THE SCARS OF LIFE - Vss. 2-3 (From pruning.)

THE SYMPHONY OF LIFE - Vss. Vss. 4-5, 7-8

THE SCARE OF LIFE - Vs. 6

John 15:9-12 LOVE!

LOVE'S DEVOTION Vs. 9

LOVE'S DEMAND Vss. 10, 12

LOVE'S DELIGHT Vs. 11

John 15:11 JOY!

Christianity is a joyful religion, but looking at us, Christ's followers, you often wouldn't think so. All too often we allow too many things rob us of our joy.

We lose our joy when we don't get up on the right side of the bed.

We lose our joy when we don't get our own way.

We lose our joy when we don't feel well.

We lose our joy when someone we love gets sick or dies.

We lose our joy when we are abused or persecuted.

We lose our joy when we are misunderstood.

We lose our joy when we feel lonely or unwanted.

We lose our joy when we feel pressured to get something done for our job or school.

We lose our joy over countless other situations as well.

Now let me distinguish between happiness and joy.

I believe that it is possible to be joyful without being happy.

I don't have to be happy when things go wrong, but I should be joyful.

I think of happiness depending on happenings, and joy depending on Jesus.

I might not be happy about what's happening in my life, and I might even shed some well-deserved tears, but on the inside I can be joyful because of my relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I wonder how many of you would sincerely like to do the will of God? That is how many of you would like to be in the center of God's will? You can only do the will of God if you learn to be joyful.

John 15:11 - These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

It is Jesus' intent that Christians be a joyful people.

It is Jesus' intent that you be a joyful Christian.

Let us consider being joyful as Christians. We'll do it by discovering six things about joy.

1. PRESCRIBED JOY - These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you...

If you recall, Jesus was delivering what we know as the Upper Room Discourse, although this part of the discourse was given after they had left the upper room.

The disciples were sad. The disciples were worried. They disciples were scared.

They knew that Jesus had enemies.

They knew that were those who wanted to kill Jesus.

They knew that Jesus had told them that He was going to leave them.

In spite of all the sorrow of the moment, Jesus tells them "I have said these things so that you might be joyful!"

Jesus is the great physician, and it is as if Jesus is writing a prescription as he talks. He is saying here, "If you do what I tell you, you will be joyful." Like a visit with any doctor you can only become well if you do what the doctor tells you and take the medicine that he prescribes. You can only be joyful if you do what Jesus tells you to do.

So what were some of the things that Jesus prescribed, that would help the disciples be joyful?

LOVE EACH OTHER - John 13:34-35

RELAX

You can't be joyful if you are uptight. Jesus said in John 14:1, Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Now, you know as well as I do, that it's very difficult not to get fretful, worried, bent out of shape or uptight. How did Jesus ever expect us to avoid worry? We are trust God, and we are to trust Jesus.

And there's more! To help us not to be uptight, the Lord Jesus has sent a special helper to us.

John 14:16-18 - And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; [17] Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [18] I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

As we allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives, he produces the fruit of The Spirit in our lives, which includes, love, joy and peace.

Prescribed joy includes loving each other and relaxing. It also includes:

OBEDIENCE - John 14:15

PERMANENT JOY - These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you...

God wants our joy in Jesus to be permanent.

Not that there won't be bumps in the road and trials along the way. There will.

But through the trials, He wants our joy in Jesus to remain. James 1:2-4

The only way we are going to be joyful in Christ, is if we are faithful to Christ no matter what the circumstances. James 1:12 Revelation 2:10

These verses remind me that not only is joy permanent, but it gets better, when we see Jesus face to face.

If things are going to be so great in the "Sweet bye and bye", shouldn't we have joyful anticipation in the nasty now and now.

Every one of us knows somebody who needs the Lord Jesus as his Savior. Stop and think. What kind of a commercial are you for Christ? Does your joy in Christ shine through in spite of difficult circumstances? If you're just as miserable as anyone else when things don't go your way, why should anyone want your Jesus?

PREEMINENT JOY - These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

Jesus wants us to be so full of joy, that there's not room for any sorrow.

It was never Jesus' intent that He'd have a bunch of grumpy disciples.

When the disciples first saw the risen Lord, they were joyful. John 20:20

When the early church gathered there was an attitude of joy. Acts 2:46-47

These early believers were even joyful when they persecuted for the sake of Christ.

Acts 5:40-41

And may I remind you again, that you can not have fullness of joy in your life without the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your life. Romans 14:17 Romans 15:13

PERSONAL JOY - Psalm 16:11 - ...in thy presence is fulness of joy;

The church is to be a place of joy.

There should be joy when we worship the Lord in prayer and music.

There should be joy as we listen to special music.

There should be joy when read the Scriptures and hear the Word preached.

The attitude of our church fellowship should be one of joy!

But our joy should be personal as well. Each of us on the inside should have a sense of joy. How is that possible? We must learn to practice the presence of God in our lives.

Psalm 65:4 John 15:4-5

Do you know why married couples have happy marriages? They stay close.

Do you know how to remain joyful as a Christian?

Stay close! Abide! Talk to Him, and let Him talk to you.

Talk to Jesus about your problems.

Talk to Jesus about your concerns.

Talk to Jesus about your joys and sorrows.

Listen to Jesus and you remain still before Him.

Listen to Jesus as He speaks through His Word.

Strive to spend time with Jesus.

PRAYERFUL JOY - John 16:24- Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Now think about the Lord Jesus for a moment.

He wants us to be joyful, so He says to us, "Ask".

Now our asking will only bring fullness of joy as we ask according to God's will. 1 John 5:14-15

POWERFUL JOY - Nehemiah 8:10 - ...for the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Why are we so often defeated?

We lack inward strength.

What will help us have inward strength?

The joy of the Lord!

John 15:12-16 THE CHURCH

In this passage our Lord Jesus gives us some vital information about His church.

COMMANDMENT TO LOVE - Vs. 12

COMMITMENT BETWEEN FRIENDS - Vss. 13-15

Jesus laid down his life for us. Vs. 13

We are to keep Christ's commands. Vs. 14

Christ communicates with us. Vs. 15, John 14:13-14, 26,

COMMISSION TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT - Vs. 16 (See verses 1-8 as well.)

John 15:13-16 FRIENDS WITH JESUS

THE VOICE OF FRIENDSHIP Vss.13-14

THE VALUE OF FRIENDSHIP Vs. 15

THE VICTORY OF FRIENDSHIP Vs. 16

John 15:16 SENT BY JESUS

THE CHOICE - "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you..."

THE COMMISSION - "...that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain..."

THE CONVERSATION - "...that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:17-27 OPPOSITION

There is persecution of Christians taking place throughout the world. Give examples that you know of.

When Jesus gave his "Upper Room" discourse He warned us that there would be opposition to Him and to His followers. In John 15:17-27 we find:

THE LORD'S WILL - Vs. 17

Our Lord made this statement just a few verses before in Vs. 12.

He repeats the statement just before talking about persecution. I think the Lord was indicating that one of the ways to get through persecution that will come from the world is through the love of the brethren!

Let's face it, hassles from the rest of the world are easier to take when there's love at home. And hassles from the world are harder to take, when there is no love at home!

We all need a place of peace.

We all need a place of refuge.

We all need a place where we feel loved.

The church should be such a place! The church should be the Christians second home!

THE LORD'S WARNING - Vss. 18-21

I don't think that the Lord was indicating that the world may hate you and it may not. The Lord was talking as if the world was going to hate us. Paul said in 2 Timothy 3:12 - "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

THE LORD'S WITNESS - Vss. 22-25

The Jews would not have been guilty of the sin of rejecting Jesus if He had not come to them, spoken to them and worked his miracles in front of them. His witness made them guilty of rejecting Him.

THE LORD'S WORK - Vss. 26-27

In spite of persecution, the Lord is at work today through the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the witness of His followers.

John 16:1-14 WONDERFUL WORDS FOR WOUNDED WORKERS

The disciples were hurting because Jesus was going to leave them. These words given by Jesus were designed to encourage them. When we are hurting, the place to go is God's Word for encouragement.

THE PURPOSE OF JESUS' WORDS - Vss. 1, 4

THE PROMISE OF PERSECUTION - Vss. 2-3

THE PREOCCUPATION OF THE DISCIPLES - Vss. 5-6

THE PROVISION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - Vss. 7-14

The Comforting Spirit - Vs. 7

The Convicting Spirit - Vss. 8-11

The Guiding Spirit - Vss. 12-13

The Glorifying Spirit - Vs. 14

John 16:15 WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH

There will always be tough times for Christians. In this passage we are assured of the help of the Holy Spirit of God.

PERILOUS TIMES - Vss. 1-6

Jesus promises that there will be times of persecution for Christians.

PRECIOUS GIFT - Vs. 7

Jesus would leave, but promised the ministry of the Comforter.

POWERFUL CONVICTION - Vss. 8-11

It is the Holy Spirit who convicts people of sin, righteousness and judgment.

PRACTICAL HELP - Vss. 12-15

It is also the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth.

John 16:7-14 THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK

INTRODUCTION - Vs. 7 - The Lord Jesus had to leave, so The Holy Spirit would indwell the believers. He is the one who sent the Holy Spirit.

THE EXCEPTIONAL CONVICTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Vss. 8-11

THE EXPECTED INSTRUCTION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Vss. 12-13

THE EXCLUSIVE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Vs. 14

John 16:24, 33 A TRIO OF BLESSINGS

John 16:24 - "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."

John 16:33 - "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The Upper Room was the place Jesus met with His disciples the night before His death. Although Jesus gave many encouraging promises and the Lord's Supper was instituted, there was still much sorrow in the Upper Room.

Jesus informed the disciples that someone would betray Him. John 13:21

Jesus informed Peter that Peter would deny Him that night. John 13:38

Jesus informed the disciples that they would be persecuted. John 15:20-21

Jesus announced that He was leaving them, thus filling them with sorrow. John 16:5-6

At the end of what we call the Upper Room Discourse, Jesus shares some very encouraging words.

I believe that He gives the disciples and us a trio of blessings.

1. JOY THROUGH ANSWERED PRAYER - Vs. 24

Jesus wants us to have joy! Philippians 4:4

In spite of times of sorrow, disappointment, and hurt, Jesus wants us to have His joy. One of the ways we have joy is when God answers our prayers.

We are to ask in Jesus' name. This is like filling in a blank check with His name on it. It is like being placed in charge of a person's business affairs and given authority to spend the person's money.

However, when we ask in His name we are only to ask for things that Jesus would approve. We are not to pray selfish or vindictive prayers. What can we ask for in Jesus' name? We can ask for anything that is God's will. 1 John 5:14-15

We ask for the salvation of souls.

We can ask for wisdom.

We can ask for Christian growth for our family our friends our church and ourselves.

We can ask for healing.

We can ask for physical needs for others and ourselves.

We can ask for strength, comfort and peace.

We can ask for the resolution of problems.

2. PEACE THROUGH CHRIST - Vs. 33a

Jesus spoke the things found in John 13-16 so they and us would have peace.

We have peace because of the love between Christians. John 13:34-35

We have peace because Jesus is coming again. John 14:1-3

We have peace because of the work of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-18, 27

We have peace because abiding in Christ. John 15:1-7

We have peace because of friendship with Christ. John 15:13-15

We have peace because of answered prayer. John 15:16

3. COURAGE THROUGH CHRIST'S VICTORY - Vs. 33b

We will have tribulation in this world.

The tribulation of being unloved and/or misunderstood

The tribulation of physical suffering

The tribulation of loneliness

The tribulation of persecution

(There are other tribulations that you might want to name.)

Tribulation is inescapable. Jesus promised it!

But Jesus also told us to take courage or "Be of good cheer" because He has overcome the world!

1 John 4:4

The power of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords is inside us!

He is greater than our greatest problems.

He is greater than our greatest enemies.

He is greater than our greatest worries.

John 16:33 COUNT ON THEM

As we abide in Christ, we can count on these three things:

PEACE - These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.

PERSECUTION - In the world ye shall have tribulation:

POWER AND PREEMINENCE - but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

John 17:4-8 THE GREATEST!

THE GREATEST CONDUCT - Vs. 4a - "I have glorified thy name..."

THE GREATEST CONCLUSION - Vs. 4b - "...I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do..."

THE GREATEST COMMUNICATION - Vss. 6,8 - "I have manifested thy name...I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me..."

John 17:4-8 FOUR GREAT GIFTS

There are four things that Jesus mentions here that were terrific gifts to the Disciples.

We can give these same four gifts back to God in appreciation for what He has done for us.

1. GLORIFY GOD - Vs. 4a - Everything we do should bring glory to Him. Colossians 3:17

2. COMPLETE GOD'S WORK - Vs. 4b - 2 Timothy 4:7-8

3. MANIFEST GOD'S NAME - Vs. 6 - Matthew 28:19-20

4. SHARE GOD'S WORD - Vs. 8 - 2 Timothy 4:2

John 19:30 IT IS FINISHED!

There is always a sense of satisfaction when a job is done. When we can add the word "finished" to a task at work, at home or church, it is a real relief! When an unpleasant chapter in life is over, it is also good when we can say, "Finished!" "It is finished!" were words uttered by Jesus on the cross. His task was done

He had done all that His Father had sent Him to do. There was nothing overlooked. Every detail was attended to. Of course, the words "It is finished" certainly refer to the atoning work of Christ on the cross.

Everything that needed to be done was done to secure salvation. But the words "It is finished" can be placed over every part of Jesus' life.

IT IS FINISHED MEANS:

1. EVERY APPOINTMENT KEPT

Before Christ ever set foot on this earth, I believe he had appointments scheduled for Him. He was better than any doctor, any pastor, and any salesman, at keeping every appointment. Here are some he kept:

Bethlehem- Micah 5:2
The Woman at the Well - John 4
Zachaeus - Luke 19:1-10
Calvary - Isaiah 53

Nicodemus - John 3
The Rich Young Ruler Mark 10:17-22
Jerusalem - Luke 19:28-40, Zechariah 9:9

2. EVERY MIRACLE PERFORMED

The Water Was Turned Into Wine - John 2
Many Blind Men Saw. Examples - Luke 18:35-43, John 9
Five Thousand Were Fed - John 6
The Sea Was Calmed During the Storm. - Luke 8
Lazarus Was Raised From The Dead. - John 11
Jesus Was Transfigured. Matthew 17

3. EVERY LESSON TAUGHT

The Sermon on the Mount - Matthew 5-7
The "Bread of Life" - John 6
The "Light of the World" - John 9
The "Good Shepherd" - John 10
The Olivet Discourse - Matthew 24-25

The Upper Room Discourse - John 13-16

4. EVERY PROPHECY FULFILLED

Concerning His Birth - Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7&9:6
Concerning His Life - Isaiah 61:1-2a, Luke 4:16-21
Concerning His Death - Psalm 22: 1,14,18, Isaiah 53

5. EVERY SIN PAID FOR.

Not one sin was missed. Not one offense overlooked. Nothing was left out!

The work of Christ is complete. Romans 6:19, Hebrews 9:27-28, Hebrews 10:14

John 19:30-42 etc. WHERE'S JESUS?

HE'S NOT ON THE CROSS - John 19:30-42

His work on the cross is finished! He hangs there no longer!

HE'S NOT IN THE TOMB - Mark 16

He's risen from the dead!

HE'S NOT PHYSICALLY ON EARTH - Acts 1:9-11

He has ascended into Heaven.

HE'S IN HEAVEN - Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1, Hebrews 1:3

HE'S KNOCKING AT YOUR HEART'S DOOR - Revelation 3:20

He's either knocking so you'll open the door for salvation (John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9), or so that you'll open the door for fellowship with Him as a Christian.

Romans 5:6-11 – GOOD FRIDAY

CALVARY'S LOOK OF LOVE

It is at Calvary, perhaps more than anywhere else that we hear God saying, "I love you."

THE MEANING OF CALVARY Vs. 6-8

The righteous Son of God died for the ungodly (That's us folks.) See Isaiah 64:6 and 1 Cor 15:3-4.

THE MAGNITUDE OF CALVARY Vs. 9-10

God has justified us through the blood of His Son! We have been reconciled to God.

THE MERCY OF CALVARY Vs. 11

We have joy because we have experienced God's mercy through the atonement.

John 20:1-18 TALE OF THE TOMB

EXASPERATION - Vss. 1-2

Mary found an empty tomb. She thought someone had stolen the body.

EXAMINATION - Vss. 3-10

Peter and John examined the evidence. John believed.

EXPRESSION - Vss. 11-16

Jesus expressed his presence to Mary.

EXCLAMATION - Vss. 16-18

Mary was so excited that she clung to Him.

John 20:1-23 HE IS RISEN!

DIFFICULTY OF AN EMPTY TOMB Vss. 1-10
DISCOVERY OF A RISEN SAVIOR Vss. 11-18
DISCLOSURE TO LOYAL DISCIPLES Vss. 19-23

John 20:15 A PENETRATING QUESTION

There will be times of tears in our lives. (Psalm 30:5, Ecclesiastes 3:4, James 1:2-4)

After Jesus had been crucified there were many tears shed.

Mary Magdalene was in tears, not only because of the death of her Lord, but because she thought that someone stole His body. The risen Lord comes to Mary and asks "Woman, why weepest thou?" In today's language he might say, "Lady, why are you crying?" She didn't need to cry. She had a risen Lord.

CHRISTIAN, WHY ARE YOU CRYING?

JESUS IS RISEN FROM THE DEAD. - John 15, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN. - Psalm 103:10-14, Colossians 1:12-14

YOU ARE GOD'S CHILD. - 1 John 1:12-13

GOD LOVES YOU. Romans 8:35-39

THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES INSIDE OF YOU. - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, John 14:16-18

JESUS IS COMING AGAIN! - Acts 1:11, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

John 20:19-29 A LIVING SAVIOR

APPEARANCE OF A LIVING SAVIOR - Vss. 19-20

AUTHORITY OF A LIVING SAVIOR - Vss. 21-23

He has authority to give peace.

He has authority to send the disciples to the world.

He has authority to provide the Holy Spirit.

He has authority to give the Apostles authority.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF A LIVING SAVIOR - Vss. 24-29

Thomas missed the first appearance of Jesus.

He expressed his doubts.

When Jesus appeared to Thomas the second time, he believed.

Jesus announces that the ones who do not see and still believed are blessed.

John 20:19-21 BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

Some of the best times we have with friends and family are in private. Such was the case when Jesus appeared to his disciples on Resurrection Night. During this meeting Jesus gave to his disciples four things.

1. Peace To Enjoy Vs. 19
2. Proofs To Believe Vs. 20
3. Plans To Obey Vs. 21
4. Power To Appropriate Vss. 22-23

John 20:19-23 WHEN JESUS APPEARED

When Jesus appeared to the disciples there was:

PEACE TO ENJOY - Vs. 19

PROOF TO BELIEVE - Vs. 20

PLANS TO OBEY - Vs. 21

POWER TO APPROPRIATE - Vss. 22-23

John 20:24-29 DOUBTING THOMAS

STUBBORN DOUBT - Vss. 24-25

Thomas refused to believe in the resurrection, unless he saw it for himself.

SHUT DOORS - Vs. 26

At a time when the disciples were isolated from others Jesus again appeared while Thomas was present.

STRENGTHENING DEMANDS - Vs. 27

Jesus invited Thomas to examine Him and believe!

STEADFAST DECISION - Vs. 28

Thomas did believe and made his belief very certain. He called Jesus his Lord and his God.

SOOTHING DECLARATION - Vs. 29

This statement is for the benefit of those of often come after Thomas.

We can't see Jesus literally, but we are blessed when we trust Him without seeing.

John 21:1-18 FISHING LESSONS

Jesus had promised to make the disciples "fishers of men". Matthew 4:19

This post-resurrection appearance can be applied to winning souls for Him.

DON'T FISH WITHOUT CHRIST - Vss. 1-6

The disciples went fishing without Jesus and caught nothing.

With Jesus' help the nets were full.

We can't expect to win souls to Christ without His enabling power. John 15:5

DON'T FRET OVER THE CATCH - Vss. 7-11

Often when we lead souls to Christ we worry about the sincerity of the decision and the consistency of the converts. Just as the net held all the flesh, the Lord Jesus holds all those that sincerely trust in Him. John 10:27-31

DON'T FUSS WHEN CORRECTED - Vss. 12-18

In order for Peter to be the very best fisher of men, Jesus needed to deal with issues in his life, and encourage him. Jesus will correct us as well, to make sure we are good fishers of men. Hebrews 12:5-11

John 21 BY THE SEA

The risen Savior made an appearance to Jesus and other disciples by the Sea of Galilee. Here we see:

A BIG REVERSAL - Vss. 1-3 - Peter and others are returning to the old way of living. They were fishing.

A BIG REMINDER - Vss. 4-11 - The disciples are reminded of the power and the authority of the Lord Jesus with a very large catch of fish.

A BIG RECEPTION - Vss. 12-14 - The Disciples are invited by Jesus to "Come and dine."

A BIG RESTORATION - Vss. 15-18 - Jesus recommissions Peter to a ministry to the "sheep" and "lambs".

Peter was not through as an apostle. He was still useable.

A BIG REQUIREMENT - Vss. 19-22 - Peter is told about his future death. And then he is instructed with one big requirement, true for all believers. We are to follow Jesus. Peter wanted to know about John's future, and Jesus basically told Peter that it was not Peter's business to know.

A BIG REFLECTION - Vss. 23-25 - John tells us that he was an the disciple that Peter was talking about. He also reflects on the fact that much more could have been written about the Lord Jesus.

John 21 IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR

A FAMILIAR SCENE - Vss. 1-3

Peter and some of the other disciples decided to return to the familiar haunts of the fishing boat.

And like other times in the past, there were no fish to be caught!

A FAMILIAR SOUND - Vss. 4-6

It was the voice of the Lord Jesus. He was inquiring as to their wellbeing. When they reply that they have no "meat", he tells them to cast the net on the other side of the boat. There is a great catch.

A FAMILIAR STORY - Vss. 7-12

It is Peter, who as usual, reacts spontaneously. He grabs his coat and puts it on. He grabs the net to bring it in. Then he and the other disciples are invited to join Jesus for breakfast!

A FAMILIAR SPOTLIGHT - Vss. 13-18

The spotlight is on Peter! It needed to be. Peter had publicly denied his Lord. He needed to publicly confess his Lord. He also needed to be publicly restored by Jesus so the other disciples will later follow his leadership.

Acts 1:1-11 LEFT BEHIND!

RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD – Vss. 1-3

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE APOSTLES – Vss. 4-8

RETURN TO HEAVEN – Vs. 9

REASSURANCE FROM THE ANGELS – Vss. 10-11

Acts 1:1-11 DEPARTURE!

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-3 - After Jesus rose from the dead, he visited with the Apostles over a period of 40 days. Now it was time for Him to return to Heaven.

PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - Vss. 4-5

PROGRAM FOR THE CHURCH - Vss. 6-8

PROGRESSION INTO HEAVEN - Vs. 9

PROMISE OF HIS RETURN - Vss. 10-11

Acts 1:4-12 THE DISCIPLES

WAITING FOR THE PRESENCE - Vss. 4-5, John 14:16-18

They were to wait for the baptism and indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

WITNESSING FOR THE SAVIOR - Vss. 6-8

Promise of Power - "...ye shall receive power..."

Purpose for Power - "...ye shall be witnesses unto me..."

Places of Power - "...Jerusalem...Judea...Samaria...the uttermost part of the earth."

WATCHING FOR THE KING - Vss. 9-12, Titus 2:11-13

The return of Christ was promised. The Disciples would watch for it.

Acts 1:4-26 DOING GOD'S WILL

ADHERE TO GOD'S INSTRUCTION Vss. 4-5, 12-13

APPEAL FOR GOD'S HELP Vs. 14

ATTEND TO GOD'S WORD Vss. 15-22

ALLOW GOD TO GUIDE YOU Vss. 23-26

*****8*****

Acts 1:12-26 MOVING FORWARD

Jesus had gone to Heaven but before leaving told the Apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:1-13)

While the Apostles waited they moved forward to take care of some "unfinished business".

THEY WERE IN AGREEMENT - Vs. 14

They were united in one place.

THEY WERE ASKING - Vs. 14

They were praying.

THEY WERE MADE AWARE OF SCRIPTURE - Vss. 15-20

Peter reminded them of the failure of Judas and the teaching of Scripture concerning a replacement.

THEY WERE ADVISED - Vss. 21-22

It was suggested that another be appointed to replace Judas.

THEY WERE ACTING IN FAITH - Vss. 23-26

They simply acted on what the Word of God told them to do.

OBSERVATIONS Acts 1:12-26, Luke 24:50-53

What makes a person a good detective?

Describe the most observant person that you know.

How does being observant make you a good Bible Student?

Let's make some observations about Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:12-26.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ASCENSION Luke 24:50-53

Jesus last act on earth was to bless his followers. Luke 24:50-53

One of the results of the resurrection and ascension is worship. Vss. 52-53

Another result of the resurrection and ascension is great joy. Vs. 52

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION (Disciples)

The disciples did as they were told. Vss. 4,12

The 12 original Apostles are accounted for. Vss. 13,18,19

Women are included. Vs. 14

Mary is mentioned as present, but there is no special place given to her. Vs. 14

Jesus' brethren are present. They have become believers. Vs. 14, John 7:5,

There is unity in the group. Vs. 14, Philippians 2:1-5

The decisions they made were based on deliberate, continual prayer.

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE APOSTATE (Judas)

The business meeting that took place involved more than just the Apostles, 120 people were present. Vs. 15

It is necessary that God's word be fulfilled. Vss. 16, 20

God's Word is inspired by the Spirit of God. Vs. 16

Judas fooled the other Apostles but never fooled God. Vs. 16

Judas paid dearly for his betrayal. Vss. 17-19

The decision to replace Judas was on the authority of God's Word. Vs. 20

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE NEW APOSTLE (Matthias)

There were certain qualifications Judas' replacement needed to have, especially to be a witness of the Resurrection. Vss. 21-22

Humanly speaking, the Apostles did the best that they could, and then left the choice up to God. Vss. 24-25

This is the last use of casting lots mentioned in Scripture. It was an OT procedure. Vs. 26, Pro 16:33

There was complete order and harmony in their procedure.

Acts 2 etc. THE WAY WE WERE

Do you ever wish that we could "turn back the clock" and live "the way we were" or the way we used to be? Perhaps we could go back to the days of hard work, decency, and integrity. Perhaps we could go back to the days when more marriages lasted a life time and when families often lived close by and took care of their own.

It would be nice if the Christian Church could turn back the clock and return to the way we were at the beginning of Christianity. Perhaps we can't turn back the clock for Christianity in general, but individual churches can practice being more like the church found in the Book of Acts.

WE WERE STEADFAST - Acts 2:42

To be steadfast is to be stubborn in a good way. To be steadfast is to be consistent and not to quit, not to let down and not to stop. The early church was steadfast in doctrine (teaching), fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers.

WE WERE STIRRED UP - Acts 8:1-4

Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15 and Acts 1:8 give the Great Commission.

The early church had not yet begun to carry it out.

When persecution began the church scattered. As they fled, they were so excited or stirred up about their newfound faith, that they shared it with others. They were enthused about salvation and burdened that others would come to Christ.

WE WERE SHEPHERDED

There were Godly leaders who shepherded the church (1 Peter 5:1-4).

Acts 5:1-11 - Ananias and Sapphira were disciplined through Peter.

Acts 6:1-8 - Deacons were selected to solve a dispute.

Acts 13:1-3 - Missionaries were sent.

Acts 15:1-24 - Godly shepherding by James resolved another dispute.

Acts 2:1-13 THE SPIRIT ARRIVES

The church was "born" on the Day of Pentecost. It was also the day that the Holy Spirit baptized and took up residence within the believers.

In chapter 1 of Acts our Lord gave His final commands to His disciples. They were to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were then to carry out the great commission. Acts 1:8 Our Lord then ascended into Heaven, and the disciples returned to Jerusalem, and waited prayerfully. During that time, Matthias was chosen as the successor to Judas.

THE DAY Vs. 1

The day of this event was a Jewish holy day called Pentecost.

The feasts of the Old Testament are pictures of the work of Christ.

Passover was a picture of his death.

The feast of Firstfruits, held the day after the first Sabbath after Passover, was a picture of His resurrection.

At Pentecost the Jews celebrated the giving of the law.

At Pentecost the church was given the Holy Spirit.

Pentecost took place 50 days after the feast of first fruits.

That is, 7 weeks and one day.

The day was Pentecost, and the disciples were being obedient.

They were waiting in Jerusalem, perhaps in the Upper Room, or some other room of a house. There is a possibility it was at the temple. It was probably at least a place close to the temple.

They were in one accord and in one place.

This early church was unified around the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is certainly a lesson that the 20th century church needs to learn.

THE DISPLAY Vss. 2-3

The Holy Spirit had been with the disciples, but on the Day of Pentecost, He began to indwell the disciples.

John 14:16-17

When God sent the Holy Spirit to indwell the church, he sent signs.

There was a display so that the disciples would know that the promise of the Spirit had come.

Vs. 2 - There wasn't a wind. There was the sound of a mighty rushing wind. I wonder if it sounded like a hurricane.

The word "spirit" is the same as "wind" in both Hebrew and Greek.

John 3:8 - "THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH, AND THOU HEAREST THE SOUND THEREOF, BUT CANST NOT TELL WHENCE IT COMETH, AND WHITHER IT GOETH: SO IS EVERY ONE THAT IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT."

We can hear wind. We can feel wind. We can see the results of the wind. But we don't see the wind, and we can't control the wind.

We can hear the Spirit, as He speaks to us. We can feel the Spirit.
We can see the results of the Spirit's work. But we don't see the Spirit, and we can't control the Spirit.

Vs. 3 - The next sign was that of fire.

Fire burns away that which is useless. Fire purifies. Fire warms. Fire is powerful. Fire can usually be seen.

The Holy Spirit burns away that which is useless. The Holy Spirit purifies us. The Holy Spirit warms us. The Holy Spirit is powerful. Fire can be seen. Perhaps the fire was symbolic of the witness that the believers would have through the Holy Spirit

THE DETAILS Vs. 4

This verse tells us what happened to the disciples. Here are the details.

It does not say that they were baptized, but obviously they were.

This was the promise of John, that Jesus would baptize them. Matthew 3:11

Jesus had also promised it. Acts 1:5.

Today every believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit at conversion. 1 Corinthians 12:13

Not only were the believers baptized with the Holy Spirit, but they were filled with the Spirit..

We are all to be filled with the Holy Spirit today. "There is one baptism but many fillings." Ephesians 5:18

The disciples began to speak with other tongues, languages. It was as the Spirit gave utterance. Speaking in tongues, was totally under the control of the Spirit of God.

THE DEMONSTRATION Vss. 5-11

Vs. 5 - There were various groups of devout in Jerusalem, many of whom were probably there because of the feast.

Vs. 6 - When they heard the sound of the mighty rushing wind, they came to investigate. Every man heard him in his own language. Tongues were known languages. The listeners understood the speakers.

THE DIVISION Vss. 12-13

It was obvious that Galilaeans were speaking. They were generally considered unlearned.

People wondered what was going on. Others doubted and mocked accusing them of being drunk.

Acts 2:1-13 PENTECOST

THE PLACE OF PENTECOST - Vs. 1

They were in one accord in one place.

THE POWER OF PENTECOST - Vss. 2-3

THE PRESENCE OF PENTECOST - Vs. 4

The presence was that of the Holy Spirit. He caused the disciples to speak in other languages.

THE PERPLEXITY OF PENTECOST - Vss. 5-13

Everyone heard the disciples speak "the wonderful works of God" in their own languages.

Many were confused, some mocked, saying the disciples were drunk.

THE PROMISE OF PENTECOST - Acts 1:8

Acts 2:14-36 PETER SPEAKS OUT

On the Day of Pentecost Peter, who once denied his Lord, speaks out in the power of the Holy Spirit. His message may be summarized in this way:

THE PROCLAMATION OF PROPHECY – Vss. 14-21

THE PASSION AND POWER OF JESUS – Vss. 22-24

THE PREDICTION OF DAVID – Vss. 25-31

THE PREEMINENCE OF JESUS – Vss. 32-36

Acts 2:37-47 MARKS OF A MIGHTY CHURCH

ONE FAITH Vss. 37-41

ONE FAMILY Vss. 42-46

They Continued Vs. 42

They United Vs. 44

They Shared Vs. 45

They Rejoiced Vs. 46

ONE FORCE Vs. 47

Acts 2:37-47 A LIVING CHURCH

Today there are many churches that are Spiritually dead. For churches today to be alive it would help to study the early church:

CONVERSION - Vss. 37-41

Many came to Christ as Savior.

CONTINUATION - Vs. 42

The converts continued in:

Doctrine

Fellowship

Breaking of Bread

Prayers

CONDUCT - Vss. 43-47

Here is a list of the behavior found in that early, living church.

Fear, Vs. 43

Miracles, Vs. 43

Sharing, Vss. 44-45

Gladness - Vs. 46

Unity - Vs. 46

Praise - Vs. 47

Testimony - Vs. 47

Salvation - Vs. 47

Acts 2:44-47 FAITH AT WORK

THE UNITY OF FAITH - Vss. 44, 46

THE UNSELFISHNESS OF FAITH - Vs. 45

THE UTTERANCES OF FAITH - Vs. 47 - They praised God.

THE UNIQUENESS OF FAITH - Vs. 47 - They had favor with all people. The Lord added to the church daily.

Acts 3 A TESTIMONY OF THE GRACE OF GOD!

A man crippled from birth is healed by the grace of God. The healing leads to the grace of God message.

THE MAN - Vss. 1-2 - Crippled from birth.

THE MIRACLE - Vss. 3-11

THE MESSAGE - Vss. 19-28

1. **GIVE GOD THE CREDIT** - Vss. 12-13

2. **SEE THE CROSS** - 14-18

3. **MAKE A CHOICE** - Vss. 19-26

Acts 3 GOD AT WORK

EXAMPLE OF HELPLESSNESS - Vss. 1-2

EXECUTION OF A MIRACLE - Vss. 3-8

EXCITEMENT OF THE PEOPLE - Vss. 9-11

EXPLANATION OF PETER - Vss. 12-26

Revelation - God had glorified His Son, the Lord Jesus. Vss. 12-13

Rejection - Instead of being received, Jesus was rejected and crucified. Vss. 14-18

Repentance - The listeners were to turn from their sins and trust Christ. Vss. 19-26

Results - Many believed. Acts 4:4

Acts 3:1-10 MEANWHILE, AT THE TEMPLE...

A HOPELESS CASE - Vss. 1-2

A HOPEFUL CRY - Vs. 3

A HARDY COMMAND - Vss. 4-6

A HAPPY CONCLUSION - Vss. 7-10

***** **Acts 4:1-22 THE FAITHFUL WITNESSES**

Peter and John were called upon to be witnesses for the Lord through the healing of a man who hadn't walked from birth, and the preaching of the Word of God (See Acts 3). You and I today are also called upon to be faithful witnesses as well (Psalm 107:2, Mark 16:15, 1 Peter 3:15). To be a faithful witness like Peter and John, we should remember the following principles.

1. BE READY FOR OPPOSITION Vss. 1-7 (John 15:18-25)
2. BE RELIANT DURING OPPORTUNITIES Vss. 8-12
- As Peter relied on the Holy Spirit for power, we should also.
3. BE RESPONSIBLE WHILE FACING OBJECTIONS. Vss. 13-22

Peter and John did not succumb to pressure. They stood their ground for Christ. Vss 18-20

Acts 4:1-22 FOR JESUS' SAKE

RESTRICTION FOR JESUS' SAKE - Vss. 1-4

REPORT FOR JESUS' SAKE - Vss. 5-12

RESISTANCE FOR JESUS' SAKE - Vss. 13-22

Acts 4:32-37 etc. MR. ENCOURAGEMENT

There are some people who are gifted at encouraging others. Barnabas, so named by the Apostles, had a name which means "the son of consolation". We can learn much from him.

BARNABAS ENCOURAGED WHEN HE WAS BLESSED - Acts 4:32-37

He was blessed with salvation and a sense of being one heart and soul with other believers. This led him to share.

BARNABAS ENCOURAGED WHEN PAUL WAS MISUNDERSTOOD - Acts 9:26-29

BARNABAS ENCOURAGED WHEN OTHERS WERE SAVED - Acts 11:22-26

BARNABAS ENCOURAGED WHEN MARK FAILED - Acts 15:36-41, 2 Timothy 4:11

(Paul was probably right in the dispute, but Barnabas' encouragement of Mark evidently helped him be useful to Paul later.)

Acts 4:34-37 etc. BARNABAS

INVESTMENT IN GOD'S WORK - Acts 4:34-37

INTERVENTION IN GOD'S CHURCH - Acts 9:26-28

INTERACTION WITH GOD'S CHILDREN - Acts 11:22-26

INVOLVEMENT IN GOD'S OUTREACH - Acts 13:1-4

Acts 5:1-11 GOD'S CORRECTING HAND

Introduction - Hebrews 12:5-11, God disciplines his children.

MAN DECEIVES OTHERS (Even Christians can deceive!), Vss. 1,2,7,8

THE SPIRIT DISCERNS SIN Vss. 3,4,9

GOD DEMONSTRATES HIS displeasure Vss. 5,6,10,11

ACTS 5:12-42 THE MESSENGERS THAT COULD NOT BE SILENCED

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 12-16

God was doing a great work through the ministry of the apostles. Many were coming to faith in Christ.

CONFINEMENT - Vss. 17-18

The Jewish leaders were upset and threw the apostles in jail.

COMMISSION - Vss. 19-26

An angel set the apostles free and sent them back to preaching God's Word. Vss. 19-21

The leaders discover the apostles were missing & were told that they were teaching in the temple. Vs. 21-25

The captain of the guard quietly brought the apostles before the Jewish leaders. Vs. 26

CONFRONTATION - Vss. 27-32

The high priest verbally chastised the apostles for disobedience. Vss. 27-28

Peter responded that it is more important to obey God than man. Vss. 29-32

CONSULTATION - Vss. 33-39

Gamaliel advised the leaders to be careful how they treated the apostles.

In verses 38-29 Gamaliel reminds the leaders that it the apostles' work was of men that it would die.

However, if the apostles' word was of God, the Jewish leaders could not stop it.

COMMAND - Vss. 40-41

The apostles were beaten and told to remain silent concerning their faith.

CONCLUSION - Vss. 42-43

The apostles rejoiced. Vs. 42

The apostles continued to preach. Vs. 43

Acts 5:12-42 THE APOSTLES

THEIR POWER - Vss. 12-16

THEIR PROTECTION - Vss. 17-26, 34-39

THEIR POSITION - Vss. 27-33

THEIR PERSECUTION - Vs. 40

THEIR PRAISE (TO GOD) - Vss. 41-42

Acts 6 STEPHEN

Stephen was a very special man.

HIS CHARACTER - Vss.3, 5

Stephen met the qualifications for being a deacon.

He had an honest report.

He was full of the Holy Ghost.

He was full of wisdom.

He was full of faith.

HIS CONDUCT - Vs. 8

HIS CONFLICT - Vss. 9-14

HIS COUNTENANCE - Vs. 15

Despite his struggle he had the face of an angel.

Acts 6:1-8 SANCTIFIED PROBLEM SOLVING

There will be times when there will be misunderstandings.

The Apostles here teach us some good principles for handling these difficulties.

DEFINITION OF THE PROBLEM Vs. 1

The early church was made up of two distinct groups of Jewish Christians. There were those who grew up in the homeland (Hebrews) and those who grew up somewhere else within the Roman Empire (Grecians). The Grecians felt that their widows were not getting the same treatment as the Hebrew widows. This is the type of problem that can still cause problems in a local church today.

CONSULTATION AMONG THE APOSTLES Vs. 2

It is obvious to me that the Apostles had discussed this problem before they actually met with the congregation to solve it. Leaders must communicate and work together to solve difficulties.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE SAINTS Vss. 2-4

Notice that the Apostles kept their own priorities in order by not leaving the job they were called to do. They continued their ministry of preaching and praying, but recommended that Godly men be appointed to take care of the problem. Delegation can often relieve a pastor and other church leaders of tasks, which someone else can do.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLUTION Vss. 5-6

An election was held. Those elected appear to be members of the Grecian portion of the church.

The Apostles put their blessing on the ministry of these men.

DESCRIPTION OF THE RESULTS Vss. 7-8

The word of God increased.

The number of disciples multiplied.

Many priests believed.

Stephen ministered effectively.

When there is love in the church, there will be blessing. John 13:34-35

Acts 6:1-8 LEADERS AT WORK

One of the jobs of leaders is to handle difficulties as they come along.

One of the problems leaders have is solving difficulties without getting themselves distracted from what God has called them to do. Often leaders can solve problems by doing things themselves and robbing time from other important tasks. The Apostles solved a major problem in Acts 6:1-8 without being taken from the jobs which God had given them.

DIFFICULTY IN THE FELLOWSHIP - Vs. 1

There were two groups of Jewish believers in the early church.

The "Hebrews" were the Palestinian Jews who grew up in the land of Palestine.

The "Grecians" were the Hellenistic Jews who grew up in other parts of the world.

The early church supported widows. The Grecians felt that their widows were not being taken care of.

DISTRACTION FROM THE WORK - Vs. 2

The Apostles saw the potential for distraction. Their main ministry was the Word of God.

It would not make sense for them to leave their important ministry to do something that others could just as easily do. Proper care of the widows was important, but others could do it.

Leaders must remember to do the most important things that God has called them to do, and to let others have part in ministry as well.

DECISION OF THE APOSTLES - Vs. 3

The first deacons were to be appointed.

They were to be men of good reputation, full of the Holy Ghost, and full of wisdom.

DETERMINATION FOR MINISTRY - Vs. 4

The Apostles were determined to stick with their most important ministries, which were the preaching of the Word and prayer.

DEPLOYMENT OF DEACONS - Vss. 5-6

The deacons were elected and deployed by the Apostles.

DESCRIPTION OF GROWTH - Vss. 7-8

There was peace in the church.

The Word of God increased and so did the number of Apostles.

Stephen "...did great wonders and miracles among the people."

Acts 6:1-8 SIMPLE SOLUTION

There are many things that have caused church splits. Sometimes a disagreement is doctrinal in nature, and other times a disagreement has more to do with personalities and preferences. In the early church there was potential for a church split but the matter was resolved by apply a simple solution.

THE PROBLEM IN THE CHURCH - Vs. 1

There were two groups of widows receiving food from the church. One group of Jews making up the church had not grown up in Palestine. The other group of Jews had. The group of Hellenistic Jews, as they were called, claimed that their widows were not receiving equal treatment with the Palestinian Jews.

THE PROPOSAL FROM THE APOSTLES - Vss. 2-3

They suggested that it would not be wise for them to leave their own ministry to wait on tables and solve the problem. They proposed that seven men full of the Holy Spirit be chosen to take care of the problem.

THE PRIORITY OF THE LEADERS - Vs. 4

The leaders would continue their ministry of preaching the Word and praying.

Some churches need to pitch in and help the pastor out so he can have the same priorities.

THE POWER OF A RIGHT DECISION - Vss. 5-8

Seven men full of faith and the Holy Spirit were chosen.

There was peace.

The Gospel advanced.

Stephen performed great wonders and miracles.

Acts 8:1-25 GOSPEL ON THE MOVE

MOTIVATION IN THE CHURCH Vss. 1-4

The persecution under Saul actually led to the scattering of the church and the work of evangelism.

MINISTRY OF PHILIP Vss. 5-13

MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT Vss. 14-17

MISUSE OF GOD'S GIFT Vss. 18-25

Acts 8:5-24 MINISTRY IN SAMARIA

MESSAGE AND MARVELS - Vss. 5-10

Philip delivered the message of Christ in Samaria and authenticated his message by the working of miracles.

BELIEF AND BAPTISM - Vss. 11-13

Many believed and were baptized.

SUPPLICATION AND SPIRIT - Vss. 14-17

Peter and John were sent. They asked the Lord for the reception of the Holy Spirit for these people. God answered.

REQUEST AND REJECTION - Vss. 18-24

Simon wanted to purchase the ability to give out the Holy Spirit. He was soundly rebuked.

Acts 8:5-24 A MISSIONARY OUTREACH

A MARVELOUS MINISTRY – Vss. 5-8

A MEAN MAN – Vss. 9-11

A MIGHTY MANIFESTATION – Vss. 12-17

A MISERABLE MOMENT – Vss. 18-23

Acts 8:26-40 HANDLING CHANGE

Most of us do not like change, but changes take place. Of course God in His character does not change. But He does use different methods of reaching different people. Sometimes what God wants us to do with our lives will change. Such was the case of the Philip. He was to leave a prosperous ministry in Samaria to travel to the dessert to reach one man.

NEW CHALLENGE Vss. 26-29

NEW COURSE OF ACTION Vss. 30-35

The method Philip used with the Eunuch was different from the method he used with the Samaritans.

NEW CONVERT Vss. 36-38

NEW CONDITIONS Vss. 39-40

Philip's work was done. God caught him away to still another ministry.

Acts 9:1-22 CONVERTED!

If there was ever an opponent to Christianity, it was the Apostle Paul. Before God miraculously saved him, Saul (Paul) was "Public Enemy #1" to the Christians. See Acts 8:1-4

There came a day however, when Paul was converted. God saved him, and his life was not the same after that. He was a new creature in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17). Here is the story of Paul's conversion:

PAUL'S INTENT TO DO HARM Vss. 1-3

PAUL'S INTRODUCTION TO HIS NEW MASTER Vss. 4-9

PAUL'S INVOLVEMENT IN NEW LIFE Vss. 10-22

A visit from Ananias. Vss. 10-19

A voice for the Lord Jesus. Vss. 20-22

Acts 9:1-22 A WORK OF GRACE

God's grace is a wonderful thing! Ephesians 2:8-9

Nobody shows how wonderful grace is better than the Apostle Paul.

PAUL, THE TERROR - Vss. 1-2

PAUL, THE TERRIFIED - Vss. 3-9

PAUL, THE TRANSFORMED - Vss. 10-17

PAUL, THE TESTIMONY - Vss. 18-22

PAUL, THE TARGET - Vss. 23-28

Of the Jews - Vss. 23-25

Of the Christians - Vss. 26-28

Acts 9:1-31 THE MANY SIDES OF PAUL

Every conversion to Christ is a miracle. One of the greatest conversion stories of all is that of the Apostle Paul. We learn a lot about Paul shortly before and after his salvation experience. He shows many "sides" or characteristics.

PAUL, THE ENEMY - Vss. 1-2

PAUL, THE CONVERT - Vss. 3-9

PAUL, THE RECEIVER - Vss. 10-19

Paul had to receive before he could give. Ananias and other believers in Damascus helped him.

PAUL, THE EVANGELIST - Vss 20-22

PAUL, THE ESCAPEE - Vss. 23-25

PAUL, THE MISUNDERSTOOD - Vs. 26

PAUL, THE ACCEPTED - Vss. 27-31

Acts 9:10-18 LITTLE-KNOWN SAINTS

There are many well-known saints (born again Christians).

Talk about some of the ones your congregation would be familiar with.

For every well-known saint, there are hundreds of little known saints.

These are people who know Christ as Savior and are busy serving him in various ways.

Such a little-known saint was Ananias, who resided in Damascus when Paul (Saul) was coming to arrest Christians. Of course, the Lord met Paul on the road to that city and Paul was converted (Acts 9:1-9).

The story of Ananias teaches us some principles for us who are little-known saints.

LITTLE-KNOWN SAINTS RECEIVE GREAT CHALLENGES - Vss. 10-12

Ananias was asked to do something that was very challenging. He was to go and meet Saul who he knew as an enemy of the Christians. Very often the Lord asks us to do challenging things which may seem to be beyond our strength, ability, or even logic. We must remember that he always enables us when we are challenged by Him (Philippians 4:13, Zechariah 4:6).

LITTLE-KNOWN SAINTS HAVE GREAT CONCERNS - Vss. 13-14

You can understand Ananias' concern. He thought that appearing to Saul was volunteering to be arrested! When the Lord challenges us we will think of reasons why doing what we are being led to do is not too wise. There will be concerns when the Lord challenges us to move forward. There are some legitimate concerns, but others will be imaginary.

LITTLE-KNOWN SAINTS ARE GIVEN GREAT COMFORT - Vss. 15-16

God assured Ananias that he had nothing to fear! In this case, God had worked in Paul's heart and had great plans for Paul. When we are challenged by God and have concerns, He will give us comfort that we are moving in the right direction. I was a little hesitant to candidate at a church. The Lord comforted me that I was moving in the right direction. I did candidate and was called as the pastor. We have been here now for a little over a year, and we are very happy. One of the greatest concerns I had was the church's name. The congregation voted positively on a name change and the legal work is now in process to make the new name official.

LITTLE-KNOWN SAINTS PRACTICE GREAT CONDUCT - Vss. 17-18

Ananias practiced great conduct by obeying God. I am particularly amazed that Ananias was so accepting of Saul. Right away he called Saul "brother". You and I are also capable of great conduct for the Lord. All we need to do is obey.

***** Acts 9:26-31 RETURN TO JERUSALEM

Paul was recently converted to Christ while in Damascus. He returned to Jerusalem, and not surprisingly, he had trouble connecting with the church there. Their memories of Paul's persecuting them were still fresh.

PROBLEM - Vs. 26 - Those in the church were afraid and did not believe that Paul had truly been converted.

PERSUASION - Vss. 27-28 - Barnabas brought Paul to the apostles and spoke in Paul's behalf. Paul

became part of the group.

PREACHING - Vs. 29 - Paul boldly proclaimed Christ.

PERSECUTION - Vss. 29-30 - Some wanted to kill Paul. Paul was forced to flee for his life.

PEACE - Vs. 31 - After Paul left there was a time of peace and spiritual growth in the church.

***** Acts 9:32-43 THIS IS YOUR LIFE

Our text here is a biography of two individuals. It is as if God is saying, "This is your life!"

AENEAS, THIS IS YOUR LIFE Vss. 32-35

A life that is DIFFICULT Vs. 33

A life that became DIFFERENT Vs. 34

A life that DECLARES God's grace Vs. 35

DORCAS, THIS IS YOUR LIFE Vss. 36-42

A life that is FULL OF GOD'S GOODNESS. Vs. 36

A life that is FASHIONED FOR GOD'S GLORY Vss. 37-41

A life that FURTHERS THE GOSPEL Vs. 42

***** Acts 10 HOUSE CALL

PETER'S VISION - Vss. 1-16

PETER'S VISIT - Vss. 17-33

PETER'S VOICE - Vss. 34-43

PETER'S VICTORY - Vss. 44-48

***** Acts 10:9-20 THE REEDUCATION OF PETER

Peter had become a Christian. However, Peter still retained a lot of his Jewish traditions and ways of thinking. Christ was about to show His church (which was made up of converted Jews) that the Gospel was also for the Gentiles. Peter would be the first Apostle to take the Gospel to the Gentiles. First, God needed to reeducate Peter so that Peter would be able to minister with a clear conscience.

PETER'S DISTRACTION - Vss. 9-10

Peter was distracted, first by hunger, and then by a trance. Sometimes God will distract us.

PETER'S DILEMMA - Vss. 11-14, 16

Peter was shown a great sheet loaded with what he would call "unclean" animals. God's instruction was to "Rise, kill, and eat." Peter resisted because it was against his religion to eat such things.

GOD'S DEMAND - Vs. 15

Peter was not to call "common" anything that God had cleansed. We generally think of this as God's permission to eat "unclean" food at the House of Cornelius. More importantly I think that God was telling Peter not to call Gentiles common or unclean if God had cleansed them.

GOD'S DIRECTIONS - Vss. 17-20

While Peter was trying to figure out the vision, messengers from Cornelius were at the gate, looking for Peter. Peter was told three men were seeking him, and he was to go with them, "doubting nothing".

Acts 10:1-8, 21-48 CORNELIUS

HE WAS CLOSE TO THE TRUTH - Vss.1-2
HE WAS COUNSELED TO GET HELP - Vss. 3-6
HE WAS COOPERATIVE WITH GOD - Vss. 7-8, 21-33
HE WAS CONFRONTED WITH THE GOSPEL - Vss. 34-43
HE WAS CONVERTED TO CHRIST - Vss. 44-48

Acts 11:1-18 PETER'S DEFENSE

In Acts 10 Peter, under God's direction, conducted the first official witness of the church to the Gentiles. This caused quite a stir in the Jerusalem Church. Peter is forced to defend himself.
PETER CRITICIZED - Vss. 1-3
The Jews would not eat a meal with Gentiles. Those believers in Christ who were still zealous about the Law immediately found fault with Peter.
PETER'S COMMENTARY - Vss. 4-15
Peter tells what happened, explaining the call of God to go, the presentation of the Gospel, and the work of the Holy Spirit on those who believed the Gospel.
PETER'S CONCLUSION - Vss. 16-17
Peter concluded that the Gentiles were truly saved needed to be baptized.
He also concluded that he should not stand in the way of those who professed Christ.
PETER CONFIRMED - Vs. 18
There was great rejoicing at the church of Jerusalem. They accepted Peter's explanation.

Acts 11:1-18 VICTORY OVER PREJUDICE

PUBLICATION OF THE NEWS Vs. 1
Peter had ministered to the House of Cornelius (a gentile). There was salvation (chapter 10)
CONFRONTATION BY THE CIRCUMCISION Vss, 2-3
EXPLANATION BY PETER Vss. 4-17
VISION FROM GOD Vss. 4-10
VISIT FOR GOD Vss.11-14
VICTORY THROUGH GOD Vss. 15-17
JUBILATION AMONG CHRISTIANS Vs. 18

Acts 11:19-26 BIRTH OF A CHURCH

CONVERSIONS IN ANTIOCH – Vss. 19-21
COMMISSION OF BARNABAS – Vs. 22
CHALLENGES TO GROW – Vss. 23, 25-26
Barnabas encouraged them all to cling to the Lord.
Barnabas recruited Paul to help teach the new converts.
CHARACTER OF THE LEADER – Vs. 24
A Good Man
Full of the Holy Ghost and Faith

Acts 11:24 etc. A GOOD MAN

A GOOD MAN IS FILLED - Acts 11:24
For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.
A GOOD MAN FOLLOWS - Psalm 37:23
The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.
A GOOD MAN IS FAITHFUL - Micah 6:8
He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?
A GOOD MAN IS FRUITFUL - Luke 6:45
A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

Acts 11:19-26 WHAT A GUY!

We can learn from all the characters found in the Bible. One special man that was greatly used of God was Barnabas. We could call Barnabas "Mr. Encouragement" (Acts 4:36-37). Let us learn from his story.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 19-21 - As a result of the persecution that had resulted from Stephen's Martyrdom, many Gentiles, especially in Antioch, came to Christ.

AVAILABILITY OF BARNABAS - Vs. 22

The leaders at the church in Jerusalem heard about the new believers in Antioch, and dispatched Barnabas to help them. Barnabas was available to go. When God calls us to service, wherever it is, we need to be available to go as well. Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 12:1, Isaiah 6:8

ACTIVITY OF BARNABAS - Vss. 23, 25-26

He was able to recognize the grace of God. Vs. 23

He encouraged the new believers. Vs. 23

He recruited Saul (Paul) to help teach the new believers. Vss. 25-26

ATTRIBUTES OF BARNABAS - Vs. 24

A Good Man

Full of the Holy Ghost

Full of Faith

The end result of Barnabas' ministry was that even more people were saved.

Acts 11:19-30 CHURCH PLANTING!

Church planting took place in Antioch. If these steps are taken in areas around the world, many wonderful churches will spring up!

EXPLANATION - The Gospel is preached and believed. - Vss. 19-21

EXHORTATION - New believers are encouraged. - Vss. 22-24

EDUCATION - New believers are instructed. - Vss. 25-26

EXTENSION - New believers reach out to help other Christians. - Vss. 27-30

Acts 12 LESSONS FROM A JAIL CELL

GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE RESTRICTIONS Vss. 1-4

GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE A RE COURSE Vs. 5

GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE A RESCUER Vss. 6-11

GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES Vs. 12-17

1. To believe God will answer prayer. Vss. 12-16

2. To report what God has done. Vs. 17

GOD'S ENEMIES HAVE RETRIBUTION Vss. 18-25

Acts 12 GOD IN CONTROL

A SAD IMPRISONMENT - Vss. 1-5a

A SECRET WEAPON - Vs. 5b

A SUPERNATURAL DELIVERANCE - Vss. 6-11

A SURPRISE APPEARANCE - Vss. 12-17

A SPECIFIC JUDGMENT - Vss. 18-23

Acts 12:1-17 PETER'S PREDICAMENT

RESTRICTION Vss. 1-4

REQUEST Vs. 5

RELEASE Vss. 6-11

REPORT Vss. 12-17

Acts 12 WHEN TROUBLE STRIKES

Peter was in trouble! Herod had placed him in jail and was planning to execute him.

Although we may never end up in jail because of our faith, or face execution, we will face troubles from time to time. The lessons about Peter's troubles are applicable to ours.

OUR PROBLEMS ARE BIGGER THAN WE CAN HANDLE. Vss. 1-4

OUR PETITIONS ARE TO BE CONSISTENT UNTIL WE HAVE AN ANSWER. Vs. 5

The church continued to pray. We should follow its example and the teaching of our Lord in Luke 18:1-8.

GOD'S PEACE CAN KEEP US IN ANY SITUATION. Vs. 6

Peter slept the night before execution. He was at peace!

GOD'S POWER IS GREATER THAN WE CAN IMAGINE. Vss. 6-11

OUR PERSPECTIVE SHOULD KEEP US EXPECTING GOD'S ANSWER. Vss. 12-17

Peter was at the door. Rhoda reported it. The people praying did not believe that their answer to prayer was standing at the door.

GOD'S PREROGATIVE WILL BE SHOWN OVER HIS ENEMIES. Vss. 18-25

Acts 13:1-4 FIRST MISSIONARIES

SUPPLY OF GODLY MEN – Vs. 1

SEPARATION TO GOD'S SERVICE – Vs. 2

SUPPLICATION FOR GOD'S HELP – Vs. 3

SENDING BY GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT – Vs. 4

Acts 13:1-3 CALLED TO MISSIONS

THE MEN - Vs. 1

There are seven men mentioned as being busy in the ministry. They were all serving the Lord faithfully where they were. Don't expect to be called to missions unless you can serve the Lord where you are!

THE MINISTRY - Vss. 1, 2

They were prophets and teachers. They ministered to the Lord and fasted.

THE MANDATE - Vs. 3

The Holy Spirit called on them to separate or set apart Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for the work of missions. Notice that this was a work to which God had called. Man was only asked to put his approval on what God had already decided.

THE METHOD (OF SEPARATION) - Vs.3

1. They fasted.

2. They prayed.

3. They laid hands.

4. They sent them.

Acts 13:1-4 WHEN THE CHURCH SENDS MISSIONARIES

When a local church sends missionaries in the will of God there will be certain things that are true.

GIFTED PEOPLE WILL BE USING THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFTS - Vs. 1, Ephesians 4:11-12 1 Peter 4:10-11

GREAT DEDICATION WILL BE SHOWN

Vs. 2 "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, "

GRACIOUS CALLING WILL COME FROM GOD

Vs. 2 - "...the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them."

GENERAL AGREEMENT WILL BE PRESENT

Vs. 3 - "And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away."

GOD'S APPROVAL WILL BE SENSED

Vs. 4 - "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost..."

Acts 13:4-13 ALONG THE TRAIL

If you are a born again Christian, you are on the trail, or path, or road which will ultimately bring you to Heaven. Along the trail you will meet many different types of people in general, and fellow Christians in particular..

Along Paul's trail to Heaven, he met many different people. In our text, we see the beginning of the first missionary journey which Paul made. Along the trail with Paul we met at least four different people.

(Begin by explaining Vss. 1-3)

MARK - RENEGING - Vss. 5, 13

This was the young cousin of Barnabas, who began the trip, but reneged on his commitment. When Barnabas wanted to take Mark the next time, Paul said "No." (Acts 15:36-40). Eventually Mark got straightened out, and reconciled to Paul (2 Timothy 4:11). Much trouble could have been avoided, and many blessings secured, if Mark had not reneged.

BAR-JESUS - (ELYMAS) - RESISTING - Vss. 6-8

This man resisted the work of God.

PAUL - RELYING - Vss. 9-11

Paul relied on God to resist the resister, Elymas was struck blind for a period of time.

SERGIUS PAULUS - RECEIVING - Vss. 7, 12

The governor of the area, was impressed by what Paul did, and "astonished at the doctrine of the Lord." He believed on Christ.

Acts 14:6-20 FROM HERO TO GOAT

In sports there are many "heroes" who win big games for their teams. There are also people called "goats" who make mistakes that cause teams to lose games. In a matter of minutes an athlete can be transformed from a hero to a goat or from a goat to a hero.

When Paul visited Lystra he went from being a "hero" to being a "goat" in the eyes of the people.

FAITHFUL PREACHING - Vss. 6-7

FABULOUS MIRACLE - Vss. 8-10

FAULTY UNDERSTANDING - Vss. 11-18

Just barely did Paul and Barnabas stop the people from worshipping them. They thought that Paul and Barnabas were gods.

FIENDISH OPPOSITION - Vss. 19-20

Jews that opposed Paul caused trouble.

He ended up being stoned by the very people that had previously wanted to worship him.

Acts 14:21-23 FOLLOW-UP

When people are won to Christ it is important that we follow them up so that they become grounded in their faith. On their first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas revisited the places where they had won converts. They give us some lessons on following up new believers.

THEY RETURNED - Vs. 21

The people we win to Christ need to be in the presence of other believers. They need the encouragement of friendships with true believers. We need to spend time with them, and make sure they spend time with other believers. Acts 2:42, Hebrews 10:24-25

THEY REAFFIRMED - Vs. 22

Those who are won to Christ need to be strengthened through Biblical teaching, encouraged to continue in the faith, and warned about trials and tribulations. (Matthew 28:20, 2 Timothy 2:1-2, 3:12)

THEY RECRUITED - Vs. 23

Godly leadership is always needed. As we follow-up those who have been won to Christ, we should look forward to appointing them to positions of leadership.

THEY REQUESTED (PRAYED) - Vs. 23

It is important that we pray for those in leadership. As they are installed into office they should be prayed for. As we conduct our personal times of devotion, they should be prayed. Ephesians 6:18

Acts 14:21-28 RETURNING MISSIONARIES

THEY ASSURED THE SAINTS (New converts) - Vss. 21-22

THEY APPOINTED LEADERS - Vs. 23

THEY ANNOUNCED GOD'S WORD (When they had opportunity) - Vss. 24-25

THEY ACCOUNTED FOR THEIR MINISTRY - Vss. 26-28

Acts 15:1-31 HANDLING DISPUTES

If we as a church today would follow this procedure, there would be a lot less church splits. Note that when the problem was finally solved, much care was shown to show love as the decision was delivered. Without such exercises of discretion and love there could have been two churches, Jewish and Gentile.

SEEK HELP - Vss. 1-5 - LOOK!

SHARE EXPERIENCE - Vss. 6-11 - LEARN!

SHOW RESPECT - Vs. 12 - LISTEN!

STATE DECISION - Vss. 13-31 - LOVE!

Acts 16:6-16 GOD'S GUIDANCE

In Psalm 32:8 God promises, "I will instruct and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." In Romans 12:2 God's will is called "good", "acceptable", and perfect. Knowing God's will is a challenge to believers. The way God guides Paul here reminds us of some things about God's guidance.

GOD RESTRICTS Vss. 7-8

There are times when we will feel a hesitation about something that comes from the Spirit of God. Other times, we will find God saying "no" as we read his word. Other times, an open door will close.

GOD REVEALS Vss. 9-10

God will show us His will through His Word, through circumstances, through others, and through the prodding of his Holy Spirit. God will never lead you contrary to the written Word of God.

GOD REASSURES Vss. 11-15

Although crowds were small, God reassured Paul that he was in the right place through the salvation of Lydia and her household. God will reassure us when we are in the center of His will.

Acts 16:6-33 IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING

INTRODUCTION - If you are like me, you usually do not take the time to compare yourself with the Apostle Paul. He was such a great man that we wouldn't think of comparing ourselves to him. But let's do some comparing, because there are some similarities between Paul and us.

1. Paul was self-righteous before he was saved, so was I.
2. Paul was a sinner before he was saved, so was I.
3. Paul's sins were paid for on the cross before he ever realized he needed a Savior.
4. Paul was confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ, who called him to be saved. Through the message a preacher and the conviction of the Holy Spirit, Christ called me to be saved.
5. Paul's sins were forgiven, although they were great. My sins are forgiven, although they are great.
6. Paul was saved for a purpose, to serve Christ, and make Him known. I am saved for that same purpose.
7. The Apostle Paul was the servant of the King. I am also Servant of the King.

Because there are so many similarities between our lives and the life of Paul, Paul can teach us much. We will never measure up to his greatness, but we can learn from Him, and thus complete all that God wants us to do.

BACKGROUND:

This was the second missionary journey.

Barnabas, partner for the first journey, had a disagreement with Paul over Mark, who deserted on the first journey. Acts 15:37-39

Barnabas left with Mark and Paul chose Silas as his partner. Timothy was later added to the team. Because Luke uses the word "we" in this passage, it is evident that Luke was there too. Acts 15:40-16:3

THERE WAS A CALL Vss. 6-12

Paul was called of God to be an apostle. Acts 9:15-16

Paul received other calls from the Lord during his time of ministry. For instance, he was called to be a missionary in Acts 13:1-3.

In these verses Paul receives both negative and positive calls.

He was not called to minister in Asia or Bithynia at this time (Vss. 6-8), although Paul would later minister in Ephesus, which is Asia. Also someone ministered in Bithynia, because Peter addresses his first Epistle to believers in Bithynia and other areas.

Paul was called by a vision to minister in Macedonia (Vss. 9-12), which is part of Europe.

We will receive both negative and positive calls as we serve the Lord. There will be times when it will be clear that the Lord doesn't want us doing a certain thing, and other times when it will be obvious that the Lord does want us doing things.

God might not call you to be a pastor or a missionary, but he will call you to use your spiritual gift for His glory. And he might call you to be a leader in the church, or a teacher, or as a witness to a specific individual. We need to be in the Word, in prayer, and alert to what God might be calling us to do.

THERE WAS COMMUNICATION - Vss. 13, 16-18, 28, 31

Paul was called to communicate the message of salvation - Vss. 13 and 31

Paul was called to communicate authority - Vss. 16-18

Paul was called to communicate encouragement - Vs. 28

There will be times when we are called upon to communicate in these same three areas.

THERE WAS CONFLICT - Vss. 19-24

When the Gospel is preached, there will be conflict. When God works, Satan will oppose. 2 Timothy 3:12

THERE WAS CHORUS - Vs. 25

The chorus was a chorus of praise to God, in spite of poor circumstances. We too, are to rejoice in all situations. Philippians 4:4

THERE WERE CONVERSIONS - Vss. 14-15, 26-33

Lydia, the Jailer, and his family all came to know Christ as Savior.

When we follow the Lord's directions, others will be influenced to trust Christ as well.

Acts 16:16-34 CONTENTS UNDER PRESSURE

Sometimes you will see this sign on a container: "Caution, contents under pressure".

There are times when there is pressure in our lives, and we feel that we could almost burst!

Paul and Silas found themselves under pressure, but with God's help, they were able to withstand.

A PEST WHO WAS POSSESSED – Vss. 16-17

A demon possessed girl gave Paul and Silas unwanted publicity.

A PROCLAMATION THAT BROUGHT DELIVERANCE – Vs. 18

Paul cast out the demon. The girl was no longer possessed and Paul was no longer oppressed!

A PROBLEM CAUSED BY PERSECUTION – Vss. 19-24

The owners of the slave girl were not happy with the loss of income.

As a result Paul and Silas were beaten and thrown in jail.

A POWER DISPLAYED DURING PRAISE – Vss. 25-26

Paul and Silas sang in spite of their problems, and God sent a mighty earthquake.

A PRONOUNCEMENT THAT LEAD TO SALVATION – Vss. 27-34

Paul and Silas rescued the jailer from a potential suicide.

In Acts 16:31 they told him to believe on the Lord Jesus to be saved.

The jailer trusted Christ as his Savior.

Acts 16:25-40 REVIVAL MEETING IN A JAIL CELL

Introduction - Vss. 18-24

Revival Is:

A TIME OF PRAYER - Vs. 25

A TIME OF PRAISE - Vs. 25

A TIME OF POWER (GOD'S) - Vss. 26-40

1. TO RELEASE Vs. 26

2. TO RESTRAIN Vss. 27-28 (The doors opened and all the chains fell off, but nobody escaped!)

3. TO REDEEM Vss. 29-34

4. TO REQUIRE Vss. 35-40

(Paul required a public release from jail by those who had publicly mistreated Silas and him. This would have furthered their testimony for Christ.)

Acts 17:10-14 THOSE NOBLE BEREANS

Acts 17:11 - "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Today there are many different aids to Bible study. There are all sorts of study Bibles available as well as books and courses that will help one study the Bible. In spite of all the help at our fingertips, many Christians are ignorant of the content and teachings of God's Word!

I want to introduce you to a special group of people who will always be remembered because they were serious about studying God's Word. They are known as the Bereans. According to Acts 17:11, the Bereans were "more noble" than another group of people known as the Thessalonian Jews. The difference was their attitude towards the Scriptures. The Bereans were true students of the Word of God. They loved God's Word.

In this message we want to think about Acts 17:11 and how to love God's Word. But first, we need to get an overview of the travels of Paul and Silas before they arrived in Berea. (Give an overview of Acts 16 and the ministry in Philippi, then talk about Acts 17:1-10 and the ministry in Thessalonica. Stress the rejection of the Word of God by some in these places.)

Vs. 10, 12 - Paul and Silas arrived in Berea and again went right to the synagogue. Again they preached to the Jews. It is here that these Jews are found to be more noble than those of Thessalonica. The result was that many of the Jews believed, as well as many Gentiles.

Vss. 13-14 - Trouble followed, and again Paul needed to leave town.

In verse 11 we learn many good things about approaching God's Word from those "noble Bereans".

They loved God's Word, and we want to use the word "love" as acrostic to help examine the Bereans' love for the Word of God.

L - LISTENING AND LEARNING

"... they received the word with all readiness of mind..."

Of course, we must realize that the reason the Bereans could listen and learn was because Paul and Silas were doing their jobs. They were teaching the Word of God. Make sure that the men you listen to practice 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 4:2 and 1 Timothy 4:12-16.

There appears to be a lack of listening going on today. The people in the pews are sitting there, but very often they are not paying attention to what they are being taught. Many people are present in body, but absent in spirit. They are not with it. I would venture to say that the majority of people can not tell you what the preacher said after he said it.

To be a better listener in church, I suggest:

1. Ask God to help you pay attention.
2. Make sure there is nothing wrong between you and the preacher. Get any problems settled, or you won't listen well.
3. If necessary, in your mind repeat the words that the preacher is saying. This will help you concentrate.
4. Take notes.
5. Try to apply what is being said to your own life. Ask, "How does this relate to me."

The Bereans not only listened, but they learned. As you listen attentively you will learn. And if you really love God's Word, you will also read and study God's Word for yourself. This will also help you learn.

O - OPENNESS AND OBEDIENCE

One of the great problems which we have when we witness to unsaved people is that we are dealing with narrow-minded people. One of the problems that preachers have is that often they are dealing with narrow-minded Christians! The Bereans were open to the teachings of the Word of God. The majority of Thessalonians were not.

As Christians we need to be open to the being taught the word of God by the preacher. We must be ready to allow our wrong ideas to be replaced by what the Bible actually says. When your pastor presents a new idea from God's Word be open to seeing if this new idea is correct. If it is correct, replace your old wrong ideas with new Biblical ones.

In verse 12 we are told that many believed. That means that they obeyed the Word of God and were saved. As Christians we must also obey the Word of God and follow the Biblical teaching of those preaching God's Word. We also need to obey God's Word as we study it for ourselves. 1 Samuel 15:22-23

V - VERIFICATION

"...and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

Sometimes preachers preach pure heresy and nobody realizes it.

Do not take what your pastor says blindly, but check your Bible and make sure that what he is teaching is true! If you make sure that the preacher you already trust is teaching you the truth, it will be easier for you to spot a heretic. You will already be used to "searching the Scriptures daily".

If you find a problem with what your pastor is preaching, go to him personally. Maybe you have not understood what he was saying, or maybe the pastor simply made a mistake. AND PREACHER, WHEN YOU'RE WRONG, ADMIT IT!

E - EXAMINE - ENDURE - EXPERIENCE

Examine thoroughly the Word of God.

Endure in studying the Word of God. It is to be a daily process.

Experience much from the Word of God. The Bereans experienced salvation.

As Christians sincerely study God's Word they will experience:

Much joy

Much change

Much growth

Much knowledge

Much peace

Much encouragement

And much more!

Acts 17:32-34 REACTIONS TO THE RESURRECTION

In Athens, Paul preached the resurrection of the dead. (Discuss Acts 17:22-31)

There were three distinct reactions to the resurrection.

SOME DETRACTED - Vs. 32 - They mocked.

SOME DELAYED - Vs. 32 - They would hear Paul again.

SOME DECIDED - Vss. 33-34 - They chose to believe.

Acts 18:1-18 GOD'S MAN IN CORINTH

Paul was an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20) As God's ambassador, one of the ministries he had was in Corinth. We see that he was:

PRESSED BY GOD Vss. 1-6

Verse 5 says that Paul was "pressed in the Spirit."

When Silas and Timothy arrived in Corinth Paul was constrained to minister to the words of God and witnessed on a greater scale to the Jews. The Jews rejected the message, and Paul moved on to minister to the Gentiles.

ENCOURAGED BY GOD Vss. 7-11

Paul moved next door, and the head of the synagogue was saved.

The Lord encouraged Paul in a night vision. He had four words of encouragement.

1. "Do not be afraid." Vs. 9

2. "Do not be silent." Vs. 9

3. "I am with you and will protect you." Vs. 10

4. "I have many people in this city." Vs. 10

PROTECTED BY GOD Vss. 12-18

God promised protection for Paul.

God kept His promise, as He always does.

Acts 18:2-3 etc. AQUILA AND PRISCILLA - LOVE PARTNERS IN MINISTRY

THEY WERE IN HARMONY - Acts 18:2-3, 18, 26, Romans 16:3-5, 1 Corinthians 16:19, 2 Corinthians 4:19
They are mentioned in six different verses of the Bible and always together. They evidently took the idea of being "one flesh" seriously, and worked closely together (Genesis 2:24). It is interesting however that Priscilla, called Prisca by Paul, is mentioned first four out of six times. Perhaps she was the more outgoing or dominant of the two. There are couples who work well together. Theirs is a teamwork approach to ministry.

THEY WERE HOSPITABLE

They housed Paul - Acts 18:2-3

They received Apollos - Acts 18:26

At least two churches met in their homes. Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19

THEY WERE HELPFUL

They helped and protected Paul - Romans 16:3-4

They instructed Apollos - Acts 18:24-26

They probably helped to nourish two churches - Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19

Acts 18:24-28 DIAMOND IN THE ROUGH

The expression "Diamond in the rough" refers to a person who has much potential, but it has not yet been developed. Some folks with great potential never develop, while others do. Apollos was one who did.

POTENTIAL GREATNESS - Vss. 24-26A

Apollos was preaching effectively. He had the potential to be greatly used. The trouble was that Apollos didn't know the whole story. He only knew about the Baptism of John, which was a Baptism of repentance. He didn't know the full story about the Lord Jesus Christ.

PERFECTED UNDERSTANDING - Vs. 26

Acquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside and trained him in the things of God.

This is what we need to do for those who have undeveloped potential. We are to train them!

POWERFUL MINISTRY - Vss. 27-28

Apollos went on to be a great preacher for the Lord.

Acts 18:24-28 USEABLE!

Probably the biggest insult you can give to a person is to say that he or she is "useless". No Christian is useless! He or she is a child of God (John 1:12) and God has plans for each Christian's life (Ephesians 2:10). Instead of being useless, Christians are to be useable. They should be used of God to promote God's work and Word. One such useable person was Apollos

HE WAS TALENTED Vss. 24-25

"an eloquent man"

"Spoke and taught diligently the things of the Lord"

HE WAS TRAINED - Vs. 25

"Mighty in the Scriptures"

"Instructed in the way of the Lord."

HE WAS TEACHABLE - Vs. 26

Apollos did not know all the information about Christ.

His knowledge extended only to John's Baptism.

He allowed Aquilla and Priscilla to instruct him further.

HE WAS TRUSTWORTHY - Vss. 27-28

He "helped them much which had believed through grace."

"For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."

Acts 20:18-21 PAUL'S MINISTRY

PAUL'S MINISTRY WAS SEASONAL - Vs. 18

No matter what the conditions, Paul served faithfully. He was a "man of all seasons". Consider some the situations through which Paul served faithfully in 2 Corinthians 11:23-33)

PAUL'S MINISTRY WAS SERVING - Vs. 19

Paul served the Lord, not men. That's why he was able to persevere.

PAUL'S MINISTRY WAS SHARING - Vss. 20-21

Paul shared the Good News with all in every situation. He held back nothing profitable.

Acts 20:18-24 MODEL MINISTRY

Paul's ministry is a model to all who would serve the Lord.
Vs. 18 gives the introduction. He was with them at all seasons!
HUMBLE ATTITUDE Vs.19a
HURTFUL ATTACKS Vs. 19b
HONEST APPROACH Vss.20-21
HAPPY ANTICIPATION Vss. 22-24

Acts 20:25-35 PARTING WORDS

Paul was leaving Ephesus, and did not anticipate coming back.
His words to the leaders of the church are significant for us today!
CLEAR CONSCIENCE - Vss. 25-27, 33-35
CONCISE COUNSEL - Vss. 28, 31
CONSIDERABLE CONCERN Vss. 29-30
CONFIDENT COMMITMENT Vs. 32

Acts 22:1-24 TESTIMONY TIME

We never know when we will be required to speak up for the Lord.
Paul had been worshipping in the temple, when he was falsely accused of bringing a Gentile inside the temple. A riot followed. The captain of the Roman guard broke up the riot, and bound Paul with chains. Paul asked the captain for an opportunity to speak up. Paul gave his personal testimony.
PAUL'S PAST CONDUCT Vss. 1-5
PAUL'S POWERFUL CONVERSION Vss. 6-11
PAUL'S PROMISING COMMISSION Vss. 12-21
Paul was sent to primarily evangelize the Gentiles.
ISRAEL'S PERSISTENT PREJUDICE Vss. 22-24
Upon hearing of the Gentiles, the Jews again began to riot.

Acts 23:12-31 TIMING IS EVERYTHING!

God has a perfect sense of timing. He always does the right thing at the right time.
We see God's perfect timing in this story of God's protection.
THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME - Vss. 12-16
Paul was in jail under Roman custody. There were certain Jews who planned to murder Paul.
God placed Paul's nephew in the right place at the right time. He heard of the plot.
THE RIGHT PERSON AT THE RIGHT TIME - Vss. 17-22
Paul's nephew wisely told Paul. Paul realized that this information needed to go to the chief captain, and made sure that it got there.
THE RIGHT PROTECTION AT THE RIGHT TIME - Vss. 23-31
Using the chief captain, God saw to it that Paul was protected.

Acts 27 MARKS OF A GOOD LEADER

Have you ever noticed that the one in charge is not always the leader? The true leader is the one whose directions and commands are being followed. Many a pastor thought he was the leader, when in reality it was someone else in the congregation. The Apostle Paul was low in rank when he was on a sailing vessel headed towards Rome. He was only a prisoner going to appear before Caesar in a trial. However, because of his good leadership traits, he was the true leader on the ship.
A GOOD LEADER DISPLAYS COMMON SENSE - Vss. 1-19
It was not the time for sailing. The weather would be too bad.
Paul showed more common sense than those who should have known better, and warned those in charge.
He was ignored and the voyage progressed. The ship got caught in a terrible storm.
Many leaders do not show common sense, and do not take obvious warnings into consideration.
A GOOD LEADER COMMUNICATES WITH GOD AND MAN - Vss. 20-26
God and Paul had been talking. Paul knew what would happen because God had told him. Those of us who lead today should be talking to God, and listening for His answer. After hearing from God, Paul communicated what he heard to the others who were in the ship.
Notice that Paul did remind them that they should have listened to him in the first place. - Vs. 21
Also notice that Paul also comforted them and gave them hope. - Vss. 22-26
A GOOD LEADER CONFRONTS EVIL - Vss. 27-32
The sailors needed to stay in the ship. It was wrong for them to leave.
Paul confronted the evil that would be done, and the soldiers made sure that the sailors stayed.
Very often a leader must confront evil, and correct it when possible.

A GOOD LEADER IS CONCERNED FOR THE WELL-BEING OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW Vss. 33-36
Paul made sure that those on the ship ate. They had fasted for too long. Paul knew they needed to have the strength that nourishing food gives.

The conclusion of the story finds Paul being spared from death and everyone arriving safely on an island.
Vss. 37-44

Acts 28:30-31 A PRISONER?

Paul was a prisoner in Rome and yet God granted Him incredible freedom.

HE WAS AVAILABLE – Vs. 30

He had his own hired house and received all that wanted to see Him.

We can only win souls to Christ if we are available.

HE WAS ACTIVE – Vs. 31

He was able to preach and teach the truth.

HE WAS ASSURED – Vs. 31

He preached and taught with all confidence.

Nobody stopped Him.

Romans 1:1 MUCH IN COMMON

I do not have much in common with Johann Sebastian Bach, Thomas Edison or Dwight D. Eisenhower, but I admire them. Sometimes we feel the same way about great Bible characters.

We admire them, but see little in common with us. That's a wrong perception.

Take for instance, the Apostle Paul. If we are born again, we have much in common with Him.

THE SAME SERVICE - "A Servant of Jesus Christ"

THE SAME SUMMONS - "Called"

We are not called to be apostles. However, the word apostle means

"One Sent" .. We are summoned and sent to performing good works, witnessing, and doing God's will.

THE SAME SEPARATION - "Separated unto the Gospel of God."

The Gospel is "good news". We are separated by God to living and sharing God's good news.

Romans 1:1-6 GOD AT WORK!

As the Book of Romans opens we find God at work in the world.

A FAITHFUL PATTERN or

A PATTERN OF FAITHFULNESS - Vs. 1

God was faithful to call Paul, a former enemy of Christ, into the Gospel ministry. 1 Timothy 1:11-17

He was called to be a servant.

He was called to be an Apostle.

He was separated to the Gospel of Christ.

A FULFILLED PROMISE or

A PROMISE FULFILLED - Vss. 2-4

Jesus was promised by the prophets - Vs. 2 (Micah 5:2, Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 53).

Jesus was of the Seed of David - Vs. 3 (Matthew 1:1-17, Luke 3:23-38)

Jesus was declared to be the Son of God through the Resurrection from the Dead - Vs. 4

A FORCEFUL PRESENTATION or

A PRESENTATION THAT'S FORCEFUL - Vss. 5-6

Paul and others received "grace" and apostleship so that they could forcefully proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ among all nations.

Romans 1:1-7 GREETINGS FROM PAUL

THE MAN - Vss. 1-2

1. "Servant of Jesus Christ"

2. "Called to be an apostle"

3. "Separated unto the gospel of God"

HIS MASTER - Vss. 3-4

HIS MINISTRY - Vs. 5

HIS MESSAGE - Vss. 6-7

1. Grace

2. Peace

Romans 1:1-7 COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION - Vs. 1 - Paul as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ was called to be an apostle whose life was separated to the communication of the Gospel of God.

THE PROMISE OF THE GOSPEL - Vs. 2

Old Testament prophets had promised the Gospel. One notable promise of the coming Gospel is Isaiah 53.

THE PERSON OF THE GOSPEL - Vs. 3

The Gospel is centered in the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to earth. John 1:1-5, 14

THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL - Vs. 4

The power of the Gospel is centered in the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL - Vss. 5-6

The Apostles received grace and apostleship so people from all nations would be saved.

THE PEOPLE OF THE GOSPEL - Vs. 7

The people of the Gospel are those called as saints, those who have trusted Christ as Savior. They are those who receive grace and peace.

Romans 1:7-12 PASTOR PAUL**A PASTOR'S PROCLAMATION - Vs. 7**

As a pastor, Paul wanted the Romans to have Grace and Peace

A PASTOR'S PRAYERS - Vss. 8-10

As he prayed he was thankful for those he prayed for. Vs. 8

Paul always prayed for his congregations and those congregations that he was yet to meet. Vs. 9

As he prayed he also prayed for opportunities to minister. Vs. 10

A PASTOR'S PURPOSE - Vss. 11-12

He wanted to help them spiritually. Vs. 11

He wanted to be blessed by their fellowship. Paul was able to be blessed by those he ministered to Vs. 12

Romans 1:13-17 MISSIONARY!**PAUL'S PLAN - To Bear Fruit - Vs. 13****PAUL'S POSITION - Debtor - Vs. 14****PAUL'S PREPARATION - Ready! - Vs. 15****PAUL'S POWER - The Gospel - Vs. 16****PAUL'S PROMISE - "The Just Shall Live By Faith" - Vs. 17**

Romans 1:13-17 MINDSET FOR MISSIONS

If we as a church are going to be the best possible help to our missionaries, and if we are going to reach our own community for Christ, we need a mindset for missions. We need to have the right Biblical perspective for reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am not saying that anyone of us will be a full time missionary, although that is possible. I am saying that if we have a missions mindset we will be more effective in our service for Christ and our missionaries.

In Romans 1:13-17, I believe that the Apostle Paul reveals to us his own personal mindset for missions. Paul, a missionary himself, shows what it is like to have a heart for missions.

In looking at this passage I found five questions that we can ask that will help us determine if we too have a mindset for missions.

WHAT IS MY DESIRE? - Vs. 13

Have you noticed that we don't always get what we want? Even when what we want is good, God doesn't always give it to us, or he makes us wait until His timing is perfect.

Paul wanted to go to Rome. However, God did not allow Paul to go to Rome at that point in his ministry. He would later arrive in Rome as a prisoner. As a prisoner, he would win many to Christ, especially soldiers.

Paul was hindered from going to Rome, but that did not stop him from serving God as a missionary where he was. And that did not stop Paul's desire to bear fruit in Rome as he did among other Gentiles. I believe the fruit being referred to here is people coming to know Christ as Savior.

We might want to go on a short-term missions trip.

We might want to share Christ with a specific person or a specific people group. And God may seem to say, "no".

However, the most important thing is to serve Christ and share Christ with others right where we live.

Paul not only wanted to bear fruit in Rome, but wherever he was.

Wherever Paul went he tried to communicate the Gospel of Christ to Jew and Gentile alike. He desired to see people saved.

My friend, you and I will not be fruitful in the area of witnessing for Christ unless we want to be.

I believe that every Christian is called to be a missionary. Some are called to be missionaries on foreign soil or another part of their country. Others, like us, are called to be missionaries right where they are. Consider the pattern that Jesus gave for missions.

Acts 1:8

Many of us need to stay in Jerusalem to reach the people on our home turf, as well as to work and support those who are going on the road with the Gospel.

You will not be a good ambassador for Jesus Christ unless you have a desire for people to be saved.
You will not be a good ambassador for Jesus Christ unless you desire to be used of God in bringing people to Christ.

Why should you have a desire to be fruitful in witnessing for Christ? John 3:17-18

So, what is your desire?

Is it to be usable as a missionary for Christ right where you are?

If it isn't your desire, why isn't it?

DO I SEE MYSELF AS A DEBTOR? - Vs. 14

A debtor is someone who has an obligation. He owes someone something.

Paul considered himself a debtor. He had an obligation to non-Jews.

There was good reason for Paul to feel this way. Before Paul was saved, he was antagonistic to the Gospel. When God saved Paul, he saved him so that he would be a missionary to the Gentile. This is what Jesus told Paul when he appeared to him on the Road to Damascus. Acts 26:16-18

And Paul, never got over the fact that Jesus saved him and gave him a ministry.

1 Timothy 1:12-13

So we understand why Paul felt indebted to do missionary work.

But, why should we feel indebted?

If you are a Christian, God has saved you from an eternity in hell. Out of appreciation, you should love Christ, and want others to know Him personally. Christ loved you enough to save you. You should love Him enough to tell others what He has done for you.

If you are a Christian, you know something that other people don't know. It is your obligation to tell them what you know. Psalm 107:2

We know that a person without Christ is in trouble.

Because of what we know, we are obligated to share that information with others.

1 Peter 3:15

My friend, do you feel any obligation, any debt because of what Christ has done for you and because of what you know that can help others?

AM I DEDICATED? - Vss. 15-16a

There a lot of dedicated people around here.

There are people dedicated to hunting.

There are people dedicated to yard sales.

There are people dedicated to eating.

There are people dedicated to learning.

There are people dedicated to taking care of their children.

There are people dedicated to the internet.

There are people dedicated to their husbands and wives.

There are people dedicated to their friends.

Usually, a dedicated person:

Likes what he or she is dedicated to
Believes in what he or she is dedicated to
Persists at doing what he or she is dedicated to
Spends time doing what he or she is dedicated to
Talks about what he or she is dedicated to

Paul was dedicated to sharing Christ with others.
It showed in two ways.
First of all, Paul was eager to share.
That word "ready" in verse 15 means "eager".
Paul was eager to share what had made him free.
He wanted people to know about Christ, and because he was eager to share, he did it often.

Because Paul was eager to share Christ, he was dedicated, as the following verses show.
Acts 20:16-21

Paul was not only dedicated because he was eager, but because he was not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.
If you are truly dedicated to Christ, you will not be ashamed of his Gospel.

Many times we fail to communicate the Gospel to our own family members, because we don't want them to get angry with us.
Many times we fail to communicate the Gospel to our friends because we don't want to lose their friendship.
Many times we fail to communicate the Gospel of Christ because we do not want to open ourselves up to ridicule.

What do you do when Christ is ridiculed in your presence?
What do you do when God gives you the opportunity to speak in his behalf?

Are you dedicated enough to be eager to share?
Are you dedicated enough to not be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ?

WHAT IS MY DYNAMIC? - Vs. 16b

In other words, what is the source of my power? On what am I relying for strength as I share the Gospel?

The Gospel of Christ is the power of God.
When you share the Gospel of Christ, you can expect God to work in his power.
That doesn't mean that everyone who hears the Gospel will be saved. But it does mean that when you present the Gospel some will be saved. 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

My friend, when we share the Gospel of Christ, we have the power of God working on our side? Are you using it as your dynamic?

ON WHOM DO I DEPEND? - Vs. 17

Only righteous people go to Heaven.
There's only one problem. Nobody's righteous. Romans 3:10, Romans 3:23 So how can anybody get into Heaven if none of us are righteous?
The key word is "faith" in verse 17.
Jesus was righteous. Jesus did no sin.
Jesus died in your place on the cross of Calvary.
The gospel is summed up in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.
To believe the Gospel is to depend on the fact that a righteous God died in your place. And because God the Son died in your place, God the Father, will make you righteous when you place your faith in Christ.

Romans 5:1, Romans 1:17 -

Are you depending on Christ for your salvation?
And are you depending on Christ for daily strength?
You must continue to live by faith after being saved!

Romans 1:14-17 RESOLVED

Paul was resolved to win souls to Christ. We should have the same attitude when he said:

I AM DEBTOR Vs. 14

I AM READY Vs. 15

I AM NOT ASHAMED Vss. 16-17

Romans 1:14-17 PREPARED TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

PAUL SAW HIS OBLIGATION - "I am debtor." Vs. 14

PAUL SOUGHT AN OPPORTUNITY - "I am ready." Vs. 15

PAUL SHARED HIS OPENNESS - "I am not ashamed." Vss. 16-17

Romans 1:18-32 THE HEATHEN ARE LOST!

In my last church I often talked with an old priest. He often brought up the fact that he couldn't see that God would ever punish those who had not heard the Gospel. Romans 1:18-32 is very clear that the answer to the age-old question, "Are the heathen lost?" is "YES!"

GOD'S REVELATION Vss. 18-20

God has revealed himself to man.

MAN'S REJECTION Vss. 21-23

GOD'S RELEASE Vss. 24-25

MAN'S RUIN - Vss. 26-32

Romans 1:18-32 OUR SIN-SICK WORLD

GOD'S WRATH - Vs. 18

GOD'S WISDOM - Vss. 19-20

God, in His wisdom, has revealed himself to man.

GOD'S WOE - Vss. 21-23

Man, in his stupidity, has rebelled against God, thus causing Him woe

GOD'S WORK - Vss. 24-32 - HE GAVE THEM UP!

God gave them up to uncleanness - Vss. 24-25

God gave them up to vile affections - Vss. 26-27

God gave them up to a reprobate mind - Vss. 28-32

Romans 1:24-32 THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME

There's an old hymn that goes,

" This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through;

My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue;

The angels beckon me from heaven's open door,

And I can't feel at home in this world anymore."

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME!

Abraham the father of faith and of the Jewish nation felt that this old world was not his final goal.

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

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME

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

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME

Phil 3:20 - "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord

Jesus Christ;" (The word "conversation" here means "citizenship".)

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME

Read Revelation 21:1-5

Read Revelation 21:22-27

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME!

And this world is not your home either, if you have placed your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. John 3:36

Are you a citizen of Heaven?

If you are you can say, "This world is not my home, I'm just a passing through!"

Peter calls those of us who are citizens of heaven "strangers and pilgrims". This world is not our permanent home!

Christian it is of extreme importance that you understand something. This world, as it is today, is not where your affections and interests are to lie. You have something better.

Today we look at the nature of this old world and exactly what it is like because of its rebellion against God. You and I should look at this passage of Scripture describing this world and say, THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME!

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME: WHERE SENSUALITY IS PERSISTENT - Vss. 24-25
God has responded to man's rebellion by giving them "up" or "over" to their own wickedness!
Vs. 24 - Mankind rebelled against God, and God permitted them to go! They were given over to uncleanness or impurity because of their own lust!

While the word lust can refer to any natural desire, it was most often used to refer to that which was carnal, fleshly, and sinful.

It is from within that man's sensual, sinful activity come. Matthew 15:19

Notice that men end up dishonoring their own bodies between themselves. Many of man's sins are of a sensual nature. God honored man by giving him the beauty of sex in marriage. Genesis 2:22-24

Man has taken the beauty of sex in marriage and replaced it with sensual lusts, going beyond what is normal and beautiful.

Hebrews 13:4 - "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Sex within marriage is a beautiful thing.

But sensuality is all around us, outside of the marriage bonds.

How many people do you know who are living together instead of being married?

How many people do you know who have committed adultery?

How many Television shows have you seen that treat sex outside of marriage as permissible and sometimes even funny?

How many products have you seen advertised by scantily clad women and men who are "hunks"?

How many times a day are you bombarded with the thought that if it feels good to you, it's all right?

Vs. 25 tells us why this all happens. People have exchanged the truth about God into a lie! People worship the creature instead of the creator! The creature wants to be like God or even superior to God. That was Satan's desire when he rebelled against God. That was Eve's desire when she took the forbidden fruit.

Man is involved in sensuality because he wants to worship himself!

He wants to make himself feel good!

He wants himself to be comfortable!

He wants himself to be gratified!

And think of this, when we make our plans and ourselves more important than God and His plans, we are worshiping ourselves!

Even those of us who are Christians need to watch out for that!

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME: WHERE SEX IS PERVERTED - Vss. 26-27

God has allowed mankind to go another step "down".

Sensuality and all sorts of sin involving sex and the worship of the creature are bad enough.

But mankind has gone a step further into the world of perversion.

Women and men both have gotten involved in homosexuality.

Homosexuals are trying to tell us that their alternate lifestyle is "normal", and that there should be "same-sex" marriages.

And anyone who resists allowing homosexuals to be treated as normal is branded as a bigot.

My friends, it is God who says right here that homosexuality is not normal.

My friends, it is God who says that homosexuality is sin!

My friends, it is God who says that homosexuality is perverted!

My friends, it is God who says that He has judged man because of homosexuality at the end of Vs. 27.

We are to love those who are outside of Christ and treat them respectfully, but we can not approve of the sin of homosexuality any more than we can approve of lying, cheating, stealing, ungodly anger, gossip or murder.

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME: WHERE SIN IS PREVALENT - Vss. 28-32

Here is a long list that shows just how prevalent sin is. I quickly explained what each word meant when I preached this sermon.

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY HOME, I'M JUST A PASSING THROUGH! I'm looking for a city whose builder and maker is God! This life is temporary! And I'm glad. I'm glad!

But wait a minute, if the world is this wicked, and it is, what should our response be to it as those who are leaving this world for a better world?

1 Peter 2:11 - We are to abstain from the fleshly lusts which we just itemized here in this passage. We are not to be participants in the same evil that the world participates in, because we are citizens of Heaven.

For example we are not to be envious like the world.

We are not to be immoral or sensual like the world.

We are not to break our promises, like the world.

We are not to disobey our parents, like the world.

We are not to be greedy like the world.

We are not to be malicious like the world.

1 John 2:15-17 - If this world is not your home, don't act like it is!

We remain attached to this old world, and then wonder why we make no progress in the Christian life. If we love this world, we are not acting like citizens of the next world.

In closing, let me ask you this question, "What are you holding on to that belongs to this world?"

Is it jealousy, pride, immorality, gossip, maliciousness, anger?

Whatever it is, leave at the foot of cross.

Give it to Jesus and move on in Godliness.

If you are a citizen of Heaven, act like one!

If you are not a citizen of Heaven, become one!

Romans 2:1-16 GOD KNOWS!

In Luke 18:9-14, Jesus told a parable ".unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:"

The Lord told about two men who went into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, part of a religious sect in Israel that tended to be a very legalistic and self-righteous group. The other was a tax collector or publican. The tax collectors were hated because they often cheated their fellow Jews, and because they were considered traitors who worked for the Roman government that ruled Israel.

Vss. 11-12 show the pride and self-righteousness of the Pharisee.

Vs. 13 shows the sorrow for sin in the tax collector.

In Vs. 14 Jesus gives the marrow of the story, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

One of the easiest things to do is to be self-righteous. We can always find someone we consider not as well behaved as we are. We then compare ourselves to that person, and feel that compared to that person, we are doing just fine!

There are many people who feel that they are going to Heaven because they are not immoral like others. They are not adulterers, murderers, bank robbers, or even blasphemers. In fact they find fault with that sort of person, and consider themselves way above those sinners.

There are also many born-again Christians who feel pretty good about themselves because they compare themselves with other Christians. Their church attendance is better than others. Their devotional life is better than others. The places they go or don't go are better. The Bible they use is better.

Paul confronts the self-righteous in Romans 2:1-16. These would be people who read Romans 1:25-32, which concerns the heathen. They would have considered themselves well above that kind of behavior. They would not consider themselves to be this bad.

In our text Paul confronts the person who felt that he would get to Heaven because he was not like those sinners mentioned in Romans 1! He shows in this passage that the self-righteous person is just as guilty as the blatant sinner. If Paul was writing today, he might point out that just being in church and living an outwardly moral life is not going to get you into Heaven. Because we are all sinners, we need a Savior, one to die for our sins. That's the Lord Jesus!

There is a reminder in this passage for those of us who know we are saved. The reminder is that we have no right to stand as critics of others. So often we have critical statements to make concerning sinner and saint alike. To be honest, very often our criticisms are not valid.

Why should we be so careful about our criticisms of others? Very simply, this passage shows us that God knows about us. He is the one that has the right to judge, and ultimately, He will! GOD KNOWS!

GOD KNOWS THE TRUTH - Vss. 1-3

Vs. 1 - The person who judges and condemns another person is actually condemning himself! To judge someone else is to show that you have a conscience. You show that you have some sense of what is right and what is wrong. In showing that you know right and wrong, you condemn yourself, because you and I who judge others are guilty of the same things. Matthew 5:12-22A, Matthew 5:27-28, John 8:1-11

Vs. 2 - When God judges it will be according to the truth. There will be no fooling God.

Vs. 3 - Criticizing others for their sins does not excuse someone from their own sins.

GOD KNOWS YOUR NEED - Vss. 4-5

He knows that you need to repent and turn to Christ for forgiveness. 2 Cor 5:21, Eph 2:8-9, Psalm 32:5

GOD KNOWS YOUR DEEDS - Vss. 6-10

God knows what your deeds are and they will be judged.

GOD KNOWS YOUR SITUATION - Vss. 11-15

God is totally impartial. The person who had the law of God will be judged by the law of God.

The one who did not have the law of God will be judged by his conscience.

GOD KNOWS YOUR MOTIVES - Vs. 16

All the secrets will come out. The unsaved will be judged at the Great White Throne - Revelation 20:11-15

The saved will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ - 2 Corinthians 5:10, Romans 14:12

If you are self-righteous about salvation, turn to Christ for forgiveness and eternal life.

If you are self-righteous as a Christian, confess and forsake that sin!

Romans 3:9-24 THE LAW! (the Old Testament Law.)

THE PRONOUNCEMENT BY THE LAW - Vss. 9-19 - We are sinners.

THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW - Vs. 20 - To give the knowledge of sin.

THE PROVISION ABOVE THE LAW - Vss. 21-24 - Righteousness in Christ.

Romans 3:21-27 OBTAINING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

Only those who have God's righteousness will enter into Heaven.

THE TRAGEDY OF SIN - Vs. 23

Nobody is righteous before God. We have all failed Him! We all deserve punishment. Romans 3:10-20

THE TRUTH OF JUSTIFICATION - Vs. 24

We are justified ("declared righteous") by God's grace through the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Romans 5:6-9

THE TRANSACTION BY FAITH - Vss. 21-22, 25

We obtain God's righteousness when we place our faith in Christ as our Savior. Romans 5:1

THE TRIUMPH OF GOD - Vss. 26-28

He is the justifier of those who believe in Christ.

We have no boasting in our own righteousness. It is excluded by the law of faith.

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Romans 3:27-31 UNDER GRACE

EXCLUSION - Vs. 27

Under grace boasting is excluded.

CONCLUSION - Vss. 28, 31

Under grace a man is justified by faith and not by the deeds of the law.

INCLUSION - Vss. 29-30

Under grace Jews and Gentiles are included based on faith.

Romans 4:1-9 WHEN GOD IS REAL

There are many people who know nothing of peace of heart, forgiveness for sin, relief from guilt, and power to live a new life. They have never discovered that God is real.

God is not a myth, figment of imagination, powerless, unloving, or uncaring. Our God gives peace, forgiveness, and relief from guilt. Romans 4:1-9 tells us what happens when God becomes real to a lost sinner.

GOD IS BELIEVED - Vss. 1-3a - "Abraham believed God..."

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BESTOWED - Vss. 3b-5 - "...and it was accounted unto him for righteousness."

WE ARE BLESSED - Vss. 6-8 - "...Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven..."

Romans 4:1-12 ESSENTIAL FAITH!

THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE – Vss. 1-3

The Scripture tells us that "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

See Genesis 15:1-6

THE TROUBLE WITH WORKS – Vs. 4

If one works to get to Heaven he is trying to place God in his debt.

THE TRIUMPH OF BELIEF – Vss. 5-8

David tells us of the blessing of faith apart from works.

THE TIMING OF FAITH – Vss. 9-12

Faith has nothing to do with circumcision.

Abraham placed faith in God before he was circumcised.

Romans 4:20-21 LEARNING FROM ABRAHAM!

We can learn much from Bible characters. See Romans 15:4

From David we can learn to trust God explicitly when facing the "giants" in our lives.

From Daniel we can learn to be faithful.

From Mary, Martha's sister, we can learn to be devoted.

From Peter we can learn to put our mind in gear before speaking.

In this passage we can learn at least 3 lessons from Abraham.

1. BE CONSISTENT - He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief.

2. BE COURAGEOUS - But was strong in faith, giving glory to God.

3. BE CONVINCED - And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.

[Note: The promises to Abraham are found in Genesis 12, 15, 17, 18 etc.]

Romans 5:1-5 GOOD NEWS FOR THE CHRISTIAN

THE CHRISTIAN IS ACCEPTED BY GOD - Vs. 1

THE CHRISTIAN HAS ACCESS INTO GRACE - Vs. 2

THE CHRISTIAN HAS ASSISTANCE IN HIS SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT - Vss. 3-5

Romans 5:1-5 CHRISTIAN BENEFITS

When you take a job he wants to know the benefits. There are benefits from being a Christian.

PEACE WITH GOD - Vs. 1

PRESENCE WITH GOD - Vs. 2

PROGRESS FROM GOD - Vss. 3-5

Romans 5:1 etc. PEACE!

PEACE IS A RESULT OF FAITH IN CHRIST - Romans 5:1

PEACE IS A RESULT OF FOCUS ON GOD - Isaiah 26:3-4, Philippians 4:6-7

PEACE IS A RESULT OF FAITHFULNESS TO GOD'S WORD - Psalm 119:65

Faith in Christ guarantees peace with God.

Focus and Faithfulness guarantee the peace of God.

Don't try to have focus or faithfulness until you have faith in Christ!

Romans 5:1 etc. PEACE! (A FUNERAL MESSAGE)

There is very often a lack of peace at funerals. People miss their loved ones. Sometimes there have been tragedies that have led to death (such as this one). Other times people never resolved problems or issues with the deceased and it's too late. Still other times a mourner is feeling guilty because of things said or done towards the deceased. Other times there is anger in the service because of things done (There certainly will be anger with the ex-husband, father, grandfather, who killed these people.).

I will stress the almost universal lack of peace in my introduction.

I will announce that God wants us to have peace.

PEACE NEEDED

Isaiah 48:22 - "There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked."

Isaiah 59:2 - "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."

Also: Isaiah 64:6, Romans 3:10, 23, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23a

PEACE NEAR

Isaiah 53:3-6 - "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

2 Corinthians 5:21 - "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Also: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Hebrews 10:14

PEACE NOW!

Peace with God:

Romans 5:1 - "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"

Also: John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9, Colossians 2:14, Romans 6:23

PEACE WITH GOD COMES WHEN SOMEONE TRUST CHRIST AS SAVIOR AND IS BORN AGAIN!

PEACE IS AVAILABLE NOW!

Peace of God:

The peace of God is only found by those who first make peace with God.

Verses that promise the peace of God include: John 14:27, Isaiah 26:3-4, Philippians 4:6-7

Romans 5:1-9 LIFE ESSENTIALS

There are certain things which are needed for us to be alive physically. These things include food, water, clothing and shelter. There are also things which are needed or essential for us to have Spiritual Life. Our text gives us four life essentials.

1. PEACE Vs. 1

2. POSITION Vs 2 - We stand in hope of the glory of God.

3. PROGRESS Vss. 3-5 - We grow physically if we have life. We will grow spiritually if we have life.

We will make progress in patience, experience, etc.

4. PARDON Vss. 6-9

(Of course, if you just want a "three pointer," the first three points will stand by themselves.)

Romans 5:1-9 ALL THROUGH JESUS

Everything that we need for Spiritual success is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

ACCEPTANCE THROUGH CHRIST - Vs. 1

Peace with God or God accepting us is through our faith in Christ.

ACCESS THROUGH CHRIST - Vs. 2

We come into God's presence through Christ.

ATTAINMENT THROUGH CHRIST - Vss. 3-5

We attain Spiritual maturity through the process described here. As Christ lives His life through us, we will mature through tribulation. Galatians 2:20

ATONEMENT THROUGH CHRIST - Vss. 6-9

The finished work of Christ paid for our sins!

Romans 5:6-9 etc. FIVE UNSHAKEABLE TRUTHS

(If you use this as a prayer meeting or Bible Study you can ask the following questions.)

What causes Christians to get depressed?

Does worry ever have anything to do with depression?

How can we handle non-clinical depression in a Biblical way?

One way that helps our mental outlook is to think on things that are true. Philippians 4:8

Here are 5 unshakeable truths that do not change no matter what happens in my life.

WE HAVE AN UNSHAKEABLE REDEMPTION

Romans 5:6-9, 1 Peter 18-19

WE HAVE AN UNSHAKEABLE REGENERATION

John 3:1-8, 1 Peter 1:23

WE HAVE AN UNSHAKEABLE RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:1-20, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

WE HAVE AN UNSHAKEABLE RESERVE

Romans 8:35-39, Hebrews 13:5

(Christ abides in us, and we abide in Christ.)

WE HAVE AN UNSHAKEABLE RESIDENCE - Revelation 21:1-5, Revelation 22:1-5

Romans 5:6-11 – GOOD FRIDAY CALVARY'S LOOK OF LOVE

It is at Calvary, perhaps more than anywhere else that we hear God saying, "I love you."

THE MEANING OF CALVARY Vs. 6-8

The righteous Son of God died for the ungodly (That's us folks.) See Isaiah 64:6 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

THE MAGNITUDE OF CALVARY Vss. 9-10

God has justified us through the blood of His Son! We have been reconciled to God.

THE MERCY OF CALVARY Vs. 11

We have joy because we have experienced God's mercy through the atonement.

Romans 6:1-11 UNITED WITH CHRIST

WE ARE UNITED WITH HIM IN DEATH - Vss. 1-3

WE ARE UNITED WITH HIM IN RESURRECTION - Vss. 4-6

WE ARE UNITED WITH HIM IN FREEDOM - Vss. 7-11

Romans 6:11-14 A NEW WAY OF LIVING

One of the great problems for the born again Christian is living a life that is victorious over sin.

Romans 6 introduces us to a new way of living, which is the crucified life. Romans 6:1-10 shows us that when Christ died we died, when Christ was buried we were buried, when Christ rose from the dead we rose to a new life in Him. Based on verses 1-10, the next verses show us how to live a victorious life.

RECKON YOUR NEW POSITION Vs. 10

We are dead to sin and alive to God through Christ.

REJECT THE OLD PATH Vs. 12

Decide that sin will no longer reign in your life.

RELINQUISH TO THE NEW PREMIERE Vs. 13

Yield yourself and all your "members" to God.

RELY ON THE NEW PROMISE Vs. 14

Romans 6:15-23 WHOSE FOOL ARE YOU?

I remember reading about a man who carried one of those double placards with messages on the front and the back. The front said, "I am a fool for Christ's sake." The back asked, "Whose fool are you?"

When you are someone's fool, you are his or her servant or slave. You do what that person wants you to do. In Romans 6:15-23 we discover that whoever's leadership we follow, or yield to, we are their servant. There are two choices. You will either be the servant of sin or you will be the servant of righteousness. If you are the servant of sin, you are Satan's fool. If you are the servant of righteousness, you are God's fool. When we are God's fools we are in good company. Paul was a fool for Christ's sake (1 Corinthians 4:10)

So, whose fool are you? You might respond, "I'm a Christian, I guess that makes me God's fool. If you are really a Christian, you are partially right. But if you are really God's fool as a Christian, you should be living a life that serves God and not yourself, somebody else, and not something else."

Whose fool are you? There are:

TWO POSSIBILITIES - Vs. 16

Think of yourself as a slave. That's what the word "servant" means in this verse. As a slave, you have a choice to make. You can choose to surrender yourself as a slave to sin, or you can choose to surrender yourself to be a slave of "obedience unto righteousness." When you surrender to sin you surrender to Satan. When you surrender to obedience unto righteousness you surrender to God.

TWO POSITIONS - Vss. 17-18

Paul is talking about standing or position in these verses. Before being saved your position was servant to sin. Ephesians 2:1-3 If you are a true Christian, you have obeyed from the heart the doctrine of salvation that has delivered you and changed your life. Your position in God's eyes is "servant of righteousness."

TWO PRACTICES - Vs. 19

A person should practice a behavior in line with the position he or she holds.

A schoolteacher should act like a schoolteacher.

A policeman should act like a policeman.

A pastor should act like a pastor.

It is possible for each of these to not act the way they should. And when a policeman does not act like a policeman or a schoolteacher does not act like a schoolteacher, or a pastor does not act like a pastor, there is sure to be trouble. People get upset, and often the offenders lose their jobs.

Based on these illustrations, let me remind you that as Christians, we need to act as "servants of righteousness" because that is our position. Vs. 19 tells us to yield ourselves as "servants to righteousness unto holiness." See 1 Peter 1:15-16. In the past we yielded ourselves as slaves to uncleanness and "iniquity unto iniquity".

TWO PROMISES - Vss. 20-22

Before being saved you were a free man. You were free from righteousness.

You had the sure promise of death. Vss. 20-21, Ezekiel 18:4

If you are a Christian you also have a promise. It is the promise of "fruit unto holiness, and in the end everlasting life."

TWO PLACES - Vs. 23

"The wages of sin is death." Death is eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire. Revelation 20:11-15
"The gift of God is eternal life..." - Eternal life is in Heaven. Everyone is going to one of those two places.

SO, WHOSE FOOL ARE YOU?

Romans 8:1-4 ENCOURAGING WORDS

GOOD NEWS - Vs. 1

Those of us who know Christ as Savior are not condemned.

GREAT FREEDOM - Vs. 2

We are free from "the law of sin and death".

GRACIOUS SACRIFICE - Vs. 3

God "condemned sin in the flesh" by sending His Son to die for our sins.

GENEROUS FULFILLMENT - Vs. 4

We fulfill the righteousness of the law as we walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

Romans 8:1-4 GREAT NEWS!

THE CHRISTIAN HAS BEEN DELIVERED

1. FROM THE PENALTY OF SIN Vss. 1-2

2. FROM THE POWER OF SIN Vs. 3

3. FROM THE PRACTICE OF SIN Vs. 4

We are not suggesting that the Christian now leads a sinless life, but as he yields to the Holy Spirit, he will fulfill the righteousness of God's law and not habitually sin.

Romans 8:1-4 WE'RE SPECIAL!

Those of us who are saved are God's special people. Consider:

OUR STANDING IN CHRIST - "NO CONDEMNATION!" - Vs. 1

OUR SEPARATION FROM SIN - "FREE FROM THE LAW OF SIN AND DEATH" - Vs. 2

OUR SUPPLY FOR RIGHTEOUS LIVING - WALKING AFTER THE SPIRIT - Vss. 3-4

Romans 8:5-13 CONTRASTS

There are certain contrasts between the believer and the unbeliever. These differences are enough to motivate us to want to avoid "the lusts of the flesh" and to live after the Spirit."

TWO MINDS – Vss. 5-7

One of two minds is going to control your thinking. It will be the mind of the "flesh" or the mind of the "Spirit". Vs. 5

TWO MODES – Vss. 8-9

There are two modes of operation, one of which is in charge of every life. We will either operate in the "flesh" or in the Spirit. Notice the helplessness found in Vs. 8. It is impossible to please God in our own self-effort.

TWO MANDATES – Vss. 10-11

In these verses the mandates are unto life and death. The mandate to life is by the Spirit of God who will raise us from the dead.

TWO METHODS – Vss. 12-13

We either live after the "flesh" or after the "Spirit".

Romans 8:18 A NEW PERSPECTIVE

THE HINDRANCE OF SIN - Vss. 5-8

The carnal or "fleshy" mind is sinful, and a problem

THE HEALING OF LIFE - Vss. 9-11

If we are saved we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us, giving us life.

THE HELP OF THE SPIRIT - Vss. 12-14

We are obligated to follow the leading of the Spirit and not of the flesh.

We are to put to death the deeds of the flesh and follow the leading of God's Spirit.

THE HOPE OF ADOPTION - Vss. 15-18

We have hope for the future because we have the Spirit of Adoption living inside of us.

The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirits that we are the children of God.

The sufferings of this life do not compare with the glory to come.

Romans 8:15-17, 26-27 THE SPIRIT AT WORK

The Holy Spirit of God is at work in the lives of every believer. (Romans 8:9). Here we see Him working in three specific areas of our lives.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS THE SPIRIT OF ADOPTION Vs.15

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS THE SPIRIT OF ASSURANCE Vss. 16-17

It is the Spirit of God that witnesses to us that we are the children of God.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS THE SPIRIT OF ASSISTANCE Vss. 26-27

It is the Spirit of God that intercedes for us when we don't know what to pray.

Romans 8:19-27 GROANING TO GLORY

Groaning is something that will take place all through our lives and until such time as Jesus establishes His rule here on earth. When glory comes the groaning will cease. Until then, there are three things mentioned in our text that will cause "Groaning To Glory".

GROANING CREATION – Vss. 19-22

In the future there will be a new Heaven and a new earth. Revelation 22:1-5

Vs. 19 - The creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. This manifestation will take place when we appear with Him in glory. Colossians 3:4, Revelation 19:14

Vs. 20 – The creation became subject to vanity when Adam and Eve sinned Genesis 3:15-19, Vs. 20

Vs. 21 - The "glorious liberty of the children of God" is described in 1 John 3:1-3.

GROANING CONVERTS – Vss. 23-25

Vs. 23 – We are the "firstfruits of the Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:30

We will groan until the adoption process is fully completed.

Vss. 24 -25 – Though we groan, we have hope.

GROANING COMFORTER – Vss. 26-27

On earth, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with "groanings which can not be uttered.

In Heaven the Son of God intercedes for us at the Father's Throne. Romans 8:34

Romans 8:31-39 WHO?

Here are four questions that, when answered, give the Christian great assurance.

WHO CAN BE AGAINST US? Vs. 31,32

WHO CAN ACCUSE US? Vs. 33

WHO CAN CONDEMN US? Vs. 34

WHO CAN SEPARATE US? Vss. 35-39

When we are in Christ, the answer to each of these questions is, NOBODY!

Romans 8:33-39 VICTORY!

In Christ there is:

NO CONDEMNATION Vss. 33-34

NO DOMINATION (We are "more than conquerors".) Vss. 35-37

NO SEPARATION Vss. 38-39

Romans 10:1-10 WHAT ABOUT ISRAEL?

PRAYER FOR ISRAEL – Vs. 1 – For their salvation

PROBLEM WITH ISRAEL – Vss. 2-3 – Zeal without knowledge

PROMISE FOR ISRAEL – Vss. 4-10 – Faith brings salvation

Romans 10:1-4 STUBBORN ISRAEL

We have all met stubborn people like the little boy who insisted on standing up in the car. Finally, the Father stopped the car and made the boy sit down. After a little time, the boy told his father, "I'm still standing up on the inside!" He was stubborn. The nation Israel was also stubborn. God wanted to save the Jews, but the majority of them stubbornly rejected Christ.

PAUL'S PRIORITY - Vs. 1 - His number 1 desire was that Israel would be saved, coming to Christ.

ISRAEL'S PROBLEM - Vss. 2-3 - They tried to establish their own righteousness, without submitting themselves to the righteousness of God.

CHRIST'S PROVISION - Vs. 4 - Christ secured righteousness on the cross for all who will believe on Him.

The believer's righteousness is found in Christ, not in law keeping. See Romans 5:1

Romans 10:8-10 THE WORD OF FAITH

This can be developed into a very pointed salvation message.

The word, or message of faith which we preach can be summed up in three simple steps.

BELIEVE

CONFESS

BE SAVED

Romans 10:9-10, 13-17 NO TIME FOR SILENCE

There are times when it is right to be silent, especially when words will needlessly hurt someone. There are other times when it is wrong to be silent, especially when someone is in danger, and words would warn.

When it comes to the sharing of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, today is no time for silence.

THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION Vss. 9-10,13

THE METHOD OF EVANGELISM Vss. 14, 17 (Preaching of the Word of God)

THE MANDATE FOR MISSIONS Vss. 14-15

THE MISTAKE OF (SOME) HEARERS Vs. 16

Romans 10:13-17 GETTING THE WORD OUT!

Publicity is important. If you have a good product, or a good service, or a good price, you want people to know about it. The government spends millions of dollars to get the word out about its programs.

It is important for us as Christians that we get the word of salvation in Christ out to those who need it. (See Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:10).

Here's is God's program for getting the word out to the world.

GOD'S PROMISE Vs. 13 - Salvation comes when a person calls in faith upon Christ for salvation. See Romans 10:9-10

GOD'S PLAN Vss. 14-15, 17 - Faith comes by hearing. Hearing comes from God's word.

A person can't call on Christ unless he believes.

A person can't believe on Christ unless he hears the Gospels.

A person can't hear the Gospel unless there is a preacher.

A preacher won't preach unless he is sent.

GOD'S PROCLAMATION - The feet of those who preach the Gospel is beautiful. God will reward the one who brings people to Christ. See Daniel 12:3

Romans 12:1-2 LIVING IT!
It's one thing to profess that you are a Christian.
It's quite another thing to live like you a Christian.
The true Christian needs to live out his faith. A good place to start living out one's faith is Romans 12:1-2 - " I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

REQUEST - "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,"
REQUIREMENT - "...that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."
REFORMATION - "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind,"
REASON - "... that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

Romans 12:3-8 USING WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN YOU

We have all been given gifts down through the years. Some of these gifts were practical and others not so practical. Some have been helpful and others not so helpful. No gift is really practical or helpful however unless we start to use it. God has given each Christian at least one Spiritual gift (1 Cor 12:4-7, Eph 4:7-12). These gifts, no matter how great they are, are worthless unless we use what God has given us.

REFLECT - Vs. 3

Each one should give a sober, honest evaluation of his gifts. He should not in pride, fool himself into thinking that God has given more than He has. However, if a man is sober and honest, he will not deny or ignore what gifts God has given us.

REMEMBER - Vss. 4-5

We need to remember that we are all members of one body, the body of Christ. We also need to remember that God has given us different positions and gifts within that body. And we need to remember that we are members with each other. We are a team, and each one has his specific place to fill.

RESPOND - Vss. 6-8

We must respond by understanding what the gifts are that God has given us.

Then, we are to respond by using these gifts by faith.

(Of course, in preaching this sermon, you will want to explain each of the gifts listed in this passage.)

Romans 12:14-18 PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

BE GRACIOUS - Vs. 14 - "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not."

BE SENSITIVE - Vs. 15 - "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."

BE AGREEABLE - Vs. 16 - "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

BE KIND - Vs. 17 - "Recompense to no man evil for evil."

BE HONEST - Vs. 17 - "Provide things honest in the sight of all men."

BE PEACEFUL - "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

Romans 12:17-21 GETTING EVEN

As Christian in our behavior as we want to be, we still will face times when we want to take matters into our own hands and "get even" with someone who has hurt us. Romans 12:17-21 reminds us that we should let God take vengeance as He likes. Our responsibility is kind behavior.

PRINCIPLE FOR PEACE - Vss. 17-18

PROMISE OF VENGEANCE - Vs. 19

PROCEDURE TO FOLLOW - Vss. 20-21

Romans 12:9-13 LOVE IS

These verses show us some of the ways we show the love we have for our Lord and for fellow Christians.

LOVE IS PURE - Vs. 9 - Love hates evil and clings to the good.

LOVE IS PREFERENTIAL - Vs. 10 - Christians are to love all, even their enemies. But we are to have a special love for our brothers and sisters in Christ. They should be our nearest and dearest friends.

LOVE IS PRODUCTIVE - Vss. 11-12 - These expressions of love are very positive. Some of these we express towards God, and others towards man.

LOVE IS PRACTICAL - Vs. 13 - Love expresses itself through meeting the needs of those who are hurting, and showing hospitality.

Romans 13:1-7 WHAT ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT?
THE RESPECT FOR RULERS - Vss. 1-2
THE REASON FOR RULERS - Vss. 3-4
THE RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS RULERS - Vss. 5-7

You will want to discuss when it is proper to disobey government. See Acts 4:18-20
You might want to mention some of the Godly Bible characters involved in government.
Those involved in government include Joseph, David, Nehemiah and Daniel.

Romans 13:1-7 THE CHRISTIAN AND GOVERNMENT

In the Bible we find that God has established 3 institutions to govern the affairs of men.
There is the family. Genesis 2:18-25
There is the church. Matthew 16:18, Acts 2
There is government. Romans 13:1-7
In this passage we do find that the Christian does have a responsibility to government.
THE ORIGINATOR OF GOVERNMENT IS GOD. Vss. 1-2
GOD'S PURPOSE FOR GOVERNMENT IS FOR OUR GOOD. Vss. 3-4
OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT IS TO OBEY. Vss. 5-7
This includes the payment of taxes.

Notes: You will want to discuss when it is proper to disobey government. See Acts 4:18-20
You might want to mention some of the Godly Bible characters involved in government.
Those involved in government include Joseph, David, Nehemiah and Daniel.

Romans 13:8-10 LOVE LIFE

MY GREATEST OBLIGATION – Vs. 8 – I am to love others
MY GREATEST OMISSION – Vs. 9 – Everyone has broken the Ten Commandments. By failing to keep the Ten Commandments I have omitted loving others.
MY GREATEST OPPORTUNITY – Vs. 10 – When I truly love my neighbor I do not hurt him. When I truly love my neighbor I fulfill God's Law.

Romans 13:11-14 KNOWING THE TIME

There was a Sunday Morning several years ago when one of our people at our church came to services. She walked in, and sat down. Imagine her surprise, when just after she sat down, the whole congregation got up and left! What had happened? It was the Sunday to change the clocks and she forgot to change her's. She didn't know what time it was. We've all had trouble knowing exactly what time it is. Watches stop, or lose or gain time. We misread clocks. Sometimes we are told the wrong time. But to fulfill all our obligations we need to know the time!

Our Scripture text begins with the phrase "knowing the time". We tend to forget that God is keeping time. He is working up to a time when He will end this age in which we live, and move on to another one. We, who are Christians need to be aware of this and to know that it is time for us to do certain things. According to the passage before us this morning, we must realize that it is: TIME TO WAKE - Vs. 11

When Paul talks about "knowing the time" here he is not talking about a chronological time like five o'clock on July 6, 2003. Instead he is talking about an epoch, an era, or the age in which we live. We are actually living in the last times before Jesus comes to get his church. We'll say more about that in a few moments. Because this age is almost over, and because Jesus could come at any time, we are told here to "Wake Up!" Paul tells us here that it is "high time to awake from sleep".

When Paul talks about awakening from sleep here, he is talking about spiritual sleep. Paul is calling us to awake from spiritual "unconsciousness, unresponsiveness, and inactivity concerning the things of God."

We as Christians can very easily be unconscious to the things of God. We just more or less ignore them. We're saved, but it doesn't sink in as to what we should be doing.

We as Christians are often unresponsive to the Word of God. The preacher gives a message, and we know he's right. He then gives an invitation for us to fix what's wrong, to make a commitment, or to do what we know the Bible tells us to do. We just sit there, unresponsive!

Sometimes we wonder why God doesn't give us all that we want. Perhaps, it's because we are not ambitious enough to pursue what we say we want. Ephesians 5:14-18

When we wake up, we show Godly ambition, and we seek to do God's will, and we don't waste time.

Most of all, when we wake up we examine our lives and confess sin, so nothing hinders the filling of the Holy Spirit, and we ask God to fill us with His Spirit.

Why should we wake up?

Because our salvation is nearer than when we believed.
Wait a minute. Weren't we saved the moment we believed?
Yes we were.

Acts 16:31 says in part *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...*

**So, if we were saved when we believed in Christ, Then how can our salvation be closer?
That's because your salvation is in 3 tenses, past, present and future.**

**past - JUSTIFICATION - At a specific moment in time, I believed on the finished work of Christ, His death, burial, resurrection for my sins. I trusted him as my Savior. Romans 5:1
present - SANCTIFICATION - We are growing in Christ, becoming more like Him, knowing Him better, and living a holy life. 2 Peter 3:18
ver. Amen.**

**future - GLORIFICATION - This is when the Lord Jesus comes back for his church in the air.
1 Corinthians 15:51-52**

So Paul is talking about our final salvation here.

And of course, it is nearer than when we first believed.

Because of this, we are to awake from our sleep and live Godly lives, because Jesus could come at any time.

The soon, or imminent return of Christ is a Biblical Doctrine.

We are taught in this passage that in light of His imminent return, we are to be awake, alert, and living Godly lives. Titus 2:11-13, 1 John 3:1-3

Jesus could come at any moment.

Will you be delighted to see Him and unashamed?

Or will you be delighted to see Him, but ashamed of the condition in which He's found you?

And one more thought. When Christ comes, it will be too late to pray for, live a Godly life in front of, or witness to your unsaved family and friends. It must be done now. It's time for us to WAKE UP!

TIME TO WALK Vs. 13

In the Scriptures, our walk refers to our conduct.

There is a positive conduct in this verse in which we should walk. There is also a negative conduct in this verse in which we should not walk!

First, we are to "walk honestly, as in the day;"

To walk honestly, is to behave properly.

It is to behave in the way children of God should behave.

There were times when growing up, that I did not behave in a way a member of the Peters family should behave. And, my father let me know it.

On the job, if you do not behave the way a member of your company should behave, you are told about it. Even in sports, there is a code of behavior. Several years ago Sandy Alomar spit in the face of an umpire. That was not the right kind of behavior for a baseball player.

Proper behavior for a Christian is clearly spelled out in the Scriptures. 1 Peter 1:15-16

As Christians, we are children of the day, not the night.

We are children of light, not of darkness.

We are to walk as children of the day, not of the night! 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8

This leads to how we should not walk, if we avoid the deeds of darkness, these things will be on our lists.

NOT IN RIOTING - Rioting here can be partying of the worst kind, an orgy, if you will! It's been translated elsewhere as "carousing".

NOT IN DRUNKENNESS - Proverbs 20:1 says *Wine [is] a mocker, strong drink [is] raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.*

NOT IN CHAMBERING - Not in "going to bed", that is sexual promiscuity. Hebrews 13:4

NOT IN WANTONNESS - We might say sensuality. There is to be no public display of sexual immorality. We are never to show "shameless excess or absence of restraint."

NOT IN STRIFE - There is not to be petty bickering and fighting among us. We are to be known by our love, not our disagreements.

NOT IN ENVYING - We are not to be jealous of what someone else has. Jealousy is what often leads to the strife which we just mentioned!

TIME TO WEAR Vss. 12, 14

Vs. 12 - I wear different clothes for different occasions.

I wear old jeans and an old shirt when I work in the garden.

As you can see, I didn't wear those for this morning's service.

Before you and I became Christians, we thought certain things to be acceptable behavior. But these things turned out to be sinful, and now that we are saved, we need to get changed.

We need to take off our "night clothes" of sin, and put on our day clothes of righteousness.

We need to undress by taking off the works of darkness.

We must decide to remove those things which do not please God, that are still left from our old lives.

Instead, because we are children of the day, children of light, we are to put on the "armor of light". The armor of light is described in Ephesians 6:13-18.

Vs. 14 - It is one thing to put on a team uniform, like say the Pirates. It is quite another thing to act like one of the star players, like say Willie Stargall

I think it would have been neat if I could have put on a Pirate Uniform, and had Willie Stargall play through my body. I'd be quite a star! That of course is impossible.

We have, in a sense the team uniform. We are the Christians.

We are to live like the star of the team - Our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have an advantage over my trying to be Willie Stargall.

The Lord Jesus does live inside of me, and I can put Him "on" by faith, and He will live His righteous life through me. Galatians 2:20

However, I can not serve the Lord Jesus and live my old, sinful life as well. I need to be continually putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and taking off the flesh at the same time. I denounce the old, sinful habits, and take them off. I put Christ on, and imitate Him!

Romans 15:1-7 UNSELFISH LIVING

You can begin the message with your favorite illustrations or quotes on selfishness.

Each one of us has a selfish streak inside of us. We can all have a "me first" attitude if we are not careful.

When it comes to getting along with other people in the church, especially those who might be considered "weaker brothers" we need to learn to live in an unselfish manner.

To begin with, because of the cross we need to make a decision to strive to live in an unselfish manner.

Romans 6:6 reminds us that we died with Christ on the cross. Romans 6:11-13 admonishes to count ourselves as dead to but alive to God. If we died to sin, we died to selfishness!

Romans 12:1 reminds us that we are to present ourselves as a living sacrifice to God.

Romans 15:1-7 enhances the Scriptures we just mentioned by providing 4 suggestions for enhancing the defeat of selfishness in our lives.

BACKGROUND

This section is actually the concluding argument from Romans 14. Romans 14 is the contrast between the weak brother and the strong brother. The weak brother is more legalistic, more tending towards rules and regulations about diet, observance of days, where to go, and what to do. The strong brother realizes that he is free of the rules and regulations of the Old Testament that deal with diet and holy days.

Romans 14:3 - The strong brother is not to despise or think little of the person who is not as free as he is. The weaker brother is to be respected for his convictions. The weaker brother is not to judge the stronger brother. He is not pronounce judgment on the stronger brother. God has accepted both of them.

Romans 14:10 - Each of us will stand before Christ and give account. We need not prejudge. The Lord Jesus will do a much better job.

Romans 14:13 - The stronger brother is not to be a stumbling block, a snare, or a trap to the weaker brother. If the weaker brother is legitimately bothered by what the stronger brother does, he is not to be harassed or encouraged to damage his own conscience.

Romans 14:15 - We are warned not to destroy our brother with our own Christian liberty. That is not love.

Romans 14:21-23 - We are to honor the conscience of the weaker brother. If he can't do something by faith it becomes sin to him if he violates his own conscience.

With all this in mind, the stronger brother is given some tips for not being selfish. Instead, the weaker brother will be helped. Actually all of us are helpful if we follow these directions.

SET SOME GOALS - Vss. 1-2

There will always be weaker brethren in a thriving Christian church.

There will be those weak because they are new Christians.

There will be those weak because of sin habits.

There will be those weak because of poverty.

There will be those weak due to personal sickness, sickness of a loved one, or loss of a loved one.

There will be those weak due to immaturity.

There will be those weak due to weak conscience.

There will be those who are emotionally weak.

With this in mind there are two goals we should have for our behavior towards weaker brethren.

1. We are to bear the infirmities of the weak. (Vs. 1) When we do we will not please ourselves. Galatians 6:2 When we bear the burdens of others we will pray for them, listen to them, spend time with them, help them financially, and support them during tragedies.

2. We are to please our neighbors. (Vs. 2) This means I am to work at edifying or building up that Christian brother or sister for his or her own good.

I can build up that person by not offending him with my own strength and by sharing with him what God is teaching me. I can also build up that neighbor by being a model of Christ centered living.

SEE THE SCRIPTURES - Vss. 3-4

1. I can look to Scripture for the model of Christ. This verse refers to the sacrifice of Christ for my sin. He took the reproach for sin that should have been mine. Christ did not please himself on the cross, but was concerned with the good of the world. I can follow this example of unselfish living, and the other examples that Christ set.

2. We can also learn from all the examples found in Scripture. This verse, I believe, specifically refers to the Old Testament, but is applicable to the New Testament as well. In the Old Testament we learn of:

The example of Abraham willing to sacrifice his son, Isaac

The example of Hosea who accepted being married to a harlot so God could make a point

The example of Moses who continually interceded for the rebellious Israelites

And there are many more examples for us to follow from the Scriptures that will teach us how to deal with weaker people.

SHOOT (AIM) FOR UNITY - Vss. 5-6

Vs. 5 - The God of patience can and will make you patient, if you let Him.

The God of consolation will help you to console others, if you let Him.

The word likeminded here means to think the same thing.

We will think the same thing when we seek to be patient instead of getting our own way.

We will think the same thing when we seek to console others instead of criticizing them.

Vs. 6 - Notice here what brings glory.

When we have one mind and one mouth within a congregation, we are bringing glory to God. Psalm 133:3 The church is a single unit. It is a team. It is individuals working together.

Therefore, shoot for unity!

SEEK TO ACCEPT - Vs. 7

The key word here is "receive". The word means "take to one's self". It means to take a special interest on the part of the receiver. It suggests a welcome.

We are to receive others as Christ has received us. Christ accepted us with no strings attached. It is about time that you and I started to seek to accept others this same way.

We may not agree on every point of doctrine.

We may not agree on every point of separation.

We may not agree about who our closest friends are.

We may not even care particularly for the person's personality.

But when a person is sincerely born again, we need to accept them as Christ accepted us.

Romans 15:13 etc. CHRISTIAN OPTIMISM

I've met quite a few optimists in my time and probably far more pessimists and cynics. I like optimists better because they tend to lift me up. Pessimists tend to drag me down with them.

Like anywhere else, in the church there are both optimists and pessimists.

Often a pessimist will hold a church back with it's gloom and doom while an optimist will get the church to think and act in positive ways.

Why should Christians be optimistic? It's because of a little four letter word called "hope". Hope is something that God provides for the Christian. Romans 5:1-2, Romans 5:5, Romans 15:13, 1 Corinthians 13:13

Now when we think of the word hope, we often think of somebody doing some wishful thinking, like "I hope I get that raise," or "I hope I pass that test", or "I hope the Pirates win the World Series," or "I hope Mom serves apple pie for dessert."

But according to James Montgomery Boice, in the Bible the word hope means certainty. Boice says, "...the only reason it is called hope rather than certainty is that we do not possess what is hoped for yet, although we will." James Montgomery Boice, Romans, Volume 2, ©1992 by Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, page 525

It is my desire that this church would be full of Christian optimists. Christian optimists have a tremendous impact on other Christians and on unsaved people. Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 3:15

If we are going to be Christian optimists we need to know something about hope. This morning I'd like to encourage you that:

WE NEED TO ASK IN HOPE

Now, you probably already know that faith is a requirement for answered prayer. James 1:5-8, Mark 11:24 If we are going to see God answer our prayers, we certainly need to pray in faith. I think of hope as an extension of faith. First we believe that God is going to answer our prayers, and then we look forward to the answer. 1 John 5:14-15

When we ask for something that is the will of God, we believe that God will answer the prayer and we are also confident. I believe that confidence is akin to hope! If I am not confident I don't have hope. If I am confident, I have hope.

WE NEED TO ACT IN HOPE

The way we act should be a reflection of our hope.

If we are Christians we should want other people to become Christians too. Therefore we will want to act in such a way that will bring others to Christ and encourage other Christians. Matthew 5:14-16

The first way to impact others for Christ is to preach a sermon to them. I mean a sermon of actions, not a sermon of words. Let them see your good works of acting the way a Christian should and they will glorify God because of you.

Christians are also supposed to use their words for Christ, but people will not listen to you unless your words are backed up by your life's actions. 1 Peter 3:15

As people see in your actions the hope that Jesus gives, they will want to hear your words. As you live a godly life, people will ask you the secret of your hope in Christ.

And our actions of living and witnessing for Christ will be blessed! Psalm 126:6

The precious seed is God's Word. As we sow it in tears, we will reap results in joy. It might be the joy of a soul saved or the joy of a Christian who was helped to grow.

Christian, when you act in hope, you live and speak for Christ.

WE NEED TO ABIDE IN HOPE

The Christian has a very special hope.

The Christian's very special hope is that Jesus is coming. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

We are to look forward to the coming of our Lord Jesus.

And we need to realize that Jesus could come at any time. Luke 12:40

Looking forward to the Lord's coming is to affect our behavior and our attitude.

Titus 2:11-13 - The blessed hope of the Christian is the return of Christ. It is His glorious appearing. If you are looking forward to his coming you need to deny ungodliness. Ungodliness is simply anything God does not approve of. There should be no time for it in your life.

If you are looking forward to his coming, you should also deny worldly lusts. Worldly lusts are those desires that get out of hand and cause us to sin. In 1 John 2 they are described as the "lust of flesh", the "lust of the eyes" and the "pride of life".

If you are looking forward to Jesus coming, you're sober or serious about your behavior.

If you are looking forward to Jesus' coming, you're doing what is right or righteous. How would you feel if Jesus returned and He caught you doing something that did not please Him?

If you are looking forward to Jesus' coming, you are doing what pleases God or what is like God. Your standard of behavior is high. That's godliness.

The coming of Jesus for you should be such a blessed hope, that you look forward to His coming and want your life to be in order when He arrives!

WE NEED TO ABOUND IN HOPE

Romans 15:13 - Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

First of all notice that God is the God of hope.

God is the one who is responsible for hope.

The reason you have hope at all is because of what Jesus did for you on the cross. Jesus died for you there. Because of His death and your faith in Christ, you have hope!

God made the plan that made your hope possible. He is the God of hope.

Notice two essential things that God wants you to have.

God wants you to have joy.

God wants you to have peace.

And He doesn't want you to have just a little joy.

And He doesn't want you to have a little peace.

He wants you to be filled with joy!

He wants you to be filled with peace! John 15:11, John 14:27

Joy and peace come in believing! If you trust Jesus enough to obey Him, you will be filled with joy. If you trust Jesus enough to pray and cast all your care upon Him, you will be filled with peace. If you are filled with joy and peace, you will abound with hope. Hope appears to be a result of our joy and peace! But hope is also the result of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit includes both joy and peace. The filling of the Spirit also fills me with hope.

God wants you and I to abound in hope, and He helps us to do this through His Holy Spirit!

1 Corinthians 1:1-3 GREETINGS FROM PAUL

PAUL'S AUTHORITY - Vs. 1

Paul was called.

Paul was an Apostle.

What Paul did was by the will of God.

God calls each Christian to a ministry.

Whatever we do should be according to the will of God.

PAUL'S AUDIENCE - Vs. 2

Corinth was a local church.

They were sanctified or set apart in Christ.

They were saints, just like every true believer.

PAUL'S ANNOUNCEMENT - Vs. 3

Paul announces a blessing of grace and peace. Every Christian has experienced grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) and peace (Romans 5:1) at the point of salvation. Grace and Peace are to be a continual part of our lives.

2 Peter 3:18, John 14:27

1 Corinthians 1:4-8 WHAT A DEAL!

We all like when we get a bargain, or a good deal. My wife and I once rented a house for \$75 a month. That was quite a deal! Then, when we were changing jobs, the lady refunded our rent for a month, and then didn't charge rent for a few months. (You can share great deals that you know of.)

In our text Paul is sharing with the Corinthians what a great deal they received when they came to Christ as Savior.

GRACE - Vs. 4

God gave the Corinthians His grace, or unmerited favor both at salvation and on a daily basis. Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Corinthians 1:3.

GREATNESS - Vss. 5-7a

"...in every thing ye are enriched by him..."

"So that ye come behind in no gift;"

GLORY - Vs. 7b-8

We will be "blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 1:4-9 OUR FAITHFUL GOD – NEW YEAR

It is dark most mornings when I get up. Imagine how surprised I would be if I got up one morning and switched on the light and nothing happened! And imagine how disturbed I would be if there was no electric so my coffee maker could make my morning coffee. And imagine how uncomfortable I'd feel if there was no heat. It is electricity that makes the heater work. Someone is faithful at the electric company!

We are dependent on faithful people. We get in our cars and in our travels expect to find faithful gas stations, food stores, clothing stores, department stores, hardware stores, and restaurants, all providing the goods and services which we want or need.

We also expect to find faithful schools. We expect police departments, fire departments, and first aid squads to do their assigned jobs faithfully. We also expect that our friends and loved ones will be faithful in loving, in caring and being available when needed. We live in a society in which faithfulness is assumed many times a day. We simply act if someone has done the job that needed to be done to keep us comfortable.

One truth will remain true. **OUR GOD IS FAITHFUL!**

Lamentations 3:22-23 - "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness."

Consider that God is faithful to maintain the right orbit of this planet around the sun, so that it is consistent. Therefore we can depend, more or less, on the weather.

Consider that God is faithful to provide summer, winter, seedtime and harvest.

Consider that God is faithful to provide the rain, the snow, the sun and the moon.

God is indeed faithful! We, as Christians, however often fail to realize just how far this faithfulness extends. We know that God was faithful to send his Son to die for our sins. We know that God is faithful to give eternal life to anyone who asks, and we know that God is faithful in giving us His Holy Spirit when we come to Christ.

We are also aware that God has promised to take care of our needs.

But, beyond what we have just shared, most of us do not always see the faithfulness of God at work in our lives, even though it's there!

In verse 9 we read, "God is faithful..."

I personally believe that these verses show us at least 5 ways that God is faithful to us who know Christ as Savior.

Vs. 4 - Introduces this passage. Paul gives us a good reminder.

He tells us that he continually gave thanks for the Corinthians. The Corinthians, questioned Paul's apostleship, permitted immorality in the church, were split their allegiances, and were Spiritually immature. And yet Paul was still able to give thanks to God for them. He gave thanks, not because he was happy with their problems, but because of what God had done, was doing, and would do in the lives of the Corinthians. Specifically, Paul was thankful for the grace of God that was at work in the Corinthians' hearts and lives. You and I will not agree with everything other Christians do, but we can be thankful when we see God's grace at work in the hearts and lives of others.

WE ARE ENRICHED BY HIS GRACE - Vs. 5

When someone is enriched, he is given riches. He is made wealthy.

Here, we are told that we are enriched by Him! We are made wealthy.

Notice how all-inclusive this is - in all things.

Not one aspect of your life is left untouched.

You've already heard the classic stories about people who were rich, but never claimed their riches.
All Christians are rich in Christ. Many have just not taken the time to discover and claim all their riches. 2 Peter 1:3, Colossians 1:10

In this verse we find ourselves enriched in two ways. We are enriched in utterance and knowledge. Both of these help us be the witnesses we need to be for the Lord Jesus. Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 3:15
WE ARE CONFIRMED BY HIS GRACE - Vs. 6

I have been confirmed twice in my lifetime.

When I was twelve years old, I took a course in the church I attended, and then a bishop came and laid his hands on me. This meant that I was confirming the faith which someone else, my parents and Godparents, spoke for me when I was a baby. There was only one catch. Although I had been christened and confirmed, I was still lost. I did not have the right idea of how to get saved and go to Heaven. Then came my second confirmation. One night while listening to Billy Graham on the radio, I came to trust Christ as my Savior. At that moment I knew I was saved, and God began to bring about change in my life. Later I was Scripturally baptized by immersion.

The first time I was confirmed by man.

The second time I was confirmed by the grace of God!

The word confirmed means "settled, steadfast, solid".

And although some may doubt their salvation for a brief period, the one who is truly saved has assurance of knowing they have eternal life. Romans 8:16

WE ARE GIFTED BY HIS GRACE - Vs. 7

We are waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We do not know when He is coming back.

We do know, that He is coming, and He will come first for us, His church.

What are we to be doing until He comes?

We are to love one another.

We are to be meeting together.

We are to be celebrating the Lord's Table.

We are to be living Godly lives.

We are to be reaching out to a lost and dying world with the message of salvation.

All of these things require talent and ability that we don't naturally have. We couldn't save ourselves and we can't live the Christian Life without help.

Verse 7 is telling us that we are lacking no gift that we need in order to live for Christ. You might not have the same gift as someone else, or ability, but when it comes to Godly living, you have all you need.

Ephesians 1:3

As you know God has provided many Spiritual Gifts and gifted people to the church. We find lists of these gifts in such passages as Ephesians 4, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12.

God does not give all his Spiritual gifts to one individual, but He spreads them out. He may give the gift of preaching to one, and the gift administration to another. Also He might give still others gifts of helping, evangelism and giving. I believe that God gives the individual church all the gifts necessary to get the job done.

WE ARE ESTABLISHED BY HIS GRACE - Vs. 8

The same God who confirmed your testimony within you, when you first came to Christ, will continue to confirm or establish you to the end. Here the word confirm means establish. One day we are going to stand blameless before God, not because we did something but because God was faithful in establishing us that way.

WE ARE INCLUDED BY HIS GRACE - Vs. 9

Notice that God has called us into fellowship with Him.

Fellowship here means partnership.

There is a oneness that takes place that joins us together,.

Have you ever thought of the Lord Jesus as your partner?

He would be senior partner for sure!

That where you go, He's there.

What say, He's there.

What you try to accomplish for His glory, He's there.

When you hurt, He hurts.

When you love the right things, He loves.

So, if Jesus is here, why not let the senior partner have control.

May it be that where you go, Jesus has taken you.

And what you say, Jesus is saying through you.

And what you try to accomplish for His glory, He has done through you.

And when you love, He is loving through you.

I do not know what is going to happen in Y2K, but I do know that my God is faithful!

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 ONE MASTER, ONE MESSAGE

The church in Corinth was not lacking in Spiritual gifts (1:7).

The church in Corinth was lacking in Spiritual maturity (3:1-3)

In our text Paul makes an appeal for unity among true believers.

COHESION OF THE BODY Vs. 10

CONTENTION WITHIN THE BODY Vss. 11-16

CONCERN BY THE BODY Vss. 17-18

Correct doctrine is important! However, we should not concern ourselves with following a particular human leader. Paul's main concern was the preaching of the cross of Christ. Preaching the Gospel is what brings folks to faith in Christ!

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS GOD'S POWER - Vss. 18, 23-24

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS GOD'S WISDOM - Vss. 19-25

THE PREACHING OF THE CROSS IS CHRIST'S SUFFICIENCY - Vss. 26-31

God has taken a bunch of "nobodies" and made them "somebodies" in Christ!

Christ is sufficient to provide "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption".

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 ALL I NEED!

In order to have salvation and to live a Godly Christian life, Jesus Christ is all I need.

WISDOM

RIGHTEOUSNESS

SANCTIFICATION

REDEMPTION

GLORY (Vs. 31)

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

PAUL, THE EVANGELIST

HIS PREACHING Vs. 1

HIS PLAN Vs. 2

HIS PRESENCE Vs. 3

HIS PERFORMANCE Vs. 4

HIS PURPOSE Vs. 5

1 Corinthians 2:1-8 COMMUNICATING THE ANSWER

Everyone who speaks clearly is a communicator.

Some people are very good communicators.

Other people do not seem to be able to express themselves as well.

This world is full of problems caused by sin. Isaiah 64:6

The answer to the world's sin problem is found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

Faith in Him brings eternal life (John 3:16-18, John 3:36).

It is the Christian's job to communicate the answer of the Gospel to a lost and dying world (Matthew 28:19,20, Mark 16:15, Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 3:15).

One of the greatest communicators of the Gospel was the Apostle Paul.

He gives us some ideas of how to communicate the Gospel in our text.

MINDSET - Vss. 1-2

In order to effectively do anything one needs a proper mindset. We need to think correctly and be determined to accomplish a specific goal.

When Paul went to Corinth he didn't go as a tremendous orator or great human wisdom (Vs. 1).

He went in order to communicate the testimony or message of God (Vs. 1)

Paul's mindset was to know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Paul knew that Christ was the answer. His whole goal was to communicate the crucified Christ to these People (Vs. 2).

Actually, this was not only Paul's mindset for preaching, but for everything he did (Galatians 6:14).

We fail to communicate the Gospel effectively because we segregate the cross from the rest of our lives.

Communicating the cross to others is only a small section of our lives. With Paul, it was the vital part of his life! He gloried in the cross! May we do the same!

METHOD - Vss. 3-5

What method did Paul use to communicate the cross?

First of all, Paul shows he was just like us. Verse 3 tells us that he tended towards being weak, fearful and scared!

Secondly, we see that Paul did not use man's wisdom (Vs.4). Man's wisdom did not save Paul, so he didn't use it. Instead Paul demonstrated the Spirit and power of God! Paul depended on God's strength to enable him to communicate the cross. May we be equally dependent on God! The faith of those we are reaching must be in the power of God, not the wisdom of men (Vs. 5).

MESSAGE - Vss. 6-8

Paul spoke a message of wisdom to those who were perfect (mature, complete) in Christ.

But it was not the wisdom of this world that Paul communicated (Vs. 6)

The wisdom of God is a mystery to this world (Vs. 7).

If the leaders of this world had understood God's wisdom, they would have never crucified Christ (Vs. 8).

We must make sure that the message we communicate is God's wisdom of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:18-24). This message will bring people to maturity.

1 Corinthians 2:9-3:7 TALE OF THREE MEN

There are three types of men mentioned in this passage.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN RECEIVES UNDERSTANDING - 2:9-13, 15-16

THE NATURAL (UNSAVED) MAN IS REFUSED UNDERSTANDING - 2:14

THE CARNAL MAN IS RESTRICTED IN UNDERSTANDING - 3:1-7

The carnal man is saved, but is limited in understanding because he is not allowing the Spirit of God to control him. In vs. 3, men are carnal when there is "envying, and strife, and divisions" among them.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 PAUL, THE EVANGELIST

HIS PREACHING Vs. 1

HIS PLAN Vs. 2

HIS PRESENCE Vs. 3

HIS PERFORMANCE Vs. 4

HIS PURPOSE Vs. 5

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 QUESTIONS ANSWERED

WHO ARE WE? - Vs. 1 - We are Stewards of the mysteries of God.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF US? - Vs. 2 - Faithfulness

WHOM SHALL WE JUDGE? - Vss. 3, 5a - Nobody

We are talking about evaluation of our ministry, not the judgment of sin. Christians are called upon to judge sin in others and ourselves (1 Corinthians 5, Galatians 6:1, 1 Corinthians 11:28-32, 1 John 1:8-10)

WHO IS OUR JUDGE? - Vss. 4, 5b - The Lord

1 Corinthians 4:2 MAKING LIFE COUNT

"Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

"And it's long fly ball to deep left field, and that ball is going...going...going foul! That ball went over 400 feet, but doesn't count."

Some people seem to hit the ball a long way in the game called life. It appears that they have accomplished much in the way of earning money, becoming famous or doing good works. However, if they haven't pleased God in this life, it is like hitting a foul ball. What they did just doesn't count.

We are reminded in 1 Corinthians 4:2 of the most important ingredient in making one's life count.

That ingredient is faithfulness. A steward was a household servant in charge of his master's worldly goods.

He was responsible for the success of the household. A good steward was a faithful steward who took good care of what his master owned. As servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries (1 Corinthians 4:1) we are responsible to be faithful if our lives are going to count for Him. Here are some areas in which we need to be faithful.

FAITHFUL IN CONVERSION - John 1:1-7, John 3:16-18 - If a person has not experienced the second birth, he has not been faithful in being converted. His life has not been turned around because of trust in Christ as Savior. Every person whose life counts, comes to Christ for salvation.

FAITHFUL IN COMMITMENT - Romans 12:1, Matthew 22:34-40 - A person who has trusted Christ as Savior is to be committed to Him in every way. To me, the first step of commitment to Christ is believer's baptism (Matthew 28:19-20)

FAITHFUL IN CHOICE - Romans 12:1-2, 2 Corinthians 6:14 - A Christian will make many choices in his lifetime. Probably the two most important choices concern career and marriage. In both cases, the Christian needs to be faithful to God in these choices. He or she should do with His life whatever God wants him to do. He or she should only marry a Christian.

FAITHFUL IN CONDUCT - Colossians 3:17 - All that we do should be approved by the Lord Jesus. If we can't do it in His name, we shouldn't do it!

FAITHFUL IN COMMUNICATION - 1 Peter 3:15 - We should be ready to witness for Christ at all times.

1 Corinthians 5 DEALING WITH A SIN PROBLEM

ACCEPT THE PROBLEM Vss. 1-2

ADDRESS THE PROBLEM Vss. 3-5

ALLEViate THE PROBLEM Vss. 6-13

1 Corinthians 5 THE CHURCH PURIFIED

Please turn to 1 John 3:1-3. In these verses you will note the great love that God has bestowed on us, that we as Christians should be called God's children (Vs. 1). Also we look forward to the day that we will be like Him, because we will see Jesus as He is (Vs. 2). Because of this hope that we have, we are to purify ourselves even as He is pure (Vs. 3).

If our Lord expects each individual Christian to strive towards purity, then He also expects His church to strive towards purity.

The people in the church in Corinth considered themselves to be spiritual giants, when in reality they were not. This church was a proud church, so proud that it was overlooking the purity of the body of Christ. In this passage Paul maintains that the Corinthian church must be purified if this church was going to please God. THE CONFRONTATION - Vss. 1-2

Paul begins this chapter by confronting the Corinthians with their problem. This was not a rumor by a commonly reported fact. The problem was that a church member was having an affair with his stepmother. This sin was so bad, that not even the Gentiles did it! Instead of mourning over the sin, the Corinthians were proud of their tolerance!

THE COMMAND - Vss. 3-5

Vs. 3 - Because the sin was obvious, Paul could make a judgment as to what needed to be done.

Vs. 4 - Paul was commanding that action be taken at a church meeting, gathered in the name of the Lord Jesus and meeting in His power.

Vs. 5 - To deliver this man to Satan would be to excommunicate the man. He would be placed in Satan's realm out in the world, so that hopefully he would repent and get right with the Lord.

THE CLEANSING - Vss. 6-8

Vs. 6 - Leaven is yeast. Yeast is put into bread to make the bread rise.

Vs. 7 - In scripture leaven is usually a symbol for sin. Paul calls for a purging of the old leaven. He is calling for the removal of sin. During the Passover celebration a lamb was killed, the blood was sprinkled, and the sacrifice was eaten. It was eaten with unleavened bread. Christ is our Passover sacrificed for us.

Vs. 8 - Because Christ is our Passover that we have partaken of for salvation we are to live unleavened lives. We are to live lives that do not practice sin. We are to cleanse ourselves of the leaven of malice and wickedness and practice an unleavened life of sincerity and truth.

THE CLARIFICATION - Vss. 9-13

Vss. 9-10 - Paul is saying that you will not avoid contact with sinful people. That is impossible. Paul is not saying not to talk to sinners. It is in talking to sinners that we can witness for the Savior. It is not wrong to eat a meal or to go somewhere an unbeliever.

Vs. 11 - Paul is telling us that there are certain people who call themselves born again Christians who have gone to extremes in sin. These people who profess to be believers but are not acting like it are people we should not have fellowship with.

Vss. 12-13 - God wants us to maintain purity within the church. He will judge those who are outside the church.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 CHRISTIAN, ADMIT IT!

If you know Christ as your Savior, it is time to admit to some facts which Paul states in these 2 verses.

YOU ARE OCCUPIED WITH GOD - "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God..." See John 14:16-18.

YOU ARE OWNED BY GOD - "...and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price..." See 1 Peter 1:18-19.

YOU ARE OBLIGATED TO GOD - "...therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." See Romans 12:1-2.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 ABOUT YOUR BODY

YOUR BODY IS A TEMPLE - "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God,"

The moment you trusted Christ as your Savior, the Holy Spirit began to indwell you. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9

The Holy Spirit of God lives inside of each believer, therefore your body is a temple of God!

YOUR BODY IS A TRUST - "...and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price:"

When a person is responsible for a trust it means that he is taking care of something that He doesn't own. We are responsible to take care of our bodies as a trust. God owns our bodies because He purchased our salvation on the cross. Romans 5:6-9

YOUR BODY IS TO BE A TESTIMONY - "...therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." Because we are owned by God, we are to bring glory to God with all that we do in body and/or spirit! Romans 12:1

ALTERNATE OUTLINE:

MY BODY - A TEMPLE

MY BODY - A TRUST

MY BODY - A TESTIMONY

1 Corinthians 7:1-24 PRINCIPLES IN MARRIAGE

PERMISSION TO MARRY - Vss. 1-2, 6-9

PLEASURE IN MARRIAGE - Vss. 3-5

PERMANENCE OF MARRIAGE - Vss. 10-16

PLACEMENT IN THE BODY OF CHRIST - Vss. 17-24

Every person is to remain as they are called. If we have been placed in the body of Christ as a married person, we are to remain married, and not to seek another venue. This principle also has many applications besides marriage, as the text indicates.

(NOTE: You may want to develop just the first three points and just preach through verse 16.)

1 Corinthians 10:12-14 SURVIVAL

The Christian lives in a wicked world! Satan is trying to entice the Christian to sin (1 Peter 5:8). The Christian can survive Satan's brutal attacks if he heeds these verses.

BE CAREFUL - Vs. 12

The Christian needs to realize that he is vulnerable. When the Christian thinks he's arrived or made it Spiritually, he needs to take heed! He's setting himself up for a fall. We are to remember the Israelites in the wilderness is a model of failure. See 1 Corinthians 10:5-11

BE CONFIDENT - Vs. 13

No temptation is a new one.

God is faithful.

God will provide a way to escape. All we have to do is take that way of escape.

BE CONCERNED - Vs. 14

Idolatry is a terrible sin. We should loathe the idea of falling into idolatry. We are to flee from idolatry.

1 Corinthians 11:23-32 A COMMUNION MEDITATION

We must be careful that the celebration of Communion, or The Lord's Table does not become a routine addition to our church services without having any impact on those who participate. It is good to remind our flocks of the importance of The Lord's Table.

ELEMENTS AT THE LORD'S TABLE - Vss. 23-25

The bread represents the body of Christ that was broken.

The cup represents the blood of Christ that was shed for our sins.

EXPLANATIONS CONCERNING THE LORD'S TABLE - Vss. 26-27

First, Paul explains that we are showing or preaching or proclaiming the Lord's death till He comes back.

Each one of us is preaching our faith in the sacrificial death of Christ for our sins when we take of the bread and the cup. It is the most important message that we will ever preach!

Second, Paul explains that we should not partake of the elements in an unworthy manner.

We are all unworthy because we are sinners.

An unworthy manner is when we partake of the communion without being saved.

An unworthy manner is when we partake of the communion with unconfessed sin in our lives.

An unworthy manner is when we partake of the communion with out paying attention to what we are doing.

An unworthy manner is taking the bread and the cup lightly.

EXAMINATION AT THE LORD'S TABLE - Vss. 28-32

Vs. 28 says that we should examine ourselves before we partake of the Lord's Table. This concept can be summed up with two words.

1. CONFESSION - Vs. 28 - Sin is to be named and confessed to God. Psalm 32:5, 1 John 1:9

2. CHASTENING - Vss. 29-32 - The person who partakes of the Table without confession of sin is inviting the judgment of God (The word damnation in vs. 29 means judgment.). God disciplined many who took of the table in an unworthy way with an early death (sleep). When we judge our own sins through confession, then God does not have to discipline us.

1 Corinthians 11:23-31 etc. FELLOWSHIP AROUND THE TABLE

There is nothing like friends gathering around the table for food and fellowship. We can all remember times of great fellowship gathered around the table.

Today we are gathered for a more significant time of food and fellowship. This is what we call "Holy Communion" or "The Lord's Table".

As we contemplate the fellowship around the table this morning, we are attempting to prepare our hearts for participation in this, the Lord's Table. These remarks are made to stimulate our thinking and sharpen our awareness of what we are doing. As we prepare for fellowship around the table, I want us to consider five things:

THE PERFECT HOST - Luke 22:7-13

Whether you go to a person's house there is a host, hostess, or both. These are the providers of the feast, the ones who foot the bill for the food, and the ones who prepared the food or made sure it was prepared. They are the ones in charge.

There is such a thing as the perfect host or hostess. One who does things just right to make the meal go perfectly. We do have a perfect host. The host is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read Luke 22:7-13

It was the night before the Jesus' death. It was the Jewish feast of the Passover. Our Lord chose the place for the meal, and our Lord's disciples prepared the meal.

Read Luke 22:14-20

Notice that the Lord was in charge of the meal. He was indeed the host. Also notice that Jesus said to do this in remembrance of him. Thus, the Lord's table was instituted by Him as a way you and I can have a memorial of what He has done for us on the cross.

At this table today:

Our Lord is host because He established the feast.

Our Lord is host because He is being remembered.

Our Lord is host because He provides the reason for the bread and the cup - His death.

Our Lord is host because He is right here with us. Matthew 18:20

There should not be frivolity because He is here as Host and observer.

There should not be impure thoughts because He is here and knows our thoughts.

This should not be taken lightly because the food, the bread and the cup, are emblems of His body broken for our sins and His blood shed for our sins. This should not be done with a wandering mind for that would be disrespectful to our host.

THE PROPER ATTIRE

The Lord's table requires certain clothing. The Lord's table is not for everyone. Just as there is required dress for a formal dinner, and a different type of dress required at a picnic, there is proper attire to come before the Lord at His table.

The requirement is that one is attired or dressed in righteousness before God. You must be declared righteous before God.

This is difficult because of our sin. Romans 3:23, Isaiah 64:6 How can we be clothed in a garment of righteousness? Read and explain, Titus 3:5, Philippians 3:7-9, and Romans 3:21-22.

In Matthew 22 our Lord tells the story of a marriage feast. Many made excuses for not coming, so the Lord sent his servants out into the highways and byways and compelled people to come. Evidently the Lord was providing the proper attire for those who would come in. And yet one man did not put on a wedding garment. He was sent out to punishment instead of enjoying the feast.

Jesus Christ has provided the wedding garment for us. It is righteousness based on faith in Him. Put on that garment. Be ready for Heaven and then come to the Lord's Table. Romans 5:1

THE PRESCRIBED GIFT - 1 Corinthians 11:27-31

Very often when we go to someone's house we bring a gift. It might be candy, flowers, or a little something for the hostess. Coming to a table where the Lord Himself has died to declare us righteous, we might hesitate about bringing a gift. What could we possibly bring to please this host?

1 Corinthians 11:28 tells us what to bring. We are called upon as Christians, who have on the proper attire of righteousness to come with clean hearts. Matthew 5:23-25,

1 Corinthians 11:27 warns us of eating in an "unworthy manner". Everyone is unworthy, but to eat and drink in an unworthy manner is to come to the Lord's Table with unconfessed sin or frivolity. We must take action.

1 John 1:8-10

THE PREPARED MENU - 1 Corinthians 11:23-25

Just as there is a menu of what you will serve when you have folks over for dinner, there is a menu for the Lord's Table. Of course, the purpose for this table is not for the purpose of filling us up, but for causing us to reflect, and be thankful for what Jesus has done for us. The bread is symbolic for the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. It was the body that was given for us.

The cup is symbolic for the blood that was shed on our behalf. 1 Peter 1:18-19

THE PLANNED RESULT - Vs. 26

The planned result of the Lord's table is that we will preach to others by our actions. Just about everything we do preaches to others. When you cheer for a certain team, you "preach" what team you are for. When you smile or make a nasty face at the mention of someone's name you "preach" your feelings about that person. Your good works and bad works also "preach" what kind of a person you are.

The purpose of the Lord's Table is to preach his death to others until Jesus comes. The greatest message that you and I will ever preach is at the Lord's Table.

1 Corinthians 11:23-32 NOT FOR GRANTED

(A SERMON FOR CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S TABLE)

We take many things for granted.

We flip a switch, and we turn on a faucet and we take for granted that someone is providing us with electricity and running water. We go to McDonald's or some other fast food restaurant and take for granted that someone has stocked food and arranged for, and trained people to cook and serve it properly.

We come to church and take for granted that the door is open, the church is clean, the bulletin is typed, the lawn is mowed and that someone is there to play the organ and/or piano.

We probably take parts of the service for granted as well. We would miss the hymns if we didn't sing them, but do we ever concentrate on worship as we sing? We would miss the Scriptures if they weren't read, but do we try to get anything out of the Word while it is being read? We would be upset if we didn't hear a Bible-based message, but is the preaching of the Word viewed by us as something that will help change our lives, or mere entertainment? How much of the worship service are we taking for granted?

Today we come to a routine time in our worship. It is the time that we regularly come to the communion table. We call the celebration "Holy Communion" or "The Lord's Table". Do we take this part of our service for granted, not paying much attention to our responsibilities at the Lord's Table? Or do we allow this time to really minister to our lives.

It is my prayer that the verse by verse study of this passage will help us get more out of our participation at the Lord's Table, and that we will not take the Lord's Table for granted. As we 1 Corinthians 11:23-32 we come to the following conclusions.

1. CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S TABLE IS A SACRED EVENT. Vs. 23 It was received "of the Lord".

2. CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S TABLE MEANS REMEMBERING THE LORD'S DEATH AND PROCLAIMING FAITH IN IT FOR SALVATION. Vss. 24-26

3. THE BREAD AND THE CUP REMIND US OF THE BROKEN BODY AND SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST. Vss. 24-25

4. EACH BELIEVER IS TO EXAMINE HIMSELF BEFORE PARTAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP. Vs. 27-28

5. THE LORD WILL CHASTEN US IF WE PARTAKE OF THE LORD'S TABLE IN AN UNWORTHY MANNER. Vss. 29-32

There is a difference between being unworthy (We all are!) and partaking in an unworthy manner. An unworthy manner means I am partaking without confessing sin, or taking the Lord's Table lightly.

1 Corinthians 11:23-34 RECEIVED OF THE LORD

Paul received his instructions concerning The Lord's Table from the Lord himself. Paul shows us that the Lord's Table is a time of examination. We need to take four "looks" as we prepare to partake of The Lord's Table.

THE BACKWARD LOOK Vss. 23-25

THE PRESENT LOOK Vss.

THE FORWARD LOOK ("Till he come.") Vs. 26

THE INWARD LOOK Vss. 27-34

1 Corinthians 11:23-34 YOU ARE HERE (A communion meditation.)

As we gather around the Lord's table, we often do not consider its significance. As you come to the table, you must remember that you are here for a purpose.

YOU ARE HERE TO REMEMBER JESUS - Vss. 23-25

See Isaiah 53:4-8 and 1 Peter 1:18-19

YOU ARE HERE TO PREACH HIS DEATH - Vs. 26

The word "shew" means to proclaim.

YOU ARE HERE TO EXAMINE YOURSELF - Vss. 27-34

1 Corinthians 13 HOW'S YOUR LOVE LIFE?

When we ask "How's Your Love Life?", we are not talking romance. God is very clear in the "Love Chapter", that true, Christian, agape love is of the utmost importance. How do you measure up to 1 Corinthians 13?

LOVE IS ESSENTIAL - Priority - Vss. 1-2

LOVE IS EXPERIENTIAL - Practice - Vss. 3-7

LOVE IS EXCEPTIONAL - Prominence Vss. 8-13

(You may want to preach this one in three sessions, breaking down the main points with your own points.)

1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13 THE GREATNESS OF LOVE

FUTILITY WITHOUT LOVE – Vss. 1-3

FACTORS OF LOVE – Vss. 4-7

FAITHFULNESS OF LOVE – Vss. 8, 13

1 Corinthians 13 LOVE!

THE PRIORITY OF LOVE - Vss. 1-3

THE PARTICULARS OF LOVE - Vss. 4-7

THE PERMANENCE OF LOVE - Vss. 8-13

1 Corinthians 15:1-10 THREE REALITIES

People wonder about the authenticity and reality of the Easter story.

Paul answers that question, by showing us three things that are real that center around Easter.

THE REALITY OF REDEMPTION - Vss. 1-4

The facts of the Gospel of redemption are presented very concisely here. Christ died for our sins. He was buried. He rose again.

THE REALITY OF RESURRECTION - Vss. 5-7

Here are witnesses of the fact that Jesus did rise from the dead.

THE REALITY OF REGENERATION - Vss. 8-10

Jesus appeared to Paul. Paul was regenerated (born again) by the Spirit of God. His life was changed!

1 Corinthians 15:1-10 RESURRECTION FOR EVERYONE

On Good Friday we remember the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross for our sins. He died for everyone. Anyone who trusts him can have forgiveness and eternal life.

On Easter Sunday we remember the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Just as the death of Jesus Christ was for everyone, so is the resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-11 we have list of witnesses to the resurrection. I find it striking that the resurrection of Christ was for each witness. It met a need, having a purpose for witness. Perhaps as we study these particular people this morning you see yourself as having the same need as one of these witnesses.

Introduction - Vss. 1-4 (Stress the Gospel message of verses 3-4.)

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST WAS FOR:

THE DENIER - Vs. 5 - Peter who was so adamant about his loyalty denied Christ 3 times. Matthew 26:70-74, Luke 23:54-62. When Jesus arose from the dead, he appeared to Peter in Luke 24:52, and gave Peter special attention in John 21. Peter, the denier, needed to know that he was forgiven and still useful in ministry for Christ.

THE DESERTER - Vs. 5 - The Apostles are called "the twelve" even though there was now 11. They had run when Jesus was in His darkest hour. Jesus appeared to them with a message of Peace and commission. See John 20:19-23.

THE COMMON MAN - Vs. 6 - Here was a group of believers who hadn't necessarily denied Christ. They were not necessarily distinguished people. They were probably an average cross section of people, and yet Jesus appeared to them. This reminds me that one does not have to be special to go to Heaven, become saved, and feel the touch of the resurrection.

THE UNBELIEVER - Vs. 7 - This James was half-brother to Jesus. John 7:5 tells us that His brethren didn't believe on Jesus. James was touched by the appearance of his brother. He became a believer.

THE MESSENGER - Vs. 7 - Here they are referred to as the apostles. They saw Jesus more than once. As apostles, they were sent as messengers with the Gospel. The Lord commissioned them to go out in Matthew 28:18-20. Because they had seen the risen Lord they were effective messengers for Him. A true witness for Christ must see Him as risen, or he has no message.

THE PERSECUTOR - Vss. 8-11 - Not only did Paul not believe in Jesus, but he persecuted Jesus' followers. See Acts 8:1 and 9:1-2. The risen Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus road (Acts 9). Even those who persecute Jesus and His followers can be saved!

1 Corinthians 15:20 CHRIST IS RISEN! (Three Parts)

Easter Services have been a celebration of the fact that Christ is risen from the dead. If there is one truth as necessary as the substitutionary death of Christ on the cross, it is the resurrection of Christ from the grave. The great news, however is that Christ indeed is raised from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

1 Corinthians 15:20 - But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

This little verse tells us three important things about the resurrection. It tells of:

1) THE IMMEDIACY OF THE RESURRECTION

We live in a "now" society. We want immediate gratification.

That's one of the reasons credit card debt is so high for so many. We don't want to wait to save to buy something. We want it now. Most of us don't like to wait for anything. There is one thing we don't have to wait for. We are not waiting for the resurrection of Christ to take place. We are not hoping that one day Jesus will come out of the grave. He has already come out of the grave. *But now is Christ risen from the dead* The fact that Christ is already risen from the dead is important because it shows us that God accepted the sacrifice that Jesus made for our sins.

The immediacy of Jesus' resurrection is also important because of where Jesus is. He is in Heaven! Acts 1:9-11, Hebrews 1:1-3

The one who died for you, sits at the right hand of the throne of God to represent you! He is your advocate! 1 John 2:1-2

If you are a born again Christian, Jesus died for your sins.

Because you are a Christian God does not want you to sin.

However, there are times when we do sin.

When we fail God we have an advocate, a lawyer, "one called along side to help", sitting at the right hand of the throne of God. He is there to represent us. I imagine that when we sin, He might say to God the Father, "Father, He's mine, I died for that sin."

As Christians, we should strive to live holy lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16

And when we sin, we are to confess that sin, and forsake it. 1 John 1:9

But isn't it nice to know that we have a risen Savior, who's there representing us when we sin. Sin should never be taken lightly, but it's nice to have help.

Not only is Jesus in Heaven now as our advocate, He's there as our high priest. Hebrews 4:14-16. I have had the pleasure of having friends who can sometimes say, "I know exactly how you feel, because I've been through the same thing."

In Heaven, you have a high priest that not only speaks in your behalf to the Heavenly Father, but He knows just how you feel and what you are going through. He was tempted just like we are. Now Jesus might not have faced the same situation that you do, but He has faced the same types of temptations that you have.

- Have you been tempted to worry? So has Jesus.
- Have you been tempted to give up? So has Jesus.
- Have you been tempted to steal? So has Jesus.
- Have you been tempted to be dishonest? So has Jesus.
- Have you been tempted to be lazy? So has Jesus?
- Have you been tempted to lose your temper? So has Jesus?

What's the difference between your temptation and that of Jesus? Jesus was tempted and never sinned. We have been tempted and often succumbed to sin.

Because Jesus is alive now and sitting at the right hand of God, You are encouraged to "come boldly before the throne of grace to find grace to help in time of need."

So, when you worry, come to Jesus.

When you want to quit, come to Jesus.

When you are tempted to do wrong, come to Jesus.

He is there for us.

When we don't know which way to turn because problems seem so great, come to Jesus!

All of the great work that is done is by the Lord Jesus Christ is done by a resurrected Jesus Christ! For NOW is Jesus risen from the dead!

2) THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RESURRECTION

But now is Christ risen from the dead

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is important, because the death of the Lord Jesus is important. Every one of us will face death unless Jesus comes back before we die.

For most of us, when we die it will not be international news or even national or state news. Our death will only be significant to a few people.

Jesus death was important because of who He was.

He was God in the flesh.

He was God in human form. John 1:1-4

Jesus' death was also important because of why he died.

Ezekiel 18:4 - ...the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Jesus did not sin. Therefore Jesus was not required to die.

So why did He die?

He died to pay for your sins and mine. Isaiah 53:5-6, 2 Corinthians 5:21

When Jesus died on the cross He had accomplished everything He was supposed to accomplish in this life. That's why He cried "It is finished!"

So we know why Jesus died. He died for us. His death is important. But His resurrection is also important. When Jesus rose from the dead, it proved that God had accepted Jesus' sacrifice for sin. Isaiah 53:10

The resurrection of Christ from the dead is also important, because it is a living Savior who offers us eternal life. It is a man who conquered death that is offering us forgiveness and a life in Heaven!

It is a living Savior who says in Revelation 3:20, *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

It is faith in this living Savior that brings us forgiveness and eternal life. Romans 10:9-10

Romans 10:9-10 - That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. [10] For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Have you placed your faith and trust in Christ?

3) THE IMPLICATION OF THE RESURRECTION

1 Corinthians 15:20 - But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

According to John MacArthur, when it was harvest time in Israel, the Israelites were to bring some of their crops as an offering to the Lord before they harvested the crop. This was called the "first fruits". The implication of the resurrection for us is that Christ is the "first fruits" of them that slept. Those who sleep are those who know Christ as Savior but are dead.

The fact that Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection implies that others will follow. In fact this resurrection is promised right in 1 Corinthians 15:22-23

What does this mean for us?

It means that one day we, who are Christians, will have a new, resurrection body.

It means that not only need we not fear death because our spirits go to Heaven, we need not fear death because we, like Christ, will rise out of the grave. 1 Corinthians 15:52-55

This also means that all those Christians whom we have loved who have passed away will also have resurrection bodies. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

What tremendous implications we have.

1 Corinthians 15:58 HANDLING CHANGE

1 Corinthians 15:58 - "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

As we go through life we will encounter change. Our family situations change. Our work situations change. Our church and social situations change. Our own health and the health of those we love often changes.

1 Corinthians 15:58 is a good verse to help us handle change. This verse concludes "The Resurrection Chapter" of the Bible. The resurrection is a sure thing, therefore we can stand firm no matter what changes we face in our lives.

OUR POSITION - "be ye stedfast, unmoveable..."

Because of the hope of resurrection we should be steadfast and unmoveable in at least three ways:

In Doctrine - We should hold on to the doctrine or teachings of the Word of God. Ephesians 4:14

In Devotion - We should be steadfast in our commitment to Christ. Romans 12:1-2

Against The Devil - We should resist the Devil at all times. 1 Peter 5:8

OUR PROGRAM - "always abounding in the work of the Lord..."

The work of the Lord is summed up in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20.

We are to bring people to Christ, baptize them, and continually teach them to obey the teachings of Christ.

OUR PROMISE - "...forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Our labor in the Lord is not in vain because:

His Word never returns to him void. Isaiah 55:10-11

His Reward for us comes at the Judgment Seat of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10

1 Corinthians 16:2 A PATTERN FOR GIVING

GIVING IS PLANNED - The first day of the week.

Of course, they were to set it aside until the offering would be received. Most churches receive the offering weekly. My wife, Dottie and I have discovered that our giving is best done when we plan it.

The Lord's money is taken out of our pay first!

GIVING IS PERSONAL - Every one of you.

GIVING IS PROPORTIONAL - As God has prospered.

You might want to point out that some only get paid once every month or every two weeks. They are to give when they receive it, and not to be concerned about the weeks when they do not give.

We are to give as God has prospered us. I personally believe that the Christian should begin his giving by tithing to the local church.

[For more guidelines for giving, see 2 Corinthians 8-9. Especially pay attention to 2 Corinthians 9:6-11]

2 Corinthians 1:2-5 GOD'S COMFORT

THE CHARACTER OF GOD'S COMFORT - Vs. 2

Grace

Peace

THE CONSISTENCY OF GOD'S COMFORT - Vs. 3

He is the Father of mercies.

He is the God of ALL comfort.

THE CONTINUATION OF GOD'S COMFORT - Vs. 4

God comforts us so we can pass the comfort on to others.

THE COMPLETENESS OF GOD'S COMFORT - Vs. 5

The more we suffer, the more we experience God's comfort.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 etc. SEVEN SOURCES OF COMFORT

A small child dies suddenly in the middle of the night. There is no warning, no advanced notice.

A FAMILY NEEDS COMFORT!

A man loses his sight and now has to adjust to blindness and greater dependence on others.

A MAN NEEDS COMFORT!

A woman who once could do anything and everything is restricted to a wheel chair and can do nothing.

A WOMAN NEEDS COMFORT!

A little boy or girl is suddenly faced with the reality that mommy and daddy are getting divorced.

A CHILD NEEDS COMFORT!

A dad with a wife and 4 children is faced with job loss. There are 6 mouths to feed and almost no income

A FATHER NEEDS COMFORT!

A faithful wife discovers that her husband has been unfaithful and is now suing her with divorce.

A WIFE NEEDS COMFORT!

On and on I could go, describing situations that bring sorrow into the lives of people every day. These situations burden, trouble, and disturb people, and rightly so. When there are sorrows, needs, and difficulties, it is only natural to ask, "Where do we turn for comfort?"

For the born again Christian there are at least seven sources of comfort. Perhaps you need them yourself right now, but if not, you can learn where to direct others when they need comfort.

1. THE FATHER - 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

He's "the God of all comfort". See 1 Peter 5:7, Philippians 4:6-7 and Isaiah 26:3-4

2. THE SON - 1 John 2:1-2, Matthew 11:28-30, John 14:27

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT - John 16:7-15

4. THE WORD OF GOD - Romans 15:4, John 16:33

5. THE PREACHING OF GOD'S WORD - 2 Timothy 4:2

"Exhortation" is encouragement. When a preacher exhorts, he often speaks words of comfort.

6. THE BRETHREN - John 13:34-35, Romans 12:15, Galatians 6:2

7. THE FUTURE - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13

2 Corinthians 1:3 etc. BLESS GOD!

Because God has blessed us we should bless His name!

BLESS GOD FOR HIS SUPPORT

2 Corinthians 1:3 - Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;"

BLESS GOD FOR THE SPIRITUAL

Ephesians 1:3 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"

BLESS GOD FOR SALVATION

1 Peter 1:3 - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,"

2 Corinthians 1:3-11 STANDING THROUGH SUFFERING

All true Christians suffer at some time in their lives. The Apostle Paul was no different.

He teaches in this passage how to stand successfully, even when it hurts!

PRAISE THROUGH SUFFERING Vs. 3

PURPOSE OF SUFFERING Vss. 4-7

POWER IN SUFFERING Vss. 8-10

PARTNERSHIP DURING SUFFERING Vs. 11

2 Corinthians 3:17 etc. THERE IS LIBERTY!

Imagine being given a check for a million dollars and never cashing it.

Imagine having a freezer and cupboard full of food and never eating.

Imagine dangling precariously on a rope when there is a ladder within your grasp.

Imagine living a life of defeat and despair when there is no reason to do so.

"And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

If you read 2 Corinthians 3 you will discover that God does not want us under the bondage of law keeping or self-effort. Instead He wants us to have the freedom of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. Because the Holy Spirit is present within us, all we need to do is reach for it by faith. We live such self-defeating lives that God never intended us to live.

I want to share with you some of the freedoms we have as a result of the working of the Holy Spirit. We just need to appropriate these truths by faith.

FREEDOM TO BELONG - Romans 8:15-17

You are a child of God and therefore part of the family of God.

FREEDOM TO SERVE - 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

We are ministers of God. His sufficiency to serve comes from God.

FREEDOM TO BE GUIDED - Romans 8:14, Psalm 32:8

FREEDOM TO WITNESS - Acts 1:8

FREEDOM TO LEARN - John 16:13-15

FREEDOM TO PRAY - Romans 8:26-27

FREEDOM TO PRODUCE - Galatians 5:22-23

2 Corinthians 4:1-5 SERVING GOD

Every Christian should desire to serve God. The Apostle Paul gives us an example of how to serve effectively.

SERVING GOD IS A MATTER OF COURAGE - Vs. 1

God has given us something to do. We must do not fainting, but receiving mercy. God's mercy can get us through any problem.

SERVING GOD IS A MATTER OF CONDUCT - Vs. 2

We are not to act or handle God's Word in a deceitful way. We are to openly display the truth.

SERVING GOD IS A MATTER OF CONCERN - Vs. 3

If the good news about Jesus is hidden, it is hidden from those who are lost.

SERVING GOD IS A MATTER OF CONFLICT - Vs. 4

Satan has blinded the minds of unbelievers.

SERVING GOD IS A MATTER OF COMMITMENT - Vss. 5

We are to preach Christ and not ourselves.

We are servants to others for Jesus sake.

2 Corinthians 4:1-6 FAITHFUL!!!

As faithful servants of Jesus Christ we are to be faithful! 1 Corinthians 4:2

Our text shows us ways to be faithful as Christ's servants.

FAITHFUL IN INTENSITY- Vs. 1

"We faint not." We are intense in our dedication to Christ. Galatians 2:20

FAITHFUL IN INTEGRITY - Vs. 2

Instead of being deceitful and dishonest we are to manifest the truth.

FAITHFUL IN IMPORTANCE - Vss. 3-4

We realize that a hidden Gospel is hidden to those who are lost. We know how important it is to get the Gospel out.

FAITHFUL IN INTEREST - Vss. 5-6

We are so interested in people coming to Christ, that we are not to preach ourselves but Christ and to consider ourselves the servants of others for Jesus' sake.

2 Corinthians 4:1-10 SO YOU WANT TO SERVE THE LORD

The greatest privilege in my life is to be a born-again Christian. The next greatest privilege in my life is to be the Lord's servant. If you want to serve the Lord, Paul gives you some pointers about that service in our text.

1. YOU HAVE MERCY - Vs. 1

2. YOU NEED INTEGRITY - Vs. 2

3. YOU HAVE AN ENEMY - Vss. 3-4

4. YOU NEED A PRIORITY - Vss. 5-6

5. YOU NEED EXCELLENCE - Vs. 7

6. YOU NEED VICTORY - Vss. 8-10

2 Corinthians 4:1-5 THE MINISTRY!

Each of us who are Christians are servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. That means that we are his ministers! We are full time servants, even if we do not support by our ministry for Christ. Everyone of us should remember these things about the ministry:

1. THERE'S MERCY FOR MINISTRY Vs. 1

2. THERE'S A METHOD FOR MINISTRY Vs. 2 (Honesty)

3. THERE'S A MOTIVE FOR MINISTRY Vs. 3

(When the Gospel is hidden, it's hidden to those who are lost!)

4. THERE'S A MENACE TO THE MINISTRY Vs. 4 (Satan, the god of this world).

5. THERE'S A MASTER IN THE MINISTRY Vs. 5 (The Lord Jesus Christ)

2 Corinthians 4:5-10 IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING

THE PREACHING IS GLORIOUS – Vss. 5-6

It is of Christ who shines in our hearts.

THE POWER IS GOD'S – Vs. 7

THE PROBLEMS ARE SURMOUNTABLE – Vss. 8-9

THE PURPOSE IS CLEAR – Vs. 10

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 LOOKING AHEAD

OUR HOPE OF RESURRECTION - Vss. 1-4

OUR HELP FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT - Vss. 5-8

OUR HOLINESS OF LIFE - Vss. 9-10

We live holy lives because we must give account at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:8-11a LOOKING AHEAD

WE ARE CONFIDENT

Vs. 8 - *We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.*

WE ARE CONCERNED

Vs. 9 - *Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

WE ARE COGNIZANT (AWARE)

Vs. 10 - *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

We know that we must all appear before the "Judgment Seat of Christ".

WE ARE COMPASSIONATE

Vs. 11a - *Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;*

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 WHAT A CHANGE!

There is a dramatic change in our lives when we come to know Christ as Savior.

WE ARE CONSTRAINED BY CHRIST'S LOVE Vs. 14

WE ARE CONVICTED ABOUT GODLY LIVING Vss. 15-16

WE ARE CONVERTED TO NEW LIFE Vss. 17-18

WE ARE COMMISSIONED FOR MINISTRY Vss. 19-21

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 GREAT NEWS

Our son has just accepted a position to pastor his first church. That's great news! Our other son has earned his Masters Degree in Classic Musicology, and is working towards his doctorate. That's great news!

Our daughter spent 2 1/2 weeks on a mission trip to Moldova this summer. That's great news!

Our church had about 2,400 contacts at our local county fair while handing out literature. That's great news!

I'm sure you can think of other examples of great news. Truly great news is found in our text.

GOD'S MAJESTY - Vs. 17 - He has made Christians "new creatures" in Christ. He has brought about change in our lives!

CHRIST'S MASTERY - Vss. 18a, 19a, 21 - Christ has mastered sin, and has made us righteous in Himself. He has reconciled Christians to God!

OUR MINISTRY - Vss. 18b, 19b, 20 - We are now given the ministry of reconciliation. We are now ambassadors for Christ, telling others the good news of salvation in Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 IT DOESN'T GET BETTER THAN THIS!

THE WORK OF TRANSFORMATION - Vs. 17

THE WORD OF RECONCILIATION - Vss. 18, 19b, 20

THE WONDER OF REDEMPTION - Vss. 19a, 21

2 Corinthians 6:1-10 SO, YOU'RE A SERVANT OF CHRIST!

If you have trusted Christ as your Savior, you are His servant (Romans 12:1). We, who are Christ's servants are in good company. One of our fellow servants was the Apostle Paul. Paul gives us a very good description of what being a servant of Christ is all about.

PASSION FOR MINISTRY - Vss. 1-2 - Beseeching

Paul had such a passion for ministry that he beseeched the saved and unsaved alike. Time is short. People need to be won to Christ, and then living for Christ. We need passion for the Spiritual well-being of others.

PREVENTION IN MINISTRY - Vs. 3 - "Giving no offense."

Paul wanted to do nothing that would bring blame on his ministry for Christ.

PROOF OF MINISTRY - Vss. 4-10 - "Approving ourselves as the ministers of God."

The "in" of CONDITIONS - Vss. 4-5

"...in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;"

The "by" of CONDUCT - Vss. 6-8a

"By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report:"

The "as" of CONTRAST - Vss. 8b-10

"...as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

2 Corinthians 6:3-10 HE PROVED IT!

How do we show ourselves to be the true servants of God! Like Paul, we prove it!

IN VARIOUS SITUATIONS Vss. 4-5

"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings;"

Paul faced all sorts of problems for the cause of Christ. You might want to refer to some of the things he talks about in 2 Corinthians 11:24-33.

WITH VITAL STRENGTH Vss. 6-7

"By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left," Paul relied on God for the strength he needed during trying times.

WITH VICTORIOUS SUPERIORITY Vss. 8-10

"By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Paul had victory in God that made him superior in every situation that he faced.

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 A CASE FOR SEPARATION

We often quote 2 Corinthians 6:14 and apply the verse to marriage.

Although this is a healthy application, the believer needs to be separated from the influence of the unsaved in any number of ways. Here is Paul's case for living a life separated unto God.

INSISTENCE - "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers." - Vs. 14a.

INQUIRY - 6:14b-16a

"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness?"

"What communion hath light with darkness?"

"What concord hath Christ with Belial (Probably means the devil.)?"

"What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"

"What agreement hath the temple of God with idols?"

IDENTITY - "Ye are the temple of the living God..." 6:16b

INVITATION - "Come out from among them and be ye separate..." 6:17-18

INSTRUCTION - Because of the promises of Vss. 17-18, Paul instructs the Corinthians, "...let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." 7:1

2 Corinthians 8:1-15 MONEY MATTERS

The Corinthians were lax in their giving, after making great promises. There are lessons here that encourage us to be generous as well.

EXAMPLE OF GENEROSITY Vss. 1-3

EXHORTATION TO GIVE Vss.6-8

EXCELLENCE OF GRACE Vs. 9

EXPEDIENCE OF GUIDANCE Vss. 10-12

EQUALITY IN GIVING Vss. 13-15

2 Corinthians 8:1-5 THOSE GENEROUS MACEDONIANS

GENEROSITY THAT WAS PERFORMED UNDER PRESSURE – Vss. 1-2

GENEROSITY THAT WAS POWERFUL – Vs. 3

GENEROSITY THAT WAS PERSISTENT – Vs. 4

GENEROSITY THAT WAS PRIORITIZED – Vs. 5

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 etc. WALLET WORSHIP

We are in a worship service.

We have worshiped through singing.

We have worshiped through praying.

We have worshiped by reading the Scriptures.

We have worshiped by listening to special music.

We are worshiping by listening and responding to the preaching of God's Word.

There was another act of worship in our service.

This act of worship is probably the most unpopular.

This act of worship is one that most do not want the pastor to talk about.

This act of worship is done with your wallet.

That's why I have entitled the sermon, "Wallet Worship".

I would like us to consider 3 things about worshiping God by Giving to His work.

THE REASONS FOR WALLET WORSHIP

Why should I part with my hard-earned money? Why should I put more than a token gift in the offering plate? There are, of course, many reasons. Here are 3:

1. Gratitude

When you give, to whom are you giving? Are you giving to the church, the pastor, the missionary, the Sunday School, or the building fund? No! When you give in worship, you are giving to the Lord! The church, the pastor, the missionary, the Sunday School and/or the building fund will benefit, but your giving should be to God.

If you know Christ as Savior, you're giving is out of gratitude for what He has done for you. See Ephesians 2:4-10 to see what He's done for us.

2. Ownership

Psalm 24:1-2 - Because of creation God owns everything. Because of creation God owns your possessions. Because of creation God owns you. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 shows us that God has an even greater hold on us as Christians. Because of what God has done for us, he owns us. He should be allowed to use those things he has entrusted into my care.

3. Dedication

Romans 12:1 - If my body is a living sacrifice, that means that all I have and all I am His. If what I have is that with he has entrusted to my keeping, I am responsible to properly use it.

THE WRONG KINDS OF WALLET WORSHIP

Wallet worship is wrong when we worship our wallets, instead of worshiping with our wallets. 1 Timothy 6:10 The wrong kinds of Wallet Worship include:

1. Being Selfish

Another word for it is "stingy". You want to be "comfortable", without regard to helping others. Luke 12:16-21

2. Being Scared

Many of you never started giving generously to God when you were young. Now you are afraid that you cannot afford to tithe or to give above the tithe to missions. You are afraid that ends will not meet. Our Lord answers this concern in Matthew 6:19-21, 31-33.

3. Being Sneaky

Some folks who talk the most about giving end up giving the least. Some will even try to deceive others about the amount of their contribution to the Lord's work. Acts 5:1-11

THE RIGHT PRINCIPLES OF WALLET WORSHIP

Here are four different principles to apply for the right kind of worship with the wallet.

1. THE ABRAHAM PRINCIPLE - Genesis 14:18-20

Abraham demonstrates the giving of the tithe.

There was no law as yet about giving when Abraham did this.

But Abraham gave willingly, gratefully, systematically, and generously to the Lord's work.

If Abraham considered the tithe as fitting, shouldn't we at least make that our minimum gift?

2. THE MALACHI PRINCIPLE - Malachi 3:8

The principle is to simply not to rob God! I think of the tithe as those, that we would give to the local church and the offerings are those gifts that are over and above the tithe. Often these gifts go to support missionaries. God promises blessing when we give properly. Malachi 3:10-11

3. THE WIDOW PRINCIPLE - Mark 12:41-44

Jesus is more impressed with the percentage of the gift (In this case it was 100%!), that he is the amount of the gift.

4. THE PAUL PRINCIPLE - 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Paul reminds us that we will reap in proportion to how much we sow. Vs. 6

We are to give purposefully, willingly, and cheerfully. Vs. 7

When that is done, there will be no lack. Vs. 8

2 Corinthians 9:15 – CHRISTMAS THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT

The greatest gift that God ever gave was His Son!

Consider just how unspeakable the gift of Jesus is!

THE UNSPEAKABLE PRESENCE OF JESUS

In His Birth - John 1:14

In His Miracles (Chose your own examples.)

In His Teaching (Chose your own examples.)

THE UNSPEAKABLE PRICE WHICH JESUS PAID - Isaiah 53

THE UNSPEAKABLE POWER OF JESUS

He Arose From the Dead - Matthew 28, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

He Saves - John 3:16, Acts 4:12

He Intercedes - Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 2:1-2

He's Coming Again - Acts 1:10-11, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Make sure you accept God's gift of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ! Ephesians 2:8-9

2 Corinthians 9:6-15 GIVING THAT GOD LIKES**THE MEANING OF GIVING - Vs. 6 - AN INVESTMENT**

Giving to the Lord's work is our investment in what God wants to accomplish. The more we "sow" the more we reap in Spiritual harvest.

THE METHOD OF GIVING - Vs. 7 - AN ENJOYMENT

God wants willing, joyful, givers.

THE MARVELS OF GIVING - Vss. 8-15 - AN ENCOURAGEMENT

God will cause us to abound to every good work. Vss. 8-10

God will be thanked. Vs. 11-13

The giver will be prayed for. Vs. 14

God has given more than we could ever give (His Son). Vs. 15

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 WARFARE**A PRINCIPLE - Vs. 3**

Though we live in fleshly bodies our war with the forces of evil is not after the flesh.

A PROVISION - Vs. 4

The weapons of Christian Warfare are mighty. See Ephesians 6:13-18

A PROCEDURE - Vs. 5

Imaginations and any high thing are to be cast down and every thought brought into obedience to Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:23-33 THINK YOUR LIFE IS HARD?

Many of us have it rough! Life is not easy! But consider what Paul went through for the sake of Christ. See Acts 9:16

PAUL KNEW PERSECUTION! - Vss. 23-25, 32-33

PAUL KNEW PERIL - Vss. 26-27

PAUL KNEW PARENTING - Vss. 28-29

PAUL KNEW PEACE - Vss. 30-31

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 MESSAGES BEFORE E-MAIL

Today those of us with computers benefit from a phenomenon called "e-mail", or electronic mail. Through it, we can get lots of messages, especially if we are on mailing lists. Before e-mail, there was "snail mail" and good, old fashioned, messenger service (Someone physically goes and delivers a message.)

In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, we find 3 messages delivered.

A MESSAGE FROM SATAN - HURT! - Vs. 7

A MESSAGE FROM PAUL - HELP! - Vs. 8

A MESSAGE FROM GOD - HOPE! - Vss. 9-10

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 HANDLING HINDRANCES

PAUL'S PROBLEM - Vs. 7

PAUL'S PRAYER - Vs. 8

PAUL'S POWER - Vs. 9

PAUL'S PRAISE - Vs. 10

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 GOT TROUBLES?

Like us, Paul had troubles. Here's how he handled them:

PAUL'S GROANING - Vss. 7-8

GOD'S GRACE - Vs. 9a

It was sufficient

CHRIST'S GLORY - Vss. 9b-10

Galatians 1:1-5 BORN FREE!

(An introduction to the Book of Galatians. I am not starting a series on Galatians, but thought you might need an introduction to the Book some day.)

Imagine being in a prison. You are in a cell with your hands cuffed, and your feet in shackles. Hour by hour, day by day, month by month, year by year you wallow in bondage. Then one day someone comes in and knocks out the guards, removes the cuffs and shackles, and opens all the doors to the prison and says, "You're free! Leave this place!"

Imagine after a period of time you are walking by that old prison. A guard calls out, "Why not come back in and visit us again? We'll give you a NEW cell with NEW handcuffs, NEW shackles, and even NEW guards!" You're reaction, like mine, would be, "No way! I don't want to go back to that old stinking jail! I like my freedom and I'm keeping it!"

This seems to be a pretty ridiculous story, doesn't it? And yet every day there are those among us who have been set free by Jesus Christ, who fall back into old bad habits and old bondage. We also entangle ourselves in new bad habits and new bondage. The sad thing about it is we don't need to go back into bondage once we have born into the family of God. We have been born free!

Read John 8:31-32, 36, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Ephesians 2:1-6, Romans 6:14. In spite of these great verses, there are times when we find ourselves right back into bondage. We find ourselves saying with Paul in Romans 7:19, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians was written to a group of people who were listening to the wrong teachers, and were putting themselves right back into bondage. The particular form of bondage was adding law keeping to or works as an additional part of the plan of salvation. They were being taught that grace plus works equals salvation.

In the fifth chapter of this book, Paul addresses another form of bondage. It is bondage to the flesh, our old selves drawing us back into habits and lusts that make us captive to Satan. We fall into bondage to the very things for which Christ died to set us free.

Because we are only sinners saved by grace we sin on occasion. When we do this, we have forgiveness and restoration to fellowship with God as we confess our sins (1 John 1:9). The trouble is, so many of us never experience all the victory that God wants us to have! Therefore our testimonies suffer and our productivity for the Lord suffers as well.

If you have been born into the Family of God you are now a child of God (John 1:12). God has given you his Holy Spirit to indwell you. You have been born free of the penalty of sin. With the Holy Spirit's help you can be free from the power of sin. And in the future you will be free from the presence of sin. You have been born free!

The Book of Galatians deals with the problem of adding works and law keeping to salvation. The Book of Galatians shows us how to be free from the habits to which we find ourselves in bondage. This book can also teach us other valuable lessons concerning Christian doctrine and practical Christian living.

Galatians 1:1-5 introduces the Book of Galatians.

THE MAN - Vs. 1

Many of the books of the New Testament are epistles, or letters. In New Testament days one did not wait until the end to let someone know the identity of the writer. It was placed at the beginning in a greeting or salutation. The man who wrote this letter simply begins with his name, Paul.

When God chose people to write the various parts of the Bible, He always chose the appropriate person to write. God would use a writer's personality, background and circumstances as channels for the very words that He wanted said. 2 Peter 2:21

Paul was certainly the one who knew about being in bondage to the law. Paul certainly knew what it was to be set free from the works of law keeping. Philippians 3:1-8

THE MINISTRY - Vs. 1

Paul was an Apostle. An apostle was "one sent". He was an appointed ambassador, a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father. He was a witness of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. God chose him for this ministry. Acts 9:15-16

THE MISSION - Vs. 2

Paul's mission or writing was to the churches in Galatia. The churches of Galatia were located in the Roman province of Galatia. Paul and Barnabas started several churches on their first missionary journey. You may read about these churches in Acts 13-14

Paul's mission was to strengthen these particular churches who were often plagued by false teachers who followed Paul around trying to add the doctrines of Old Testament Law to his teachings.

THE MESSAGE - Vss. 3-4

Paul shared his customary greeting or message of "grace and peace" from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE MOTIVE - Vs. 5

Paul's motive for writing this epistle and for everything else that he did was to bring glory to God and to his Lord and Savior.

Galatians 1:6-10 THE PERIL OF WRONG INFORMATION

We have all been the victims of wrong information. We have been given wrong information about the character of people that was nothing more than gossip. We have been given wrong information concerning arrival times of busses, cars, and planes. We have been given wrong information concerning the government. We have been given wrong information about peoples intentions. Sometimes people tell you what they want you to believe, not the truth.

There is another kind of wrong information going around today that is even more dangerous than the types of wrong information that I have already shared. It is wrong information which, if believed, leads to eternal destruction.

After a brief introduction in Galatians 1, Paul gets right to the point. The Galatians were victims of wrong information. There are cults and churches that claim to be Christian that are giving out wrong information. They are teaching other ways to Heaven, other than by grace through faith. The peril of such false teaching, no matter how sincere, is that such teaching will damn souls for all eternity instead of giving them eternal life.

AMAZING DESERTION - Vs. 5

Paul was astounded that so soon after embracing Christ as Savior they were already being swayed by false teachers. The Galatians were gullible. The best weapon a false teacher has is Christians who are ignorant of God's Word.

They were removed, or had deserted God by leaving the grace of Christ behind. The Gospel of Grace is summed up in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. Christ died for our sins. He was buried and rose again. A person receives this grace through faith in Christ.

APOSTASY DENOUNCED - Vss. 6-9

Someone has said (I don't know who.) that apostasy is a "falling away or defection from the faith."

Paul said in verse 6 that the Galatians were turning to "another Gospel". This other Gospel was another opinion. But as verse 7a says, the other Gospel was not another Gospel. It was not the Gospel at all. False teachers trouble the church and pervert the truth.

In verses 8-9 Paul pronounces a curse (anathema) on anyone who preaches a false Gospel. Why is Paul so adamant?

There is only one way to Heaven (John 14:6).

There is only one Gospel (Vs. 6).

There is only one sacrifice for sin, paid for by Jesus (Hebrews 10:14).

ALLEGIANC DECLARED - Vs. 10

When it came to accurate presentation of the Gospel, Paul would either please man or God. He could not please both (1 Corinthians 1:21-29). Paul declares his allegiance to God by choosing to be a servant of Christ and preaching the true Gospel.

Galatians 1:11-24 FIRST STEPS

When our children were small we rejoiced in the development of their abilities. We were happy when they could eat cereal, then baby food and then table food. We rejoiced when they smiled, then laughed, and then started saying those first words. We watched as they rolled over, then crawled, then pulled them up to stand next to the couch. But probably the greatest day of all was when they took those "first steps" all by themselves.

First steps are almost always exciting. When a person takes those first steps walking, or riding a bicycle, or learning to read, or learning a new a job, we are happy in the progress which is made. When a person is saved, or born-again, there are also first steps that need to take place. If a person is truly born again these steps will take place, and most of these steps will be repeated all through the Christian Life. It's just like walking!

In the Book of Galatians Paul is writing to a group of churches that he founded in what is modern day Turkey. Paul was writing because of the false teachers, called Judaizers, who had followed Paul into the area. They taught that to be saved a person had to keep Old Testament Law as well as believe in Christ. They also discredited Paul, claiming that he was not truly an Apostle of Christ.

In this passage Paul gives a defense of his Apostleship. He tells about the first steps that he made in his walk as a believer. We should have imitated these first steps, and should continue to imitate them.

CHRIST REVEALED AND RECEIVED - Vss. 11-12

The Gospel that Paul preached did not come from other teachers. It came from God.

He received it by revelation from God beginning on the road to Damascus. See Acts 9:1-22

The Gospel that Paul preached and the Gospel that we believe came from God, not man. See John 3:16 and 1 Peter 1:18-21

An important thing to note is that Paul had to receive Christ in order to be saved.

God, through the work of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Word of God will reveal the message of salvation, but each individual must receive Christ in order to be saved. John 3:36, Ephesians 2:8-9.

THE PAST RENOUNCED - Vss. 13-14

A change took place when Paul was saved. He let the past behind. He left the Jew's religion in favor of Christianity. He stopped persecuting Christians, profiting in the Jew's religion, and being zealous for the traditions of his fathers. See Philippians 3:1-9.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, a change takes place if we are truly saved. We will want to leave the past behind, and things which never bothered us before like foul language, lying, or immorality, will start to bother us.

THE MIND REPROGRAMMED OR RENEWED - Vss. 13-17

Paul was isolated from man and placed in God's Bible School. He had his mind renewed. His thinking was changed. Paul would have had the Old Testament Scriptures as his text. Today we need our mind renewed by God's Word. Romans 12:1-2, 1 Peter 2:1-3, 2 Timothy 2:15, Joshua 1:8

BELIEVERS REJOICED - Vss. 18-24

Finally Paul did go to Jerusalem.

Churches had heard that the one who once persecuted Christians now preached the Gospel.

The change in us should be so dramatic that it will cause other Christians to rejoice.

Galatians 1:12-24 PAUL: AN EXAMPLE OF GOD'S GRACE

PAUL'S SOURCE OF AUTHORITY - Vss. 11-12

PAUL'S SINS OF THE PAST - Vss. 13-14

PAUL'S SALVATION FROM GOD - Vss. 15-16

PAUL'S STUDY UNDER GOD - Vss. 16-17

PAUL'S STORY FOR OTHERS - Vss. 18-24

Told in Jerusalem - Vss. 18-20

Told in Syria and Cilicia - Vs. 21

Told in Judea - Vss. 22-24

Galatians 1:13-16 etc. FOR REAL!

Most of us do not care for people that are "phonies", who pretend to be what they are not, and pretend to be more important than they actually are. We usually do not care for hypocrisy in any form.

Our Lord Jesus hated hypocrisy. One day, toward the end of His ministry, he warned against the scribes, a group of religious leaders, who were very hypocritical. Mark 12:38-40

God wants us to be "for real"! He does not want us to be phony or hypocritical.

He wants our Christian walk and talk to be genuine. Our problem is that we are human.

No one is perfect, and consequently there will be some inconsistencies in us all.

There are ways for us to be "for real" before God, the church, our families, and unbelievers.

There are principles found in God's word that will help us be genuine or "for real". The Apostle Paul demonstrates and/or teaches us several of these principles in the Book of Galatians.

THE PRINCIPLE OF CHANGE 1:13-16, 22-24

Paul was very religious before his salvation experience. Vss. 13-14

However, when Paul was truly converted, there was a definite change that took place in his life.

He became a preacher to the heathen, or gentile. Vss. 15-16

Instead of persecuting the faith, he became a preacher of the faith. Vss. 22-24

Nobody can be "for real" unless they truly come to Christ and become changed by Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17

Change for the Christian did not only happen at salvation but should be a continued process. 2 Peter 3:18, 2 Peter 1:5-9

THE PRINCIPLE OF COURAGE - 2:11-14

If we are going to be "for real" we need to have the courage to stand for what is right.

When the Apostle Peter visited Antioch he ate with the Gentiles. Vs. 12a

Then when certain men came who were "of the circumcision", he became afraid of their opinion and separated himself from the Gentiles at mealtime. Vs. 12

Paul had the courage to stand for what is right and to point out Peter's hypocrisy. Vs. 14

THE PRINCIPLE OF CRUCIFIXION - 2:20

A Christian who is "for real" recognizes his own death.

Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ."

Christ was my substitute on the cross.

Christ bore my punishment on the cross.

Christ took my place.

Therefore, when Christ died, I died. I am crucified with Christ.

This makes me dead to the control of sin in my life, dead to the domination of sin in my life, and dead to any obligation to sin. Although I have been crucified with Christ I am very much alive. I am alive because Christ is living in me. And Christ, who has given me eternal life, wants to live His life through me. Christ lives his life through me when I recognize that I am dead to sin and by faith trust Christ to live through me. Romans 6:1-14

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONTROL - 5:16, 22-23

As I yield to Christ by faith, He through the Holy Spirit will have control of my life.

Walking the Spirit keeps me from fulfilling the lust of the flesh. It also produces the Fruit of the Spirit.

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPASSION - 6:2

When I have compassion I will bear the burdens of others, especially helping them with areas of failure. 6:1-2. The supreme law of Christ is to "love one another". John 13:14-15

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSISTENCY - 6:9

We are to keep on doing well and not get weary.

If we are consistent, we will reap the benefits of that consistency.

Galatians 2:1-10 MEETING IN JERUSALEM

COMMUNICATION OF BELIEF - Vss. 1-2, 6

Paul reported what he was preaching to the church at Jerusalem.

There was no problem with his teaching. It was approved for its accuracy.

CONTROVERSY OVER CIRCUMCISION - Vss. 3-5

Titus, a partner in ministry with Paul, was a Greek. Some would have circumcised him, but Paul refused.

Circumcision is not needed for salvation.

COMMISSION TO GENTILE MINISTRY - Vss. 7-10

Ministries and methods vary. Paul was commissioned to go to the Gentiles.

As Peter was mighty as an Apostle to the Jews, Paul was mighty as an Apostle to the Gentiles.

Galatians 2:20 THE BELIEVER'S CRUCIFIXION

IT'S PERSONAL - "I am crucified..." See Romans 6:1-10

When Christ died on the cross, each believer died with Him.

IT'S A PARTNERSHIP - "...with Christ:..."

He actually took my place on that cross.

IT'S PRECIOUS - "...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:..."

To think that very Son of God has taken up residence in my life through His Spirit. WOW!

IT'S PRACTICAL - "...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Galatians 2:20 GRATEFUL LIVING

Do you appreciate what Christ has done for you? You can show your appreciation by the way you live.

Paul was grateful for what Christ had done in his life and it was his motivation for godly living.

In Galatians 2:20 Paul's appreciation shows as he tells us how he lived in gratitude towards Christ, "who loved me, and gave himself for me."

MY POSITION - " I am crucified with Christ:"

Christ died for me, therefore, when He died, I died. Romans 6:1-4, 10-14

I should see myself as dead to the power of sin in my life.

MY POWER - "...nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:"

Christ is powerful. Colossians 1:15-18

His power is available in my life. Philippians 4:13, Ephesians 1:19-23, 3:16-17a

MY PRACTICE - "...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God..."

Galatians 3:1-9 UNDERSTANDING GOD'S BLESSINGS

I have often acted foolishly because I failed to think things through. I've spent money I didn't have to spend because I failed to think. I once road in a helicopter next to an open door without wearing a seat belt.

That certainly wasn't thinking. And when I was a layman I once sided with someone on a key issue, without talking to my pastor first. That wasn't thinking either.

In verses 1 and 3 of our text Paul calls the Galatians "foolish".

By foolish, he did not mean they were stupid, or dumb, or mentally deficient. He meant they weren't thinking. Because they weren't thinking they were being fooled by false teachers.

The false teachers were instructing these new believers that they had to keep Old Testament Law as well as believe on Christ in order to have eternal life. Specifically the Galatians were being wrongly taught that they had to practice the Jewish rite of circumcision in order to be saved.

Today we as Christians try often foolishly try to do the same thing. We believe on Christ, and God, through His Spirit, does a wonderful work in our lives. Then we try to live the Christian Life without God's power at work within us. We try to be holy, Godly, and a good witness in our own self-effort. This is foolish. We are not thinking.

We need to understand God's blessing. God has blessed us so we can live a Christian life that pleases Him after we are saved. The Galatians were foolish because they did not understand the blessing of God. We are equally foolish if we do not understand the blessing of God. In our text Paul shows us three things about God's blessing that we need to understand.

WE ARE BLESSED WITH THE SPIRIT

Vs. 2 - These Galatians were truly saved. They had received the Holy Spirit of God in their lives.

Anyone who is saved is born of the spirit. (John 3:1-8)

Anyone who is truly saved has received the Holy Spirit of God. 1 Cor 6:19-20, 12:13, Romans 8:9, Eph 1:3.

Vs. 5 - The one who ministers or supplies the Spirit is God.

God supplies His spirit so that we might be filled with the Spirit and produce the fruit of the Spirit. Ephesians 5:18-21, Galatians 5:22-23

WE ARE BLESSED BY FAITH

Vs. 2 - Paul asks an important question.

He wants to know if the Galatians first received the Spirit by the works of the law or the hearing of faith? The obvious answer is that they were blessed by the hearing of faith.

Vs. 3 - Paul shows how illogical and foolish these Galatians were. They received the Spirit of God as a result of faith. They began their Christian walk with the Holy Spirit. Now, they were trying to perfect the Christian life by the keeping of the Old Testament Law. They should have been living the Christian Life by simple faith in the power of God's Spirit.

Vs. 5 - The great things accomplished by the Spirit of God are not by keeping Old Testament Law or any self-effort without the power of God. The great things of the Spirit of God accomplishes in our lives are a result of our faith or reliance, or trust in God. We are not suggesting that we are to be lazy. We are suggesting that all that we do should be done by faith.

WE ARE BLESSED WITH ABRAHAM

Vs. 6 - Abraham was a great patriarch, a great hero in Jewish history. God made him a promise. He promised him a son. He promised him descendants as numerous as the stars. Abraham believed that promise. God declared him righteous.

Vs. 7 - Those in this age, which trust Christ as Savior are true children of Abraham. Those who live the Christian life by faith by faith after being saved are acting as true children of Abraham.

Vs. 8 - The Gentiles are justified through faith in Abraham's descendent, Christ. In Abraham all nations are blessed.

Vs. 9 - Those who are of faith are blessed with faithful, or believing Abraham. If you are saved you were blessed with Abraham at the point of salvation. And every time you trust God by faith as a Christian, you are again blessed with Abraham.

Galatians 3:10-14 IT'S SO SIMPLE! DON'T MISS IT!

The Gospel itself is really very simple (1 Cor 15:3-4, Eph 2:8-9), but there are folks who try to add to the Gospel. This was the problem facing the Galatians. The Galatians were trying to live the Christian Life by keeping the Old Testament Law. They were taking something simple, and making it complicated.

THE CURSE Vs. 10

Trying to be righteous by law keeping (The Ten Commandments, or any other law.) just doesn't work. The curse is that a person would have to keep the law perfectly in order to get into Heaven.

Nobody but the Lord Jesus has ever done that. Romans 3:10, 23, James 2:10

THE CONFLICT Vss. 11-12

There are two principles that contradict each other mentioned here. The law principle, says, "I will try to be declared righteous before God based on my ability to keep law, my own self-effort." The grace principle says, "I will trust God to do for me and in me what I cannot do for myself."

THE CURE Vs. 13-14

The cure for those who have not lived righteous lives according to the law (That's all of us.) is the fact that Christ died for our sins, becoming a curse for us. When a person receives Christ as Savior, he or she receive the cure for their sins, and is blessed. They receive the "promise of the Spirit through faith", which enables them to live Godly lives.

Galatians 4:1-7 THE TIMES

A DIFFICULT TIME OF RESTRICTION - Vss. 1-3

A DEFINITE TIME OF REDEMPTION - Vss. 4-5

A DELIGHTFUL TIME OF RECEPTION - Vss. 6-7

(We have been received as God's children and heirs.)

Galatians 5:1 STAND FAST!

Galatians 5:1 - Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

I know another lady who was a schoolteacher. Her first principal mistreated her. She was fired. Since that time, she held other teaching positions very responsibly. She was free from the first principal, and yet she was not free because she failed to forgive him. She has a hard, sad countenance.

I know a man who wrestled with the doctrine of salvation and finally came to know Christ as Savior. The man was now free to serve God as a Christian. However, because of a critical spirit, which made him continuously dissatisfied. He really wasn't free.

The people I have just mentioned are examples of a difficulty with which all born again Christians wrestle at one time or another. It is the problem of being set free, but being in bondage. The people I just mentioned were free because they were forgiven. They were free because they were going to Heaven, and free because they had potential victory over sin. They were free, but they were still in bondage to a critical or unforgiving spirit.

In the Book of Galatians Paul deals with a similar problem. The Galatians, who were mostly Gentiles before being saved, were set free from the bondage of sin and the rules and regulations of Gentile religion. But now, they were listening to false teachers called Judaizers, who were teaching the Galatians that they needed to observe Jewish Old Testament Law in order to be good Christians. They were trying to bring the Galatians back into bondage.

God has a wonderful plan for the life of every Christian. It is to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in freedom all our days. We are free to do what He wants us to do, when He wants us to do it, and in the way he wants us to do it. We have freedom to do what is right!

God's enemy, Satan, wants us to be in bondage to law keeping, to guilt, to unforgiveness, to a critical spirit, to anger, to worry, to habitual sin of any kind. He wants anything possible to keep us from serving God freely.

The good news is that there is freedom from bondage for the Christian. This freedom is found in Christ as Galatians 5:1 explains.

DECLARATION - ...Christ hath made us free,

When Paul talks about being free he is talking to those who have accepted the free gift of salvation found in Christ. Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12

We are free from the penalty of sin. Romans 5:6-9, Romans 8:1-2

We are free from the problem of law keeping. This is the context of Galatians 5:1. We are not dependent upon law keeping to get to Heaven.

We are free from the power of sin. Romans 6:14

When Christ comes we will be free from the presence of sin. 1 John 3:1-2

(The above outline is not original with me. I have seen it often with the exception of the word "problem".)

DANGER - ...be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Christ had set the Galatians free. But now they were in danger of being entangled or entwined with a yoke. A yoke was a big piece of wood placed around the neck of an animal to keep that animal under control. When the Galatians tried to add law keeping to their faith in Christ, they were putting on a new yoke of bondage. When a person is trying to keep religious law he is in bondage to detail, trying to keep everything perfectly. He is also in bondage to guilt if he breaks that law.

There is a better yoke than the yoke of bondage. There is the yoke of Christ. Matthew 11:28-30 Allow Christ to control you through His Spirit. If He is in control, you will do what is right. His yoke is easy! His burden is light!

DELIVERANCE - ... Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,

When a person is saved, he is saved by faith. Romans 5:1

The work of the Spirit of God (John 3:1-7, John 16:8-11, 1 Corinthians 12:13) in our lives based on the work of Christ on the cross gave us freedom to serve God properly. Just as the Spirit of God did the work that convicted us and saved us, the same wonderful Holy Spirit is present to keep us and empower us.

Ephesians 1:13-14, Galatians 5:16, 22-23

We are delivered from bondage as we stand fast in the same original liberty that set us free in Christ! As we stand fast in the control of the Holy Spirit we will be delivered from bondage in our daily lives. Ephesians 5:18

Galatians 5:13 etc. IMPROVING YOUR SERVE

According to Galatians 5:13 we are to serve one another.

Other Scriptures including Ephesians 2:10 and Titus 3:8 would verify that the Christian Life is one of service. Even the Great Commission indicates that Christians are to serve. Matthew 28:19-20 tells us to teach all nations, to baptize and to teach those who have trusted Christ. All three of these actions are ways of serving others.

Let us consider how we can improve our serve, the way we work in behalf of others.

ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST'S EXAMPLE - John 13:1-17

Our Lord Jesus set the example of service by taking on the lowly task of washing the Disciples' feet. He also indicated that His disciples were to follow His example. Vss. 13-17

ACCEPT THE FACT THAT JESUS WANTS YOU TO BE A SERVANT - Mark 10:42-45

The Gentiles exercise great authority over those under them. Vs. 42

It is to be different among believers. The great among Christians are to be servants. Vs.43

And the greatest Christian of all is to be servant of all. Vs. 44

Again, Jesus sets the example. Vs. 45

ATTAIN THE ATTITUDE OF A SERVANT - Philippians 2:1-8

The attitude of a servant is manifested in Vss. 1-4

The example of this servant attitude is found in Christ. Vss. 5-8

ACT AS A SERVANT OF CHRIST - Galatians 5:13-14

To act as a servant of Christ is to serve others in Love.

Two Biblical examples of serving others in love.

The Philippians served Paul. - Philippians 4:14-16

Onesiphorus - 2 Timothy 1:16-18

Galatians 5:13-18 GIVE ME LIBERTY

LIBERTY'S CALL - Vs. 13 - "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty;"

LIBERTY'S CAUTION - Vs. 13 - "...only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh,"

LIBERTY'S CONDUCT - Vss. 13-16

1. Serve each other in love. - "...but by love serve one another."

2. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." - Vs. 14

3. Don't "bite and devour". - Vs. 15

4. "Walk in the Spirit." - Vs. 16

LIBERTY'S CONFLICT - Vss. 17-18

1. The conflict is between the Spirit and the flesh. - Vs. 17

2. We are to be led by the Spirit. - Vs. 18

Galatians 5:16-21 STAY OUT OF THE MUD!

Children like to play. If we are wise parents, we let children play. We let the boys play with trucks and cars, and the girls with dolls and house stuff. We allow both to play outside on swings and slides and we encourage them to play games such as "hide and seek" and "tag". However, there is at least one place I never wanted my children to play, and that was in the mud! Mud is dirty. Mud is filthy. Mud leaves tracks on carpets and floors. Mud produces extra baths and extra loads of dirty clothes to wash. I would advise any children, "Stay out of the mud!"

Our heavenly Father has the same desire for His children. He wants us to stay out of the mud called sin! See 1 John 1:5-2:2.

Our text shows us how to stay out of the mud, and some specific sins to avoid if we are going to remain pure.

THE SURE WAY - Galatians 5:16 - "Walk In The Spirit"

THE SURE WARFARE - Galatians 5:17-18 - The war is between the "flesh" and "the Spirit". As I am led by the Spirit, I will win the war.

THE SURE WARNING - Vss. 19-21 - Here is a list of sins to avoid.

Galatians 5:19-26 CONTRASTING LIFE STYLES

There are two ways to live the Christian life. One way, following the leadership of "the flesh" is the wrong way. The other way, following the leadership of the Holy Spirit is the right way.

WORKS OF THE FLESH Vss. 19-21

WEALTH THROUGH THE SPIRIT Vss. 22-23

WALK IN THE SPIRIT Vss. 24-26

Galatians 5:22-23 CHAMPIONS OF THE SPIRIT

(This will probably work best as a Sunday School Lesson. I would hand out notes, so the class can follow along and also have the Scripture references for future use. This lesson also lends itself well to discussion. You can ask them to figure out how each example exemplified that particular fruit of the Spirit. For instance, have them share how Mary demonstrated love, or Joseph longsuffering. Have the class think of other Biblical examples besides the ones you have given.)

This passage gives us the "fruit of the Spirit." In the Bible, there are people who demonstrated each part of the fruit during some portion of their lives.

LOVE - MARY - Luke 10:38-42, John 12:1-8

JOY - PAUL AND SILAS - Acts 16:19-25

PEACE - DANIEL - Daniel seemed to be always at peace when in difficult situations. Daniel 1,2,5,6

LONGSUFFERING - JOSEPH - Genesis 39-41

GENTLENESS - RUTH - Ruth 1-4

GOODNESS - Onesiphorus - 2 Timothy 1:15-18

FAITH - STEPHEN - Acts 6-7

MEEKNESS - MOSES - Numbers 12

TEMPERANCE (SELF-CONTROL) - DAVID - He had two opportunities to kill his enemy Saul and didn't. 2 Sam 24 and 26

Galatians 5:22-26 THE SPIRIT CONTROLLED LIFE

Ephesians 5:18 tells us to be filled, or controlled by the Holy Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-26 elaborates on this idea.

THE WORTH OF THE SPIRIT CONTROLLED LIFE Vss. 22-23

THE WALK OF THE SPIRIT CONTROLLED LIFE Vss. 24-25

THE WARNING OF HINDRANCES TO THE SPIRIT CONTROLLED LIFE Vs. 26

Galatians 6:1-10 PREPARED TO HELP

(You may want to divide this into two messages.)

As a former Boy Scout, I remember the Scout motto, "Be Prepared". The Scouts taught that there would be a multitude of situations one would face. The scout needed to be ready to handle any situation. We were taught such things as swimming, first aid, knot tying, cooking, and Morse code.

As a pastor I find it important to be prepared, especially when I am expected to preach or teach God's Word. I must also be prepared to handle emergencies, listen at any time, pray with someone hurting, and give loving counsel.

As Christians God wants us to be prepared to help each other. Galatians 6:1-10 shows us 6 things we should be prepared to do.

ASSIST - Vs. 1

When a Christian has failed God we are to be ready to humbly restore him to fellowship with God.

ASSUME - Vss. 2

When Christians have heavy burdens, we should be ready to help bear them, fulfilling the law of love. John 13:34-35

ACCEPT - Vss. 4-5

Although we do have the responsibility to help others with heavy burdens, we do have responsibility to bear our own burdens. The word burden here is different from verse 2. Here it simply refers to something carried in the hand. It is not a heavy burden like verse 2.

SHARE - Vs. 6

The person who is taught should share good things with his teacher. This very well could refer to financial support for the full-time minister of the Word.

SOW - Vss. 7-8

We reap what we sow. Therefore, we should sow the things of the Spirit and not the things of the flesh.

SERVE - Vss. 9-10

We should not be weary in well doing because we will reap good things if we don't give up.

We should strive to do good to all, but especially to fellow believers.

Ephesians 1:1-2 RICH!

In their commentaries on Ephesians, both John MacArthur and Warren Wiersbe talk about Hetty Green, who was known for a long time as the "America's greatest miser." Worth over \$100 million when she died, she would eat cold oatmeal to save heating costs. Her son had a leg amputated because she spent so much time looking for a free clinic. She died after an attack of apoplexy, which was brought on by an argument over the value of skim milk over whole milk. She was for skim milk because it was cheaper.

Hetty Green did not enjoy her riches! The Book of Ephesians is the Bible Book that shows us our riches in Christ! Christians need to study this book so they will discover their riches in Christ and how to use them. We as Christians are often spiritual misers, because we don't use our riches in Christ.

Even the salutation in this book shows us our riches in Christ.

RICH IN STANDING (OR STATUS) - "Saints and faithful in Christ Jesus." - A saint is a person who has been set apart for God. The word "faithful" means believers. Saints become saints by being believers in Christ.

RICH IN SERVICE - "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God." - The Lord saved Paul with service for Him in mind (Acts 9:10-16).

God has saved each Christian with service in mind for Him. What a privilege!

RICH IN SUPPLY - "Grace...and peace..." - God supplies us with what we need in order to serve Him well. God gives us grace and peace at salvation, and continues to supply them as we walk with Him.

Ephesians 1:1-2 WHAT'S IN AN INTRODUCTION?

We will have been introduced to thousands of people of the course of a lifetime. Many, if not most, of these introductions were so casual that we will forget them. However, many introductions that we have experienced were important. I was once introduced to a young lady named Dottie Adams. Twenty-seven years ago she changed her last name to "Peters". She's my wife. I once met a new pastor in my area named George Headley. He became my mentor. I once met a group of people in West Valley, PA. I am now their pastor. The most important introduction I ever received was to the Lord Jesus Christ who became my Savior and Lord.

As we read the Bible, we might not think much about the introductions found there, but they do contain important information and are worthy of our attention. We might quickly read over the introductions found in Paul's epistles, but there is valuable information contained there. For instance, let's consider Eph 1:1-2

THE GREETER - Vs. 1

1. "Paul" - A person - Acts 8:1-3, 9:1-22
2. "An Apostle" - A position - Paul's position was as one of the Apostles. Each of us is given a position within the body of Christ, and a Spiritual gift to carry out that position. Romans 12:4-8
3. "By the will of God" - A plan - God has a specific plan for each one of our lives. Romans 12:2, Ephesians 5:15-17

THE GREETED - Vs. 1

1. "Saints" - In the Bible a saint is simply a person who has come to know Christ as Savior. This means that anyone who is saved is a saint by position. The way a Christian conducts his life should make him a saint by practice. 1 Peter 1:15-16
2. "Faithful Brethren" - Paul is talking to the same people. Saints are to be faithful to their Lord (1 Corinthians 4:2), and are brothers and sisters with other believers.

THE GREETING - Vs. 2

1. "Grace" - Paul desired that the Ephesians, who received grace for salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9), would continue to be beneficiaries of God's grace. 2 Peter 3:18
2. "Peace" - Paul also desired that the Ephesians, who also received peace with God at salvation (Romans 5:1), would continue to receive the peace of God (Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7)
3. Notice the source of grace and peace is God.

Ephesians 1:3-7 RICHES FROM THE FATHER!

Ephesians 1:3-14 is one sentence in Greek. In it we see the riches we have from the God The Father, God The Son, and God The Holy Spirit. Here are the riches from the hand of God The Father.

THE FATHER'S PRESENT TO US - Vs. 3

We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.

THE FATHER'S PLANS FOR US - Vss. 4-5

We are holy and without blame.

We have received the adoption of (adult) children.

THE FATHER'S POSITION TOWARDS US - Vs. 6

We are accepted in the beloved, who is Christ!

THE FATHER'S PARDON OF US - Vs. 7

Ephesians 1:3-7 IN CHRIST

Here is a brief list of some of the blessings for each Christian who is "in Christ".

In Christ:

I AM COMPLETE - Vs. 3 - I am blessed with "all spiritual blessings".

I AM CHOSEN - Vs. 4 - Because I am in Christ, I have been chosen to stand before God as "holy and without blame before him in love."

I AM GOD'S CHILD - Vs. 5

I AM CONFIDENT - Vs. 6 - I am confident because I have been "accepted in the beloved."

I AM CLEANSED - Vs. 7

Ephesians 1:3-8 BLESSED!

I AM APPOINTED – Vs. 4

I AM ADOPTED – Vs. 5

I AM ACCEPTED – Vs. 6

I AM ACQUITTED – Vs. 7

I HAVE ABUNDANCE – Vs. 8

Ephesians 1:7-12 RICHES IN CHRIST

Here are some of the riches we receive when we trust Christ as Savior:

WE ARE SAVED - Vs. 7

Redemption

Forgiveness

WE ARE SUPPLIED - Vss. 8

Wisdom

Prudence (Understanding)

WE ARE SETTLED - Vss. 9-10

Christ is going to gather all things together under Himself. 2 Corinthians 15:21-28. I believe this well begin with the millennium and culminate with the eternal state. When Christ takes over, we will be settled!

WE ARE SATISFIED - Vss. 11-12

We have our inheritance in Him.

Ephesians 1:13-14 RICHES IN THE SPIRIT

Imagine getting a new computer, taking it out of the box, assembling all the components, and then letting it sit on your desk without doing anything else. "Nonsense!", you say, "If I get a new computer and assemble it, I won't stop there. I'll turn on the power and use it!"

Ephesians 1:3-14 shows us the riches that we have at salvation coming from The Trinity. The work of the Holy Spirit at salvation can be viewed as God "turning on the power" in our lives! There are three things mentioned here that are the result of the work of the Holy Spirit when we are saved. (Check web site for other 2 outlines on riches.)

THE NEW BIRTH - "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation..." - Although the Spirit is not mentioned here, Paul is talking about the Ephesians' new birth or being born again by the Spirit of God. See John 3:1-8 and John 1:12-13.

THE SEALING - "...in whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise," - In Scripture sealing speaks of security, authenticity, (Romans 8:16) and ownership (The meaning here.).

THE DOWN PAYMENT - "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession..." - "Earnest money" is a down payment to show that someone will finish a transaction, such as the down payment on a house. Although we are redeemed when we trust Christ as Savior, God will finish the transaction with the redemption of our bodies at the resurrection.

Ephesians 1:15-23 GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Have you noticed that at the beginning of every professional sports season, that every manager or head coach talks like he is expecting his team to go all the way to win the championship? There are great expectations.

As parents we have great expectations for our children, expecting them to go further in their lives than we have in ours.

The apostle Paul also had great expectations for the Ephesian believers. That's why he prayed for them. As Christians, we should have the same great expectations for other believers and pray for them.

Paul prayed for the Christians that they would

1. KNOW HIM, THE PERSON OF GOD Vs. 17
2. KNOW HIS HOPE, THE PROMISES OF GOD Vs. 18
3. KNOW HIS HELP, THE POWER OF GOD Vs. 19-23

(Be sure to comment on Paul's thankfulness and regular prayers for the Ephesians in Vss. 15-16)

Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:16-21, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-14 HELPING YOUR CHURCH GROW

Most people would like to see their church grow in numbers and Spirituality. The average person may wonder, "How can I help my church grow." Very few people feel capable of assisting when it comes to church growth.

In the texts listed above we find the Apostle Paul praying for four prayers for three churches. Each one of these prayers is a prayer for Spiritual development. I am convinced that if we pray for the pastors and people in our own church and other churches, God will answer. As we grow Spiritually we will grow physically.

Please note that Paul gave thanks for each church before making requests for them. Ephesians 1:15-16, Philippians 1:3-8, Colossians 1:3-8.

Also note that some of the requests are repeated for each congregation, but there seems to be a special theme for each prayer. Let us pray for each other as Paul prayed for those he loved in Christ.

PRAY FOR PERCEPTION - Ephesians 1:15-23

We need to pray that other Christians will have a "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him" (Vs. 17) and that they will grasp:

1. "...the hope of His calling..." - Vs. 18
2. "...the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints..." - Vs. 18 - Just think! We are His inheritance!
3. "...the exceeding greatness of his power..." - Vss. 19-23 - We need to grasp just how much power is available for us in Christ. We will not appropriate the power unless we understand its availability.

PRAY FOR POWER - Ephesians 3:14-21

After praying that Christians perceive the availability of Christ's power, we need to pray that appropriation of that power would be a reality in their lives.

1. Power of the Spirit - Vs. 16
2. Power of Christ's control - Vs. 17a
3. Power to love - Vss. 17b-19a
4. Power of God's fullness - Vs. 19b

PRAY FOR PERFORMANCE - Philippians 1:9-11

I see this prayer as a prayer for action!

1. Abounding in love - Vs. 9
2. Abounding in choice and Godly living - Vs. 10
3. Abounding in fruitfulness - Vs. 11

PRAY FOR PERSEVERANCE - Colossians 1:9-14

The Christian life is not a sprint but a marathon. We need to pray that other Christians "hang in there".

1. Knowing His will - Vs. 9
2. Walking worthily - Vs. 10a
3. Being fruitful - Vs. 10b
4. Knowing God - Vs. 10c
5. Enduring with patience, longsuffering, joyfulness and thanksgiving - Vss. 11-14

If you like, this message could be broken down into four devotionals delivered four weeks in a row. Used this way, this series would be especially appropriate for Prayer Meeting.

Ephesians 2:1-7 GOD'S MASTERPIECE

We are God's masterpieces of grace. We are reminded here of,

1. WHAT WE WERE Vss. 1-3
2. WHAT WE ARE Vss. 4-6
3. WHAT WE WILL BE Vs. 7

Ephesians 2:1-10 THIS IS YOUR LIFE

In this passage of Scripture, God is giving the Christian a personal biography of sorts. It is if He is saying, "Christian, this is your life!"

PERVERSION OF SIN - Vss. 1-3

The Christian was in terrible straits before he came to know Christ.

PROVISION OF LIFE - Vss. 4-5

God in his love and mercy gave the Christian life ("quickened").

POSITION IN GLORY - Vss. 6-7

We are positioned in heavenly places in Christ.

PLACEMENT BY FAITH - Vss. 8-9

The Christian was saved and placed into the family of God when he put his trust in Christ.

PROOF OF CONVERSION - Vs. 10

The person who is truly saved will experience a change in life that will produce good works.

Ephesians 2:1-10 GOD'S MASTERPIECE

We call a great work a "masterpiece". It's hard to believe, but we are God's masterpieces if we know Christ as Savior. We are shown God's great work in this passage.

WICKEDNESS OF MAN Vss. 1-3

WONDER OF LOVE Vss. 4-7

WAY OF SALVATION Vss. 8-9

WORKMANSHIP OF GOD Vs. 10

We get the English word "poem" from the Greek word rendered "workmanship". Think of it! We are His poem! And God has planned ahead so that we would do good works. We don't perform good works in order to be saved. We perform good works because we are saved!

EPHESIANS 2:8-10 THANKFUL!

THANKFUL FOR GOD'S GRACE - *For by grace are ye saved through faith;*

THANKFUL FOR GOD'S GIFT - *and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*

Salvation is a free gift that must be accepted.

THANKFUL FOR GOD'S GENIUS - *Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

God in His genius made salvation something could not be earned. There will be no self-promotion in Heaven, no boasting.

THANKFUL FOR GOD'S GENEROSITY - *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

We can be thankful because God has made us "his workmanship" and has ordained that we should perform good works. Just think! Poor lost sinners like us are allowed to serve God with good works. What a privilege!

Ephesians 2:8-10 IN CHRIST!

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

When we are "in Christ":

WE ARE SAVED - By grace through faith. Vs. 8

We ARE SILENCED - "Not of works lest any man should boast." Vs. 9

WE ARE SANCTIFIED - Christ has set us apart for good works. Vs. 10

Ephesians 2:8-10 A GRAND SALVATION!

THE GRACE OF SALVATION - "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:"

THE GIFT OF SALVATION - "it is the gift of God:"

THE GREATNESS OF SALVATION -

"Not of works, lest any man should boast."

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Ephesians 2:11-22 ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

This may come as a shock to you, but there are Christians that I haven't liked very much.

'So, how do we maintain a good attitude towards Christians, whose manner, whose race, whose words, whose actions, whose attitudes rub us the wrong way? We find the answer to that question in our text.

As we come to verse 11, we are reminded that when it comes to Christians we don't like, we just might need an attitude adjustment. A key word in Vs. 11 is "remember". When we have a tendency not to like someone, there are three things here which we need to remember.

REMEMBER YOUR PAST Vss. 11-12

Vs. 11 - The majority of believers in the Ephesian church were gentiles. Basically, a gentile is a non-Jew.

For centuries the Jews and Gentiles did not get along. There was division. There was animosity. There was hatred. Paul reminds the Ephesians, that as Gentiles, their past was far less than spectacular. They were at a spiritual disadvantage to the Jews.

God had made a distinction between the Jew and the Gentile.

He had called Abraham to be the Father of a great nation. This would be the nation through which the Messiah would come, and through which all the nations of the world would be blessed. The Jews however, instead of trying to reach the world with their knowledge of God, began acting much like the gentiles they were supposed to win, and also developed a serious hatred for the gentiles they were supposed to win.

The physical sign that distinguished a Jew from a Gentile was circumcision. Paul reminds them that the Gentiles were looked down upon and called "uncircumcision" by those who are called "circumcision". Paul is not approving here of the obvious prejudice that Jew had against the Gentile.

Vs. 12 - Paul shows here, that as Gentiles, they had a spiritual disadvantage.

1. WITHOUT CHRIST - The Gentile did not originally have the promise of the Messiah. The coming Christ, the Lord Jesus was promised to Israel. Think of you and I, and every other Christian. Before we came to faith in Christ, we too were without Christ! We all began the same way!

2. AILIENS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL - Gentiles lacked citizenship in God's chosen nation. When we were without Christ, we lacked citizenship in Heaven!

3. STRANGERS FROM THE COVENANTS OF PROMISE - God had given Israel many promises that weren't for the Gentile. Without Christ, each and every person is without God's promises. It is only when we come to Christ that we have His promises.

4. HAVING NO HOPE - The Gentile is hopeless if he has no promises from God. Without Christ we are hopeless. Our only hope is an eternity in hell!

5. WITHOUT GOD - O the Gentile had plenty of gods. There were many idols. The problem was they were without the one, true and living God!

Any person without Christ today is just like the Gentile!

This was our condition before we were saved!

What right do we have to think of anyone else as inferior, or not good enough as a Christian? We came from the same background. We are no better than they!

REMEMBER YOUR PEACE Vss. 13-17

By the way, a Jew without Christ, although he has many Spiritual advantages over the Gentile is equally lost. The Jews had all the Spiritual advantages over the Gentile, and still the majority turned their backs on God.

Vs. 13 - In spite of our terrible past, there was a day, if you are a Christian, that God gave you peace. This verse tells us that we who were once far away from God are drawn nigh, or brought close by the blood of Christ. What did the blood of Christ do?

The blood of Christ was the perfect payment for the sins of the Gentile.

The blood of Christ was the perfect payment for the sins of the Jew. Romans 5:6-9, John 3:14, John If Christ is your Savior, please remember that the Christian which you do not care for, came to God the same way you did, through the blood of Christ.

Vs. 14 - He is the one who brings peace between Jew and Gentile.

He is the one who brings peace between Jew and Jew. He is the one who brings peace between Gentile and Gentile. When a Jew comes to Christ and when a Gentile comes to Christ, they are made one! They are one in Christ. When two Jews come to Christ they are made one! They are one in Christ. When two Gentiles come to Christ they are made one! They are one in Christ!

Vs. 14 says that the middle wall of partition has been broken down by Christ.

There was an outer court at the temple. This was called the court of the Gentiles. That was as far as Gentiles were allowed to come. This physical barrier was representative of the attitude barrier which existed between Jew and Gentile. Christian, when you came to Christ, please bear in mind that the barrier that existed between you and any other Christian disappeared. Christ tore it down!

Vs. 15 - The enmity, hatred, hostility between Gentile and Jew was handled at the cross.

One of the great barriers between Jew and Gentile was the ceremonial law which included the sacrifices, offerings feasts, laws of cleanliness and purification. The outward laws of separation would be included as well.

Jesus took the two groups, Jew and Gentile, and made them one new man in himself. When the two come together in Christ, there is now peace!

Vs. 16 - It was on the cross that the sin of enmity, the sin of hostility, the sin of hatred was paid for. He brought both groups to God! Paying for all sin!

Yes, Jesus died to end the hostility between believers in both groups, Jews and Gentiles.

But Jesus also died to end the hostility between God and man.

We were separated from God because of our sin.

Jesus reconciled us to God by paying for that sin on the cross!

To reconcile means to "turn from hostility to friendship."

Not only do we now have friendship with God, but we become children of God. John 1:12

Any child of God should now be my friend because we are brothers and sisters in Christ. And more than a friend because we are kin in Christ!

I'm not saying you will like what every believer does.

I'm not saying you'll appreciate every believer's personality.

But I am saying that because of what Christ did on the cross to reconcile us to God and us to each other, we need to have a proper attitude of love to all believers. John 13:34-35

Vs. 17 - Jesus came and preached peace to them that were far away from God - the Gentiles.

Jesus came and preached peace to them that were close by - the Jews. Jesus' Gospel is a Gospel of peace. Romans 5:1, Isaiah 9:6, Luke 2:13-14. John 14:27, Matthew 5:9

If the ministry of Jesus Christ is a ministry of peace, should I not strive to be at peace with each fellow believer. That isn't always possible, but if there is enmity, hatred, bitterness, between two Christians, let it be their enmity, their hatred, their bitterness, not yours!

REMEMBER YOUR POSITION Vss. 18-22

Vs. 18 - When Jesus Christ died on the cross, a very special thing happened. Mark 5:38

The veil that kept men out of the Holy of Holies, symbolic of the very presence of God, was ripped in two. Because of the work on the cross, you and I have access into the very presence of God.

My friend, as long as the Christian you do not like is right with God, he or she has just as much access into the throne of Grace as you do!

Vs. 19 - Not only do we all have access into the presence of God, but we are also fellow citizens of Heaven and members of God's household.

Vs. 20 - God now alludes to the church as a building. The key part of the building is the corner stone.

Vs. 21 - The building we know as Christ's church is still being fitted together. Each new believer is another stone in the temple. Each Christian you know is a stone, an important part in God's Temple, the church.

Vs. 22 - We are the habitation of God through the Spirit.

Each individual is the temple of God. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Each individual Christian added to the other Christians is jointly the temple of God.

There is a unity here that we must remember.

There is a unity here that we must practice.

There is a unity here that will bring glory to God.

Perhaps we need an attitude adjustment.

Who is the Christian that you don't particularly like?

We both have access to God.

We both are fellow citizens of the household of God.

We both are part of God's temple, indwelled by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 2:15-21 GOD CARES

GOD CARES ABOUT CONDUCT - *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,*

GOD CARES ABOUT CONSERVATION - *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

GOD CARES ABOUT CONTENT - *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

GOD CARES ABOUT CONTROL - *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*

Ephesians 3:1-12 IT IS NO SECRET!

You might want to begin the message by reading the words to the song, "It Is No Secret" by Stuart Hamblen. He was a song writer and singer who came to know Christ as Savior. One night he was at a party, and Stuart made the comment "It is no secret what God can do". Upon leaving, his host suggested that he write a song about that statement. He went home and wrote the song in 17 minutes. The change in Hamblen's life when coming to Christ is an indication of just how true the words of the song are! Genesis 18:14, Jeremiah 32:17, Luke 1:37.

In this text we see four wonderful things that God did for Paul that He will also do for us through the mighty working of His power.

1. GOD CAN EMPOWER US TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES Vs. 1

Jews and Gentiles were enemies. How remarkable that Paul would end up loving his former enemies so much that he became a prisoner for their sakes. Acts 21:27-30, Acts 22:17-22.

God will also enable us to love our enemies. Ephesians 4:32, Matthew 22:36-40, John 14:34-35, Matthew 6:43-48

2. GOD CAN EMPOWER US TO UNDERSTAND HIS WORD Vss. 2-6

Paul and the other Apostles (See Acts 10:for Peter's story.) were given to understand a great mystery. A "mystery" is a sacred secret. The mystery is that believing Gentiles would be fellow heirs of salvation with believing Jews.

Just as Paul was empowered to understand God's Word. Luke 8:10, 2 Timothy 2:15, Acts 17:11

3. GOD CAN EMPOWER US TO SERVE AS MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL. Vss. 7-9

The word minister means "servant". Paul considered it a special privilege to share the riches of Christ with the Gentiles. We too have the privilege of sharing Christ with others. Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 3:15

4. GOD CAN EMPOWER US TO COMMUNICATE WITH HIMSELF. Vs. 12

We have bold access to the "Throne of Grace" through prayer.

1 John 5:14-15, James 5:16-18

Ephesians 3:1-12 MISSIONARY AT WORK

PAUL'S PRIVILEGE - Vss. 1-6 - To understand the mystery that the Gentiles are to be fellow heirs in Christ

PAUL'S POSITION - Vss. 7-8 - A preacher of the Gospel to the Gentiles

PAUL'S PURPOSE - Vss. 9-11 - That people understand God's mystery

PAUL'S POWER - Vs. 12 - By faith

Ephesians 3:7-8 THE JOYS OF MINISTRY

MINISTRY IS A PRIVILEGE - Vs. 7a

Paul was a minister (servant) by God's grace. None of us are worthy to be God's servants, but God has not only saved us by grace, but he has chosen to use us by grace. Ephesians 2:8-10, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11, Romans 12:3-8

MINISTRY IS IN HIS POWER - Vs. 7b

It is the power of God that makes us effective in ministry.

MINISTRY IS PRICELESS - Vs. 8

It is priceless to think that God would save a wretch like me, and use me to further His kingdom!

Ephesians 3:14-21 IN PRAYER

I personally believe that:

Satan would rather have me witness than pray.

Satan would rather have me study my Bible than pray.

Satan would rather have me fellowship with other believers than pray.

Satan would rather have me preach or teach than pray.

I feel this way because God is the all-powerful God of the universe. He has the power to answer prayer and to do great things. I pray first and then witness, study, fellowship, preach or teach, I will be doing it in the power of God! I must remember that Jesus said, "Without me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

In Ephesians 3:14-21 Paul tells the Ephesians how he prayed for them. In this passage we learn some important principles about prayer.

IN PRAYER GOD IS ACKNOWLEDGED - Vss. 14-15

When we pray, we need to think about the person that we are approaching. We need to realize that we are coming to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. If we are saved, we are coming to our Father (John 1:12-13, Matthew 6:9) in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:13-14). There is a sense in which God is Father of all (Vs. 15). He is the one who has created and named the whole family of Heaven and earth.

IN PRAYER GOD IS ASKED - Vss. 16-19

Paul is praying for the Spiritual needs of the Ephesians.

We can ask God the same things for our own church and other churches we know.

It is proper to pray for those who are sick, but let's not forget their Spiritual needs as well.

IN PRAYER GOD IS APPRECIATED - Vss. 20-21

God is to be praised! He can do greatly more than we would ever ask or think! And this power is at work inside of us. May our desire be that He be glorified in His Son through His church!

Ephesians 3:14-21 INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS

PAUL'S CRY TO GOD - Vss. 14-15

PAUL'S CONCERNs BROUGHT TO GOD - Vss. 16-19

1. Strength from the Spirit - Vs. 16

2. Sovereignty of the Son - Vss. 17a

3. Love of the Saints - Vss. 17b-19a

4. Fullness of God - Vs. 19b

PAUL'S CONFIDENCE IN GOD - Vss. 20-21

Ephesians 4:1-6 THE WORTHY WALK

REQUEST FOR THE WORTHY WALK Vs. 1

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE WORTHY WALK Vss. 2-3

REASON FOR THE WORTHY WALK Vss. 4-6

Ephesians 4:1-16 THE WALK

Our Christian life is viewed by Paul as a "walk". Our walk is how we live. The walk is important, and Paul shows us some of the aspects of our walk in this passage.

THE WORTHY WALK - Vs. 1

THE HUMBLE WALK - Vs. 2

THE UNIFIED WALK - Vss. 3-6

THE GIFTED WALK - Vss. 7-11

God sent gifted men so that we will walk correctly.

THE PURPOSEFUL WALK - Vss. 12-16

As we follow the teaching of gifted individuals, our walk will have a purpose. We will be perfected for the work of the ministry.

Ephesians 4:2 etc. BE CONSISTENT!

Many of us feel that we are not as talented or as worthwhile to the Lord as some other Christians are. Our problem is that we tend to compare ourselves with others instead of comparing ourselves what God expects of us in the Bible. Next to being saved, the next most important thing is that we be faithful or consistent! See Ephesians 4:2. When I am consistent:

MY PORTION IS GOD'S WORD - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3, John 15:7, Philippians 4:8

There is not enough emphasis placed on memorization of and meditation upon Scripture. The more we consistently think upon God's Word, the more Godly we will become!

MY POWER IS GOD'S SPIRIT - Zechariah 4:6, Ephesians 5:18-21, Ephesians 1:19-23, Ephesians 3:16

God's Holy Spirit is the one who will enable us to be consistent. We couldn't save ourselves because we have no power to save. We can not live the Christian life consistently without God's help. We have no power to live the Christian life. We need the power of the Holy Spirit at work in our lives.

MY PRAISE AND PRAYER ARE GOD'S PLEASURE - Philippians 4:4, Psalm 63:3-7, 113:3, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, 1 Timothy 2:1-3

God wants us to consistently praise Him. God wants us to consistently come to Him in prayer.

Ephesians 4:11-16 THE ROAD TO MATURITY

God wants His church to grow into Spiritual maturity. Here is His plan for accomplishing this task. Notice that each verse begins with a preposition, so that we have:

1. THE "AND" OF PROVISION Vs. 11

God has provided gifted men to the church. In our day they are the evangelists, pastors and teachers.

2. THE "FOR" OF PURPOSE Vs. 12

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry..."

3. THE "TILL" OF PERFECTION (MATURITY) Vs. 13

4. THE "THAT" OF PERMANENCE Vs. 14

5. THE "BUT" OF PROCLAMATION Vs. 15

6. THE "FROM" OF PROGRESS Vs. 16

Ephesians 4:25-32 PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

Christianity is a very practical faith. After coming to know Christ as Savior, we are to conduct ourselves in a practical, Godly way. Paul gives us some tips for practical Christian living in these verses.

1. BE TRUTHFUL Vs. 25

2. BE TAME Vss. 26-27, 29

Anger should be under control.

Our speech should be edifying instead of being destructive.

3. BE TRUSTWORTHY Vs. 28

4. BE TENDER Vss. 30-32

We should not grieve the Spirit of God, but practice forgiveness. And forgive as we have been forgiven

Ephesians 5 etc. T.L.C. FOR MOM

Mother's Day comes once a year. Here are ways husband and children can show Mom Tender Loving Care (T.L.C.) every day of the year.

1. LOVE HER (Ephesians 5:25-27)

2. LEAD HER (Ephesians 5:22-24)

The husband is not a dictator, but a loving leader, whose leadership will usually be accepted by the wife when she is treated correctly. A wise leader will include those he's leading in decision making processes.

3. LEARN FROM HER (Proverbs 3:11-12, 26)

4. LOOK UP TO HER (1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 6:1-3)

5. LOOK AFTER HER (1 Timothy 5:8)

Ephesians 5:15-17 TIME MANAGEMENT

THE WALK OF TIME MANAGEMENT - Vs. 15 - *See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,*
THE WATCH OF TIME MANAGEMENT - Vs. 16 - *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*
THE WISDOM OF TIME MANAGEMENT - Vs. 17 - *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

Ephesians 5:18-21 FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

When a person is saved, he or she is baptized with the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13.) If the Holy Spirit is not present in the life, a person is not born again (John 3:5-8, Romans 8:9).
Although there is only one baptism of the Spirit, there is to be many "fillings" of the Spirit. The filling of the Spirit is the control of the Spirit of God in the life.
THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT IS NOT ARTIFICIAL - Vs. 18 - "And be not drunk with wine..."
Satan is a deceiver. He tries to substitute God's work with his own.
Alcohol is the substitute for the filling of the Spirit mentioned here.
When alcohol controls it is not only devastating, but temporary.
We must also beware of a "filling" of the Spirit that has no Biblical basis.
THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT IS NOT ACCIDENTAL - Vs. 18 - "...but be filled with the spirit."
Spirit filling does not just happen, it is commanded. The original text conveys the idea of being constantly filled, or controlled by the Spirit.
To be filled with the Spirit, one must confess sin, and be a "clean" container for the Spirit to fill. 2 Timothy 2:19-21, 1 John 1:9. Then, ask God to fill you with His Spirit. 1 John 5:14-15.
THE FILLING OF THE SPIRIT IS NOT AVERAGE - Vss. 19-21
The results of Spirit filling include
1. Supernatural Praise Vs. 19
2. Supernatural Thanksgiving Vs. 20
3. Supernatural Submission Vs. 21
4. Supernatural Fruit Galatians 5:22-23

Ephesians 5:21-33 HEAVEN IN THE HOME

I begin this message by reading the marriage vows.
The couple that keeps their marriage vows will be the couple that will experience a great marriage. They know what it is like to experience Heaven in the home. One of the Scriptures which shows us how to keep our marriage vows is Ephesians 5:21-33. Here are four ingredients for a happy marriage.
LORDSHIP Vss. 21-23
Christians are to be submissive to each other. This is a quality that comes from being filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-21)
As husbands and wives submit to the Lord, and then to each other, there will be harmony in the home. The husband is the leader of the family, but that does not make him a dictator. He must still submit himself to the needs and desires of his wife. That will mean doing things around the house, doing things she likes to do, and purchasing things (when feasible) which she wants. The wife needs to be submissive to the leadership of her husband.
LOVE Vs. 25 (Colossians 3:19)
The primary lover in the family is the husband.
Most Christian husbands who love their wives as Christ loved the church will not need to worry about having a submissive wife.
LEADERSHIP Vs. 23
The husband is the "head".
This makes him a leader.
The husband is responsible for the Spiritual well being of the home.
A good leader is not a dictator, but a thoughtful, considerate person.
A good leader makes the final decisions, but consults those he's leading before making decisions.
See Ephesians 6:4
LOYALTY Vss. 22 & 24
In order for husbands to be great leaders, they need great followers.
A loyal wife, who is loyal first to her Lord, and then to her husband, will enhance the husband's service for the Lord. Proverbs 31:10-12

Ephesians 6:5-9 ON THE JOB

Most people to whom you will minister are involved in some sort of employment. Ephesians 6:5-9 talks to masters and slaves. The truths of this passage may easily be applied to employers and employees or bosses and employees.

THE SERVANT (EMPLOYEE) Vss. 5-8

The Honesty Of The Servant Vs. 5-6a

"...obedient..."

"...fear and trembling..."

"...in singleness of you heart, as unto Christ..."

"...not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers..."

The Heart Of The Servant Vss. 6b-7

"...servants of Christ..."

"...doing the will of God from the heart;"

"With good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men;"

The Honor Of The Servant Vs. 8

"Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord..."

THE MASTER (EMPLOYER OR BOSS) Vs. 9

Reciprocate - "...do the same things unto them..."

Restrict - "...forbearing threatening;"

Remember - "...knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."

Ephesians 6:10-17 FULLY ARMED

Soldiers need to be fully armed when they go into battle. Any good army provides the soldier with all he needs in weapons, technology, clothing, transportation, etc. in order to fight a good fight.

We, as soldiers of the cross have also been equipped for the fight which is ahead of us. This fight against Satan and his forces is talked of in our text.

THE INVASION Vss. 11-12

THE INSTRUCTIONS Vss. 10, 11, 13

1. "Be strong in the Lord and the power of his might." Vs. 10

2. "Put on the whole armor of God." Vss. 11,13

THE INVENTORY Vss. 14-17

Here are the weapons we should put on.

Ephesians 6:10-18 THE ARMOR OF GOD

Ephesians 6:10-13 - "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

MY MEDITATION - "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth," - Vs. 14a

Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3, Psalm 119:15-16, Psalm 119:97

MY MASTER - "and having on the breastplate of righteousness;" - Vs. 14b

Romans 13:14, Galatians 2:20, Luke 9:23, Romans 6:10-14,

MY MESSAGE - "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" - Vs. 15

Romans 5:1, John 14:27, Isaiah 26:3-4, Philippians 4:6-7, Galatians 5:22

MY MOTIVATION - "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked". - Vs. 16

Hebrews 11:6

MY MEMORY - "And take the helmet of salvation" - Vs. 17a

Salvation Past - Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12

Salvation Present - Romans 8:35-39

Salvation Future - 1 John 3:1-3

MY METHOD - "and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;" - Vs. 17b

Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 3:16, 4:2

MY MINISTRY - "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" - Vs. 18

Ephesians 1:15-23, Ephesians 3:16-21, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-14

Ephesians 6:18 PROCEDURE FOR EFFECTIVE PRAYING

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

Frequency Of Prayer - "always"

Fullness Of Prayer - "all" (Philippians 4:6)

Includes praise, thanksgiving, prayer for personal needs, prayer for others.

Force Of Prayer - "in the Spirit"

Focus Of Prayer - "all saints" and unsaved (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

Faithfulness Of Prayer - "perseverance"

Ephesians 6:10-13 #1 - THE REALITY OF WAR

(An introductory message on the Christian's armor)

The Civil War, The Spanish - American War, World War I, World War II, The Korean War, The Vietnam War, Desert Storm and the current action in Yugoslavia are some of the conflicts involving Americans down through the years.

War is a reality. Even when there isn't war involving this nation, there is war going on somewhere else in the world. And there are also the smaller wars of gang warfare, drug warfare, and terrorism in this country and worldwide. There is also violence in many homes.

It should come as no surprise that the Christian is also at war.

He has peace with God. Romans 5:1

He also has the peace of God as he commits everything to the Lord in prayer. Philippians 4:6-7

He should have peace with others. Romans 12:17

But in a real way, the Christian is to be at war with Satan and his forces of evil.

We want to make you aware of the fact that you are involved in a real war! It's a Spiritual war against the forces of evil.

The great news, though, is that you are guaranteed to win the war, if you simply do as you are told.

REAL POTENTIAL Vs. 10

God never intends for any Christian to live a defeated Christian life. The God who saves you through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the God who expects you to be victorious in service to Him.

God never asks anyone to do anything that's impossible.

But God always asks us to do things that are impossible without His help.

Imagine me telling my granddaughter, Nicole, "touch the ceiling".

For this little girl who is all of a year and five months old, touching a ceiling would be impossible. But, if I pick her up and lift her above my head, she could easily touch a dropped ceiling.

I would never seriously ask my granddaughter to do something that's impossible. I would ask her to do something that was impossible without my help, expecting her to let me help her.

One difficulty we have as Christians is that we don't realize just how much power is available to us for the express purpose of living a victorious Christian life!

Ephesians 1:19-23 -

Vs. 19 - This is part of a prayer Paul prayed for the Ephesians. He wanted them to grasp or understand the great power that has already been expressed in their behalf, and that it was available for them to take advantage of it.

Vs. 20 - This great power was wrought in Christ by raising Him from the dead, and then seating Him "in the heavenly places" at God the Father's own right hand.

Vs. 21-23 give us a description of how tremendous accomplishment this seating of Christ in the heavenly places is. (Read)

Also, consider the victories promised to us in Philippians 4:13, 1 John 4:4 and Zechariah 4:6b.

REAL PROBLEMS Vss. 11b-12

We face the "wiles", schemes, or methods of the devil.

The history of Satan is well documented in Ezekiel 28:11-17, Isaiah 14:12-15 and Genesis 3:1-6.

The good news is that Satan is not all-powerful like God.

The good news is that Satan is not all knowing like God.

The good news is that Satan is not present everywhere like God.

The bad news is that Satan has a lot of help from the fallen angels who followed him in his rebellion. These demons have quite an influence as shown in verse 12.

Satan and his forces are enticing us to break God's commands as found in Exodus 20:1-17, and to do the things that God hates as described in Proverbs 6:16-19

REAL PARTICIPATION Vss. 11a, 13

We can stand against the wiles of the devil.

We can be victorious over his vicious attacks.

God has given us the Christian armor which includes a helmet, a shield, a breastplate, a belt and shoes. Their purpose is to protect us from the attacks of Satan.

It is our responsibility to make sure that we are fully clothed in this armor and to stand against the "wiles" of the devil.

When we stand we are holding firm, or holding the fort. Most of you know the story of the Alamo, a fort that resisted the attack of the Mexican general Santa Anna. A few valiant soldiers and volunteers tried to hold that fort against Santa Anna's attacks. It didn't work. Those valiant men including Davie Crockett and Jim Bowie were overwhelmed.

When the Lord tells us to "hold the fort" against the wiles of the devil we are not outnumbered. He has provided all the strength that we need. He has provided us with His strength. Our Lord never puts us in a battle that we will lose as long as we do as He says. Our Lord tells us to use the weapons, the armor He has provided in order to resist Satan.

We should make sure that we have made a once and for all decision to wear and use the armor which God has provided. Daily we should put on this armor.

Ephesians 6:14a and Joshua 1:8 #2 - BELTED!

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth..."

Illustrations of hypocrisy abound. You can site some from your illustration resources or from personal experience.

Hypocrisy: We laugh about it in others.

We don't like it in others.

We ignore it or tolerate it in ourselves.

Because we are sinners, we also tend to be hypocrites. We pretend to be what we are not. We pretend not to be what we are. The one who is influencing us towards hypocrisy is Satan.

In Ephesians 6:11-12 we are warned against the "wiles of the devil" and against the work of his demons (Vs.12). We are encouraged in Ephesians 6: 10, 11 and 13 that we have Spiritual armor provided by God which we should put on.

In our stand against Satan, we are first told, "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth."

Paul is in prison when he is writing. He is being guarded by a Roman soldier who probably had most or all of this armor with him.

Paul begins by discussing the belt!

When a soldier got dressed, he would put on his belt over his tunic.

The tunic was the primary piece of outer clothing that covered much of the soldier's body. It was a square piece of material with holes cut in it for the soldier's head and arms. It fit very loosely.

As you can imagine, during battle the tunic could easily be a hindrance, getting in the way. The tunic was tucked into the heavy leather belt worn by the soldier. The belt also helped to hold other pieces of armor in place. The belt was an essential piece of equipment.

Paul tells us to wear the belt of truth!

It is the truth that will help us keep all the other pieces of armor and our lives in place.

As the belt surrounds the person wearing it, the truth should surround us.

And may I add this thought - If we surround ourselves with truth and actually practice it, we will be truthful. To truly surround ourselves with truth, we are also surrounding ourselves with truthfulness. THE BEST ANTIDOTE FOR HYPOCRISY IN OUR LIVES IS THE TRUTH PRACTICED!

So, what is the truth?

First of all there is the truth of the Gospel.

A person must come to a point in his or her life of trusting the one, who died for our sins, was buried and rose again. A person must believe on the one who is "the way, the truth and the life."

A person must trust the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Savior. John 14:6 - "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Second, there is the truth of God's Word.

Third, there is the truth of practicing God's Word. That is called truthfulness.

I feel that the belt we put on is the truth of God's Word and the truthfulness of practicing it.

For the rest of this message, I would like to take you to a passage of Scripture that will show us how to put on that belt of truth so that our lives will be truthful!

Joshua 1:8 - "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

MY RESOURCE - "This book of the law..."

Joshua had the first 5 books of the Bible. We have Genesis to Revelation. We have a great book written by God. 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:21, Romans 15:4, Psalm 19:7-11

MY RETAINMENT - "... shall not depart out of thy mouth;"

As a 7-year old boy, I remember asking my mother at World Series time if the New York Yankees were playing. They weren't. It was 1954. (I'll save you the math. I'll be 52 this year.) Since that time I have always talked about the Yankees. They haven't stopped being in my mouth. How much more should the Word of God be a topic of my conversation and yours.

MY REFLECTION - "...but thou shalt meditate therein day and night..."

See Psalm 1:2, Jeremiah 15:16 and Psalm 119:15, 16, 97.

MY REASON - "... that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein:"

See Psalm 119:9

MY RESULTS - "... for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." I believe that the prosperity mentioned here is primarily Spiritual. See Psalm 1:3.

Ephesians 6:14b, Galatians 2:20 3 - PROTECTED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS

Protection! In our area there is a radio personality named John Signa, who broadcasts on KDKA, Pittsburgh. For many years he was opposed to a Pennsylvania State law which requires motorcyclists to wear helmets. Then, about a month ago, Signa had a motorcycle accident that could have killed him, if he hadn't been wearing the protective helmet required by law. John Signa has changed his mind about that law. He now supports it. The law is designed to protect motorcyclists as it did Signa.

Some of you may not like laws that require people to wear seatbelts. However, time and time again the wearing of seatbelts has saved lives. Seat belts have protected people!

Protection! Most parents do things to protect their children.

We protect our children by where we allow them to go.

We protect our children by what we allow them to do.

We protect our children by teaching them proper behavior and procedures.

We protect our children by watching out for them, keeping them away from such things as stairs and electric outlets when they are very small.

If the recent tragedy in Littleton Colorado has taught us anything, it has taught us that our children need to be protected from the wrong kind of influences.

We protect our children because we love them. God, our Heavenly Father, protects His children because He loves us. As Christians our enemy is Satan (1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:11-12).

Because God wants to protect us, He has given us Spiritual armor for us to wear (Ephesians 6:10-17).

Roman soldiers would wear a breastplate that would cover the torso, and protect vital organs.

Our God has given us the breastplate of righteousness, which guards our Spiritual vital organs, including the "heart".

To begin with, no human being is naturally righteous (Romans 3:10-18, 23 and Isaiah 64:6.) Our Lord Jesus died for us to become righteous (2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:6-9). When a person trusts Christ as Savior, he or she is justified (declared righteous) by faith (Romans 5:1). He wiped out the debt caused by sin! God protects those who are saved from the judgement of hell by covering them with the righteousness of his Son.

After a person is standing in the righteousness of Christ for salvation, he is also to put on the breastplate of righteousness. This righteousness is not the righteousness that saved him. That was a once and for all righteousness. This righteousness is a practical, daily righteousness that protects from the attacks of Satan on our Spiritual hearts.

One of the passages that describes this practical righteousness is Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

In this passage we see that

WE ARE CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST - "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live;"

Because Jesus died for me, when Jesus died on the cross, I died with Him.

When Jesus was buried, I was buried.

When Jesus rose in a new resurrection body, I arose to newness of life in Him (Romans 6:3-4).

We are now to count on the fact that we are dead to sin and alive to righteousness (Romans 6:10-14).

WE ARE TO BE CLOTHED WITH CHRIST - "...yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:"

Yes, through the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus does live inside of each and every person who is saved! But when Paul speaks these words about Christ living inside of Him, I believe that he is clothing himself with the righteousness of Christ. He is yielded to Christ and allowing Him to rule in his life. He is living out what he prayed in Ephesians 3:17 - "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." He is allowing the Lord Jesus to live rule and reign in His life. When we are clothed with Christ, we are simply allowing Him to be Lord of all within us! (Romans 13:14)

WE ARE TO BE CONFIDENT IN CHRIST - "...and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

As I allow myself to be clothed with Christ, I am placing my faith and confidence in Christ!
I am trusting Christ when I want to hold a grudge but no longer hold it against a person.
I am trusting Christ when I want to lose my temper but quietly discuss a matter instead.
I am trusting Christ when I want to do or say what is dishonest, but instead do and say what is truthful.
I am trusting Christ when I begin to fear or worry, but turn those fears over to Him.
I am trusting Christ when I start to doubt but instead have faith.
As I trust Christ I will be clothed with Christ's righteousness and Christ will live His life through me.

Why should I want to live such a life?
Why should I want to be righteous in the way I live?

Paul tells us here.

Jesus loved us and gave Himself for us.
He gave His all for me. He gave His all for you.
We should trust Him to live through us in return!

Ephesians 6:15 #4 - A GOOD PAIR OF SHOES OR "IF THE SHOE FITS, WEAR IT"

God has the answer for those who feel pressured, trapped, up against it, discouraged, or even defeated. God's answer, figuratively speaking, has to do with footwear. I'm sure you've worn various shoes or boots that were a problem. Some were too large. Some were too small. Some had holes in them. Some were too slippery on the bottom, and you had no traction. And some were just plain uncomfortable!

God wants you to trade in whatever footwear you are wearing for a comfortable, sturdy pair of army boots. Ephesians 6:14-15 says,
"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;"

We are in Spiritual warfare against the devil and his henchmen, the demons. Ephesians 6:11-12
God has provided the Christian with armor to withstand the devil.
The Christian's responsibility is to wear and use that armor.

Roman soldiers wore sandals that were hobnailed. We might say they were cleated.
Imagine a soldier trying to march up a slippery hill and not being able to do so because of smooth bottoms to the shoes. Imagine a soldier trying to fight an enemy when he couldn't stand firm. If the soldier had slippery boots, the enemy could push him down, and defeat him.

Our footwear is the "preparation" or the "readiness" of the Gospel of peace.
In a real sense the Christian needs to be ready or prepared to move out and share the Gospel at any moment. (Romans 10:14-15) And although we are to be ready to go and share the Gospel, that does not appear to be the meaning here. The context here is standing. We are to be standing, resisting the devil! We stand firm, resisting the devil when we are wearing a prepared foundation, a base which will not allow us to be moved by uncertainty, anxiety, or worry. We will be able to stand firm when we are standing in the peace of the Gospel.

THE POSITION OF PEACE

Before a person comes to Christ, he or she has an enemy. Because of our sins, we are God's enemies. Oh, He loves us, but sin separates us from God and makes us God's enemies. Isaiah 59:2, Ephesians 2:2-3

We could not have peace because we were God's enemies.

A person under the bondage of sin and service to the devil cannot have peace.

We were God's enemies. But God sent his Son to the cross to die for our sins. He died in our place, the righteous for the unrighteous. He died so we could have peace. Romans 5:1
The moment you trust Christ as Savior one battle is over.

You are no longer God's enemy, you are now God's child. John 1:12

THE POWER FOR PEACE

God wants you to have two kinds of peace.
He wants you to have peace with Him. That happens the moment you come to Christ as Savior.
But God also wants you to have His peace to rule inside of you. It is possible to actually be at peace and not feel peaceful. And this is where Satan likes to get in and meddle.
If Satan can stop you from experiencing God's peace, he will.

God in His goodness wants us to experience the peace of God.
God has provided a very Special person to live inside of us to give us the power to have peace. This special person is God, the Holy Spirit. John 14:15-18, John 14:26-27
The power for peace, the Holy Spirit of God, lives in your life.

THE PRACTICE OF PEACE

Now we see how the Christian can put on these boots, the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. I feel it can be summed up in three words:

FILLING - Ephesians 5:18

How can you tell if you are filled? Ephesians 5:19-21, Galatians 5:22-23

FOCUS - Isaiah 26:3-4

FELLOWSHIP - Psalm 27:4-5, Philippians 4:6-7

Ephesians 6:16, Hebrews 11:6 #5 - THE SHIELD OF FAITH

Faith is essential! There is no person in this whole world that is going to Heaven without faith in Christ alone for salvation! (John 14:6)

We are sinners.

Jesus Christ, God's Son in the flesh, died on the cross for our sins.

He paid the price on the cross! (2 Corinthians 5:21)

He rose from the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

The price is paid for our sins so we can go to Heaven.

We simply have to accept it by faith!

Ephesians 2:8-10 - "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

God in his grace has provided the way to Heaven, free of charge.

But it is totally a matter of faith, not of works.

It's not good works that get you to Heaven.

It's not faith and good works that get you into Heaven.

It's faith plus nothing that gets you into Heaven.

If you have not trusted Christ alone, place faith in Him for eternal life.

God is offering a free gift!

Accept it by faith!

Faith is essential for eternal life.

Faith is also an essential ingredient in the Christian's Armor.

Ephesians 6:16 - "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

Please consider:

THE PRIORITY OF FAITH

The words "above all" carry the idea of adding to what has already been said.

Besides the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, and the boots of peace, the Christian soldier is to take the shield of faith. The Roman soldier had two shields that he could use. The first shield was a small shield held in one hand while a sword could be held in the other. The second shield that was used, and referred to in our text, was much larger. It was 4 1/2 feet tall and 2 1/2 feet wide and covered with metal or leather. This shield was sufficient to protect a soldier's whole body. Soldiers often stood next to each other, shield next to shield, and moved forward against an enemy.

How important is the shield of faith?

Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith it is impossible to please him:"

Another word for "faith" is trust.

Is trust an important part of a friendship?

Friendships are ruined by a lack of trust.

Is trust an important part of marriage?

I have seen marriages ruined by a lack of trust.

When trust is violated, it takes a long time for a marriage to be restored, if it's ever restored.

Is trust important between parents and children?

Yes! When a child can't trust the parent, and/or the parent can't trust the child, the whole relationship is strained and often destroyed.

And what's even sadder is when the other person in the relationship does not trust a trustworthy person.

If a wife is trustworthy and not trusted by her husband, it's sad.

If a child is trustworthy and not trusted by her daughter, it's sad.

If a friend is trustworthy and not trusted by his or her friend, it's sad!

Can God be trusted? Of course He can!

How sad it is when we do not trust God!

How can we tell we are not trusting God.

When we worry.

When we fear.

When we allow temptation to conquer us.

It is obvious in these situations that we are simply not trusting, not using the shield of faith!

Have you ever stopped to think why we trust people?
We trust them because they are family.
We trust them because they are friends.
We trust them because we know they care.
We trust them because they have proven themselves trustworthy.
We trust them because they have the power and ability to help us.

Why should we trust God?
We should trust Him because He is family - Our loving Heavenly Father.
We should trust Him because He is our friend.
We should trust Him because we know He cares.
We should trust Him because He has the power and ability to help us.
We should trust Him because He has proven Himself trustworthy.
As someone has said, "You can trust the one who died for you." (Romans 8:32)
When we are not trusting God, we are not pleasing God.

THE PROCEDURE OF FAITH

We are to "take" the shield of faith. How do we do that?
Hebrews 11:6 - "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Notice there are two things mentioned here which we must do to use the shield of faith.

First we must believe that God is!

And you might be thinking, "Why pastor we all believe in the existence of God."

I think we all believe in our heads, but we don't always practice belief in God in our hearts.

We don't act like we believe in God!

You say you believe in God, but do you trust Him in tight jams?

You say you believe in God, but do care about His opinion of your behavior?

You say you believe in God, but are you ever concerned about hurting His feelings.

You say you believe in God, but do you worry as if He didn't exist?

You can say you believe in God, but if you don't act like there's a God, you don't really believe in Him. By taking the shield of faith, you believe in God's existence as part of your every day life. But there's more. Not only do you believe in God's existence, but also you believe that He rewards those that diligently seek Him. How can you tell if you believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him? You believe that He rewards those who diligently seek Him, if you diligently seek Him.

Millions of people say they believe that God answers prayer.

The ones, who truly believe that God answers prayer, pray diligently!

And after they have prayed, they simply believe that God will answer. That's faith! (Psalm 37:5
Psalm 91:2, Proverbs 3:5-6)

THE PROFIT OF FAITH

According to Ephesians 6:16, the shield of faith quenches all the fire darts of the wicked.

A Roman soldier's shield covered with leather would not only stop the darts of the enemy, but if they were fiery darts, the fire would be put out.

Our enemy sends his fiery darts of temptation. The shield of faith quenches them.

There is even more profit for the one who uses the shield of faith. God rewards him according to Hebrews 11:6. God gives direction to him according to Proverbs 3:5-6. And God protects him according to Psalm 91:1.

Ephesians 6:17a # 6 - HEADGEAR FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

(Please note, this outline is NOT ORIGINAL WITH ME. I think I have seen it in print in various forms. I have simply adapted this outline to this particular text.)

The 21st century is coming soon! We are on the verge of entering a new millennium. And as we prepare to move ahead into a new era, let me tell you something. Satan is ready to give you a hard time in the next millennium just as he has given you a hard time during the last end of this millennium. Satan will attack you (1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:11-12).

The Roman soldier wore a helmet, usually made with metal of some kind, in order to protect his head. If the head was injured, the brain was likely to be injured as well. The brain is the control center of the body. Satan attacks our Spiritual "brains". If he destroy our Spiritual control centers, he can destroy the quality of our Christian lives.

We are told to take the helmet of "salvation". Salvation is presented in three stages in the Bible. There is justification the moment we are saved. There is sanctification as we are in the process of being saved. There is glorification when we leave this life and are saved for all eternity. We are to think of our salvation as deliverance from and victory over sin.

THE PAST - SAVED FROM THE PENALTY OF SIN - Romans 8:1

The moment we trusted Christ as Savior, our sins are forgiven (Psalm 103:10-14)

To maintain fellowship with God, we are to be continually confessing our sins (Psalm 66:18, 1 John 1:9).

THE PRESENT - SAVED FROM THE POWER OF SIN - Romans 6:10-14, Romans 8:35-39

We have victory over sin, as we trust God for victory.

Nothing separates us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

THE FUTURE - SAVED FROM THE PRESENCE OF SIN - 1 Thessalonians 5:8, Titus 2:11-13, Revelation 21:1-5, 22:1-8

The Christian Soldier looks forward to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the "hope of salvation". He also looks forward to the eternal state, which will include the new heaven, new earth and New Jerusalem. As a Christian Soldier I must wear the "Helmet of Salvation". I look to the past realizing that my sins have been forgiven. I look to the present and see that nothing can separate me from the love of Christ. I look to the future and anxiously await Jesus' coming.

Ephesians 6:17b, Matthew 4:1-11 # 7 - LEARNING GOOD SWORDSMANSHIP

(This introduction assumes that you are preaching a series on the Christian's armor.)

We have been warning you against the schemes, the wiles, the methods of the devil. We have been telling you about the "armor" which God has provided for us to wear and/or use. We have seen the belt of truth, which is knowing and obeying God's Word. We have seen the breastplate of righteousness, which is recognizing our association, which Christ in His death burial and resurrection. It is allowing Christ to live His life through us. We have seen the boots of the readiness of the Gospel peace. We are to stand in peace as we focus on Christ, are filled with the Spirit and fellowship with God in prayer. We have seen the shield of faith, which allows us to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

We have seen the helmet of salvation that reminds us of our victory over the penalty, power and presence of sin.

And today we see the sword of the Spirit, which when properly used allows us to resist temptation. Ephesians 6:17 - "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" The Roman Soldier's armor included a sword that was used in hand to hand combat. The Sword of the Spirit is that which is used to ward off temptation from Satan. The Word of God is that sword. The word "word" in this passage would refer to a specific saying. Thus, when we use the word of God in fighting temptation, we are using specific sayings from God. We are confronting Satan with Scripture. As Christians we need to learn to use our swords. There is no better teacher than the Lord Jesus Christ. Matthew 4:1-11 shows how He defeated temptation from Satan.

DIRECTION FROM THE SPIRIT Vs. 1

When Jesus was tempted it was after a time of great success. Matthew 3:13-17. Satan will also try to tempt the Christian after times of success. The key to Jesus' victory is that the Holy Spirit was guiding him. We all will face temptation, but the least amount of temptation will be faced when the Spirit is in control of our lives.

DISTRACTIONS FROM SATAN Vss. 2-3, 5-6, 8-9

Eve was tempted by Satan in three basic areas (Genesis 3:6). The Christian is tempted by Satan in three basic areas (1John 2:16) Jesus showed that he was qualified to be our Savior because He was tempted and had victory in the same three areas of temptation.

Lust Of The Flesh Vss. 2-3

Jesus was hungry. Satan wanted Jesus to make bread. That would have been wrong for Jesus to do, because He would have disobeyed God's plan for His life, and He would have listened to Satan. When we allow our desires to get out of hand they become lusts. When we satisfy our lusts we do not fulfill God's plan for our lives and we listen to Satan.

Pride Of Life Vss. 5-6

If Jesus had listened to Satan, He would have tempted God to take care of Him while Jesus was doing something unwise.

How do Christians tempt God?

Here are a few examples:

They do dangerous things that are not at all safe, but expect God to protect them.

They are supposed to take medicine but don't and expect God to keep them healthy.

They foolishly spend money they don't have, and then expect God to pay their bills.

This is all pride, expecting our priorities to be more important than God's plan for our lives, and expecting God to care for us anyway.

Lust Of The Eyes Vss. 8-9

Jesus was invited to receive "a kingdom without a cross" if he bowed to Satan. He would have satisfied the lust of the eyes. Our eyes see many things. Many things our eyes see are things we shouldn't have. When we give in to lusts of our eyes, we do what we can to obtain what the eyes see. Or we fantasize through our eyes things which are wrong. Many a man or woman has committed adultery with their eyes. Many a man or woman has killed with their eyes. Many a man or woman has stolen with their eyes. Those who wouldn't steal, lie, commit adultery, or murder watch all sorts of television shows and movies, which promote stealing, lying, adultery and murder.

DECLARATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE

There Is One Word To Obey - Vs. 4

Jesus pointed out that man is to live by every word that comes from God's mouth.

There Is One Way To Follow - Vs. 7

We are not to tempt God, but obey Him.

There Is One Person To Worship Vss. 10-11

When God is worshiped we will not bow down to Satan or anyone else.

Jesus quoted Scripture in order to have victory over temptation. We should do the same.

Ephesians 6:18 #8 - PROCEDURE FOR EFFECTIVE PRAYING

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

One of the most difficult things a Christian is asked to do is to pray consistently. I personally feel that the difficulty rises because Satan knows just how effective prayer is. He doesn't want us to pray and he fights us about prayer.

The passage before us follows the description of the Christian Soldier's armor. While technically not part of the armor, prayer is essential in the armor's use. Prayer activates the armor and keeps us in touch with our general, The Lord Jesus Christ.

FREQUENCY OF PRAYER - "always"

Prayer will not always be on our lips, but should never be far from our lips. Continual prayer is taught several places in Scripture including Psalm 55:17, Acts 6:4, 2 Timothy 1:3 and Philippians 4:6.

FULLNESS OF PRAYER - "all"

Prayer is not just asking God for things. I have had friends whom only called me when they wanted something. I didn't appreciate this. Imagine how God feels when all we do is ask. Prayer includes:

Praise - Psalm 47:6-7, Psalm 96:1-2

Thanksgiving - 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Request for guidance - James 1:5

Confession - Psalm 32:5

Request for spiritual needs - 1 John 5:14-15

Intercession - Ephesians 6:18 (More on this follows.)

FORCE OF PRAYER - "in the Spirit"

The Holy Spirit should guide our prayers. He will, as we yield to His filling.

FOCUS OF PRAYER - "all saints" and unsaved (1Timothy 2:1-4)

Paul gives us at least four prayers to model in praying for other believers.

Ephesians 1:16-23, 3:14-21, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-14.

We should ask God to save those who don't know Christ.

FAITHFULNESS IN PRAYER - "perseverance"

We should continually be praying according to God's will until He sends the answer. Luke 18:1-8

Philippians 1:1 etc. THE CHURCH

When the Bible speaks of "the church" it is either referring to the universal church or the local church. The universal church is made up of every person who has been saved. The universal church consists of those who know they are going to heaven because they have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

The local church is a group of Christians who meet in a specific area. Where I live we have the local church that I pastor in Valley Township, Pennsylvania. When I travel to Suriname, I will visit at least one local church that meets either in or near Paramaribo. Our Lord Jesus has promised to build His Church.

Matthew 16:18

Please remember that the church is made up of people, and that the church will only be as strong and effective as you, the individual, is! If the church is made up of just one age group, then eventually the church will dwindle down to nothing.

Let us consider three things about the local church that involve all of us.

THE CHURCH IS TRANSFORMED - PHILIPPIANS 1:1

First of all, let us think about the Biblical meaning of the word "church". The word is made up by combining two other words, "called" and "out". In the Greek the term was often used for an assembly of people who were meeting for a specific purpose. We as a church are a group of people who meet for a specific purpose. We meet to worship and serve God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a group and as individuals we are given a special title in Philippians 1:1. Those who believe on Christ are called "saints".

Phil 1:1 - Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Some of us come from a religious background in which a "saint" was some sort of holy person with supernatural influence who was declared a saint by the church. But this is not how Paul used the word, or how the Philippians would have thought of themselves.

The term saints was used in Paul's day to refer to all Christians.
Today, we might use the terms, "believers" or "brothers and sisters".

The term has to do with separation.
A saint is someone who is set apart for God.

Or, we might say that a saint is someone whom God has set apart for Himself.

You became set apart for God in Jesus Christ the moment you were saved.

Before being saved, we were set apart for Satan and his work. Ephesians 2:2-3

A big change or transformation took place the moment you came to Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:17
Christ has made you new!

You have a new nature on the inside.

You have a new forgiveness.

You have a new hope of eternal life.

You should have a new desire to please God.

You should have a new hatred for sin.

You should have a new desire to live a holy life. 1 Peter 1:15-16

The church is made up of changed people!
Not one of us is the same as we were before coming to Christ.

Now we are to live like we are saved.

Those who do not know Christ should look at our church and see people who are saints set apart for God.

Our words are set apart for God.

Our attitudes are set apart for God.

Our actions and activities are set apart for God.

Those who do not know Christ should look at our church and see people who are different from what we used to be, because we are changed. We have been transformed.

THE CHURCH IS A TEAM

The church is also a team. We do not all have the same jobs.
We do not have the same jobs because God has given us different "gifts" or supernatural abilities. Romans 12:3-8 explains this. There will be gifted people in the church who need to use their abilities for the glory of the Lord. Although we should all give, show mercy etc., there will be people who will have expertise in these areas. If someone is not using their gift there will be a lack in the church just there is a lack in a human body when a body part is missing or not doing its job.

Here is another thought. Every team has leaders. They are often called managers or coaches. Our Lord Jesus Christ has provided men to be leaders in the church. Those of us who lead need to be good leaders. Those who follow are to be good followers. 1 Peter 5:1-5, Hebrews 13:7, 13:17

THE CHURCH IS A TESTIMONY

As a church we are to spread the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In order to do this we must have a good testimony.

Those who are unbelievers should be able to look at our church and see something good, something positive, and something that they want to be part of.

How can we, as a church, be a good testimony?

As Christians we are to love other Christians as Christ loved us. John 13:34-35

Christ gave for us in love.

Christ taught us in love.

Christ went to the cross for us in love!

Christ forgave us in love.

We are to do the same!

Unsaved people should be able to tell we belong to the Lord Jesus by the amount of love we show!

Another way the church gives testimony to the unsaved is by our actions. Matthew 5:16

And a third way the church gives testimony is by its words. 1 Peter 3:15

Philippians 1:1-2 JUST WHO ARE WE ANYWAY?

From these short, introductory verses to the Book of Philippians we discover that:

WE ARE SAINTS - "...to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons."

Many think of saints as special holy people with supernatural influence, designated by some church as "saints". In the Bible, all born again Christians are designated as saints. The word saint has the idea of being "set apart". As saints we are set apart unto God in Christ for Godly living! A saint has experienced a changed life! (See 1 Peter 1:15-15 and 2 Corinthians 5:17).

WE ARE SERVANTS - "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ..."

A servant was a bondslave. He had been purchased by his master.

We have been purchased with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19). As servants we should obey our master exclusively, willingly, and lovingly. (You might want to refer to the Hebrew slave who was voluntarily slave for life because he loved his master. See Exodus 21:1-6)

WE ARE SUPPLIED - Vs. 2

Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9) and peace (Romans 5:1) were initial gifts at the moment of salvation. However, grace and peace are available to us on a regular basis. We can only accomplish great things for God by His grace (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). As we serve God we need His peace, which is a result of prayer (Philippians 4:6-7). We are supplied with grace and peace so we can act well as servants and saints!

Philippians 1:2-11 A PASTOR'S HEART

In order to serve a congregation well a minister should have a pastor's heart. Our Lord Jesus Christ had a pastor's heart. (Psalm 23, John 10) The Apostle Paul also had a pastor's heart, as this passage shows us. A person with a pastor's heart is:

CONCERNED FOR THE SHEEP - Vss. 2, 7-8

THANKFUL FOR THE SHEEP - Vss. 3-5

CONFIDENT IN GOD - Vs. 6

PRAYERFUL FOR THE SHEEP - Vss. 9-11

Philippians 1:3-8 THANKFUL INTERCESSION

When we intercede for others in prayer, we are to be thankful. That's easy enough when we are getting along with someone, but hard when we are not on good terms with another Christian. In this passage, Paul shows us his own thankful heart for other believers.

THE WHO OF THANKSGIVING - Vs. 3

Who is to be thanked for the people who enter our lives, good and bad, Spiritual, and unspiritual? God is! Paul thanked the Lord for almost all the churches, even though they were filled with imperfect people.

Romans 1:8, 1 Corinthians 1:4 (A very immature church.), Colossians 1:3 (A church plagued by some false teachers, Gnostics.)

THE WHEN OF THANKSGIVING - Vss. 3-4

"...upon every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you..." See 1 Timothy 2:1-4 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17

THE WHY OF THANKSGIVING - Vss. 5-8

Paul gives three reasons for giving thanks for the Philippians.

1. FELLOWSHIP - Vs. 5 - They were Paul's partners in ministry. Every believer is your partner in Christ.

2. FAITHFULNESS - Vs. 6 - God began a "good work" in each believer. Each believer will be completed at the rapture of the church. God is faithful to preserve and keep us. See Hebrews 12:2, 1 Peter 1:5, Eph 4:30 & John 10:27-30

3. FONDNESS - Vss. 7-8 - Paul was fond of the Philippians. As we develop the same fondness for other Christians, we too, will be able to pray for them thankfully.

Philippians 1:12-18 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING

We have an expression in America which says, "Opportunity Knocks".

When opportunity knocks, we find that there are great chances to accomplish something. When a person has the chance to make some extra money through work, that is "opportunity knocking". When a Christian has a very good opening to share the Gospel, that is opportunity knocking. Although Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he saw opportunity knocking.

OUTREACH Vss. 12-13

(You might want to review the things which happened to Paul, including his arrest, imprisonment, appeal to Caesar, trip to Rome etc. See Acts 22-28) Paul was under Roman guard 24 hours a day, under the supervision of Caesar's crack troops, the Praetorian Guard. He took this opportunity to spread the Gospel.

OVERFLOW Vss. 14-17

Paul's preaching influenced others to preach the Gospel.

Some did it out of sincerity, others were hoping that Gospel preaching would make things harder on Paul.

OPTIMISM Vs. 18

Paul could have gotten very upset by the wrong motives of people, but he didn't. He simply rejoiced that the Gospel was preached.

In light of Revelation 20:15, we should have the same joy when the Gospel is proclaimed.

Philippians 1:21 A FORGOTTEN VERSE

We are all forgetful at times. There is a kind of forgetting that is not harmless. Forgetting to be kind, or to remember a kindness shown is not harmless. To forget Godly principles that you once lived by is not harmless. And to forget to live by key Bible verses is not harmless.

I want us to consider a verse that many Christians have forgotten or have never learned.

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Concerning this verse, please note:

THERE ARE DECISIONS TO BE MADE

Eternal life is through faith in Christ. One must decide to believe on Him. Paul left behind trying to earn his way to Heaven in favor of faith in Christ. Philippians 3:4-9, John 3:36

After deciding to trust Christ, a Christian must also decide to live for Christ. Christ is to become the center of all the Christian is, and all he hopes to be. Romans 12:1

THERE IS DEATH TO EXPERIENCE

Just as Jesus died to give life to millions, it is as we die to self and let Christ live through us that we will truly learn "to live is Christ."

John 12:24-25, Luke 9:23-24, Galatians 2:20a.

THERE IS DEVOTION TO PRACTICE

"and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God , who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20b

My life is to be devoted to Christ, "who loved me and gave himself for me."

THERE IS DISCIPLINE INVOLVED

I can type because of years of practice, and some training.

In order to say, "For to me to live is Christ," also takes the discipline of practice.

I must practice prayer.

I must practice Bible reading and study.

I must practice Bible memorization and meditation.

I must practice walking in the Spirit.

As I practice, I must depend on the Lord's help. John 15:5, Philippians 4:13

THERE IS DESTINY AHEAD

"...and to die is gain."

See Philippians 1:23. Paul looked forward to departing and being with Christ. We have that same hope of being with Him when this life is over.

Philippians 1:19-26 AT THE CROSSROADS

In this life you will often find yourself "at the crossroads". It will be a time when you must make an important decision. Such decisions might involve marriage, schooling, family, employment, church or other things.

When we come to the "crossroads" it is easy to get depressed, worried, uncertain, confused, and out of sorts. The crossroads we face usually don't bring us much joy. Paul, however, faced a crossroads in his life and he was able to handle it with joy.

PAUL HAD A PROBLEM - Vss. 23-24

Paul's crossroad was simply this. He wanted to leave earth and go home to be with the Lord. But he also realized that it was necessary for him to remain a while longer to help the Philippians and other churches under his care. It was a tough decision.

PAUL HAD A PLAN - Vss. 20-21

Paul could handle the crossroads in life because he had a plan.

His plan was to magnify Christ no matter whether he lived or faced death.

Nothing else really mattered.

Paul's plan meant that life was centered on Christ. For Him to live was Christ, and to die was gain!

PAUL HAD A PRIORITY - Vss. 19,24-26

Paul's priority was to do what was most important for the Lord.

Paul realized that although he'd rather have Jesus take him home, it was more important for the Philippians that he be delivered and continue to minister.

Paul's decision at the crossroads was centered around the Lord's will and doing what was best for others.

Philippians 1:27-30 TAKE A STAND!

As Christians, we are to stand for what is right. In Philippians 1:27-30 we find Paul encouraging the Philippians to take a stand.

STAND AS CITIZENS Vs. 27a

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ:"

The word "conversation" here carries the idea of citizenship.

Paul wanted the Philippians to act as good citizens of Heaven. Philippians 3:20, Hebrews 13:14

STAND IN PARTNERSHIP Vs. 27

"that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;"

STAND WITH BOLDNESS Vs. 28

"And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." Stephen is a good example of standing boldly. (Acts 6-7)

STAND THROUGH SUFFERING Vs. 29

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;"

Philippians 1:27-30 JOY UNDER PRESSURE

There are many pressures in the world today.

There's the pressure that comes from living. That includes paying bills, raising the family, planning for the future, dealing with the neighbors, and being active in a church.

There is also the pressure that comes from taking a stand as Christian. 2 Timothy 3:12 warns us that there will be persecution for anyone who tries to live a Godly life in the name of Christ. If there was anybody who understood the pressures that came from standing for Christ, it is the Apostle Paul. He had been falsely accused, mocked, misunderstood, stoned, flogged and thrown in jail because of his testimony for Christ.

One of the themes found in the book of Philippians is joy. In the passage before us, Paul tells the Philippians and us how to have joy under pressure.

BEHAVIOR - Vs. 27

Please note in these verses that joy under pressure is not an individual activity. It's not something I usually handle alone, although sometimes I must. The way Paul is writing here, he's writing to the whole group and expecting a group response. Of course to have a group response, everyone in the group must respond individually.

Our behavior should be becoming or complimentary to the Gospel of Christ.

Our behavior should also mean taking a stand for Christ "in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

BOLDNESS - Vs. 28

In effect, Paul is telling us here not to let our enemies scare us.

BENEFIT - Vs. 29

The benefit of being under the pressure of persecution is that it is a privilege to suffer for the one who suffered on the cross for us.

BROTHERHOOD - Vs. 30

It is a mutual conflict. Rest assured that you are not the only under pressure. Never think that you are alone. Don't think that you are the only person or congregation that might suffer. Elijah thought that he was alone, yet there were 7,000 who had not submitted to idol worship. 1 Kings 19:14, 18

Philippians 2:1-4 IN COMMON

When I meet new people, it is not unusual for us to find things which we hold in common. Sometimes we will know the same person, or be from the same area, or root for the same team, or have the same hobby.

Whatever we have "in common" draws us together, and friendship usually gets off to a good start.

In our text Paul is making an appeal for unity among the Philippians.

It is evident from this appeal, and the appeal in Philippians 4:2-3 that there was some disunity in that church. Paul shows the Philippians and us some things which we should hold "in common" with other believers. As we all practice holding these things "in common" with other believers, we will have unity.

COMMON COMPONENTS Vs. 1

The word "if" means "since". Since these four parts or components These components are: consolation in Christ, comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, bowels and mercies. Because these components are true for all believers, we should be unified.

COMMON CAUSE Vs. 2

Our cause should be to be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and of one mind.

COMMON CONDUCT Vs. 3

There should be no strife (party spirit), or vainglory (pride).

Each should consider the other better than himself (If we reflect on what we were like before salvation and how human we are now, considering others better than ourselves shouldn't be hard!).

COMMON CONCERN Vs. 4

We should all be interested in the concerns of other Christians, as well as our own concerns.

Philippians 2:1-4 UNITY

REASONS FOR UNITY - Vs. 1

REQUEST FOR UNITY - Vs. 2

REQUIREMENTS FOR UNITY - Vss. 3-4

Philippians 2:5-11 THE EASTER MESSAGE

THE HUMILITY OF THE SON OF GOD Vss. 5-8a

THE HUMILIATION OF THE SON OF GOD Vs. 8b

THE HONOR OF THE SON OF GOD Vss. 9-11

Philippians 2:5-11 THE MIND OF CHRIST

As Christians we are told to have "the mind of Christ". Such a mind or attitude is seen in the following verses.

Consider:

HIS STANDING - Vs. 6

He is God!

HIS SERVANTHOOD - Vs. 7

HIS SACRIFICE - Vs. 8

HIS SOVEREIGNTY - Vss. 9-11

Philippians 2:5-11 A GOOD ATTITUDE

Begin your message with some examples of those who had good attitudes. Then, remind people that the person with the best attitude was the Son of God. Paul admonishes us all to have the "mind" or attitude of Christ in Philippians 2:5-11. A good attitude involves:

SURRENDER Vss. 6-7a

Our Lord surrendered his rights in order to save us.

He left the glory of heaven (2 Corinthians 8:9).

He voluntarily limited the use of his Godly attributes.

SERVICE Vs. 7b

He took on the form of a servant. He came to earth to serve God, and us, by dying for our sins.

SUBMISSION Vs. 8

"...he humbled himself..."

SACRIFICE Vs. 8

"...and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

SATISFACTION Vss 9-11

As a result of Jesus' actions on earth, God has highly exalted Him, and will continue to exalt Him. As we have the same mind as Christ, there will be rewards for us when we appear before Him in judgment. See 1 Corinthians 4:5 and 2 Corinthians 5:10.

Philippians 2:12-15 AN INFLUENTIAL LIFE

We, as Christians, should desire the joy of being a good influence in the lives of others. We should want others to benefit from having known us, by seeing in us a good example. We should want others to benefit from having known us because we have acted and spoken as a "sweet fragrance" of Christ.

Why should we want to be a good influence for Christ? When we influence those who are saved, we are influencing God's children. God will hold us accountable for how we influence them. When we influence those who are not saved, we are either drawing them closer to Christ with a good influence, or driving them away with a poor influence.

In our text we want to see how to have a life which is a positive influence on the saved and unsaved alike.

According our text, we can have an influential life through:

EXERCISE Vss. 12-13

Notice, first of all, that salvation is a personal thing.

It is "your own salvation".

Just because you parents were or are Christians doesn't mean that you are a Christian. Living in a Christian home doesn't make you a Christian any more than living in a garage would make you a car. Ephesians 2:8-9 As Christians, we are told in Philippians 2:12 to "work out" our own salvation.

It does not say to "work for" but to "work out".

It might help if we remember that salvation is in 3 tenses.

The past tense of salvation - Justification - Being declared righteous before God based on faith in Christ.

Freedom from the penalty of sin.

The Present Tense of salvation - Sanctification - I am saved in the past, but in the present I'm in the process of salvation. To be sanctified is to be "set apart".

I'm being "set apart" for God, and living a Christian life style which is pleasing to Him. This is freedom from the power of sin.

The future tense of salvation - Glorification - One day I will see Jesus face to face. I will be like Him. I will be in Heaven. This will mean freedom from the presence of sin.

When God tells us to work out our salvation here, it means 'to carry out to the goal, to carry to its ultimate a conclusion. When we work out a math problem, we see it through until we have the right answer. When you work your garden, you see the garden through until the harvest is all in. When you work a mine, you see the work through until that can be removed from that mine safely has been removed.

For us as Christians, our goal should be to work out our salvation, see it through, so we are as much like Christ as possible. We are to continue to develop our Christian lives so we become "mature in Christ."

Ephesians 4:14-15

Now how can we possibly learn to live such a Godly life?

We are sinners by nature.

We fail naturally.

Vs. 13 - The moment you were saved, God the Holy Spirit came to live inside of you.

The moment you were saved, God began a "good work" in you.

God is at work in you, and as you allow Him to work in your life, He will produce the Godliness that He wants. You have all the resources, all the power you need to live the Christian life!

All the Godliness that you need is available to you because of the power of God in your life. You need to exercise. You need to get them out!

If you are going to be a good influence to others, you need to work out your salvation, you need to exercise.

EXTRACTIONS Vs. 14

When we extract something, we pull it out, using effort.

A dentist extracts a tooth.

A rescue team extracts a person from a wrecked car.

There are two things mentioned here for the Christian to extract from his or her life. When we have these two things active in our lives, we will be a negative influence. When we have extracted these two things, we will be a positive influence.

Notice there's an important little word here. The word is "all".

We are to remove all murmurings and disputings.

One who murmurs is a grumbler or complainer.

One who disputes is questioning, doubting, or disputing. We often dispute with each other, but ever worse, we dispute with God!

When a surgeon extracts a tumor, he wants to get it all.

When a Christian extracts a negative quality from his life, he wants to get it "all."

EXCELLENCE Vs. 15A

"That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation..."

When I do not grumble and argue I am showing excellence in my Christian life. I am showing myself to be a child of God.

The word blameless means "above reproach".

In other words, there is nothing that a person can legitimately point a finger at in my life, and say, "Aha, he calls himself a Christian, and look at what he said, or look at what he did."

Each of us needs to examine our lives for things which God needs to fix, so that we will be beyond reproach.

It might mean a paying a debt that's never been paid.

It might mean making an apology that's never been made.

It might mean forsaking a bad habit.

It might mean reconciling with a loved one.

It might mean working on a bad temper, a critical spirit or a bad attitude.

Does being blameless mean we are sinless?

No.

But it does mean that when I sin, I deal with it, seeking forgiveness from God and man.

"Harmless" - means "unmixed". It was used for wine that had not been diluted or metal that was not in any way weakened. This word means "pure".

We are to be pure of anything that is not pleasing to God in our lives. When we are pure, we are not serving two masters. We only have one master - The Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice that Vs. 15 says that we are to be without rebuke. This actually means without blemish. When a sacrifice was offered in the Old Testament, it was not to have any defect, or flaw. It was to be without blemish.

Oh that it might we said of us what was said of the Prophet Daniel. Daniel 6:4-5

May we be like Daniel!

Why do we need to be without rebuke or blemish?

The world needs to see excellence, if it is going to believe our message. The Christian is to stand out as different "in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation". The word nation means generation.

Notice that God did not save you and remove you from this evil world.

God saved you, and expects you to influence this evil world.

We do not influence by doing what the world does, but by living lives that are distinctly Christian.

The generation in which we live is not straight. It's crooked.

The generation in which we live is perverse, that is, depraved.

EXPOSURE Vs. 15B

"...among whom ye shine as lights in the world;"

Is there something better than the crookedness and perverseness of this generation?

Is there forgiveness for the crookedness and perverseness of this generation?

The answer, of course, is "yes", and it is found in Jesus Christ.

The Christian has a new life, a forgiven life, a hopeful life.

As light exposes, the Christian is to expose his new life to the world.

We are to shine out as different.

We are to shine out as having answers.

We are to shine out as those who have hope and can share hope. Matthew 5:14-15

EXPLANATION Vs. 15

"...holding forth the word of life"

To be a good influence, I should not only "shine" as a light.

But I must be ready also to share verbally my testimony for Jesus Christ.

I must be ready to explain the simple Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How can I hold forth the "word of life" to others?

Distribute tracts.

Look for opportunities to share. Ask God to provide them.

Bring others to church. Concert tonight.

Be ready to answer the question, "What makes you different". 1 Peter 3:15

Philippians 2:12-16 AN INFLUENTIAL LIFE

Everyone of us has been influenced by our family and friends either for good or bad. I see some of the same good qualities and bad qualities in my parents alive and well in me. We should want to be a positive influence for our Lord Jesus Christ through our words and deeds. In our text Paul shows us how to be a positive influence to both saved and unsaved people.

EXERCISE - work out your own salvation - Vss. 12-13

Notice that Paul does not say "work for" but "work out". It carries the idea of seeing something through to its conclusion. Paul is talking about practical, holy, living.

EXTRACTION -- no murmurings of disputings - Vs. 14

EXCELLENCE - blameless, harmless, without rebuke - Vs. 15

EXPOSURE - shinning as lights in this world - Vs. 15

EXPLANATION - holding forth the word of life - Vs. 16

Philippians 2:19-22 MODEL SERVANT

One of Paul's key helpers in ministry was Timothy. As Paul explains that Timothy is coming to visit the Philippians (Vs. 19), he also shows us three qualities of a model servant of the Lord Jesus:

1. **TIMOTHY'S CONCERN** - "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state."

2. **TIMOTHY'S COMMITMENT** - "For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's."

3. **TIMOTHY'S CONDUCT** - "But ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel."

Philippians 2:19-23 MAN ON A MISSION

Paul was planning to send Timothy to visit the Philippians.

TIMOTHY WOULD COME KNOW THEIR STATE - Vs. 19

TIMOTHY WOULD CARE (NATURALLY) THEIR SOULS - Vss. 20-21

TIMOTHY HAD CONDUCTED HIMSELF AS A FAITHFUL SERVANT - Vss. 22-23

Philippians 2:25-30 RETURNING HERO

The Bible shows us some true heroes of the Faith, including a little known Christian named Epaphroditus.

Epaphroditus had been sent by the Philippians to bring Paul a financial gift, and to help Paul. Paul unselfishly thought it necessary to return him back to his home church. Here we see Epaphroditus as:

WORKING WITH PAUL - Vs. 25

Epaphroditus showed himself to be a valuable brother and worker in Christ.

WEAKENED BY SICKNESS - Vss. 26-28

He was so sick that he almost died.

WORTHY OF HONOR - Vss. 29-30

He was to be held in esteem because of his unselfish behavior.

Philippians 3:2-10 PAUL'S DISCOVERIES

Paul was a man who had been very involved in the Jewish religion. He actually persecuted Christians, he was so zealous. However when Paul came to Christ, he made three important discoveries.

1. HAVE NO CONFIDENCE IN THE FLESH Vss. 2-3
2. THERE IS NO CONDUCT GOOD ENOUGH Vss. 4-7
3. THERE IS NO CHOICE BETTER THAN CHRIST Vss. 8-10

Philippians 3:12-21 IF YOU'RE CONTENTED, THAT'S A SHAME!

There are two kinds of contentment. One kind is good and the other is bad. The good kind of contentment is satisfaction with the Lord and with what He is doing in our lives (1 Timothy 6:6, and Hebrews 13:5). The bad kind of contentment is being satisfied with one's level of Spirituality. It is Spiritual apathy or complacency.

If anyone could have been contented with his Spiritual life, it was the Apostle Paul. He had been saved through a miraculous appearance of the Lord Jesus on the Road to Damascus. He had been personally tutored by the Lord (Galatians 1:15-18). He was a great pastor, missionary, and theologian. Besides all this, The Holy Spirit used him as an instrument to pen parts of God's Word.

In this passage, however, Paul shows us that he was not contented with the level of Spirituality which he had attained. He continued to strive to grow in the things of Christ. If Paul was not contented with the status quo in his Spiritual life, why should we? He shows us three things we can do to avoid the wrong kind of contentment.

MAKE A CHOICE Vss. 12-16

Paul realized that he had not yet "arrived" Spiritually. He was not yet perfect (fully mature). Vs.12 He realized that he was (apprehended) saved for a purpose. He would strive to accomplish all for which he had been saved. Vs. 12

One of the things for which he was saved was Christ-likeness. (Philippians 3:10)

He chose to forget his past failures and successes. Vs. 13

He chose to continue to press on to the finish line as a runner does in a race, where the Lord Jesus would hand out the prizes (2 Corinthians 5:10) Vss. 13-14

We need to make the same choice if we are going to move forward Spiritually.

MARK THE CONSISTENT Vss. 17-19

Paul could humbly say "follow my example", because he was humbly seeking Spiritual growth and development. He was submissive to the Lord's leading in his life. Paul also encouraged the Philippians to "mark" or use as an example those who followed Paul's example. Vs. 17

The reason Paul wanted the Philippians to follow the good examples of Spirituality is because there are many bad examples. Vss. 18-19

Today, many of us are in contact with professing Christians who give the same bad example as mentioned in V 19. We should "mark" the ones who are sincerely & accurately following Christ, and follow their example

MAXIMIZE YOUR CITIZENSHIP Vss. 20-21

In verse 20, the word "conversation" means citizenship.

Our citizenship is in Heaven. Therefore, we should act like citizens of Heaven, and anxiously await the coming of our King, the Lord Jesus Christ. We maximize our citizenship when we live like Heaven's citizens. As we await the coming of Christ, we are to do it with the best possible behavior. See Titus 2:11-14.

Philippians 3:17-21 FOR THE NEW YEAR! – NEW YEAR

As we face another year, these words of Paul are a good reminder for us to follow.

OUR CHALLENGE FOR THE NEW YEAR - Vs. 17 - Follow the example of Paul in Godly living and those who are also following his example. Paul and others were not perfect, but still excellent role models.

OUR CAUTION FOR THE NEW YEAR - Vss. 18-19 - Avoid following the example of those who are ungodly.

OUR CITIZENSHIP FOR ETERNITY - Vss. 20-21 - Our citizenship (conversation) is in Heaven right now.

We are away from home temporarily. We should be looking for the coming of our Savior, who will transform our bodies to be like His.

Philippians 4:1 etc. STAND FAST!

"Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved."

When we stand fast in the Lord we will have,

CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD - Proverbs 3:5-6

COMMITMENT TO THE LORD - Romans 12:1

CONDUCT THROUGH THE LORD - Galatians 2:20, Philippians 4:13

CONVERSATION FOR THE LORD - Psalm 107:2, 1 Peter 3:15, Ephesians 4:29

Philippians 4:1-5 A HAPPY CHURCH

The church at Philippi was experiencing some inner tension. Paul gave some advice that, if followed, would make this church a happy place of worship and service. Our churches would be happier if we followed the same advice.

UNWAVERING STAND - Vs. 1

First, each church member must be strong in the Lord's power and might.

UNIFIED FAMILY - Vss. 2-3

Those who didn't get along were to receive help getting along.

UNENDING REJOICING - Vs. 4

We are to constantly have an attitude of joy in the Lord.

UNIQUE CONTROL - Vs. 5

Our moderation or "sweet reasonableness" is to be known to all. After all, "the Lord is at hand", and we want to be pleasing Him when He arrives.

Philippians 4:1-7 ANTIDOTE FOR WORRY

The biggest problem I have faced in my dealing with Christians has been unforgiveness. The second biggest problem has been that of worry.

We worry about what people think.

We worry about what has happened.

We worry about will happen.

We worry about what could happen.

We worry about our children.

We worry about our parents.

We worry about our jobs.

We worry about health.

We worry about retirement.

We worry about money.

Some worry about dying.

What we are really worried about is ourselves! We are the center of attention when we worry!

As someone has said, "99% of what we worry about never happens."

So what is the cure, the antidote for worry. It is found here in Philippians 4:1-7

STAND FAST! - Vs. 1

God's great power is inside of us (Ephesians 1:19-23). By faith, let us stand fast in that power.

MAKE PEACE - Vs. 2

If there's going to be a disagreement between you and a fellow Christian, make sure that it's not your fault!

Do everything you can Biblically to make peace (Matthew 5:23-24, Romans 12:17-21)

HELP OTHERS! Vs. 3

Sometimes those disagreeing need a third party to step in, and help resolve the conflict. (Matthew 5:9)

REJOICE! - Vs. 4

BE REASONABLE! Vs. 5

The word "moderation" has been translated as "sweet reasonableness." Christians need to be gentle, kind, reasonable in their dealings with Christians and those who are not Christians.

PRAY! Vss. 6-7

Philippians 4:6-7 ANXIETY RELIEF

A COMMAND TO OBEY - "Be careful (anxious) for nothing..."

A COURSE TO FOLLOW - "...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be known unto God.

A CONTENTMENT TO EXPERIENCE - "And the peace of God that passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7 WHAT PRAYER DOES

PRAYER REPLACES WORRY

Instead of being careful and anxious, we are to pray continually.

PRAYER REVIEWS GOD'S GOODNESS

The word "prayer" is a general word that would include worship. As we worship and pray with thanksgiving, we will review just how good God has been to us.

PRAYER REQUESTS HELP

Supplication and making requests means that we are asking God for help.

PRAYER RESTS IN PEACE

The peace of God that passes all understanding will reign in our lives.

Philippians 4:8 YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK!

Introduction - Proverbs 23:7, Luke 6:45. Our words and actions are a result of our thoughts. Philippians 4:8 shows us the right kind of thoughts that produce the right kind of words and actions.

PROFOUND THOUGHTS - true, honest, just

PRECIOUS THOUGHTS - pure, lovely

POSITIVE THOUGHTS - good report, virtue, praise

For the Christian to develop the right thought life, he must meditate on Scripture (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3) and meditate on the Lord Jesus, who is true, honest, just, etc.

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Philippians 4:10-19 PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The Philippians were very involved in supporting Paul in his missionary endeavors. Here is Paul's personal testimony concerning the gifts which the Philippians had sent.

SCHOOL OF FAITH Vss. 10-12

Paul had learned both how to abound and to suffer need.

He learned to trust God in the good times and the bad times.

STRENGTH FROM CHRIST Vs. 13

Whatever God wants us to face, we have the strength we need in Christ. Ephesians 3:16, Colossians 1:11

SACRIFICE TO GOD Vss. 14-18

Notice that gifts which the Philippians sent were "...a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God."

SUPPLY FOR NEEDS Vs. 19

Don't take this verse out of context!

The Philippians' gift to the Lord's work was sacrificial, and God met their needs. Giving should be done in the right way and with the right attitude in order to expect God's blessing. 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Philippians 4:19 etc. ABUNDANT SUPPLY

Philippians 4:19 - "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

ABUNDANT GRACE

Romans 5:20 - "...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:"

ABUNDANT PARDON

Isaiah 55:7 - "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

ABUNDANT SATISFACTION

Psalm 36:8 - "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures."

ABUNDANT PEACE

Philippians 4:6-7 - "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

ABUNDANT LIFE

John 10:10 - "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

ABUNDANT JOY

Philippians 1:26 - "That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again."

ABUNDANT POWER

Col. 1:11 - "Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;"

Philippians 4:23 etc. BEST WISHES

Most of the epistles end with a benediction of some sort.

I see these benedictions as sending someone best wishes.

In Paul's epistles I discovered that Paul gives for basic wishes in his benedictions.

Paul wishes us the blessings of:

GRACE – Philippians 4:23, Romans 16:3, Colossians 4:18 etc.

PEACE – 2 Thessalonians 3:16

LOVE – Of God: 2 Corinthians 13:14, Of Paul, 1 Corinthians 16:24

COMMUNION (FELLOWSHIP) – 2 Corinthians 13:14, 2 Timothy 4:22

Colossians 1:1-8 THANKFUL FOR THE SAINTS

There is much for which we can be thankful to God.

We can be thankful for His grand salvation in Christ.

We can be thankful for our families.

We can be thankful for because "he daily loadeth us with benefits."

We can be thankful for answered prayer, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the certainty of going to Heaven, and a host of other things.

Let us not forget that God wants us to be thankful for other Christians.

Paul is a great example of a Christian who knew how to be thankful for other Christians. In our text, he gives us some very good reasons for being thankful for others.

THE MARKS OF SALVATION Vss. 3-5

Faith

Love

Hope

THE MULTIPLICATION OF SALVATION Vs. 6

THE MESSENGER OF SALVATION Vss. 7-8

Epaphras was the human minister by which many of the Colossians came to know Christ as Savior.

Colossians 1:9-13 PRAYING FOR THE SAINTS

Ephesians 6:18 tells us that we should be praying for all saints.

Ephesians 1:15-23, Ephesians 3:14-21, Philippians 1:9-11 and Colossians 1:9-13 show us how we should pray for our fellow believers.

I CHALLENGE EACH PERSON WHO READS THIS TO PRAY ONE OF THESE FOUR PRAYERS EACH DAY FOR HIS OR HER FELLOW CHURCH MEMBERS.

Based on Paul's prayer for the saints in Colosse, we should pray that our fellow believers will be:

FILLED - Vs. 9

FAITHFUL - Vs. 10 - "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing...and increasing in the knowledge of God;"

FRUITFUL - Vs. 10 - "...being fruitful in every good work..."

FORTIFIED - Vss. 11-13

Colossians 1:12-14 WHY GIVE THANKS? or NO NEED FOR TURKEY!,

Some people associate the giving of thanks with turkey! That's because they eat turkey on America's Thanksgiving Day. Actually turkey is not necessary for us to be thankful. We don't have to wait until Thanksgiving Day to give thanks. 1 Thessalonians 5:18

If you are a Christian, our text gives you three reasons for being thankful.

WE HAVE A RESIDENCE - Vs. 12

We have an inheritance with the saints in light.

WE HAVE BEEN RELEASED - Vs. 13

We have been released from Satan's kingdom and have been translated into the kingdom of Christ.

WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED - Vs. 14

We have been redeemed by the blood of the lamb.

Our sins have been forgiven.

Colossians 1:12-19 THE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

This is a worship service.

Well, did you? Did you worship?

This is a worship service. Well, are you? Are you worshipping?

We sang contemporary choruses and traditional hymns. Did you worship?

We listened to special music. Did you worship?

We read Scripture. Did you worship?

We gave an offering. Did you worship?

We are sharing a message from God's Word. Are you worshipping?

Psalm 111:1 says, *Praise ye the Lord. I will praise the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.*

Have you praised the Lord with your whole heart?

Psalm 100:2 says, *Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*

This morning have you served the Lord with gladness? Did you come before His presence with singing that was on your lips and in your hearts?

John 4:23 says, *But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

Have you worshipped God in spirit and in truth this morning?

Let's face it, there have been many times in our lives when we have come to church, but have not had a true worship experience.

Perhaps that is true for you this very morning.

I have found in Colossians 1:12-19 some verses that remind me how to go about having a true worship experience.

BE THANKFUL - Vss. 12-14

You will not have a true worship experience unless you are thankful to God. These verses give us several reasons for being thankful.

Vs. 12 - The word "meet" in this verse means to qualify or make fit.

We can thank God who has made us qualified *to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*

Our inheritance as Christians is one of being in the light of God's glory for all eternity. Heaven will be a place of glorious light. Revelation 21:23

Now think for a moment. You and I were not qualified to be part of the inheritance of light any more than I was qualified to attend Harvard or Yale!

It is our sin that keeps us from being qualified to go to Heaven.

It is our God who has provided forgiveness in Christ so we can be qualified or fit for Heaven.

Vs. 13 - In this verse we are told that God has moved us. And just as Dottie and I were thankful about the change in housing, we should be thankful about our change in kingdoms.

Before being saved you were in the kingdom of darkness. Ephesians 2:1-3

It is from this kingdom, this domain we have been delivered and translated us into Christ's Kingdom. God has moved us from the realm of Satan to the realm of his dear, or beloved Son.

Vs. 14 - This verse tells us how God made us qualified to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. This verse also tells us why we have been moved from Satan's kingdom to the kingdom of God's beloved Son.

The reason for these things is the redemption that comes through Christ's shed blood.

When we were unsaved, in the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of Satan, we were prisoners. We were dead in trespasses and sins according to Ephesians 2:1. We could not free ourselves from the penalty of sin or the power of sin that made us slaves in Satan's Kingdom.

But the Lord Jesus came to earth and took care of the problem that kept us slaves. He died for our sins. His blood was shed for our sins. Because his blood was shed for our sins, He has paid the price that is sufficient for God to be satisfied. And because God is satisfied with the payment for our sins, we are set free! 1 Peter 1:18-19

Not only have we been redeemed, or set free, we have been forgiven. When we place our faith in Christ as our Savior, God forgives us, based on Christ's shed blood. When He forgives us, He sends our sins packing!

Psalm 103:12 - *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

If you are a Christian, you have every reason to be thankful as you worship.

God has qualified you to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

God has delivered you from Satan's Kingdom and moved you into the Kingdom of His dear Son.

Christ has redeemed you, set you free and forgiven you.

BE THOUGHTFUL - Vss. 15-18

One of our problems in worship is we don't think as we worship. As you worship, think or reflect on Christ. In these verses are some things to consider about Him that should help you to worship.

Vs. 15 - Christ is the image of the invisible God.

Jesus is the exact likeness of God.

Jesus is the manifestation of God.

It is Jesus who shows who God is, and what God is like.

Jesus shows us a God who is compassionate, righteous, holy, merciful, loving and a host of other things!

Study Jesus Christ and you study God. Know Jesus Christ, and you know God.

Not only is Jesus *the image of the invisible God*, but He is *the firstborn of every creature*.

Some people believe that this verse teaches that Jesus is a created being because it calls him "firstborn".

That just isn't so!

Charles Erdman said - "Firstborn' here means two things: priority in time and supremacy in place or position. Christ existed before the Creation, but He held the rank commonly assigned to the 'firstborn', the rank of eminence and dominion." Charles R. Erdman, The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon, © 1966 by W. L. Jenkins, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Page 52

Now think! The Lord Jesus is worthy of your worship because He was preexistent to, and preeminent over everything that was created, including you.

Vs. 16 - Jesus is the creator! God the Father placed the creation of the worlds in His hands. He created everything.

This verse is telling us:

If it's in Heaven Jesus created it.

If it's on earth Jesus created it.

If you can see it, Jesus created it.

If you can't see it, Jesus created it.

If it's an angel of any kind Jesus created it.

If it's a man or woman, Jesus created them.

John sums it up beautifully John 1:3.

Of course, the whole Trinity was involved in creation. But don't forget that your Savior is also your creator.

And don't miss the last phrase of this verse: *all things were created by him, and for him*:

Now think!

You were created for Him! You were created so you would please God. You were created for His purposes.

Are you fulfilling the reason for which you were created?

And if He hadn't created you, you wouldn't be here.

If He hadn't saved you, you wouldn't have the hope of eternal life.

Vs. 17 - Notice first of all, that *he is before all things*.

Right away, we think of preexistence. We already saw that Jesus is eternal. So Jesus existed before anything else existed.

But Jesus is before all things in another sense.

Jesus is before all things in rank. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Jesus is before all things in power. He has all the power in the universe.

Jesus is before all things in importance. He is God.

No wonder we should worship Him!

And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

He holds everything together!

Now think!

Jesus is the one who is before all things, around for all eternity.

He is the one is before all things as God!

And He is the one that holds things together.

Not only does He hold the universe together.

But He holds this church together.

He holds your family together.

He holds your life together.

Even when you think things are falling apart, He is holding things together. Isaiah 41:10

Vs. 18 - What happens when a person is decapitated? A person who is decapitated is dead! Why?

Because the body needs the head in order to function. You can function without legs or arms but not without the head.

The head is necessary because it gives direction to the body. The head contains the control center.

Christ is the head of the church, which is His body. He is the one who gives direction. He is the one who is the control center. He is the source of the church's power. Without Christ in control, the church, for all practical purposes is dead, useless.

Each Christian is part of the body of Christ, the church. Christ is your head. Christ is the one who should give you direction. Christ is the source of your power. Without Christ in control in your life, for all practical purposes, you life is dead, useless.

And notice Christ's rank again. He is *the beginning, the firstborn from the dead*

He is the first person to raise from the dead never to die again.

He is superior to all those that will rise from the dead.

He is first in rank over all those who will rise from the dead.

And notice God's purpose, *that in all things he might have the preeminence*. Philippians 2:9-11

Now think!

The Christian should already be bowing his knee in submission and confessing Christ as Lord.

As you worship, Christ is to be preeminent in your thoughts.

As you do anything, Christ is to be preeminent in your life.

BE THOROUGH - Vs. 19

All fullness is found in the Lord Jesus.

All that is God is found in Jesus.

And it has pleased God that this fullness should reside in us. John 1:16

If the fullness of God though Christ is already in your life, should you not allow the fullness of Christ to control your life?

I mean, what is better, you controlling your life, or God controlling your life?

We should be thorough in worship, allowing Christ to have full control.

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians (Ephesians 3:19) was that they would be filled with all the fullness of God.

You will be filled with the fullness of God if you are thorough.

Thorough in yielding to His will - Romans 12:1

Thorough in confessing your sin - 1 John 1:9

Thorough in requesting the filling of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18

Worship isn't complete unless it is total or thorough.

*** Colossians 1:13-19 PERSPECTIVE!**

There are times when we need to realize that the Lord Jesus and us are on two different levels. He is completely superior to us, but sometimes we forget. This Scripture puts things in perspective.

WE'RE SINNERS, HE'S SAVIOR Vss. 13-14

WE'RE CREATURES, HE'S CREATOR Vss. 15-17

WE'RE SAINTS (the church), HE'S SOVEREIGN Vss. 18-19

COLOSSIANS 1:14-19 THE STAR OF THE SHOW

This morning, there is a show going on throughout America. The show, is actually many shows meeting as the church. Who is the star of the show?

Is it the song leader, worship team leader, choir director?

Is it a special soloist, a choir, or a visiting musical group?

Is it the trustees, deacons and/or elders?

Is it the pastor of the church?

Is it a guest speaker?

All too often in local churches there are those who wouldn't necessarily admit it, but they consider themselves to be the stars of the show. And there are people in the congregation who attend church because of a musical personality or because of the talents of the preacher.

In reality, however, there is to be only one star of the show. And that star of the show is the one whom we have gathered to worship and to serve, that is our Lord Jesus Christ.

When Jesus is the star, God the Father gets the glory. Ephesians 3:21

In order to help us focus better when we come to worship, and to help us understand why the Lord Jesus Christ is the star of the show, I turn your direction to Colossians 1:14-19.

HE IS REDEEMER - Vs. 14

Vs. 14 - You and I were under a death sentence because of our sins. Romans 6:23,

The Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, died in our place for our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21

When Jesus died for our sins, his blood was shed for our sins. 1 Peter 1:18-19

The word translated "redemption" refers to someone being set free because of the paying of a price. Because of the payment blood of Christ, the person who trusts Christ as Savior is set free from bondage to sin and set free from the punishment for sin.

With redemption comes forgiveness for sins. The charges of sin against us have been dismissed!

There is only one requirement for being redeemed and forgiven.

You must trust Jesus as your Savior, your way to Heaven.

You must believe that it is He who died for your sins, and that He is your only hope of Heaven. John 3:16

HE IS REFLECTOR - Vs. 15a

So many times we have said, or heard it said, "He's just like his father!" In the case of Jesus, this statement is absolutely true!

Vs. 15a - He is the image of the invisible God. Do you want to know what God is like? He is the exact duplicate! How can Jesus be an exact duplicate? He is God in the flesh! John 1:1-2, John 1:14, John 14:9
What a great privilege it is for us Christians to study and learn from the Lord Jesus who is the reflector of who God is.

HE HAS RANK - Vs. 15b

According to verse 15, not only is the Lord Jesus *The image of the invisible God*, but *the firstborn of every creature*.

In many societies, current and historical, there is rank and privilege that goes with being the first born.

Jesus of course is eternal. He has always existed. John 1:2

Charles Erdman - "Firstborn" here means two things: priority in time and supremacy in place or position. Christ existed before the Creation, but He held the rank commonly assigned to the 'firstborn,' the rank of eminence and dominion. Christ is thus declared to be the universal sovereign."

The Lord Jesus Christ outranks us all!

In this church and in our lives, we are to treat the Lord Jesus as preeminent. He's the star of the show.

HE IS RESPONSIBLE - Vss. 16-17

Vs. 16 - The Lord Jesus is responsible for two things mentioned in verses 16-17. The first thing He is responsible for is creation.

The things that we can see in Heaven, He created.

The things that we can not see in Heaven, He created.

The things that you can see on earth, He created.

The things that you can not see on earth, He created.

Please don't miss the last line of the text.

All things were created by him, and for him. Revelation 4:11

You were created by and for the Lord Jesus Christ.

He didn't create you to please yourself, or to please anyone else, but to please Him!

However, when we do please the Lord, we and everyone else will be best served.

According to Romans 12:2 says that the will of God is "good and acceptable and perfect".

Proverbs 16:7 - When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

So, the best question you can ask yourself, especially when you are considering doing something different or questionable, is "Is the Lord Jesus pleased with what I am doing?"

Not only is "The Star of the Show", the Lord Jesus responsible for creation. He is also responsible for holding everything together.

Colossians 1:17 - And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

The Lord Jesus is the glue that holds the universe together!

And let me tell you something even more comforting than that.

The Lord Jesus wants to be the glue that holds your life together. Just as molecules could fly apart if the Lord Jesus didn't hold them together, your life will fall apart if the Lord Jesus doesn't hold it together.

The Lord Jesus is responsible for creating the universe and for holding everything together.

HE IS RULER - Vss. 18-19

Vs. 18 - In the New Testament the church is sometimes viewed as a body, the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27

Think of the head as the control center of the body. There are several body parts that you can do without and still survive, but not the head. That's where the computer is, your brain, that runs everything else!

As the head of the body, the church, Christ is the ruler!

He is in control. He has every right to tell you and I, and this church what to do! He is the star of the show.

He is the firstborn from the dead. Again, we are thinking of rank. He is first in position and authority when it comes to resurrection. Nobody else's resurrection has been or will be as grand as His. Ephesians 1:19-23,

Colossians 1:18 - And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

When you get to Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ will have preeminence in your life. He will be the star of the show.

What Jesus wants from us right now is for us to allow him to be in our hearts and in our church, what He already is in the universe, the preeminent ruler.

He won't be truly the star of the show called the church, until He is the star of the show that is your life.

Colossians 1:19 - For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

All that is God is found in Christ.

He is the ruler.

He is the star of the show!

Colossians 1:15-19 A COLOSSIAN CHRISTMAS CHRISTMAS!

Paul reveals the message of Christmas in these verses.

THE PERSONALITY OF GOD'S SON - Vs. 15

THE PARTICIPATION OF GOD'S SON - Vss. 16-17

THE PREEMINENCE OF GOD'S SON - Vs. 18

Colossians 1:20-29 RECONCILIATION

THE MEANS OF RECONCILIATION Vs. 20

THE MIRACLE OF RECONCILIATION Vss. 21-23

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION Vss. 24-29

1. Rejoicing In Suffering Vs. 24

2. Revealing A Mystery Vss.25-27

3. Preaching To All Vs. 28

4. Laboring In Power Vs. 29

Colossians 1:21-23 IT'S MANDATORY!

One of the problems we have in the church today is "easy believism". People feel that as long as they have walked an aisle, professed faith, and/or been baptized they are ready to go to Heaven.

The Bible is very clear that when a person has truly trusted Christ as Savior (John 3:36, Ephesians 2:8-9) change takes place (2 Corinthians 5:17). Our text shows us that if a person is truly converted, his or her lifestyle will change. It's mandatory.

OUR SIN - Vs. 21

This verse tells us what our lives were like until we were reconciled to God through Christ.

OUR STANDING - Vs. 22

If a person is truly born again he/she is now "holy, unblameable and unproveable in his sight".

OUR STANDARD - Vs. 23

Because our standing has changed in Christ (Vs. 22) our standard of behavior changes as well. Proof of salvation is being "grounded and settled" as well as not being moved away from the hope of the Gospel.

Colossians 3:1-4 A DAILY OUTLOOK

How we view things will determine our behavior. If we have a daily perspective as described in these verses, our outlook for each day and for eternity will be good

OUR DEVOTION - Vss. 1-2 - We are to seek the things of God.

OUR DEATH - Vs. 3 - See Romans 6:1-4 and Galatians 2:20.

OUR DESTINY - Vs. 4 - We are looking forward to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. See 1 John 3:2-3

Colossians 3:1-9 HEAVENLY MINDED = EARTHLY GOOD!

You've probably heard the expression, "He's so Heavenly minded that he's no earthly good."

Indeed there are people who seem to be so religious that they have no practical value here on earth.

This kind of Heavenly mindedness, is not what the Bible teaches. When a person is truly Heavenly minded, he will live out his Christianity in such a way that he will do much earthly good.

THE FACTS - Vs. 1

We are risen with Christ because we died with Christ. (See Galatians 2:20 and Romans 6:1-14)

Christ sits on the right hand of God. He is in control.

THE FOCUS - Vss. 1-2

We are to seek things above, the things of Christ.

We are to seek things above, not the things of this earth.

THE FUNERAL - Vs. 3, 5-9

When Christ died on the cross I died with Him. Vs. 3

Therefore, I should put to death the things of the old life. Vss. 5-9

When I do this, and go on to put on the new man in Christ, my life will certainly show earthly good. (Vss. 10)

THE FUTURE - Vs. 4

When Christ appears in glory, we appear with Him. This motivates us to live for our Savior now!

Colossians 3:12-17 IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

There is a lost and dying world which needs the message of Christ. We, who are Christians, are to advertise the reality of our salvation by acting in a Godly manner. The more people see the reality of Christ in us, the more they will want salvation.

PREPARE Vss. 12-14

Here is a list of qualities that each Christian should "put on".

PERMIT Vss. 15-16

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts..." Vs. 15

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..." Vs. 16

PERFORM Vs. 17

Colossians 3:17&23 CODE OF HONOR

Many years ago I was a Boy Scout. Each Boy Scout was confronted with, what I would call, a code of Honor. There were not rigid rules, but guidelines for behavior. There was:

The Scout Motto - "Be prepared."

The Scout Law - "A scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent."

The Scout Oath - "On my honor, I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country; to obey the scout law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."

Other organizations have similar guidelines, or codes of honor for their members to follow. As Christians, we too, have what we might call a

"code of honor" found in our text. Our code of honor is to:

1. DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS Vs. 17

That means we do it with His approval.

That means we do it in His authority. He has authorized us to behave the way we are behaving.

If we do not have His approval and /or authority, we need to change our behavior.

2. DO ALL GIVING THANKS TO GOD Vs. 17 1 Thessalonians 5:18

3. DO ALL HEARTILY FOR THE LORD Vs 23

Colossians 3:18-21 FANTASTIC FAMILY

SUBMISSIVE WIVES - Vs. 18

LOVING HUSBANDS - Vs. 19

OBEDIENT CHILDREN - Vs. 20

TENDER PARENTS - Vs. 21

Colossians 4:1-6 EFFECTIVE SERVICE

MASTER - Vs. 1 - He is in Heaven!

MANDATE - Vss. 2-4 - To pray!

MISSION - Vs. 5 - To them who are "without"!

MANNERS - Vs. 6 - Speech with "grace, seasoned with salt"!

Colossians 4:2-4 RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRAYER

We are to CONTINUE in prayer. (Luke 18:1-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:17)

We are to WATCH in prayer. (1 Peter 4:7)

We are to BE THANKFUL in prayer. (Philippians 4:6)

We are to BE CONSIDERATE in prayer, praying for the needs of others. Vss. 3-4 (Ephesians 6:18)

Colossians 4:2-6 SIMPLE RULES

PRAY - Vss. 2-4

Prayer is to be a continual watch.

Prayer should especially be made for those who share the Gospel as Paul did.

PRACTICE - Vs. 5

The way we live should be a reflection of our faith. We should practice our faith wisely in front of the unsaved people around us.

PREACH - Vs. 6

We should be ready to wisely share our faith at all times. 1 Peter 3:15

Colossians 4:7-14 PAUL'S FRIENDS

Scattered around the countryside, and across the seas I have a very precious commodity. These are my fiends. No two are alike. No one is expendable. Each one is a blessing for a particular reason. In the pastorate, I would have lost my sanity years ago, if it wasn't for my friends. My very best human friend is my wife, Dottie

You can tell a lot about a person by his friends. A person who has quality friends, is generally a quality person. For the most part, a man who had quality friends was the Apostle Paul. We come to a passage which is generally overlooked, but shouldn't be. because here we have some very good lessons from people who were the friends of Paul;.

THE FAITHFUL

Tychius - Vss. 7-8

Aristachus Vs. 10

Justus Vs.11

Luke Vs. 14

THE FORGIVEN

Onesimus - Vs. 9 - See Philemon 1:11-18

Mark - Vs. 10 - See Acts 13:13, 15:36-41

(After Mark's failure, he was forgiven by Paul and restored to service.)

THE FERVENT - Epaphras - Vss. 12-13 - He was probably the evangelist who won these people to Christ.

THE FICKLE - Demas - Vs. 14 - See 2 Timothy 4:10

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10 BE THANKFUL!

Thank God (Vs. 2) when:

SAINTS HAVE THE RIGHT PATTERN (Of behavior). Vs. 3

SAINTS TAKE THE RIGHT PATH (Followers of Paul and the Lord.). Vss. 5-6

SAINTS ARE THE RIGHT KIND OF PROMOTERS (good testimonies). Vss. 7-8

SAINTS HAVE THE RIGHT PRIORITY (Turned to God from idols.). Vs. 9

SAINTS HAVE THE RIGHT PATIENCE (Waiting for Christ.). Vs. 10

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 GOSPEL IMPACT!

I once had a little 1969 Opel. I bought it brand new. It wasn't long before I realized that this car seemed to be carrying an invisible sign that said "HIT ME!". Many a time that car was involved in an accident that left an impact on the car (That is, a dent!). In our crazy English, you might say "The impact had an impact!"

When the Gospel, the good news of Christ's death, burial and resurrection is believed a person becomes born again, or saved. At that point the Gospel begins to have an impact, an influence on the person who has believed in Christ.

In our text we see the impact that the Gospel had on the Thessalonians, and does have on us when we are saved.

THE GOSPEL COMES EFFECTIVELY Vss. 4-5

THE GOSPEL CHANGES LIVES Vss. 6-9

THE GOSPEL CAUSES HOPE Vs. 10

Thessalonians 2:1-7 MISSIONS: A CLASS ACT

There are many great missionaries, who showed "class" or Godly professionalism, when they have served the Lord. Some of these would include Hudson Taylor, William Carey, Amy Carmichael, Mary Slessor, and many, many more. The Apostle Paul is probably the best example we have of a missionary with class. When a missionary is a Godly professional, the following traits will show:

TRIALS FORGOTTEN Vss. 1-2

Paul did let what happened in Philippi hinder him in Thessalonica.

TRUST KEPT Vss. 3-4

TONGUE CONTROLLED 5a

TREASURE IGNORED Vss. 5b,6,9

TENDERNESS PRACTICED Vss. 7-8

1 Thessalonians 3:1-3 THE PASTOR

Timothy was an associate of the Apostle Paul. He was a young pastor whom Paul would send to various churches for special reasons. Paul talks about Timothy in these verses, and shows us some of the qualities that pastors should still show today.

HIS POSITION

Brother in Christ

Servant (minister) of God

HIS PARTNERSHIP

Paul calls him a fellow laborer. He was a fellow laborer of Paul, but also a fellow laborer with the people he served. Today's pastor is a fellow laborer with other pastors, but also a fellow laborer with his congregation in the mission of spreading the Gospel.

HIS PURPOSE

Timothy was to establish and comfort the Thessalonians so that they would not be moved by the afflictions which they faced. The pastor is to establish and comfort the saints today so they will stand firm under duress.

1 Thessalonians 3 HOW TO HELP A HURTING CHURCH

From time to time we will hear of churches and pastors that are hurting.

Sometimes churches hurt because of persecution.

Sometimes they hurt because of misunderstandings.

Sometimes they hurt because of sin in the pastor, the members, or both.

Sometimes they hurt because of physical problems, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, famine etc.

There are times when other congregations can help those churches that are hurting.

In our text the Apostle Paul is talking to a church that was hurting because of persecution. In these verses Paul shows us some definite ways to help hurting groups of believers.

SEND A GOOD MAN - Vss. 1-3

V.1 When Paul could forbear no longer, he made a personal sacrifice & sent Timothy to the Thessalonians.

V.2 we find reference to Timothy who was an excellent man of God. I believe Hallmark Cards once used the slogan, "When you care to send the best." Paul cared enough to send one of his best helpers.

V.3 The reason Paul sent Timothy was "That no man should be moved by these afflictions;"

V.4 He wanted the Thessalonians to remain strong during inevitable persecution.

SEEK AN ACCURATE REPORT - Vss. 5-8

Another reason Paul sent Timothy was to find out the truth of what was going on. He wanted to know from a reliable source, just how his "children" were bearing up under persecution.

Timothy returned with a good report.

In trying to help other churches, we must remember not to draw conclusions from the report of one individual in the church. It is always good to get the "whole story" before deciding who is right and who is wrong.

SPEAK A THANKFUL PRAYER - Vss. 9-10

Paul prayed for the Thessalonians, even though he was not able to go immediately to help them.

His prayers included thanksgiving a desire to personally to them for the purpose of ministry.

We can intercede for other churches even when we can do nothing else.

SHARE AN ENCOURAGING WORD - Vss. 11-13

Paul encouraged the believers in these verses!

We have more ways to encourage today than the Apostle Paul did. We can encourage by way of telephone, letter, tape, and e-mail.

1 Thessalonians 3:1-10 FAITH FACTOR

There is a show currently on television called "Fear Factor". I only watched part of it once.

Evidently the idea of the show is to measure how much bravery a person has and at one point fear takes over. In our text, Paul is not measuring bravery, but he is measuring the faith of the Thessalonians.

The Apostle Paul once spent about 3 weeks establishing a church in a city called Thessalonica. After three weeks he was run out of town by persecution. Acts 17:1-10

Because he loved the new Thessalonian Christians, and knowing of the persecution that they would receive about their faith, Paul dispatched young Pastor Timothy to Thessalonica to check on the new church. We have the story of Timothy's visit in 1 Thessalonians 3. And in talking about Timothy's visit, we find that Paul's greatest concern was over the faith of the Thessalonians. The word faith is mentioned five times, and we learn that:

FAITH IS TO BE ENCOURAGED - Vss. 1-4

Timothy was dispatched to encourage the believers in their newfound faith.

FAITH IS TO BE EVALUATED - Vs. 5

Paul realized that because of the tough times that the Thessalonians were facing, it would be easier for Satan to come in and rob them of their faith.

So, Paul wanted to make sure that the faith of the Thessalonians was still strong.

God has appointed church leaders, particularly pastors and elders, with the duty of watching your faith. They aren't to judge your ministry, only the Lord can do that, but they should check to make sure your faith is strong, and then help strengthen that faith. Proverbs 27:23, Hebrews 13:17, 1 Peter 5:2-3

FAITH IS TO BE EXPRESSED - Vs. 6

Timothy brought good news back to Paul. In spite of the persecution and hardship being dished out by Satan, the Thessalonians were strong in their faith. And not only were they strong in faith but in love as well. And they also had a fond appreciation for their mentor, the Apostle Paul. Faith should show.

We should certainly express our faith verbally. Romans 12:9-10, Psalm 107:2

But our faith must go deeper than talk. People need to see that what we are saying is real in our lives.

People need to see us leaning on God alone, when we face the trials and troubles of life.

People need to see us trusting God for the strength to obey Him.

Think about this. We will only be obedient to God if we believe Him!

We will only be obedient to God when we have faith that He will give us the strength to do as He says.

FAITH IS TO BE ENCOURAGING - Vs. 7

Have you ever tried to comfort somebody and ended up being comforted yourself? Some people have so much faith during their tough times, that they encourage others.

The Apostle Paul was having his own problems with affliction and persecution. And when He heard about the faith of the Thessalonians, he was encouraged.

There are certainly examples in Scripture of people who encouraged others. When David was running from King Saul, Saul's son, Jonathan went out of his way to encourage David.

1 Samuel 23:16 - *And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.*

When the Apostle Paul was a prisoner headed for Rome he was on a ship in the middle of a terrible storm. He encouraged those with him that God had promised that all lives would be saved.

He encouraged them with these words found in Acts 27:25

Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me.

FAITH IS TO BE ENLARGED - Vs. 10

Paul prayed that he might have another opportunity to visit the Thessalonians and help to increase their faith.

Faith is something that should grow in our lives as we mature in the things of Christ.

1 Thessalonians 3:1-9 A GOOD REPRESENTATIVE

A Good Representative Is:

A MAN OF GOOD CHARACTER - Vss. 1-2

A MAN WITH A COMMISSION - Vss. 2b-5

A MAN WHO CAN DRAW CONCLUSIONS - Vs. 6

A MAN WHO CAN BRING COMFORT - Vss. 7-8

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 SUITABLE BEHAVIOR

Christians are supposed to act like Christians! We are to follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 2:6). In our text Paul calls for the Thessalonians to behave in a way that is suitable to their calling as followers of Christ.

OUR CONCERN - TO PLEASE GOD - VS. 1

THE LORD'S COMMANDS - LEADING TO SANCTIFICATION - VSS. 2-6

GOD'S CALL - TO HOLINESS - VSS. 7-8

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY

Some people live like Christianity is something that is only practiced for an hour or two on Sunday.

However Christianity is a very practical religion which is to be practiced all day, every day.

Here are some tips on how to live a practical Christian life from the pen of Paul, who wrote by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit.

A HEAVENLY WORD - Vss. 9-10

We are taught by God to love one another. The Greek word here for brotherly love is "phileo", which refers to brotherly love. It is the love that comes from being in the same family, the family of God. This love comes from having the same Heavenly Father. This love says, "Other Christians are family and therefore I have a family type of love for them."

The stronger word for love, a form of the word "agape" in the Greek is used later in this verse. This type of love is a proof of regeneration (John 3:14) and a proof of being Christ's disciple (John 13:34-35).

Not only were the Thessalonians taught to love one another, but also they did it! (Vs. 10)

They were to work at getting better at loving each other. They were to increase or abound in their love for each other. Just as a good athlete should now be satisfied with his accomplishments, but always try to do better, so should the Christian never be satisfied and always try to love more.

A HOLY WORK - Vs. 11

"Study to be quiet" - The word "study" means to "strive earnestly". This means that we are to work at being quiet within our Spirit. As we are quiet within our spirits, we will be quiet in our handling of the difficulties that come our way.

"Do your own business" - As Christians we should "mind our own business". There is a time to "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2), but we are not to be busybodies.

"Work with your own hands" - The Macedonians were known for being on the lazy side. They did not necessarily like to work. They were told here to care of business by working with their own hands.

AN HONEST WALK - Vs. 12

Our testimony as Christians is extremely important. If we walk honestly, doing our own business, and loving each other, we will have a good testimony towards those who are without Christ. Also, God will bless by providing for our needs. God will not provide supernaturally for our needs when we are being lazy or stingy. Philippians 4:18-19

***** **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 THE RAPTURE**

Many Christians are looking for the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The event, known as the Rapture will feature the resurrection of dead saints and the rising of living to meet Jesus in the air.

PROBLEM OF SORROW Vs. 13

It's easy to sorrow for a loved one. Paul reminds us that when we sorrow for a dead Christian, we are not to sorrow as those without hope.

PROMISE FOR THOSE ASLEEP Vss. 14-15

Those who are "asleep" (dead Christians) will be raptured with the living Christians.

PROCEDURE FOR THE RAPTURE Vss. 16-17

The dead in Christ shall rise first, followed by Christians who are alive at the time of Jesus' coming.

PURPOSE FOR THESE WORDS Vs. 18

This teaching about the rapture should be used to comfort fellow Christians in times of sorrow.

1 Thessalonians 5:10-12 KNOWING A CHRISTIAN IS GODLY

We are not to judge others, but we can surely tell when a Christian man or woman is Godly.

A GODLY CHRISTIAN IS PURE Vs.10

A GODLY CHRISTIAN ACTS AS A PARENT Vs. 11

A GODLY CHRISTIAN HAS A PURPOSE Vs. 12

1 Thessalonians 5:12-24 PARTING INSTRUCTIONS

As Paul closes his letter to the Thessalonians with some parting instructions.

CONSENT TOWARDS LEADERSHIP Vss. 12-13

Leaders are to be known and esteemed highly in love.

There is to be peace in the church between the leaders and those being led. We should give our consent to Godly leaders.

COOPERATION WITH OTHERS Vss. 14-15

Warning, comfort, support, patience, and good behavior are to be practiced by all.

CONDUCT TOWARDS GOD Vss. 16-24

The behavior outlined in these verses shows us how we should conduct ourselves in the eyes of God. Note that the God who calls us to do these things will enable us. (Vss. 23-24)

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 WHEN JESUS IS IN CONTROL

When Jesus is in control of a life there is,

THE HOPE THAT JESUS BRINGS - Vs. 16 - We have hope as we continually praise the Lord.

THE HELP THAT JESUS BRINGS - Vs. 17 - God will answer our prayers.

THE HAPPINESS THAT JESUS BRINGS - Vs. 18 - We are consistently thankful in all situations.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 etc. THE INNER DISCIPLINES

These three inner disciplines are to be practiced continually:

PRAISING - 1 Thessalonians 5:16,18, Ephesians 5:18-20

PRAYING - 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Ephesians 6:18, 1 Peter 4:7

PONDERING - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2-3, John 15:7

It is impossible to accomplish these without the filling of the Holy Spirit!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 LIVING RIGHTEOUSLY

THE PATTERN OF GODLY LIVING - Vss. 16-22

THE PRAYER FOR SANCTIFICATION - Vs. 23

THE PROMISE OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS - Vs. 24

2 Thessalonians 1:3-10 IT'S TIME TO THANK GOD

It's time to thank God when:

Christians Learn Faith Vs. 3a

Christians Love Each Other Vs. 3b

Christians Live Patient and Faithful Lives In Spite Of Persecution Vss. 4-10

1 Timothy 1:3-11 THE BOTTOM LINE

1 Timothy 1:5 - *Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:*

How can we tell when someone is a false teacher?

What are some of the ways of detecting that someone is teaching a wrong doctrine?

How can we discern what is Bible truth and what is not?

First, if a person is born-again, he will have the Holy Spirit living within in and pointing out the truth. John 16:13

Second, a false teacher will have his doctrine or teaching concerning Jesus Christ mixed up. 1 John 2:22-23, 1 John 4:2-3

Third, a false teacher will have the wrong bottom line from his teaching.

The bottom line in business is the results or profit after all income is counted and all expenses paid. It is the net profit or loss of the business.

In teaching the Word of God there is a bottom line.

When the Word of God is preached by a false teacher the bottom line is a loss.

When the Word of God is taught properly, there is a bottom line or profit for the Body of Christ.

Timothy had been mentored by Paul, and often served as a special assistant. In this case, as verses 3-4 show us, Timothy was left behind in Ephesus to confront and correct false doctrine.

The result of accurate teaching, the bottom line, will be love (charity). Right teaching promotes true Christian love for the brethren, and the world will be able to see the difference. 1 John 4:19, 1 John 4:7-8, John 13:34-35

In 1 Timothy 1:5 Paul gives us three reasons for love based on accurate teaching.

ACCURATE TEACHING WILL PRODUCE LOVE OUT OF A PURE HEART

We read in verse 3 that Timothy was to charge some teachers that they teach no other doctrine. I want us to especially think of the doctrine of salvation and the doctrine of Christ.

Paul was narrow minded because only correct doctrine produces love from a purified heart. Jeremiah 17:9, Hebrews 10:16-17

ACCURATE TEACHING WILL PRODUCE LOVE OUT OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE

You've heard the expression, "Let your conscience be your guide."

Well, that's all right if you have a good conscience. A good conscience is one which has been under the accurate teaching of the Gospel, and has been cleansed in the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:14

Verse 4 - False teaching does not provide a good conscience because false teaching is not edifying. It does not build.

ACCURATE TEACHING WILL PRODUCE LOVE OUT OF AN UNFEIGNED FAITH.

Unfeigned means not hypocritical. There is plenty of hypocrisy in false teaching.

Verse 6 - When someone does not accurately teaching concerning God's law, he swerves.

And when a person swerves from teaching truth, he uses empty words with no content. This verse calls it "vain jangling".

Verse 7 - False teachers want to teach, and don't know that they are talking about. This leads to hypocrisy.

Verse 8 - The law is good, when it is properly understood and explained.

Verses 9-10 - The law was not made for a righteous man. Instead the law was written to show us what sinners we really are.

The law, and the fact that no one has obeyed it perfectly, except the Lord Jesus, is the document which shows us that we are sinners in need of the Savior! Romans 3:10-12

Verse 11 - An unfeigned faith is produced by the glorious Gospel of Christ.

Such an unfeigned faith says,

"Yes, I am a sinner, according to the law. Yes, I have failed God. Yes, I deserve punishment. (Ezekiel 18:4)

But Jesus Christ died for my sins. Jesus Christ shed His blood for me. Jesus Christ was buried and rose again. I trust Jesus as my Savior. I now have eternal life." John 3:36

True doctrine produces a faith without hypocrisy which acknowledges sin and forgiveness for it through faith in Christ.

1 Timothy 1:12-17 MR ENTHUSIASM

Isn't it interesting how we get excited about secular things like jobs, sports, hobbies, vacations, etc., but we can't get as excited as we would like about the things of God. Paul is our example of Godly enthusiasm.

1. THE SECRET OF PAUL'S POWER Vs. 12
2. THE SADNESS OF PAUL'S PAST Vs. 13
3. THE SOURCE OF PAUL'S PARDON Vss. 14-15
4. THE SENSE OF GOD'S PURPOSE Vs. 16
5. THE SOUND OF PAUL'S PRAISE Vs. 17

1 Timothy 1:12-17 BE ENCOURAGED

The Apostle Paul was probably one of the greatest Christians who ever lived. He was a great theologian, pastor, missionary, writer, Bible teacher and witness. Although God greatly used Paul in the areas just mentioned Paul is also valuable to us as an encouragement. If God was able to do so much with a man who called himself "chief of sinners", think of how much he can do for us.

Paul encourages us by sharing:

GOD'S POWER FOR CHANGE - Vss.12-14

God took Paul and miraculously saved him and changed him. See Acts 9.

GOD'S PLAN FOR SINNERS - Vs. 15

GOD'S PATTERN OF GRACE - Vs. 16

Paul serves as a "pattern" to all. If God can save Paul, He can save anyone.

GOD'S PRAISE FROM BELIEVERS - Vs. 17

The previous statements of Paul should encourage our hearts, leading us to praise of God.

1 Timothy 1:12-17 RECLAMATION PROJECT

I see Paul and any other sinner as a great reclamation project. We were condemned to hell because of our sins. But God has saved us. We have been reclaimed by Him.

JESUS SAW PAUL AS FAITHFUL – Vs. 12

JESUS SAVED PAUL FROM A SINFUL PAST – Vss. 13-15

JESUS SHOWED PAUL MERCY AS AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS – Vs. 16

PAUL SANG PRAISE BECAUSE OF GOD'S GREAT MERCY – Vs. 17

1 Timothy 2:1-2 GETTING IT DONE

Do you get any satisfaction from completing a job? I do. When we finished shampooing some of our carpets recently it was nice to say, "That's done!" When I complete preparing a message or sending out an edition of Sermon Seeds, it's nice to say, "That's done!"

On the cross of Calvary our Lord Jesus Christ said, "It is finished." He had completed everything necessary to pay for the sins of mankind. It was done! When Paul came to the end of his life, Paul was able to joyfully say, "I'm done, and I did it well." 2 Timothy 4:7-8

It will also be nice, comforting, and pleasing to God if at the end of our lives we can say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

As Christians we are responsible to live lives which please God. Such lives require sacrifice. Luke 9:23-24, Luke 14:25-33, Galatians 2:20

1 Timothy 1:1-2 shows us how we can go about "Getting it done", living a life that in the end pleases God.

GOD CALLING ME - COMMANDMENT - Vs. 1

Because this was an open letter as well as a personal letter, Paul had to establish his authority. He said that he was an Apostle. Paul was an apostle because God had commanded him to be an Apostle. God has called the Christian to do God's will (Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:15-17). There are commands that every Christian should follow. But God also has a specific plan for each life. We are to use the gifts and abilities God has given us in the way God commands us to use them. Some will be in full time Christian service while most will not. However, no matter what our jobs, we are all called to be full time Christians. If we are going to get the job done, we must be following God's commands.

GOD HELPING ME - GRACE - Vs. 2

In verse 2 Paul wishes for Timothy 3 qualities that helped Timothy get the job done. They will help us as well. The first one mentioned is "grace". A Christian first receives grace, or God's unmerited favor when he or she is saved (Ephesians 2:8-9).

God's grace continues after salvation.

God's grace will enable to get the job done.

God's grace will give me the power to live the Christian life.

God's grace will give me the power to stand against sin.

God's grace will enable me to witness, to serve, to lead, to raise my family, and do anything else God commands me to do.

I keep grace working in life as I grow in grace and knowledge of my Lord. 1 Peter 3:18

I keep grace working in my life as I humbly call upon Him for help and submit to His leadership. James 4:6-7

GOD PARDONING ME - MERCY - Vs. 2

Grace is God giving me what I don't deserve.

Mercy is God not giving me what I do deserve.

I first received mercy when I trusted Christ and was cleansed of my sin (Isaiah 53).

I receive mercy today as I acknowledge my sins to God and confess them. 1 John 1:9, Psalm 32:5

GOD KEEPING ME - PEACE - Vs. 2

The moment I was saved I received peace with God. Romans 5:1 As I stay focused on the Lord and bring all my cares to Him I will experience the peace of God. Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7

1 Timothy 2:1-4 THE WIDENESS OF PRAYER

God never intended us to be narrow in the scope or our prayers. Philippians 4:6 tells us we can pray for everything that is of concern to us. In these verses we are reminded of:

THE BROAD VARIETY OF PRAYER - Vs. 1 - supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks.

THE BROAD OBJECTS OF PRAYER - Vss. 1-2 - All men, kings, all in authority, so that we can lead a quiet and peaceable life in godliness and honesty.

THE BROAD DESIRE OF GOD - Vss. 3-4 - That all will be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Of course, not all will be saved, because not all will turn to Christ. But the more we pray, the better the conditions will be to see folks come to Christ. God wants everyone to receive Christ!

1 Timothy 2:1-8 GOD'S PROGRAM FOR THIS MILLENNIUM

People differ as to when the new millennium begins. Some say it began on January 1, 2000, others say that it will begin January 1, 2001. Whenever it begins, God has a program for it until Jesus comes again.

THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS - Vss. 1, 2, 8

God's purposes are accomplished as God's servants pray. They are to be praying for all men, especially for all leaders so that they can lead a godly life in peace.

THE PURPOSE OF GOD - Vss. 3-4

Such godly living on the part of saints will attract the unsaved and challenge them to come to Christ (Matthew 5:14-16). God's purpose is that all will be saved. He wants to see people trust his Son as Savior. Not all will, but it is God's purpose none the less.

THE PRICE PAID BY CHRIST - Vss. 5-6

There is only one person who can mediate between man and God. That person is God's Son. By dying for sin He made it possible for all to be reconciled to God.

THE PROCLAMATION OF PAUL - Vs. 7

Paul was called to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to an unsaved world, especially to the Gentiles. We are also called to proclaim the Gospel. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, 1 Peter 3:15

1 Timothy 2:1-8 PRAYING EVANGELISTICALLY

We are to pray for those who are without Christ.

THE PRIORITY OF EVANGELISTIC PRAYER - Vss. 1-2a

We are to pray for all men, especially for leaders.

THE PURPOSE FOR EVANGELISTIC PRAYER - Vss. 2b-4

God would have us lead a quiet and peaceable life so we can witness to those who God wants to be saved.

THE PREMISE FOR EVANGELISTIC PRAYER - Vss. 5-7

There is one way to Heaven secured by the work of Christ on the cross.

THE PURITY OF EVANGELISTIC PRAYER

We are to lift up "holy hands" without wrath or doubting. God answers prayer that come from a pure heart.

1 Timothy 2:8-15 ORDER IN THE CHURCH

1 Corinthians 14:33 - *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.*

The context of 1Timothy 2:8-15 is public worship. In verses 1-7 Paul had given a challenge to prayer. Now, he gives some behavioral instructions, for the sake of order, to men and women for behavior during the church services.

ACTION - Vs. 8

The specific challenge is to the men in the congregation, but this does not excuse women from praying as well. I think that the words, *In like manner* also in verse 9 show us there is a place for women to pray in the church.

This word *everywhere* means in every place. That is, wherever the church is gathered men should be praying.

Concerning public prayer, we need to see happen what happened in the first century church. Acts 4:31

This action of prayer is to by men who lift up *holy hands*.

I want to emphasize that our hands are to be spiritually clean when we pray. The word *holy* here means unpolluted. This means that the person who prays should have no unjudged sin in the life. He should not be professing one thing on Sunday, and living in ungodliness the rest of the week. Psalm 66:18

The action of public prayer is also to practiced *without wrath*.

When we pray there should be no anger. James 1:20

The action of prayer is also to be *without doubting*.

The word *doubting* here means "disputations, reasonings, skeptical questions or criticisms."

ACTION

ADORNMENT

Vs. 9 - The word "adorn" means "to order or arrange". The women were to order or arrange their clothes in a modest way. The word "modest" means decent or orderly.

"Shamefacedness" means modest, " the avoiding of extremes".

The Christian woman is not to go to extremes of wearing sensual or suggestive clothes. Nor is she to go the extreme of trying to look artificially glamorous. Nor is she to go to the extreme of purposely trying to look drab or dull.

Sobriety simply means to have good sense. Thus the Christian woman is to dress sensibly. This next phrase *not with braided hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array*: is not outlawing hair-styles, or jewelry or expensive clothes. He is simply saying that the effort a woman makes should not be towards these things.

A Christian woman should strive to look modestly attractive for the glory of God, but she should not go to extremes in hairstyle, clothes or jewelry.

Vs. 10 - Here, Paul is telling the ladies what the major emphasis should be in their lives concerning adornment. Instead of concentrating on clothes, and jewelry and hairdo, they are to concentrate on that which is becoming of a woman who is a professing Christian.

Your life is to be adorned with good works! Examples: Martha, Dorcas, Phoebe, Lydia
ATTITUDE - Vs. 11

These next verses will not throw you if you understand the context.

The context is not the superiority of men and the inferiority of women. Galatians 3:27-28

In Jewish and Greek culture of Paul's day women had few rights. They were often mistreated. And yet God has always wanted women to have positions of honor within the family and church. Proverbs 31:30, 1 Peter 3:7, 1 Timothy 5:3

The context of this passage is order. There are certain things God prescribes for the sake of order.

The woman is to learn quietly. She is not to cause a "stir". She is not to be leaning over, whispering, asking questions of her husband. She is not to be leaning over, talking, taking issue with what the preacher is saying. When participation is asked for by the speaker in a public meeting, I feel that the ladies have just as much right to participate as the men.

The woman is to learn in subjection. It is the same word used for a woman's subjection to her husband in Ephesians 5:22.

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

This word is a military word that means to "rank under".

A woman learns submissively in church and follows the leadership of her husband, not because she is inferior, but because God has decided for the sake of order, she is outranked.

AUTHORITY - Vss. 12-14

Vs. 12 - God has ordained that in the church the men are to practice leadership.

Therefore the ladies are not to teach men in the public meetings of the church. Remember public meetings are the context.

Should women teach?

Why, of course!

Ladies can teach children fellow ladies certain practical truths better than any man can. Titus 2:3-5

And, on a one to one basis, a woman can instruct a man in Bible truths, and yes I believe that a woman can instruct her husband in the private of their own home. Acts 18:24-26

Vss. 13-14 - We have two reasons for the order that God has established.

First, there is the reason of order. Man was formed before woman. Therefore, woman is to naturally follow man's leadership.

Second, Eve was fooled by Satan. Adam was not, but sinned in the garden anyway.

By taking leadership over the man, she ate first and then gave to her husband to eat."

ADVANTAGE - Vs. 15

This is a very difficult verse with many possible interpretations.

I do not believe that Paul is talking about salvation of the soul here.

But I do believe he is telling us something about the results of a woman's ministry at home.

If a woman accepts her role in the church and leads a life of faith, love, holiness, and self-restraint, she will raise godly children. There is no greater privilege in the whole world than to bring up the next generation to the glory of God.

If the teachings in these verses are followed there will certainly be ORDER IN THE CHURCH.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 GODLY LEADERSHIP

The word "bishop" means "overseer". When we see this term we often think of the pastor and other Godly leaders in the church. The role of leadership in the church is not for everyone, because everyone does not qualify. Even though we might never fully qualify to be leaders, we should still strive to be as Godly as possible. Making the characteristics of leadership our goal will help us live Godly lives.

A Godly leader is:

CONSISTENT IN BEHAVIOR - Vss. 1-3

CONSCIENTIOUS AT HOME - Vss. 4-5

CONDITIONED BY EXPERIENCE - Vs. 6

COMPLIMENTED BY OUTSIDERS - Vs. 7

1Timothy 3:8-13 THE DEACON

If the work of God is going to get done there must be willing workers. Each and every Christian has that responsibility. Titus 3:8, 1 Peter 4:10, Galatians 5:13

God has given a special group of servants to the church.

These special servants are known as "deacons".

In the early church these men were "servants" who assisted the elders or overseers (bishops) of the church.

These were men who knew how to serve and how to serve well.

In the 20th century we need men who follow in the footsteps of the original deacons.

THE WORK OF THE DEACON - Acts 6:1-7

Vs. 1 - The deacons were appointed when the work became too large

Vs. 2 - The deacons were appointed when the word of God could have been neglected.

Vs. 3 - The deacons were appointed when Godly men were available.

Vs. 4 - The deacons were appointed when leaders had their priorities straight.

Vss. 5-7 - The deacons were appointed and the church grew.

THE WAY OF THE DEACON - Vss. 8-12

The deacon is to be:

A man of good behavior - Vs. 8, 10b

A man of pure conscience - Vs. 9

A man who has been proved - Vs. 10a

A man who has a Godly wife - Vs. 11

A man who has his household in order - Vs. 12

THE WAGES OF THE DEACON - Vs. 13

The one who is a good deacon earns a good degree or "rank".

He is promoted in the eyes of God and Man and might go on to bigger and better things for God (Consider Stephen in Acts 6-7).

But even if he does not, his testimony for and his ultimate reward from the Master will be worth it.

1 Timothy 4:1-8 RESISTING APOSTASY

DEPARTURE FROM THE TRUTH - Vs. 1

DECEIT OF FALSE TEACHERS - Vs. 2

DEMANDS ON THE FLESH - Vss. 3-5

DEPENDABILITY OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vss. 6-8

1 Timothy 4:12-16 A PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY

Everyone who works has a "philosophy" of work.

Some peoples philosophy is avoid work like "the plague"

Other people's philosophy is to do just enough work to get by.

Other people's philosophy is to look like they are doing more than they actually are.

Still others have a philosophy of doing their very best!

Anyone who serves the Lord Jesus as Savior has been called to service or ministry. We need to have a philosophy of ministry. That is, we need to decide how we are going to carry out our work. Paul gave Timothy a great philosophy of ministry. We should follow it too!

BE VISIBLE Vs. 12

BE VOCAL Vs. 13

BE VIGILANT Vss. 14-16

1Timothy 4:12-16 THE PREACHER PEOPLE WILL LISTEN TO

Those of us who preach want to be those the congregation will listen to. Here are some practical tips that help us see how we can be preachers who are heeded.

THE PREACHER'S PATTERN - Vs. 12

Preachers are to be examples to those he is striving to minister to.

THE PREACHER'S PROCLAMATION - Vs. 13

Reading, exhortation and doctrine are all public ways of sharing the Word of God. 2 Timothy 4:2

THE PREACHER'S POWER - Vs. 14

The preacher is to use the Spiritual gifts he has. 2 Timothy 1:6, 14

THE PREACHER'S PONDERING - Vs. 15

The preacher is to meditate on the things mentioned above and to do them.

THE PREACHER'S PROMISE - Vs. 16

When the preacher focuses on his own walk with God and on what he is teaching, God will bless.

1 Timothy 4:12-16 A GOOD PASTOR

How can you tell when you have a good pastor?

How a pastor tell when he is doing the right things.

Paul gave these tips to a young Pastor named Timothy.

They are still true today.

A PASTOR'S PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR - Vs. 12

The pastor is not a dictator, but a role model. He is an example to the believers in the areas listed in this verse.

A PASTOR'S PERFORMANCE IN THE PULPIT - Vss. 13

The pastor gives attention to public reading of Scripture, encouraging the flock (exhortation) and teaching (doctrine).

A PASTOR'S PRIORITIES FOR SUCCESS - Vss. 14-16

1. The pastor uses whatever Spiritual gifts he has for the glory of God. Vss. 14-15

2. The pastor is to take heed to his own personal walk, practicing what he preaches. Vs. 16

3. The pastor is to take heed to his doctrine (teaching) to make sure that it is accurate. Vs. 16

1 Timothy 4:12-16 PRAYING FOR PASTOR

INTRODUCTION: WHY PRAY FOR THE PASTOR?

Because of His Call

To Preach and Teach - Ephesians 4:11-12

To Study and Pray - Acts 6:4, 2 Timothy 2:15

To Shepherd - 1 Peter 5:1-4, Hebrews 13:17

To be an Example - 1 Peter 5:3, Hebrews 13:7

Because of His Conflicts

"The World, The Flesh and The Devil"

Satan likes to attack those in Leadership

David - 2 Samuel 12:14

Peter - Luke 22:31

Because of His Congregation

He has obligations to teach both the saved and the unsaved. Matthew 28:19-20

PRAY FOR THE PASTOR'S WALK - Vs. 12

Word

Conversation (conduct)

Charity (love)

Spirit

Faith

Purity

PRAY FOR THE PASTOR'S WORDS - Vs. 13

(His public ministry)

Reading

Exhortation

Doctrine

PRAY FOR THE PASTOR'S WORK - Vss. 14-15

Using His Spiritual Gift - Vs. 14

Thinking It Through (Meditating, giving himself wholly to them) - Vs. 15

Showing the Results - Vs. 15

PRAY FOR THE PASTOR'S WATCH - Vs. 16

Watching Himself

Watching His Teaching

1 Timothy 5:1-16 TAKING CARE OF FAMILY

The church is a family. Each true church member is a child of God, having been born again. John 1:12-13

Just as it is important that we take of our families at home, it is also important that we take care of our church families as well.

1 Timothy 5:1-16 talks about the way we should treat each other as church family members, and how we should treat a very important segment of the church family, widows.

RESPECT - Vss. 1-2

Timothy, Paul's protégé, was probably between thirty and forty years old. He was told to treat everyone with respect, especially those whom he needed to correct. When someone does something to anger or disturb us, this is when it is most difficult to deal with the problem and to show respect.

Elders, older men, were to be appealed to as fathers.

Younger men were to be appealed to as brothers.

Older women were to be appealed to as mothers.

Younger women were to be appealed to as sisters, in all purity.

RESPONSIBILITY - Vss. 3,4,8,16

Vs. 3 - In the church the needs of widows were attended to from the very beginning. In fact, the first church dispute on record was about the care of widows. Acts 6

God is concerned for the widow. Deuteronomy 10:18, Isaiah 1:17

Vs. 4 - When a widow can not take care of herself, the first line of help is the family. The word "nephews" actually refers to grandchildren.

Vs. 8 - A person who does not care of his own family is worse than an unbeliever.

Vs. 16 - The church has a responsibility to meet the needs of widows. But, the primary responsibility of the church is to care for "widows indeed". Widows indeed have no one else to care for them.

REQUIREMENTS - Vss. 5-7, 9-10

There are certain requirements for being "widows indeed".

She has no means of taking care of herself. Vs. 5

She is a believer, trusting in God. Vs. 5

She is a lady who continues in prayer. Vs. 5

She needed to be at least 60 years old and only married once. Vs. 9

She was to have a good reputation. Vs. 10

She was to be a doer of good works. Vs. 10

RESTRICTIONS - Vss. 11-15

Vss. 11-12 - Younger widows were not ready for the full time service to Christ that a Godly widow was to perform. Eventually they would marry, and bring judgment upon themselves.

Vs. 13 - Younger women would also have a tendency to get lazy and become "tattlers" and busybodies".

Vs. 14 - Younger women were to remarry.

2 Timothy 1:1-8 A SPIRITUAL PARENT (FATHER) – FATHER'S DAY

Many Christians end up being Spiritual parents to younger Christians. We may have led them to the Lord, and/or discipled them. How can we be good Spiritual parents to our own children and our children in the faith? We can follow Paul's example, as he was a Spiritual parent to Timothy.

A FATHER'S MIND - Vss. 1-2 - Wishing grace, mercy, and peace

A FATHER'S MINISTRY - Vss. 3-4 - Praying for the child and desiring to spend time with the child.

A FATHER'S MEMORY - Vs. 5-6 - A good parent reminds his child of positive things which have happened in the past and that he should continue to progress.

A FATHER'S MESSAGE - Vss. 7-8 - A father looks to strengthen and encourage a child. Paul's message to Timothy encouraged him to stand firm for the Lord. We should encourage our Spiritual children in the same way.

2 Timothy 1:1-8 THE MENTOR

A mentor trains someone. Paul was Timothy's mentor in the things of God. A good mentor:

REAFFIRMS Vss. 1-2

REQUESTS (Prays) Vss. 3-4

REMINDS Vss. 5-6

REQUIRES (Proper Behavior) Vss. 7-8

2 Timothy 1:13-18 BE LOYAL

In my years as a pastor, I have found many people to have a very important quality - loyalty.

A loyal person may not agree with everything you say and do, but will be faithful.

In our text, Paul, who is a prisoner in Rome, is talking to his protegee Timothy about loyalty.

Not that Timothy wasn't loyal to the one who trained him in the Christian faith. He was.

However Nero was now persecuting Christians, and some Christians were being less than loyal to Paul, and consequently to the Lord. I believe Paul was trying to insure that Timothy would remain loyal to the Lord and to himself.

BE LOYAL TO GOD'S WORD - Vss. 13-14

Vs. 13 - When an architect is building a building he makes a sketch of what the building will look like.

Timothy was given a "form", an outline, or a sketch of sound words from Paul. Paul had taught Timothy the Word of God and Bible doctrine. Timothy was to hold fast to what he had been taught. 2 Timothy 3:1-7 shows us what happens when a person does not hold on to solid Bible doctrine.

Vs. 14 - Paul uses a banking illustration. Timothy received a deposit of something that is precious.

He was to take care of it as a good banker takes care of treasure placed in his trust. Timothy had received a deposit of the Word of God. He was to care of his precious treasure.

BE LOYAL TO GOD'S WORKERS - Vss. 15-18

We are to be loyal to God's people as they stand for the truth. In these verses Paul is telling Timothy of those who were not faithful to Paul, and one person who was faithful. Many had turned away from Paul (Vs. 15). They did not stand with him during his time of need.

The man who did stand with Paul was a man named Onesiphorus.
He often refreshed Paul. - Vs. 16

He was not ashamed of Paul's chain. - Vs. 16
He sought Paul out. - Vs. 17
He served Paul. - Vs. 18

2 Timothy 1:16-18 A GOOD FRIEND

Onesiphorus, a citizen of Ephesus, visited Rome while Paul was a prisoner.
He showed himself to be a good friend to Paul.

HE WAS DILIGENT - Vs. 17 - Evidently just to find Paul, he had to search diligently. He did not give up easily in order to be a good friend.

HE WAS DELIGHTFUL - Vss. 16&18 - He refreshed Paul, meeting Paul's needs in Jail, and also ministered to him in Ephesus.

HE WAS DEVOTED - Vs. 16 - He didn't do this once, but often. And, he was not ashamed of being associated with a prisoner.

2 Timothy 2:1-4 MAKE IT COUNT!

Colossians 3:17 - "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Whatever we do for the Lord Jesus must be done with sincere fervency! We might not get a second chance to make a positive impression in some one's life. We must make whatever we do count for Christ!

When Paul wrote the Epistle of Second Timothy, he was preparing for his own departure from this earth. He was giving Timothy specific instructions that would help Timothy minister even after Paul had been removed from the scene. It is as if Paul is telling Timothy in Chapter 2, verses 1-4, "Make it Count! Tale advantage of your opportunities, and this how you do it! In this passage Paul speaks of:

SONSHIP AND STRENGTH - Vs. 1

Paul calls Timothy his Son, or his child. Timothy is called this because Paul led Timothy to faith in Christ. Paul wants Timothy to "Make it Count" because he is Paul's spiritual child, and because Timothy was a child or Son of God.

It is of the utmost importance that you make your life count by becoming a child of God. (Explain the Gospel using John 1:12-13.)

Coming along with sonship is strength. Paul instructs Timothy to be "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." There are times when we will feel extremely weak and overwhelmed. Sometimes we will not feel capable of doing or facing what God wants us to do or face. We need the grace of Christ to carry us through. As a Christian, I am in Christ. I must appropriate His strength. John 15:4-7, Gal 2:20

DISCIPLESHP AND DISCIPLING - Vs. 2

Timothy was a disciple. He was a learner, an adherent, a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He was discipled in the things of Christ, and Paul had taught him many things.

As disciples, we must continue to learn and grow. 2 Peter 3:18, 2 Timothy 2:15

As disciples, we must learn to disciple others. Paul told Timothy to pass on the things he had learned from Paul to faithful men who would be able to teach others.

We are all disciples of Christ. We all should be discipling others. Matthew 28:19-20

ENDURANCE AND ENTANGLEMENTS - Vss. 3-4

A good soldier of Jesus Christ endures hardship.

A good soldier does not get entangled with the things of this life.

As good soldiers we should:

Eat, but not be entangled in eating

Sleep, but not be entangled by sleeping

Take furlough, but not be entangled in vacation

Have recreation, but not be entangled in recreation.

We do these things so we can please the one who has enlisted us to be a soldier.

2 Timothy 2:1-4 A GOOD DISCIPLE

A GOOD DISCIPLE IS STRONG - Vs. 1

A GOOD DISCIPLE IS SMART - Vs. 2

He trains others.

A GOOD DISCIPLE IS A (GOOD) SOLDIER - Vss. 3-4

2 Timothy 2:1-6 WORD PICTURES FOR TIMOTHY

Remember when you were a kid? Your favorite books were the books with pictures in them. As I grew up, I enjoyed going to my great grandmother's house, where she had Sunday School papers that had the Bible, and other stories in cartoon form. Even today, we like to see pictures to illustrate what we are reading.

There is another kind of picture I enjoy. It is called a "word picture".

This is when someone illustrates what they are saying with a story, an example, a model, or an illustration from life. Most of us find it easier to remember someone's "word pictures" more than any other part of a message.

The Bible makes use of word pictures. Our Lord often used them. Some of the ones he used were the sower and the soils, the vine and the branches, the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, the unjust steward, and the wheat and the tares.

In 2 Timothy 2 we find several word pictures used as illustrations by Paul for his disciple, Timothy. I see Paul taking Timothy on an imaginary tour as he brings him with word pictures to:

THE CLASSROOM Vs. 2

THE ARMY CAMP Vss. 3-4

THE SPORTS ARENA Vs. 5

The man who strives for masteries is the athlete competing in an athletic event. The crown here is the victor's wreath given to the winner. In order to be crowned the winner, he must follow the rules.

THE VINEYARD Vs. 6

2 Timothy 2:3-4 A GOOD SOLDIER

ENDURANCE - "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ."

ENTANGLEMENTS - "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of [this] life;"

ENLISTMENT - "...that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

If you would like another point, consider:

ENABLEMENT - Ephesians 6:13-18

God will only call on us to do those things that He will enable us to do.

2 Timothy 2:22-26 GOD'S SERVANT

GOD'S SERVANT IS TO FLEE YOUTHFUL LUSTS - Vs. 22a

GOD'S SERVANT IS TO FOLLOW A SPECIFIC PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR - Vs. 22

GOD'S SERVANT IS TO FORSAKE FOOLISH ARGUMENTS - Vss. 23-24a

GOD'S SERVANT IS TO FOCUS ON HUMBLY REACHING THOSE WHO OPPOSE THEMSELVES - Vss. 24b-26

2 Timothy 3:1-7 GUT CHECK! [Might be good for a Revival Service]

When we say a person "has guts" we mean that they have courage.

A "gut check" is a situation that puts us to the test to see whether we have "guts" or courage.

2 Timothy 3:1-7 talks about the "last days", which we are probably in. These verses are also a challenge to Christians to take a gut check! Do we have the courage of our convictions?

WHAT DO I LOVE? Vss. 1-4

Do I love myself more than I love God? Do I love pleasure more than I love God? Vs. 4

HOW DO I LIVE? - Vss. 5-6

Do I have just a form of godliness, without any real power to live a godly life?

That power is the result of being yielded and having faith. Galatians 2:20, Romans 6:11-14

HOW DO I LEARN? - Vs. 7

Many Christians sit in church and Sunday School, but never learn. Their lives never change.

Oh, they may have some "head knowledge" but they lack "heart knowledge". They have not applied what they have learned to daily living.

2 Timothy 3:12-17 WHEN BEING A CHRISTIAN IS NOT EASY

We all have times when living for the Lord seems to be especially hard.

We need to remember the following principles:

1. THE FACT OF PERSECUTION. Vss. 12-13

All Christians will be harassed because of their faith. They live in a world that is full of wickedness.

2. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD'S SERVANT. Vs. 14

Like Timothy, we are to continue in the faith which we have been taught

3. THE FOCUS ON GOD'S WORD Vss. 15-17

We are to concentrate on knowing God's word. The Word makes us wise, comes from God, and provides us with "doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness".

2 Timothy 3:12-17 WHEN TIMES ARE BAD

THERE WILL BE PERSECUTION – Vs. 12

THERE WILL BE PERVERSITY – Vs. 13

WE MUST BE PERSISTENT – Vs. 14

WE MUST LIVE BY GOD'S PRECEPTS – Vss. 15-16

2 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 15:4, 2 Peter 1:21 THE IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S WORD

We as Christians have but one authority, and that is the Word of God, the Bible. We must understand just how important God's Word is in our lives.

THE PRODUCTION OF GOD'S WORD

"Given by inspiration of God." - It is "God breathed." 1 Timothy 3:16

Holy men of God spoke as they were "moved by the Holy Ghost."

(2 Peter 1:21)

THE PROFIT OF GOD'S WORD

God's word is profitable for

Doctrine

Reproof

Correction

Instruction in righteousness.

Learning (1 Timothy 3:16 & Romans 15:4)

THE PURPOSES OF GOD'S WORD

"That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (1 Timothy 3:17)

"That we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4)

2 Timothy 4:1-5 ADVICE

The old message of Paul to Timothy is appropriate for pastors in particular and Christians in general.

CHALLENGE - Vss. 1-2

The Word is to be preached!

CAUTION - Vss. 3-4

We never know when people will stop enduring sound doctrine. We must share the Word while some are still listening.

CONDUCT - Vs. 5

Watch (in all things)

Endure (afflictions)

Do (the work of an evangelist)

2 Timothy 4:1-5 TAKING A STAND

Timothy, one of God's faithful servants, was called upon to take a stand in the midst of difficult situations.

We too must learn to stand and to do it in the light of God's word.

PRESENTATION OF GOD'S WORD - Vss. 1-2

Timothy was to be faithful preaching the Word of God.

PERVERSION OF GOD'S WORD - Vss. 3-4

There will always be those willing to follow false teachers.

They will turn away from the truth to heed fables.

PERSISTENCE IN GOD'S WORD - Vs. 5

God's servant is to be persistent, enduring, evangelizing, and showing evidence that his ministry is of God.

2 Timothy 4:1-8 MOTIVATION FOR GREATNESS

Timothy was Paul's "son" in the Lord.

Timothy would do special assignments at the direction of Paul.

Paul would soon be leaving Timothy and going to Heaven.

Paul motivates Timothy to great living for the Lord.

EXHORTATION OF TIMOTHY - Vss. 1-2, 5

Timothy was encouraged to preach the Word of God faithfully, to be on the watch, to endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, and to fully prove his ministry.

EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES - Vss. 3-4

Timothy need to be faithful at the current time because more difficult times were coming.

EXAMPLE OF PAUL - Vss. 6-8

Paul was faithful to the end.

Paul would be rewarded in the future.

Those, like Timothy, who are faithful also will be equally rewarded.

2 Timothy 4:2 THE TYPE OF PREACHING GOD LIKES

Everybody has an opinion of what makes a sermon good or bad. When someone says "That was a great message.", or that was a terrible message, he is usually giving a subjective opinion.

God tells us in this verse what kind of preaching He likes. This is the type of sermon a preacher should strive to preach. This is the type of sermon for which God's people should be thankful when they hear it. God likes the preaching when:

THE WORD OF GOD IS PROCLAIMED - "Preach the word."

THE MESSENGER IS PREPARED - "Be instant in season, out of season."

THE AUDIENCE IS PROVOKED - "Reprove, rebuke, exhort."

THE WORD IS PRESENTED PATIENTLY AND CLEARLY.

"With all longsuffering and doctrine."

2 Timothy 4:6-8 LOOKING BACK

We all have the ability to look back, reflect, and evaluate what has happened in our lives, and what we have accomplished. Many a Godly man can look back and see the blessings and hand of God in their lives. (Chose a couple of men or women your congregation would know, and share how that man or lady can look back and see how God has worked through them.)

I think most of us want to be able to look back at the end of life and be able to say that we have accomplished something for the Lord. Paul was able to say this at the end of his life. Our text gives us some lessons so that at the end of our lives we will be able to say something similar to what Paul said.

"I AM" speaks of Paul's CHARACTER in Vs. 6..

"I HAVE" speaks of Paul's CONDUCT in Vs. 7.

"THERE IS" speaks of Paul's CONCLUSION in Vs. 8.

2 Timothy 4:6-8 AT THE END OF MY LIFE

I don't know when the end of my life will come. It could be today or it could be 30-40 years from now. Or better yet, maybe the Lord will return for all Christians today. Whether I go by way of the "undertaker or the undertaker", I want to be able to say the same things Paul said in these verses.

READINESS - Vs. 6 - Paul knew his time was short and he was ready to go. We don't know if our time is short or not, but we should always be ready. We should be ready because we have been born again (John 3). We should be ready because we are anxiously awaiting his coming (Titus 2:11-14). We should be ready because we are abiding in Him (John 15:1-7).

REVIEW - Vs. 7 - Paul could look back at his life and say "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." If we can review our lives and see this pattern of faithfulness, we should be happy. We won't live perfect lives, but we can live faithful lives. If we haven't lived faithful lives, we can start now.

REWARD - Vs. 8 - Paul could look forward to the rewards that he would receive in Heaven because he loved the appearing of the Lord. Because Paul loved the appearing of his Lord, he lived for his Lord! (2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5)

2 Timothy 4:9-11, 21 PEOPLE LESSONS

Those mentioned by Paul at the close of this Epistle teach us some very important Spiritual lessons.

DEMAS - BE SPIRITUAL, LIVE FOR ETERNITY Vs. 10

Philemon 23, 24, Colossians 4:14

LUKE - BE LOYAL, LIVE FOR CONSISTENCY Vs. 11

"Only Luke is with me..."

Proverbs 27:10, 1 Corinthians 4:2

MARK - BE USEFUL, LIVE FOR MINISTRY Vs. 11

"...Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry."

What a change! Acts 13:13, Acts 15:36-41

TIMOTHY - BE PUNCTUAL, LIVE FOR IMMEDIACY Vss. 9, 21

Paul had a special need for Timothy as Paul prepared for his home going. It was important that Timothy act right away. There are times when we must act immediately to do what needs to be done. In some cases tomorrow is too late!

2 Timothy 4:9-13, 21 THE TWILIGHT OF A CAREER

Paul was at the end of a long life of service. He was in jail, and would soon be martyred.

PAUL'S LONELY REPORT - Vss. 10, 12

Some associates had left Paul. Paul had dispatched at least for ministry.

PAUL'S LOYAL FRIEND - Vs. 11a

Luke, the beloved physician was still with Paul

PAUL'S LOVING FORGIVENESS - Vs. 11b

Mark had deserted Paul on a missionary journey a long time before. Acts 13:13, 16:36-41
However, Paul had forgiven him, and Mark had proved himself faithful.

PAUL'S LONGING FOR ENCOURAGEMENT - Vss. 9, 13, 21

Titus 1:1-4 FIVE LESSONS ABOUT GOD

God is mentioned five times in these first four verses of Titus.

They lead us to some important lessons about God that we need to learn.

GOD IS PREEMINENT - "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ..."

Paul allowed God the Father and God the Son to be preeminent in his life. They were in charge, along with the working of the Holy Spirit. We must allow God to be preeminent in our lives.

GOD HAS A PEOPLE - Titus 1:1-2 "...according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;"

All those who place faith in Christ as Savior are God's elect. As God's people we are to be acknowledging God's truth and allowing it to lead them to godliness.

GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES - Titus 1:2-3 - "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"

GOD REVEALS HIS WORD THROUGH PREACHING - Titus 1:3 - "But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour;"

GOD PROVIDES - Titus 1:4

To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.

God provides grace, mercy and peace to His children.

Titus 1:5-9 QUALITIES OF A GOOD LEADER

Timothy was to appoint elders, or men who most of us think of as pastors. Vs. 5

Many in your congregation will think that this message does not apply to them. Remind them that if these are the standards for leaders, we should strive to meet these standards, even if we never lead. We should be Godly, even if we'll never be pastors.

THE ELDER'S HOME - Vs. 6

The husband of one wife.

Having believing (faithful) children.

THE ELDER'S HABITS - Vss. 7-8

Blameless...

Not self willed

Not soon angry

Not given to wine

No striker

Not given to filthy lucre.

A lover of hospitality

A lover of good men

Sober

Just

Holy

Temperate

THE ELDER'S HOLD

The elder has "laid hold" on the "faithful word."

He teaches "sound doctrine".

He opposes the gainsayers. (Those who contradict.)

Titus 1:10-16 CRISIS MANAGEMENT

There will be times of crisis in most churches. Sometimes the crisis will center on false teaching and teachers. Paul tells Titus what to do to handle this crisis of false teaching.

RESTRAIN - Vss. 10-11

Those who teach false doctrine must be stopped.

REBUKE - Vss. 12-13

When people are presenting false doctrine they must be rebuked sharply and corrected.

REFUSE - Vs. 14

We must refuse to accept teaching based on the fables and commandments of men. The Word of God is our authority.

REMEMBER - Vss. 15-16

To the pure all things are pure. To impure nothing is pure.

Titus 2:1-10 LESSONS

LESSONS FOR OLDER MEN - Vss. 1-2
LESSONS FOR OLDER WOMEN - Vs. 3
LESSONS FOR YOUNGER WOMEN - Vss. 4-5
LESSONS FOR YOUNGER MEN - Vs. 6
LESSONS FOR THE PASTOR - Vss. 7-8
LESSONS FOR SERVANTS (Employees) - Vss. 9-10

PREPARED FOR HIS COMING Titus 2:11-14

When we know that we are having company, we try to be prepared.
If we know that we are hosting very special people, we work even harder in preparation. For instance if Queen Elizabeth or President Clinton was planning a visit to your town, the preparations would be immense. In John 14:3 Jesus promises that He is coming again. We should be prepared for that day!
THE LIGHT OF SALVATION Vs. 11
THE LIFE OF SANCTIFICATION Vs. 12
THE LOOK FOR THE SAVIOR Vss. 13-14

Titus 2:11-14 IT'S NEW!

NEW LIFE - Vs. 11
NEW LIMITS - Vs. 12
NEW LONGING - Vss. 13-14

Titus 2:11-14 LOOKING AHEAD

GRACIOUS GOD - Vss. 11, 14
GODLY LIVING - Vs. 12
GREAT EXPECTATIONS - Vs. 13

Titus 3:1-7 THE REMARKABLE CHRISTIAN

Introduction - Tell about some of the remarkable Christians you have known personally. Being a remarkable Christian is possible for any Christian. Actually the remarkable Christian is a Christian who is normal. Paul describes the remarkable Christian in these verses.

HIS CONDUCT - Vss. 1-2
HIS CONTEMPLATION - Vs. 3 - He remembers His past life.
HIS CONVERSION - Vss. 4-6
HIS CONFIDENCE - Vs. 7

Titus 3:1-8 TURNED AROUND!

Titus was ministering on the Isle of Crete. He was appointing leaders and teaching Godly living. In this passage, we are reminded that every born again Christian has a life that has been turned around. At one time we were headed for damnation. We experienced salvation. We are now to live as those who have turned from going to hell and are headed for Heaven.

PATTERN OF GOOD BEHAVIOR Vss. 1-2
Here are some of the qualities that a Christian should exhibit.
PERVERSION BEFORE SALVATION Vs. 3
It is always good to remember what we were like before we were saved.
PRESERVATION BY GRACE Vss. 4-7
It is also good to remember just how much love went into our salvation. God in His grace preserved us from hell fire.
PRODUCTION OF GOOD WORKS Vs. 8
See Matthew 5:16.

Titus 3:8-11 PEACE IN THE CHURCH

As we do the things Paul tells Titus, our churches will tend to be more peaceful.

REACH OUT WITH GOOD WORKS Vs. 8
RETREAT FROM FOOLISH QUESTIONS Vs. 9
REJECT HERETICS Vss. 10-11

False teaching has to be dealt with in order for peace to result.

Philemon 1:1-7 TALKING TO A FRIEND

Paul was talking to his old friend, Philemon (Vss. 1-2). The things he said to Philemon should be things that we are able to honestly say to our Christian friends.

GOOD WISHES - Vs. 3

Grace

Peace

GOOD WORDS - Vss. 4-6

Thanking God for our friends in prayer - Vs. 4

Being encouraged by our friend's love and faith - Vs. 5

Asking God for Spiritual development in the lives of our friends - Vs. 6

GOOD WORKS - Vs. 7

We should rejoice in the good works of our friends, and encourage them to do more!

Philemon 1:8-21 INTERVENTION FOR A FRIEND

Onesimus was a runaway slave belonging to a friend of Paul's named Philemon. Evidently their paths crossed in a Roman jail. He was gloriously saved, but needed to make things right with his master. Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon, but intervened in Onesimus' behalf.

THE PRINCIPLE - Vss. 8-9 - FOR LOVE'S SAKE

Paul could have ordered Philemon to do what was right, but instead made a request based on love.

THE PERSON- Vss. 10-12 - ONESIMUS

His name means "profitable", but he was unprofitable.

He became Paul's son in the faith. Paul led him to Christ.

He was now profitable.

He was now to be received back by Philemon

THE PREFERENCE - Vss. 13-14 - TO KEEP ONESIMUS

Paul would have like to have kept Onesimus with him.

However he would do nothing like that without Philemon's approval.

THE POSSIBILITY - Vss. 15-16 - A PERMANENT SERVANT AND BROTHER

THE PETITION - Vs. 17 - RECEIVE ONESIMUS AS HE WOULD PAUL

THE PRICE - Vss. 18-21 - PAUL WOULD PAY WHATEVER WAS OWED BY ONESIMUS

However Paul reminded Philemon how much Philemon owed Paul.

Note - Because of all the points, this would probably be a better Sunday School lesson than a sermon. By the way, when you teach Sunday School, it might be helpful to hand out a simple outline so your folks can follow along easier.

Hebrews 1 COMMUNICATION FROM GOD

God wants you and I to hear from Him. In this text we see God giving the greatest communication of all, the message of His wonderful Son, The Lord Jesus Christ.

GOD HAS SPOKEN THROUGH HIS SON Vss. 1-3

CHRIST IS SUPERIOR TO THE ANGELS Vss. 4-13

ANGELS ARE SERVANTS OF GOD FOR THE SAINTS Vss. 7,14

Hebrews 1:1-4 GOD'S FINAL WORD

God's last or final Word to man is the Lord Jesus Christ.

JESUS IS HEIR OF ALL THINGS - "... whom he hath appointed heir of all things..."

JESUS IS CREATOR OF THE WORLD - "... by whom also he made the worlds;"

JESUS IS GOD HIMSELF - " Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person..."

JESUS IS UPHOLDER OF ALL THINGS - "and upholding all things by the word of his power..."

JESUS IS THE PURGER OF OUR SINS - "... when he had by himself purged our sins..."

JESUS IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD - "...sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;"

JESUS IS BETTER THAN THE ANGELS - "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Hebrews 1:4-2:4 THE SUPERIOR SON

CONCERNING THE SON

His Name - 1:4-5, Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:14

His Position - 1:6

His Righteous Reign 1:8-9, Psalm 45:6-7

His Joy - 1:9

His Creative Acts - 1:10, Psalm 102:25-27

His Permanence - 1:11-12

CONCERNING HIS SERVANTS (THE ANGELS)

Their Song (worship) 1:6, Psalm 97:7

Their Service

To Christ - 1:7

For Saints - 1:14

Their Subordination - 1:13, Psalm 110:1

CONCERNING SAINTS AND SINNERS

Conduct - 2:1 - Saints and Sinners alike are to "take heed".

Caution - 2:2-3 - Saints and Sinners alike are not to "neglect so great salvation".

Confirmation - 2:3-4 - The message to Saints and Sinners was confirmed by signs, wonders, and miracles.

Hebrews 2:1-4 SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

POINTED CHALLENGE - Vs. 1

PROMISED RETRIBUTION - Vs. 2

PIERCING QUESTION - Vs. 3a

POWERFUL WITNESSES - Vss. 3b-4

Hebrews 3:12-13, 18-19 AN UNBELIEVING HEART

Hebrews 3:12-13 - *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. [13] But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.*

Hebrews 3:18-19 - *And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? [19] So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.*

AN UNBELIEVING HEART IS AN EVIL HEART – Vs. 12

AN UNBELIEVING HEART IS A DEPARTING HEART – Vs. 12

AN UNBELIEVING HEART IS A HARDENED HEART – Vs. 13

AN UNBELIEVING HEART IS A RESTLESS HEART – Vss. 18-19

Hebrews 4:12-14 BE AWARE!

BE AWARE OF THE WORD OF GOD Vs. 12

BE AWARE OF THE WATCH OF GOD Vs. 13

He sees everything!

BE AWARE OF THE WAY TO GOD Vss. 14-16

The way to God is through our great High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 4:14-16 BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!

In the course of a life time you face many problems, many hurts, many difficulties and many temptations.

There are times when someone can relate to you and say, "Been there, done that!" Other times you will feel that nobody is relating to what you are facing.

There is a person this who always understands your problem, always feels your problem, can always relate, and can always say, "BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!" He may have not faced the exact trial but trials so similar that he can always relate. The person's name is The Lord Jesus Christ!

The Lord Jesus can always say to you, "BEEN THERE, DONE THAT!" In Hebrews 4:14-16 we see how He is present to help us through any difficulty. These three verses show us that,

JESUS IS OUR PRIEST Vs. 14

JESUS IS OUR PARTNER Vs. 15

He was tempted every way we've tempted, but without sin. He can relate.

JESUS IS OUR PATHWAY Vs. 16

We come to the throne of grace through our priest and Savior. John 14:13-14.

Hebrews 5:5-10 OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

CHRIST WAS SELECTED AS HIGH PRIEST - Vss. 5-6

CHRIST SUFFERED AS HIGH PRIEST - Vss. 7-8

CHRIST SECURED ETERNAL SALVATION AS HIGH PRIEST - Vs. 9

Hebrews 5:11-14 TIME TO GROW UP!

Some people have been Christians for years have never matured in the things of God. Paul is exhorting the Christians in these verses to "grow up!"

THEIR DULLNESS - Vs. 12 - Paul had much to say about the Lord as a priest according to the order of Melchisedek (Vss. 1-10), but could not utter them because they were "dull of hearing".

THEIR DELAY - Vs. 12 - They should have been teachers, but instead needed to learn their "A, B, C's".

THEIR DISADVANTAGE - Vs. 13 - Their was no problem with drinking milk, or the basics of the Word of God, (1Peter2:2), but "babes in Christ" are to move on from the "milk" of the word, and add the "meat" of the Word. to their diet.

THEIR DISCERNMENT - Vs. 14 - Discernment of good and evil would come as they grow up to digest "strong meat"

Hebrews 5:10-6:3 MOVING UP

The readers of this Epistle needed to move up in maturity pertaining the things of God.

LIMITED LEARNING - 5:10-11

They were limited in learning because they were "dull of hearing".

LOW ACHIEVEMENT - 5:12-14

LEAVING IMMATURITY - 6:1-3

Hebrews 10:19-25 IN THE FAMILY

John 1:12 tells us that we are God's Children if we are saved.

That makes us brothers and sisters in Christ.

That means we are family!

Here are some thoughts on being family:

FAMILY POSSESSIONS

1. We have boldness. Vss. 19-20
2. We have a high priest. Vs. 21

FAMILY PRACTICES

1. Let us draw near - Vs. 22
2. Let us hold fast - Vs. 23
3. Let us consider - Vss. 24-25

Hebrews 10:22-25 GROUP EFFORT

Although Christians are individually responsible for themselves, God expects us to love and cooperate with other Christians. After all, we are brothers and sisters in Christ. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 encourages us to work together.

The author of Hebrews also encourages a group effort based on the statements in Hebrews 10:19-21. We can come to God through Christ boldly, because He is our high priest. Therefore, we are given three commands, which call us to a group effort.

LET US DRAW NEAR Vs. 22

LET US HOLD FAST Vs. 23

LET US CONSIDER Vss. 24-25

We are to consider how to provoke each other unto love and good works. We can only do this as we assemble together and encourage each other.

OR HOW ABOUT:

LET US DRAW NEAR CLEANLY Vs. 22

LET US HOLD FAST CONFIDENTLY Vs. 23

LET US CONSIDER CORPORATELY Vss. 24-25

Hebrews 10:24-25 etc. WHY ATTEND CHURCH REGULARLY

CHURCH IS A PLACE OF JOY - Psalm 122:1, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 5:11, Acts 13:52, Ephesians 5:19

CHURCH IS A PLACE OF POWER - 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2:1-5, 2 Timothy 4:2

CHURCH IS A PLACE OF OBEDIENCE - Hebrews 10:25a

People have all sorts of excuses for not attending church, but God commands church attendance. If we don't attend regularly, we are sinning against God!

CHURCH IS A PLACE OF ENCOURAGEMENT - Hebrews 10:24, 25b

CHURCH IS A PLACE OF LOVE - John 13:34-25

Hebrews 10:22-25 GETTING TOGETHER

APPROACH – Vs. 22 – "Let us draw near..."

ADHERE – Vs. 23 – "Let us hold fast..."

ADMONISH – Vs. 24 – "...provoke to love and go good works."

ASSEMBLE – Vs. 25 – "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..."

Hebrews 10:27-28 GRAND SALVATION

THE PROBLEM DEFINED - "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

THE PRICE DESCRIBED - "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;"

THE POTENTIAL DECLARED - "...and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Hebrews 11:1-3 LET'S HAVE FAITH!

"In college I was asked to prepare a lesson to teach my speech class. We were to be graded on our creativity and ability to drive home a point in a memorable way. The title of my talk was "The Law of the Pendulum." I spent 20 minutes carefully teaching the physical principle that governs a swinging pendulum. The law of the pendulum is: A pendulum can never return to a point higher than the point from which it was released. Because of friction and gravity, when the pendulum returns, it will fall short of its original release point. Each time it swings it makes less and less of an arc, until finally it is at rest. This point of rest is called the state of equilibrium, where all forces acting on the pendulum are equal.

"I attached a 3-foot string to a child's toy top and secured it to the top of the blackboard with a thumbtack. I pulled the top to one side and made a mark on the blackboard where I let it go. Each time it swung back I made a new mark. It took less than a minute for the top to complete its swinging and come to rest. When I finished the demonstration, the markings on the blackboard proved my thesis.

"I then asked how many people in the room BELIEVED the law of the pendulum was true. All of my classmates raised their hands, so did the teacher. He started to walk to the front of the room thinking the class was over. In reality it had just begun.

Hanging from the steel ceiling beams in the middle of the room was a large, crude but functional pendulum (250 pounds of metal weights tied to four strands of 500-pound test parachute cord.).

"I invited the instructor to climb up on a table and sit in a chair with the back of his head against a cement wall. Then I brought the 250 pounds of metal up to his nose.

Holding the huge pendulum just a fraction of an inch from his face, I once again explained the law of the pendulum he had applauded only moments before, "If the law of the pendulum is true, then when I release this mass of metal, it will swing across the room and return short of the release point. Your nose will be in no danger." "After that final restatement of this law, I looked him in the eye and asked, "Sir, do you believe this law is true?" "There was a long pause. Huge beads of sweat formed on his upper lip and then weakly he nodded and whispered, 'Yes.' I released the pendulum. It made a swishing sound as it arced across the room. At the far end of its swing, it paused momentarily and started back. I never saw a man move so fast in my life. He literally dived from the table. "Deftly stepping around the still-swinging pendulum, I asked the class, 'Does he believe in the law of the pendulum?' The students unanimously answered, 'NO!'"

What is faith?

Does faith begin or end at salvation?

Is it difficult to live by faith? Why?

THE DESCRIPTION OF FAITH - Vs. 1

What is the basis of a Christian's faith?

It is the Word of God.

The best reflection of our faith is how much we trust God to obey Him! If what He says is true, then we must trust in and act on what He says. The word translated "substance" literally means 'that which stands under'. In other words, faith holds up all that we hope for in Christ. Faith is the foundation. Faith is the assurance that what we hope for is true!

It is also the evidence or proof of things we don't yet see.

Old Testament characters are known for their faith.

Noah never saw it rain but he was convinced it was going to rain.

Noah may never have seen a boat, let alone an ark, and yet he was convinced that an ark needed to be built, and he built it. Noah never saw a flood, but that didn't stop him from preaching so that people would get on board. He was convinced!

THE DELIGHT OF FAITH - Vs. 2

The elders or men of old in this could be any person who had faith in Old Testament times. But I think that the author of Hebrews is specifically referring to those he refers to in this chapter.

In the King James, when it says that the elders received a good report, it actually means the elders had a "witness borne to them". In other words, they had the delight of knowing that God approved of their faith.

Discuss:

How did Noah know that God approved of his faith?
How did Enoch know that God approved of his faith?
How did Abraham know God approved of his faith?
How did Rahab know that God approved of her faith?
How did Shadrack Meshack and Abednego know that God approved of their faith?

How will you know that God approves of your faith?

THE DECISION OF FAITH - Vs. 3

Notice how the author gets us involved in faith. Faith was not just for the great heroes of the Old Testament. Faith is for the Christian right now. We decide to believe in God's creative work by faith.

And notice what decision is made by faith. The God who created the worlds, the ages, the universe expects us to believe in his creative work by faith. It is by faith that things were created and not a work that comes from things that already appeared.

You see the evolutionist has a problem even if evolution were true.

His problem is, "Where did the first cell come from?" There have been many theories about the origin of life. None of them beat the truth of creation, and take more faith to believe!

Hebrews 11:1-13 FAITH ON STAGE - PART 1 OF 2

Hebrews 11 has been called "The Faith Hall of Fame".

Indeed, many examples of people with faith are given.

It is as if the author of Hebrews brings examples of faith "on stage" before us to demonstrate this essential quality for every true Christian. In verses 1-13, there are 6 examples of people of faith.

We will consider three of them in this message and three next week.

Introduction - Vss. 1-3

ABEL THE WORSHIPER - Vs. 4

He offered a better sacrifice in worship of God than his brother Cain. See Genesis 4:1-8

ENOCH THE WALKER - Vss. 5-6

He walked with God. See Genesis 5:21-24

NOAH THE WORKER - Vs. 7

Noah obeyed God's command and got busy.

By faith, Noah worked. See Genesis 6:22

Hebrews 11:1-13 FAITH ON STAGE - PART 2 OF 2

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Indeed, many examples of people with faith are given.

It is as if the author of Hebrews brings examples of faith "on stage" before us to demonstrate this essential quality for every true Christian. In verses 1-13, there are 6 examples of people of faith.

Last week we considered:

Abel The Worshiper - Vs. 4

Enoch The Walker - Vss. 5-6

Noah The Worker - Vs. 7

This week we see:

ABRAHAM THE WANDERER - Vss. 8-9

Abraham was called to wander through the land which would one day belong to his family. Vss.8-9, Genesis 12:1-9, 14:18

ABRAHAM THE WATCHER - Vs. 10

Abraham was also watching or looking for the city that God built. Vs. 12

I feel that the city which Abraham was looking for by faith was "The New Jerusalem". Hebrews 13:14, Revelation 21:1-2, 22:1-7

SARAH THE WAITER - Vss. 11-12

Sarah had to wait for God to keep His promise of giving her a son.

Sarah had a rocky start with her faith. Genesis 16:1-3, 18:9-13

Evidently, under Abraham's influence, she became a woman of faith, as described in this text.

CONCLUSION - Vs. 13

Hebrews 11:4, Genesis 4:1-8 A LIFE THAT SPEAKS

Have you noticed that people have something to say after they are dead?

Richard Nixon's life speaks of sorrow and deception.

Princess Di's Life still speaks of eliminating land mines, one of her favorite causes.

Al Capone's life still speaks of organized crime.

Babe Ruth's life still speaks of baseball.

Billy Sunday's life still speaks of evangelism.

Whether we are dead or alive, our lives will speak of something.

Abel, son of Adam and Eve, still has a life that speaks.

In Hebrews 11:4 God shows us that our lives should be:

DIRECTED BY GOD

Abel came to God by faith, offering God the sacrifice which he required. Genesis 4:1-5

DEVOTED TO GOD

Just as Abel offered the right sacrifice, and thus declared righteous, there are certain sacrifices we should offer today.

1. The only sacrifice for sin - a blood sacrifice.

Our only sacrifice for sin is the blood of Christ.

2. The sacrifice of self. Romans 12:1

3. The sacrifice of song. Hebrews 13:15

4. The sacrifice of service. Hebrews 13:16

DETESTED BECAUSE OF GOD

Genesis 4:5-8, John 15:18-21, 1 Timothy 3:12

DECLARED WHEN WITH GOD - "...he, being dead, yet speaketh".

After we are in Heaven, our lives on earth should still speak for God.

Abel still speaks of faith. David still speaks of song. Paul still teaches.

Peter still preaches. Luther still speaks of reformation. Moody still speaks of evangelism. Finney still speaks of revival. Hudson Taylor still speaks of missions.

Hebrews 11:4-7 MODELS OF FAITH

The Bible is very clear that faith is of extreme importance (See Hebrews 11:6 in the text.).

God realized that we would need models of examples of faith to follow.

In our text we have three such examples.

BY FAITH ABEL PAID THE RIGHT PRICE Vs. 4, Genesis 4:1-8

Abel brought the right sacrifice for sin to God. He brought a blood sacrifice.

Today there is only one sacrifice for sin. It is the blood of Christ. A person is forgiven of sin and given eternal life based on faith in the right price paid for sin, the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:22-28.

BY FAITH ENOCH TOOK THE RIGHT PATH Vss. 5-6

Enoch pleased God because he walked with God. Genesis 5:21-24

BY FAITH NOAH COMPLETED THE RIGHT PROJECT Vs. 7

The story of Noah and the ark is found in Genesis 6-9.

Particular attention should be paid to Genesis 6:22. "Thus did Noah; according to all God commanded him, so did he."

Hebrews 11:5-6 FAITH WALKER

I began this message by quoting verses from 3 hymns - "Just A Closer Walk With Thee," "In the Garden", and "O Master Let Me Walk With Thee".

The words from these three hymns remind us of the importance of walking with God. The original faith walker was a man named Enoch. He walked by faith!

HIS TRIP

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him:"

Enoch jumps off the pages of Genesis 5 and grabs our attention.

If Hebrews 11 is the "Faith Chapter" of the Bible, Genesis 5 is the "Death Chapter". The key phrase in this list of genealogies is, "And he died".

Enoch is the exception to the rule. Genesis 5:21-24

Enoch did not see death. God brought Him directly home to Heaven. This translation from earth to Heaven was a result of Enoch's faith. That was some trip!

As a result of the faith of each Christian, we too will experience "translation". We call it the rapture, and it is possible that some of us will experience the rapture before we experience death.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

While we await the coming of the Lord Jesus, faith is to be a key part of our waiting.

Titus 2:11-14 - The evidence that we believe that Jesus is coming back soon is found in our Godly living.

HIS TESTIMONY

"for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."

This is a wonderful testimony to have. Enoch pleased God.

This is a thought that I don't want you to take lightly.

There are a lot of things that people deem important. And many things are important things after a fashion.

Family is important.
Friends are important.
Church is important.
The job is important.
Inter-personal relationships are important.
Paying our bills is important.

But there is nothing more important than pleasing God!
If we get to the end of our lives and God is not pleased, what do we have? Nothing!
How did Enoch please God? Enoch pleased God by walking with God! Genesis 5:24
To please God today, we must walk with God.
Our walk with God has certain ingredients in it.

1. COOPERATION

We can not walk with God unless we are in agreement with God. Amos 3:3

2. COMMUNICATION

To walk with someone does imply some sort of fellowship or communication. If we are going to walk with God, we must be listening to what He has to say. What's the use of walking with someone if you are not speaking with someone? We talk much about prayer and the concept of talking to God.
Indeed the Bible tells us that this important. But just as Elijah heard a still, small voice, we need to be listening for that same voice as we pray and as we listen to the Word of God.

3. CONDUCT

Walking with God requires certain kinds of behavior, if we are going to walk the way God wants us to walk.
We are to walk in newness of life. Romans 6:4

We are to walk in the Spirit. Galatians 5:16

We are to walk in love. Ephesians 5:2 -

4. CONFIDENCE

Confidence is a very important part of our walk with God. In fact, I mention it now but the concept is developed in the next verse. 2 Corinthians 5:7

HIS TRUST

"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."

If we do not have faith, it is impossible to please God.

If we are going to come to God, we must believe that He exists.

If I asked each of you if you believed that God exists, you will all say "yes".

However, the real question is "Do you act like God exists?"

I confess that all too often, I haven't.

Very often our behavior betrays how much we really believe in the existence of God. If we really believed in God's existence, we wouldn't be so quick to do some of the things we do.

We must also believe that God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Do we truly believe that God rewards those who seek Him?

How does God reward those who seek Him?

Peace

Answered prayer

Holy Spirit Power

Godliness

Now, if we truly believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, what will be done?
Isaiah 55:6, Psalm 27:4-8, John 15:1-7

If we truly are men and women of faith, we must be men and women who believe He exists and that he is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him. If we believe that He is a rewarder of them who diligently seek Him, we will seek Him. This is what Trust is about!

Hebrews 11:7 A PUBLIC FAITH

Some people think that faith is a quiet, private matter. In some senses that is true, but faith should always be a public matter. People should be able to see your faith by your actions. This was true of Noah. His faith could be seen.

NOAH WARNED - "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet..."

Genesis 6:5-21

NOAH WORKED - "...moved with fear, prepared an ark..."

Genesis 6:22 - 7:16

NOAH WON! - "...to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."

Genesis 7:17-8:22

Hebrews 11:17-19 etc. THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM

By faith, Abraham

1. DID THE UNTHINKABLE Hebrews 11:17-18, Genesis 22:1-6, 9
2. BELIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE Genesis 22:7-8, Hebrews 11:19
3. EXPERIENCED THE UNBELIEVABLE Genesis 22:10-14

Hebrews 11:27-30 FAITH WALKS

Faith is an essential and valuable characteristic for the Christian.

We are saved by faith. Ephesians 2:8-9

We are to live by faith. Hebrews 11:6

In our text we see some of the things that faith does for us, as we exercise it.

Faith walks **OUT** of bondage. Vs. 27 - By faith Moses led the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt.

Faith walks **IN** obedience Vs. 28 - Moses was told to keep the Passover. He did as he was told.

Faith walks **THROUGH** trouble Vs. 29 - The waters of the Red Sea would be symbolic of trouble. The waters had potential to hurt the Israelites, but did not.

Faith walks **AROUND** the enemy Vs. 30 - Israel marching around their enemies reminds me to march around mine in prayer. Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 5:44

Hebrews 11:32 LESSONS

And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

There are many lessons to learn from the Heroes of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11. Here are some lessons from the summary of heroes mentioned in verse 32.

Gideon - Little is much when God is in it.

Judges 6:10-16, Judges 7:1-7, 16-25

Barak - Don't add conditions to God's Call.

Judges 4:1-9, 14-15, 17-24

Samson - There is no greater burden than a great potential.

Samuel had great potential as a leader, but allowed personal sins to restrict his effectiveness.

Judges 13:1-5, 14:-4, 16:1-31

Jephthae - Think before you speak.

Judges 11:30-40

David - A life worth living has a heart for God.

1 Samuel 13:14, 16:7, Psalm 23

Samuel - Instill devotion to God in the heart of a child.

1 Samuel 1:10, 20-28, 1 Samuel 3:1, 19-21

The Prophets - Expect God to do great things.

James 5:15-18, 2 Kings 4:1-7

Hebrews 11:32-40 MEN OF FAITH

Hebrews 11 is the "Faith Chapter" in the Bible. Earlier in the chapter the stories of great men and women of faith are featured. In this passage the author mentions several names of well known men and then mentions those who's names he does not share. The important thing is that these were men of faith (Hebrews 11:6).

POPULAR MEN - Vs. 32

Here were men of renown, well known men.

POWERFUL MEN - Vss. 33-35a

God worked mighty miracles through them.

PERSECUTED MEN - Vss. 35b-38

Some of men of faith are severely tested through persecution.

PROMISED MEN - Vss. 39-40

These men were promised a Messiah who had not yet come. 1 Peter 1:10-11

They had to wait until the time of Christianity for God to fulfill the promise of redemption.

Hebrews 11:33-40 FAITH FOR ALL SEASONS

No matter what the conditions or situations, good or bad, winning or losing, we should be men and women of faith.

Hebrews 11:32 mentions several heroes of faith. "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets."

The stories of these people of faith are referred to in the next verses, as well as the stories of anonymous others, whose faith resulted in severe deprivation.

THE POWER OF FAITH - Vss. 33-35A

THE PERSEVERANCE OF FAITH - Vss. 35B-38

THE PROMISE OF FAITH - Vss. 39-40

Hebrews 12:1-2 FOR THE NEW YEAR

REMEMBER THE WITNESSES - "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," (I believe that the witnesses are the men and women of faith found in Hebrews 11)

REMOVE THE HINDRANCES - "...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us," (The book of Hebrews stresses belief. I believe that the sin that easily besets us is unbelief. See Hebrews 3:12-13.)

RUN THE RACE - "...and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,"

REFLECT ON JESUS - "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:1-3 REVIVAL - HEBREWS STYLE

There are several verses that talk about revival. Habakkuk,3:2, Psalm 85:6, Psalm 138:7, Isaiah 57:15, 2 Chronicles 7:14

Hebrews 12:1-3 shows us how to have revival.

YOU ARE SHOWN - Vs. 1

There is a *cloud of witnesses* mentioned in Hebrews 11 that shows us how to live the life of faith.

BE SURRENDERED - Vs. 1

We are to *lay aside* the weights and sin that easily besets us.

BE STEADY - Vs. 1

We are to *run with patience the race that is set before us*.

BE SUPPLIED - Vs. 2

Look to Jesus for the strength to endure.

BE SCHOoled - Vs. 3

For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

Hebrews 12:1-2 COMPETING TO WIN

Introduction - "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," We have the great examples of Hebrews 11 who teach us how to live lives of faith. Based on their example, we should compete to win our own Spiritual race.

RUN YOUR RACE - "...let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

REJECT YOUR RESTRICTIONS - "let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us."

A weight is anything that keeps us from winning the race that Christ has chosen for us to run. See Paul's example in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

I believe that the sin easily besets us is unbelief.

RELY ON YOUR RESOURCE - "Looking unto Jesus..." (Vs. 2)

Hebrews 12:1-3 PLAYING TO WIN

Some people play games for the joy of playing. Other people, like myself, enjoy playing but we play to win. Playing is fun, but winning is best! When it comes to living the Christian life, each and every one of us who knows the Lord should strive to win. We should be able to say with Paul "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

This passage before us shows us how we should play to win.

THE ENCOUAGEMENT - The Cloud of Witnesses - Vs. 1

We are encouraged to play to win by the examples of God's Hall of Fame of Faith found in Hebrews 11.

THE ENEMIES - Weights and Sin - Vs. 1

Weights hold us down. A good runner doesn't run with weights attached to his body. Instead he wears as little as possible so that he can run effectively. I believe a weight is any thing that keeps us from running a

good race for the Lord. I believe the sin that hinders us is unbelief. Chapter 11 tells us that we can't please Him without faith. Not to live by faith is a sin! (Hebrews 11:6)

THE ENDEAVOR - Run With Patience the Race Set before Us - Vs. 1

THE EYES - Looking unto Jesus - Vs. 2

THE ENLIGHTENMENT - "Consider Him" - Vs. 3

Hebrews 12:5-12 WHEN GOD SPANKS US

There are times when we receive a "spanking" or discipline from the Lord.

Chastening is:

THE PROCEDURE OF HIS LOVE - Vs. 5

THE PROOF OF HIS LOVE - Vss. 6-8

THE PROFIT OF HIS LOVE - Vss. 9-11

As we obey chastening we become "partakers of his holiness".

As we yield to God's chastening God produces the "fruit of righteousness".

Hebrews 12:5-11 FACTS ABOUT CHASTENING

1. God promised chastening. Vs. 5

2. God loves you when you are chastened. Vs. 6

3. We are to endure chastening. Vs. 7a

4. Chastening is a sign of sonship. Vss. 7-8

5. God's chastening is perfect. Vss. 9-10

6. God's chastening is temporary. Vs. 11a

7. God's chastening is profitable. Vs. 11b

Hebrews 13:1-6 PRACTICING OUR FAITH

CONTINUING CHARITY (LOVE) Vs. 1

CONSISTENT COURTESY Vs. 2

CONSTANT COMPASSION Vs. 3

COMMITTED COMPANIONSHIP Vs. 4

CONTENTED CONVERSATION (MANNER OF LIFE) Vss. 5-6

Hebrews 13:1-6 A WELL-ROUNDED LIFE

BE CONSIDERATE OF THE BRETHREN Vss. 1-3

BE CONSISTENT IN THE BEDROOM Vs. 4

BE CONTENTED WITH YOUR BLESSINGS Vss. 5-6

Hebrews 13:1-17 PRACTICAL POINTERS

Hebrews 13 is full of practical advice for living the Christian Life.

Note: This may be too much material for one sermon. You may want to break this down into 2-4 sermons.

LOVE - Vss. 1-4

Love your brother - Vs. 1

Love the stranger - Vs. 2

Love the prisoner - Vs. 3

Love your mate - Vs. 4

LEAN - Vss. 5-6

Lean without covetousness - Vs. 5a

Lean contentedly - Vs. 5b

Lean confidently - Vss. 5c-6

LEARN - Vss. 7-9

Learn from Godly Leaders - Vs. 7

Learn from the Lord Jesus Christ - Vs. 8

Learn to avoid false teaching - Vs. 9

LIVE - Vss. 10-16

Live a separated life - Vss. 10-14

Live a sacrificial life - Vss. 15-16

Life a submissive life - Vs. 17

Hebrews 13:5 etc. CHALLENGED?

As Christians we will face various challenges or difficulties. As I write these words the world is bracing itself to see what happens on Midnight of the year 2000. Will the Y2K computer problem or the actions of terrorists cause mass chaos? Even if Y2K is not a problem, all Christians will face trials, opposition and persecution at one time or another. James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-5, John 15:18-27

No matter what challenges we encounter let us remember that we have:

JESUS' PRESENCE - Hebrews 13:5-6, John 14:16-18

JESUS' POWER - Philippians 4:13, Galatians 2:20, Isaiah 41:10

JESUS' PROMOTION - John 14:1-6

This life is temporary. The one who knows Christ as "the way, the truth and the life" looks forward to an eternal home and the return of Jesus for His own. 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

Hebrews 13:5-6 4 C'S FOR THE NEW YEAR – NEW YEARS!

As a New Year approaches this passage gives us some positive encouragement.

CONDUCT - "Let your conversation (manner of life) be without covetousness;"

CONTENTMENT - "... and be content with such things as ye have:"

COMPANION - "... for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

CONFIDENCE - "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Hebrews 13:5-6 CONTENTMENT!

GOD'S COMMITMENT TO ME - "...for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

MY CONDUCT FOR GOD - "Let you conversation be without covetousness; and content with such things as ye have..."

MY CONFIDENCE FROM GOD - "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Hebrews 13:7, 17 ABOUT YOUR PASTOR

YOUR PASTOR IS A RULER - "Remember them which have the rule over you,"

YOUR PASTOR IS A REPRESENTATIVE - "...who have spoken unto you the word of God:"

YOUR PASTOR IS A ROLE MODEL - "...whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation."

YOUR PASTOR IS RESPONSIBLE - "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls,"

YOUR PASTOR IS A REPORTER - "...as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Hebrews 13:7,13 VALUE YOUR LEADERS

REMEMBER - "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God:"

REPEAT - "...whose faith follow,"

If you follow the example of a leader's faith, you will do what they did.

REFLECT - "...considering the end of their conversation."

What were the results of the leader's Godly manner of life?

RESPECT - "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves:"

RESPONSIBILITY - "...for they watch for your souls,"

REPORT - "...as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

Hebrews 13:8 THE SAME

Raymond was a friend of mine, and I miss him. Raymond was the best trustee that I've ever encountered anywhere in my ministry. But, like the rest of us, Raymond didn't like change! At the first church council meeting that I ever attended here I walked in early. Raymond and one other trustee were present. I set down my materials for the meeting on the table by a chair. A couple of minutes later, Raymond said something like this to me, "Pastor we all sit in the same places. For instance Bob sits there and Hughie sits there. Your seat is over there." He pointed to my assigned seat. So I moved my materials to what was my assigned seat. A few minutes later Raymond sat down, right where I was originally going to sit. Raymond didn't like change.

My dad is 80 years old, shorter, lighter, and more feeble than I've ever seen him. Oh how I dislike seeing my dad get old. I don't like change.

Have you noticed, for as much as we don't like change, change occurs? On Tuesday, September 11, 2001 there was much change in America and the world because of the acts of terrorism committed against the United States.

No matter who we are, there will be times when we need to face change. However the Lord Jesus gives us some words of encouragement in Hebrews 13:8.

Hebrews 13:8 - "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

If you are a born again Christian, this basic truth is still true. It has not changed. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, God in the flesh, has not changed. He's still on the throne. He's still in charge. He's still available to help. He still cares.

Because Jesus does not change, we can be hopeful, we can find peace and rest, we can be confident, and we can go on!

There are at least three things about the Lord Jesus that have not changed and will not change.

JESUS IS POWERFUL, YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER

Yesterday, Jesus was powerful.

Long before Jesus was born, Isaiah 9:6 described the Lord Jesus.

Notice in this verse that Jesus is called mighty God and everlasting Father, which means "Father of eternity."

Isaiah is telling us that Jesus is God.

Isaiah is telling us that Jesus is eternal.

John 1:1-4 also tells us that Jesus is God, that He is eternal and that He is creator.

Yesterday Jesus showed His power when He came to earth.

A lame man, sitting by a pool, was made to walk.

A blind man, named Bartimaeus was made to see.

A sea blowing, and churning, causing fear, was made to be still.

A little girl, a widow's son, and a man named Lazarus were all made to rise from the dead.

And these are just a few examples of the power of Jesus that was demonstrated.

And here's another remarkable thing about Jesus. He was sinless!

He alone had the power to live a sinless life!

And then Jesus showed His power by going to the cross.

You might be thinking, "Jesus died on the cross. How does that show His power?"

It is only Jesus who had the power to die for our sins.

It is only Jesus who could pay for our sins. 2 Corinthians 5:21

Another way Jesus showed his power yesterday was through the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

Jesus also showed His power when He ascended into Heaven. Luke 24:50-51

Well, that's great! Jesus was powerful yesterday, but what about today? Is Jesus still powerful? See

Ephesians 1:19-23 for the answer to that question.

Jesus is still powerful.

Jesus is still in control.

Jesus is still God.

So that leads us to a very tough question.

If Jesus is still powerful, still in control, and still God, why were innocent people killed last week? Why is there so much devastation in the world?

If Billy Graham could not give a complete answer to this question when he spoke at a memorial service, don't expect me to.

But let me say this.

Hurt, pain and sorrow are caused by man's sin, not by God.

God has given man free will to make choices and often man makes very bad choices.

And if God did not allow choice, we'd be robots.

Also, God has a plan that I don't understand, and these tragedies are part of His plan.

And often God uses these tragedies to get our attention, to draw us to Himself. Some people would never turn to God unless things like this happened.

I am very comforted by the words of Colossians 1:17, "And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

No matter what, Jesus holds things together. We need not fear.

And Jesus shows His power today each time a prayer is answered in His name. John 14:13-14,
1 John 5:14-15

The Lord Jesus is powerful, yesterday and today, but what about His power forever?

There will be a day when Jesus will come for His saints. That's called the rapture! This will mean resurrection from the dead!

After that there will be a great tribulation, and at the end Jesus will come and win what we know as the "Battle of Armageddon". Revelation 19:19-21

Philippians 2:9-11 tells us that every knee will bow to the Lord Jesus and every tongue shall declare that He is Lord.

JESUS PARDONS, YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER

Before God created man, God knew that man would sin.

Before God created man, God knew that man would fail to please God.
Before God created man, God had a plan so that man could be pardoned. 1 Peter 1:18-20
Yesterday, before the foundation of the world, God had foreordained, planned ahead that Jesus Christ would die for your sins. God loved us so much that He planned for His Son to die to secure our pardon.
Yesterday, 2000 years ago, Jesus did die for our sins, so that we might be forgiven. Romans 5:6-8
Yesterday Jesus secured pardon for you and me.
Today Jesus offers pardon to all who believe. John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-9
My friend pardon is available for you, for your family and for your friends.
Pardon is available for all sinners who will turn to the Lord Jesus in faith.
That is why we encourage you who know Christ as Savior to share your faith.
Pardon is available, but only through Christ.
And when we Christians sin, pardon is still available. 1 John 1:7-9
There was pardon yesterday. There is pardon today. There is pardon forever!
Hebrews 10:14 - "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."
JESUS IS PRESENT, YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER
God has been present throughout all history.
Jesus, as God has been present throughout all history.
Jesus made Old Testament Appearances as the Angel of the Lord.
Jesus was present in the Garden of Eden.
Jesus was present when Enoch walked with God.
Jesus was present with Abraham.
Jesus was present with Moses and the Children of Isarel.
Jesus was present with David and the prophets.
And Jesus was present when He is, for us, unthinkable. He became a man, and walked among men.
John 1:14 - "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
Yesterday Jesus was present.
But is Jesus present today?
Yes He is! John 14:16-18, Matthew 28:20
My Christian friend, wherever you go and whatever you face, Jesus is present.
And what about the future?
Will Jesus continue to be present?
Yes, but His presence will even be more special than it is now. 1 Thessalonians 4:6-7
We will be with the Lord forever!
Hebrews 13:8 - "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever."
JESUS IS POWERFUL, YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER
JESUS PARDONS, YESTERDAY, TODAY AND FOREVER
JESUS IS PRESENT, YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER

Hebrews 13:12-17 IN THIS LIFE

As Christians there are certain ways we should pass through this life into the next.
WE SHOULD SUFFER - Vss. 12-13

WE SHOULD SEEK - Vs. 14

WE SHOULD SACRIFICE - Vss. 15-16

WE SHOULD SUBMIT - Vs. 17

Hebrews 13:14-16 THREE POSSESSIONS

In Christ we have three possessions mentioned here. One of these we look forward to, the other two, we are to practice because they are ours in Christ.

1. A CITY OF THE FUTURE - Vs. 14 - See Revelation 21:1-4

2. A CONCERT OF PRAISE - Vs. 15

3. A CONDUCT OF CONCERN - Vs. 16

James 1:2-8 GOT PROBLEMS?

COMPLIANCE WITH GOD'S PLAN - Vs. 2

When troubles abound comply with God's plan. Count them as joy!

COMFORT FROM GOD'S PURPOSE - Vss. 3-4

God's purpose for allowing you to go through trials is so that you will become perfect or mature.

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S PROCEDURE - Vs. 5

When you don't know what to do during trials, ask God. He'll show you.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S PROVISION - Vss. 6-8

We are to ask in faith, confident that God will answer.

James 1:2-8 THERE'S A REASON

THERE'S A REASON FOR PRAISE – Vss. 2-3
THERE'S A REASON FOR PATIENCE – Vs. 4
THERE'S A REASON FOR PRAYER – Vss. 5-8

James 1:2-8 HANDLING TRIALS

COUNT ALL TRIALS AS JOY - Vs. 2
CONSIDER ALL TRIALS AS VALUABLE - Vs. 3
CONCEDE TO THE WORK OF PATIENCE - Vs. 4
CALL CONFIDENTLY ON GOD FOR WISDOM - Vss. 5-8

JAMES 1:2-4 COUNT IT JOY!

ATTITUDE TOWARDS TRIALS Vs. 2
ASSESSMENT OF TRIALS Vs. 3
ACTION IN TRIALS Vs. 4

James 1:2-8 WHEN TROUBLES STRIKE

A COMMAND TO FOLLOW - Vs. 2 - Count it joy!
A CAUSE FOR JOY - Vs. 3 - Trials lead to the development of patience.
A COURSE OF ACTION - Vss. 4-5

1. Let patience have her perfect work so that you become mature. Vs. 4
2. Ask God for wisdom. Vs. 5

A CHALLENGE FOR FAITH - Vss. 6-8

James 1:2-12 EVERYTHING IN ITS PLACE

THE PLACE OF PATIENCE - Vss. 2-4
THE PLACE OF PRAYER - Vss. 5-8
THE PLACE OF POSITION - Vss. 9-11
THE PLACE OF PERSISTENCE - Vs. 12

James 1:5-8 SEEKING GOD'S GUIDANCE

ASK FOR GOD'S LEADING Vs. 5
ASSUME THAT GOD WILL ANSWER (Vss. 5-6a)
AVOID THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNBELIEF
No answer - Vs. 7 Instability - Vs. 6b, 8

James 1:5-8 A DAILY PRAYER

There are many things we do daily. We get up. We eat, We sleep. We wash. We brush our teeth. We get dressed. We talk. We smile. etc.
Due to the many trials we face as Christians (Vss. 2-4), there is another thing we should do daily. We should daily be asking the Lord for wisdom.

THE CRY FOR WISDOM Vs. 5
THE COURAGE OF FAITH Vs. 6A
THE CONSEQUENCES OF DOUBT Vss. 6b-8

James 1:9-15 REASONS

REASONS TO REJOICE - Vss. 9-11
The Brother of Low Degree Is Exalted - Vs. 9
The Rich Brother is Humbled - Vss. 10-11
REASONS TO BE RELIABLE - Vs. 12
The person who faithfully endures trials will be rewarded.
REASONS TO RESIST - Vss. 13-15
God tempts nobody. Vs. 13
A tempted person is someone who has been drawn away by his own lusts and enticed. Vss. 14-15

James 1:12 WHEN TRIALS CONFRONT US

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."
ENDURE THE TRIAL - "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation."
EYE THE REWARD - "...for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life..."
EXPRESS YOUR LOVE - "... which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

James 1:17-19 OUR GOD!

OUR GIVING GOD - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above..."

OUR GREAT GOD - "...and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

OUR GRACIOUS GOD - "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

James 1:17-22 A WONDERFUL LIFE

GIFTS FROM GOD - Vs. 17

God sends good and perfect gifts.

GRACE FROM GOD - Vs. 18

We were born again by the word of truth.

GROWTH FOR GOD - Vss. 19-22

Control anger - Vss. 19-20

Lay sin aside - Vs. 21a

Receive God's Word humbly - Vs. 21b

Be a doer, not just a hearer - Vs. 22

James 1:18-27 THE SERMON SAMPLER'S GUIDE

You are a sermon sampler. Right now you are sampling a sermon from me. In times past you have probably sampled sermons from others. If you attend church once a Sunday for a whole year, you have sampled 52 sermons. If you attend twice on Sunday, you are up to 104 year. Add to this total sermons heard in church and on the radio and television, and you will probably conclude that you have listened to quite a few sermons.

If you are investing so much time in sampling sermons, it seems to me that you should know how to get the most out of these sermon-sampling experiences. Sermons are designed to teach, to help, to encourage, comfort and convict.

James has something to say to those who listen to the Word of God preached. He gives what I would call "The Sermon Sampler's Guide. James shows us that listening properly to a sermon will involve: REACTION TO THE SERMON - Vss. 18-20

Vs. 18 shows us that a man is forgiven of his sin and saved when he is born again. John 1:12-13

This verse also shows us that the new birth takes place in response to the preaching of the "word of truth". The ministry of the preached word does not end with salvation, but begins with salvation. Timothy was instructed by Paul to preach the Word in 2 Timothy 4:2.

Vs. 19 - When listening to a sermon the Christian should be

1. Swift to hear. - He should be swift to hear by showing up to church regularly. He should be swift to hear by paying attention as the preacher presents God's Word. He should be swift to hear, wanting to learn the Word of God and wanting to change as the Word of God directs.

2. Slow to speak - We will not always like what the preacher says. Being human, we can be quick to react with our words. We should think before we speak in reaction to the sermon.

3. Slow to wrath - Sometimes the preacher will make us angry by what He has said. Even if the preacher is incorrect, the wrong kind of anger will accomplish nothing. Many times we are angry about what the preacher has said because we are under conviction. See verse 20 also.

RECEPTION OF THE SERMON - Vs. 21

I have a friend who used to be a tomato farmer. Each year he hired boys to pull stones out of his fields.

Every year there were more stones. Every year they were yanked. Another thing a farmer must do is deal with weeds. Those of us who have small gardens end up pulling a lot of weeds.

In order for us to get the most out of sermon we must get the stones and weeds out of our hearts.

James tells us to "lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness". 1 John 1:9

Then we are to receive the Word of God with meekness or humility. We must be willing to let the Lord deal with us through the Sermon.

REPRODUCTION OF THE SERMON - Vss. 22-29

What is a good sermon? A good sermon is one that sends you the door doing things differently than when you walked in the door. The best sermon samplers take what they have heard and reproduce it in their lives.

A good sermon sampler is a "doer of the Word". Vss. 22-25

James shows us at least 3 ways that a good sermon sampler is a doer of the word:

1. He bridles his tongue. Vs. 26

2. He assists the fatherless and widows. Vs. 27

3. He keeps Himself unspotted from the world.

James 1:19-22 GLORIFYING GOD

God is glorified by the Christian when there is:
REACTION OF PATIENCE Vss. 19-20
REMOVAL OF SIN Vs. 21a
RECEPTION OF GOD'S WORD, Vs. 21b
RESPONSE TO GOD'S WORD Vs. 22

JAMES 1:22-27 DOER OR HEARER?

There is a contrast in this passage between a doer of the word and a mere hearer. Each of us who listen to the preaching of the word of God are one or the other. Which are you?

COMMAND - Vs. 22
COMPARISON - Vss. 23-25
CONDUCT - Vss. 26-27
Control the tongue
Help the needy
Keep yourself pure

James 2:1-10 PARTIALITY!

THE CONDITIONS - Vss. 1-3
Favoritism was being shown towards the rich.
The poor were being shunned.
THE CHARGE (ACCUSATION) - Vss. 4-7
These people had become judges based on wealth.
The poor are more likely to be rich in faith than the rich.
The poor were being despised.
THE CORRECTION - Vss. 8-10
All of God's rules are to be kept.
This includes the rule to love one's neighbor as himself.

James 2:14-17 EMPTY FAITH

EMPTY COMMUNICATION Vs. 14
A man may say he has faith even when he doesn't.
EMPTY CUPBOARD Vs. 15
EMPTY CHARITY Vs. 16
EMPTY CONFIDENCE Vs. 17
(If you have an affinity for 3- point outlines, simply take out the second point and cover Vs. 15 under "Empty Charity".)

James 3:1-12 TONGUE-TIED!

It was my first wedding. The bride was 60 something. The groom was 70 something.
They decided on a full church wedding. To say I was nervous is probably an understatement.
As I was giving a little devotional to the new couple I tried to quote part of Ephesians 4:26, "Don't let the sun go down upon your wrath." Instead, I said "Don't end the day without having a fight!"
Talk about being tongue-tied, using my tongue in a wrong way, I succeeded!
James gives us a very serious warning in our text. All people end up getting tongue-tied at one time or another. We are all guilty of misusing the tongue.
THE IMPORTANT TONGUE - Vss. 1-4
The tongue, although small, is important. There should not be an over abundance of teachers (masters), because they will receive greater judgment (condemnation). Those who teach others are judged by a higher standard than those who are not teachers.
James gives two examples of small things being important. He refers to the bit placed in a horse's mouth, and the rudder (helm) which steers a boat. Both small things accomplish great results.
THE INFLAMED TONGUE - Vss. 5-6
"The tongue is a fire!"
THE INCONSISTENT TONGUE - Vss. 9-12
THE IMPOSSIBLE TONGUE - Vss. 7-8
(I make this point last, because the solution to the problem is found here.)
No man can tame the tongue! Only God can!
First we need to trust Christ as Savior.
Next we need to turn the control of the tongue over to Him.
Romans 13:14 Galatians 2:20

James 3:1-12 THE TONGUE

THE TONGUE IS IMPORTANT - Vss. 1-2
THE TONGUE IS INFLUENTIAL - Vss. 3-5
THE TONGUE IS IMPOSSIBLE - Vss. 6-8
THE TONGUE IS INCONSISTENT - Vss. 9-12
ONLY GOD CAN TAME THE TONGUE!

James 3:13-18 TRUE WISDOM

WORKS THAT SHOW TRUE WISDOM Vs. 13
WARNING AGAINST EARTHLY WISDOM Vss. 14-16
WISDOM THAT COMES FROM ABOVE Vss. 17-18

James 3:13-18 WHAT KINDS OF WISDOM DO YOU HAVE?

DO YOU HAVE RESPONSIVE WISDOM? Vs. 13
A truly wise man will respond to God and show his wisdom by his works.
DO YOU HAVE REBELLIOUS WISDOM? Vss. 14-16
Wisdom that shows envy and strife is devilish! Such a person is rebelling against God!
DO YOU HAVE RIGHTEOUS WISDOM? Vss. 17-18
Righteous wisdom has a bunch of good qualities mentioned in these verses.

James 3:13-18 THREE KINDS OF WISDOM

THE WISDOM OF HUMILITY - HUMBLE WISDOM - Vs. 13
THE WISDOM OF HELL - HAUGHTY WISDOM - Vss. 14-16
THE WISDOM OF HEAVEN - HEAVENLY WISDOM - Vss. 17-18

James 4:1-4 SOURCES OF CONFLICT

There are many sources for conflict that make us very unhappy. These are the "wars and fightings among us".
DESIRE FOR WHAT IS NOT OF GOD - Vss. 1-2a - SENSUALITY (lusts)
DENIAL OF GOD'S POWER - Vs. 2b - STUPIDITY (We deny God's power when we fail to pray.)
DEVIATION FROM GOD'S PLAN - SELFISHNESS (When we do ask God for things we often ask for the wrong reasons.)
DIVISION FROM GOD - Vss. 4-5 - SEPARATION - (Love of the world separates us from God.)

James 4:1-10 HANDLING DISCONTENT

We live in a world that is primarily full with discontented people. Even in church, there are many discontented people. We are discontented with our friends, our enemies, our jobs, our churches, our finances, our families etc.
As our text shows, the problem of discontent is not new. The church in James' day also faced it. James addresses discontent in our text.
FRUSTRATIONS OF SELFISHNESS Vss. 1-2a
FAILURE IN PRAYER Vss. 2b-3
FLIRTATION WITH THE WORLD Vs. 4
FOUNDATIONS FOR CHANGE Vss. 6-10
How do we once again become contented?
Grace Through Humility Vs. 6
Submission Vs. 7
Repentance Vss. 8-10

James 4:1-10 A SPIRITUAL CLINIC

There are all sorts of "clinics" available today to meet medical needs. There are medical clinics, eye clinics, dental clinics, psychiatric clinics and a host of other clinics. They specialize on particular physical needs.
In James 4:1-10 God is giving to us a Spiritual clinic. He's helping us see what some of our Spiritual problems are and how to fix them.
OUR MAJOR SOURCE OF CONFLICT IS OUR LUSTS - Vss. 1-2
OUR MAJOR LACK OF CONTENTMENT IS DUE TO IMPROPER PRAYER LIVES - Vss. 2-3
OUR MAJOR LACK OF COMMUNION WITH GOD IS DUE TO SPIRITUAL ADULTERY - Vss. 4-5
OUR MAJOR MEANS OF CORRECTION IS HUMBLE REPENTANCE - Vss. 6-10

James 4:11-5:6 ARROGANCE!

Nobody should want to be arrogant. A person who is arrogant is showing off a tremendous amount of pride. How do we know when we are being arrogant?

WE ARE ARROGANT WHEN WE PRONOUNCE JUDGMENT ON OTHERS - Vss. 11-12

The kind of judgment referred to here is speaking evil of another person.

A person who speaks evil of another is taking judgment into his own hands. Matthew 7:1-5

WE ARE ARROGANT WHEN WE PLAN WITHOUT CONSIDERING GOD - Vss. 13-17

The arrogant person boasts of what he or she is going to do. God is not considered as having any influence in the arrogant person's plans.

WE ARE ARROGANT WHEN WE PRACTICE MISTREATMENT OF OTHERS - Vss. 1-6

Many rich people have arrogantly treated poor people.

Although we may not have been guilty of the exact infraction mentioned here, we must remember that we are to treat others the way we want to be treated. Matthew 7:12, Ephesians 4:30-32

When we do not treat people properly, we are being arrogant, thinking ourselves better than they!

James 5:1-6 THE DANGERS OF PROSPERITY

Most people would like to be richer than they are. We don't like struggling to make a living. There is no sin in being rich, although the Bible does warn us against the "love of money" (1 Timothy 6:10). The Bible also warns us of the dangers than accompany wealth.

FUTURE MISERIES - Vs. 1

James is calling the unsaved rich to repentance before it is too late.

FALSE SECURITY - Vss. 2-3

The unsaved rich put their trust in their riches. Gold and silver do not exactly rust (canker), but there will be a day when they will be useless. Matthew 6:19-21

FAULTY BUSINESS PRACTICES - Vs. 4

When money is the goal of your life it is easy to forget principles. In this verse the example of a rich man cheating his employees is used. Leviticus 19:13, Proverbs 3:27

FOOLISH PLEASURES - Vs. 5

Look at some of the high-priced athletes who are loaded with money. They squander money on foolish pleasure, because they have the money. Also see Luke 12:16-21

Being rich toward God is more important than pleasure. Matthew 6:28-33

FRAMING THE INNOCENT - Vs. 6

Those who desire money, power and pleasure will stop at nothing to get what they want. An example is the story of Ahab and Naboth found in 1 Kings 21.

James 5:13-18 IT'S TIME TO PRAY!

THE PATTERN FOR PRAYER - Vss. 13-16a

Many people carry penknives in their pockets. The penknife has many uses. It can punch a hole, make a slice, trim a piece of wood, cut a rope or string. Those who have penknives can find innumerable uses for them.

Prayer is like a penknife. It is helpful in so many different ways.

There are different prayer patterns for different situations.

If a person is afflicted, he is to pray. Vs. 13

If a person is happy or merry, he is to praise ("sing psalms"). Vs. 14

If he is sick he is to call for the church leaders to come, pray, confess and anoint. Vss. 14-16a

THE PROMISE OF ANSWERED PRAYER - Vs. 16b

THE PROTOTYPE (MODEL) OF A PRAYER WARRIOR - Vss. 17-18

James 5:16-18 THE PROCESS OF PRAYER

CONFESS YOUR FAULTS - "Confess your faults one to another..." - Of course, we first confess our sins to God, privately, according to 1 John 1:9. There are times, however, in group prayer that we admit our faults to each other.

COMMIT YOUR FRIENDS - "...and pray one for another, that ye may be healed."

CONTINUE IN FAITHFULNESS - "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

COPY ELIJAH'S EXAMPLE - Vss. 17-18

1 Peter 1:1-2 ESTABLISHING OUR IDENTITY

"The few, the proud, the Marines"

"Just do it." - Nike

"At Ford, quality is job 1."

"We love to fly and it shows."

Dodger "Blue" and Yankee "Pinstripes"

"Fly the friendly skies."

The above slogans give identity to certain products, teams or companies. Just as it is important for companies to have an identity, It is important for us who are Christians to understand our identity.

In 1 Peter 1:1-2, Peter shows us our identity.

WE ARE A TRAVELING PEOPLE Vs. 1

We are strangers, sojourners, or pilgrims. Philippians 3:20, Hebrews 13:14

WE ARE A CHOSEN PEOPLE Vs. 2a

"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God..."

WE ARE A SEPARATED PEOPLE Vs. 2b

"...through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ"

(We are separated unto obedience and cleansing.)

WE ARE A BLESSED PEOPLE Vs. 2c

"Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."

1 Peter 1:1-2 INTRODUCING 1 PETER

THE WRITING PROPHET - Peter

THE RECEIVING PEOPLE - Strangers, Elect

THE ENCOURAGING PROCLAMATION - Grace and Peace

1 Peter 1:3-7 YOU'VE GOT IT!

There are certain things that we have if we have been saved.

A SIGNIFICANT BIRTH - Vs. 3

We were born again to a living hope. John 3:1-8, 1 Peter 1:23

We have a living hope of resurrection because Christ is risen from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 1

Thessalonians 4:13-18

A SUPERNATURAL INHERITANCE - Vs. 4

To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

A SECURE SALVATION - Vs. 5

Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

A SPECIAL TEST - Vss. 6-7

God uses trials to perfect us. James 1:2-4

1 Peter 1:3-7 BLESSINGS!

We are blessed with many wonderful blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

Peter tells us what some of these blessings are.

WE ARE BLESSED WITH HIS HOPE - Vs. 3

We have a living hope of resurrection because of Christ's resurrection.

WE ARE BLESSED WITH HIS HEAVEN - Vs. 4

Our inheritance in Heaven is "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

WE ARE BLESSED WITH HIS HELP - Vs. 5

We are "kept by the power of God".

WE ARE BLESSED WITH HIS HAPPINESS - Vss. 6-7

We greatly rejoice in spite of trials.

Peter 1:3-7 TAKING INVENTORY

Inventory is a way of life for businesses of all sizes. It is important for a company to know what is "on hand", and to make sure nothing has been stolen. Also, one cannot use or sell what they do not know that they have. The Christian also needs to know what He has in Christ.

If he knows he has it, he is more apt to use it, or, in the case of trials, not let them "throw him" when they take place. According to 1 Peter 1:3-7, in Christ we have:

GREAT HOPE Vs. 3

GREAT INHERITANCE Vs. 4

GREAT PRESERVATION Vs. 5

GREAT TRIALS Vss. 6-7

1 Peter 1:9-12 THE REASON FOR HOLINESS Vss. 9-12

(Salvation)

THE RIGORS OF HOLINESS Vss. 13-14

Salvation costs you nothing. Holy living will cost you everything.

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF HOLINESS Vss. 15-16

The standard is high - "Be ye holy, for I am Holy."

THE REVERENCE OF HOLINESS Vs. 17

"...pass the time of your sojourning here in fear."

1 Peter 1:13-17 PERFECTING HOLINESS

Any pastor or special speaker who announces that he will be speaking on holiness will probably not get a large turn out. It is not a popular subject. Although it is not a popular subject, it is still a Bible doctrine for today, and any true preacher of the Gospel will need to talk about practicing holiness or holy living.

1 Peter 1:15a says "But as he which hath called you is holy..." Our holy God is the one who has called us to salvation through faith in his Son. He has justified us and made it so we are without condemnation in Christ. Revelation 22:17, Romans 10:13, Romans 5:1, Romans 8:1

God has declared us to be a "holy nation" in 1 Peter 2:9. God views our position as "holy", or set apart for him. Because I have been called by God to salvation and have been declared holy or set apart in my position, I am also to practice a separated or holy life (1 Peter 1:15-16). This does not mean that I'll be sinless in this life, but it does mean that I will live a life that strives to be holy (1 John 1:8-10). Those who serve a holy God are to practice holiness.

As we perfect holiness we develop a life that is:

SET APART FOR REASONING - Vs. 13

The way we think is to bring honor and glory to the Lord.

SET APART FOR RESPONSE - Vs. 14

We are to respond to God as obedient children.

SET APART FOR REVERENCE - Vs. 17

As we reverence God, we will be careful about our behavior.

1 Peter 1:18-23 REDEEMED!

THE PRICE OF REDEMPTION Vss. 18-19

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION Vs. 20

Jesus was "foreordained". God planned ahead for man's salvation.

THE POSSESSION OF REDEMPTION Vss. 21-23

1 Peter 1:18-23 STRESSED OUT!

We live in a day and age when many people feel the effects of stress.

Some are stressed because of financial needs. The income never catches up with the out go.

Often Mom is forced to go out and work. Then she's under the stress of trying to be a good mother and wife, keep house, provide meals, and be a good employee.

Some are stressed by the schedules their children keep. Between after school sports, band, music lessons, youth activities, and a host of other extra-curricular activities, it's hard to keep up with their schedules. Dottie and I remember when David and Mark were on two different basketball teams and Donna was a cheerleader. What fun it was trying to coordinate 3 different practices and game schedules.

Some are stressed because of the health of parents. Mom or Dad might be in a nursing home or in a hospital needing your attention. They might be living at home, and needing your care.

There's also stress caused when you or someone you love is fighting serious illness.

Then there's the job, and the church and home improvement projects! Each of these demands time and involvement and there are times when we have 2 or 3 or more of these stress-causing things all happening at once! It's no wonder so many of us feel stressed!

We cannot escape stressful situations. Job 5:7, James 1:2-4, John 16:33

Has it ever occurred to you that Jesus came to relieve stress?

Has it ever occurred to you that the Bible was written to help relieve your stress?

Has it ever occurred to you that God wants to handle your stress? Isaiah 41:10, Matthew 11:28-30

Isaiah 26:3 - "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Stress relief comes when we get our thoughts off the stress-causing difficulties in life and on to our wonderful God! When our mind is centered on the Lord our hearts will be at peace. Our minds will be centered on the Lord when they are centered on God's Word.

Our text is 1 Peter 1:18-23. In the previous verses, Peter made an appeal for Christians to live holy lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16

In the rest of this chapter Peter gives us some reasons for living holy lives. But Peter is also showing us 4 wonderful things which, if we focus on them, will help relieve the pressures of stress. We must get our minds off our problems and challenges and on to what God has done and wants us to do.

The four wonderful things that God wants us to see are:

GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REDEMPTION - Vss. 18-19

Peter begins by talking about his readers' redemption. The word redemption has to do with the payment of a ransom to set free a slave. With the exception of our Lord Jesus, every man was born in bondage to sin. Ephesians 2:1-3

Peter here reminds the Christian that he or she was not redeemed by anything corruptible, like money! As permanent as gold and silver seem to be, they will eventually perish.

In Peter's day, money could pay for the freedom of a slave. Just as money today can buy the freedom of a captive. But money could not and can not buy the freedom from the bondage of sin and death.

The word "conversation" in this verse means "manner of life".

Money can not begin to pay for the sins of a vain or empty manner of life. And we received this vain or empty manner of life by tradition from our fathers. The sinful, empty way of life goes back to Adam! Romans 5:12

Christian, your redemption, your freedom from the penalty of sin and your place in Heaven was secured by the precious blood of Christ! (Vs. 19) Why was the blood of Christ precious? Jesus Christ is God! It is God's blood that saved you! Are you stressed? Think of how much God loves you! He gave His own blood that you might have forgiveness of sins and everlasting life!

This blood was like that of a lamb. From Adam on, animals, often lambs were offered as sacrifices for sin. God required the Jews to offer blood sacrifices of animals. These were a picture of THE LAMB, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would come to pay for sin. (John 1:29) The particular lamb in view here is probably the Passover Lamb. You might remember that a lamb for each family was offered by the nation of Israel, and the blood was placed on the doorposts. When the Angel of Death came by, he passed over those that had the blood on them. That lamb had to be a lamb without blemish and spot, a perfect sacrifice. Jesus was perfect. Jesus was blameless. Jesus was pure.

The Lord Jesus did not deserve to die! He died voluntarily in our place as our lamb! John 10:17-18, 2 Corinthians 5:21

Christian, are you stressed?

Think of this - Jesus died in your place as the perfect sacrifice for you sins.

GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REVELATION - Vss. 20-21

Vs. 20 - There are times when unforeseen emergencies arise, and we need to react. For instance, there have been times when we have had unexpected company. Sometimes Dottie has had food on hand that she could serve. Other times, we have ended up taking folks out to eat. We were taken by surprise.

Man's failure in the garden did not take God by surprise.

The need of a redeemer did not take God by surprise.

Jesus was foreordained as the "Lamb of God". God had planned ahead!

Although redemption was planned so far in advance, it wasn't revealed until the time of Peter. It has now been revealed in these last times.

Vs. 21 - To whom has this redemption been revealed? To those who believe in God, by Him!

Notice that true belief in God is by Christ! Redemption has been revealed to those who believe in God, through faith in His Son! John 14:6, Acts 4:12, John 3:36

And notice we believe in God who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead and gave Him glory. He sits at the right hand of the throne of God.

And notice that if you are a Christian, your faith and hope is in God!

Your faith and hope is in God for eternal life!

If your faith and hope is in God for the most important issue, eternal life, shouldn't your faith in hope be in God for every issue? If you can trust God with your soul, you can trust God with every thing else! This is another wonderful reminder when we are stressed! Proverbs 3:5-6

GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL REGENERATION - Vs. 23

When stressed, it helps to remember who we are!

On a cold snowy day in January in 1998 the phone rang. It was my father-in-law. He said that the hospital called saying that Dottie's Mom had passed away. I called the hospital and verified that she had died. There was no misunderstanding. Then I called my Mom. As I started to tell her, I started to cry. Why? Because after all those years of being an adult I still knew who I was. I was her son. I could cry in front of her. She was and is still my Mommy.

This verse talks about being "born again". When a person trusts Christ as Savior, he or she is born into the family of God. We literally become children of God! John 3 tells us that this new birth is the work of the Spirit of God. This verse tells us that this new birth is also the work of the Word of God. God's Spirit uses God's Word to bring about the second birth. John 1:12-13

Another word for being born again is regeneration.

What does regeneration have to do with stress?
When you are stressed, you are still a child of God.
God is still taking care of you.
He is still in control. We can relax!
We can come crying to Him as our "Daddy". (In Romans 8:15 the word "Abba" means "Daddy".)
Hebrews 13:5, Psalm 121

GOD HAS GIVEN US A WONDERFUL RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 22
The word "love" used here the first time is the Greek word "phileo". This word means to like or have a fondness for someone else.
We have been born into a Spiritual family, the family of God, which is naturally fond of each other. When we obeyed the truth of the Gospel we purified our souls. The end result was a natural fondness for our brothers and sisters in Christ.
We are to take that fondness, that liking a step further.
We are to go on to loving one another with a pure heart fervently. The Greek word for love (The second time the word is used in this verse.) here is agape. It means the highest form of love. Our love should be unselfish and giving to other Christians. Agape love is the kind of love God shows to us.
What does that have to do with stress?
Most times when we get stressed, we are worried about ourselves.
However, when we use our times of stress to reach out and love others, we will find that the stress will be relieved.

1 Peter 1:23-2:3 ON A DIET?
We certainly live in a diet-conscious era.
People diet to lose weight.
People diet to control sugar.
People diet to control cholesterol.
People diet to feel good and to stay healthy.
And by the way, everyone has a diet. It is either a good diet or a bad diet, but we all have a diet!
I jokingly say, "I'm on a sea food diet; I see food and I eat it!"
Not only do we have a food diet, but we also have a Spiritual diet.
What we feed our minds will affect how we think, how we act, and what we say.
For the Christian, the primary ingredient in his Spiritual diet should be the Word of God.
Joshua 1:8, Psalms 1:1-2, 119:15-16, John 15:7, 2 Timothy 4:2
Our diet should include:
The reading of the Word of God
Memorization and Meditation upon the Word of God
Listening to the preaching and teaching of the Word of God
According to our text, we discover that our diet of the Word of God should be:
A RELIABLE DIET - 1:23-25
There are all sorts of diets that people try.
There has been the grapefruit diet.
There are low fat diets, and low cholesterol diets.
There are low salt diets.
And recently I heard that there is an aspirin diet, but don't try it. They say it has no value.
Our diet should be a healthy diet. It should be good enough to take care of our physical needs. It needs to be reliable. We should try no diet unless we know it can be trusted.
When we feed ourselves spiritually with the Word of God, we have a reliable diet.
A person who is "born again" or "saved" he or she becomes a child of God. Vs. 23, 1 John 1:12-13
When a person realizes he or she is a sinner, that Christ had died for his or her sins and rose again and then trusts Christ as Savior, he or she is born again. It is the work of the Spirit of God who uses the Word of God.
That's why this verse tells us that we are born again by God's Word. But see what the Word of God is. It is "incorruptible seed".
God's word is not corrupt or faulty in any way!
God's word is dependable. According to this verse, God's word lives and abides forever.
1 Peter 1:24-25 is quoting from Isaiah 40. Man is like grass. Eventually he will fade away. The Word of God, however endures forever! It is permanent, and therefore reliable.
(For some more ways that the Word of God is reliable check out 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Psalm 19:7-11. I suggest you share these with your listeners.)
A RESTRICTED DIET - 2:1
About 2 years ago I ended up in the hospital. The food wasn't very good there because I was on a restricted diet. There were certain things they weren't going to let me eat! The reason for a restricted diet was for my

own physical health. In order for you and I to grow Spiritually, and to be all that God wants us to be, He wants us to be on a restricted diet. There are things that just don't belong in the life of the Christian. Peter says that there are certain things that we are to "lay aside" or put out of our lives. We are to lay aside all malice. Malice is any kind of wickedness or evil that is lurking inside of us. It needs to be confessed and forsaken. Evil and malicious thoughts often lead to evil and malicious actions. If we have actually committed any evil and malicious actions, these too need to be confessed, made right, and forsaken. We are to lay aside all guile. Guile is deceit. We are not to deceive others. We are not to lie. We are not to promote falsehood in any way. It is to be put away from us. We are to lay aside hypocrisy. This term comes from the Greek stage or theatre. A hypocrite was an actor. He pretended to be someone he was not. Sometimes we pretend to understand when we don't understand. We pretend to love another person when we don't. We pretend to be more spiritual than another is when we are not. We pretend to be concerned when we could care less. We pretend to love the Lord when we don't love the Lord! Often our words do not match what we actually think or feel! God says to restrict this from our diets! We also have to beware of jealousy or envy. All too often we are jealous because someone else has what we want. We are jealous if someone else is asked to do something and we are not. We are jealous if someone else gets the raise or promotion and we don't. We are jealous when other people are spoken well of and we are not mentioned. Jealousy will lead us to do and say things that we will be sorry about later! We are to lay aside all evil speaking. It's so easy to say things that aren't true. It's so easy to say things that are critical. It's so easy to say things because we have been hurt. It's so easy to say things that aren't necessary. It's so easy to say things that will make us look good and someone else look bad.

A RECEIVED DIET - 2:2

In physical sense there are people who have been given a diet to follow but haven't. That includes myself. We have been told to eat certain things and stay away from other certain things, but we haven't done it. A diet will do you no good unless you receive or accept it! We are told here in this verse how to receive God's Word. We are to receive it as "new born babes". A newborn babe is enthusiastic about Mamma's milk. A newborn babe likes to eat! We are to be equally enthused and receptive of God's Word! Why should we crave the sincere or pure milk of the Word of God? Because pure milk causes us to grow!

A REASONABLE DIET - 2:3

Is God being unreasonable when He expects us to desire His Word? Of course not! When you were born again the Spirit of God used the Word of God. You tasted that the Lord is gracious! You received forgiveness of sin and new life. If by God's grace you tasted of the Lord's grace from the word of God once, shouldn't you continue to taste of His grace through His Word? Of course! We should be able to say with Jeremiah in Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts."

1 Peter 1:24-2:3 THE WORD

PERMANENCE OF THE WORD Vss. 24-25

PURIFICATION TO RECEIVE THE WORD Vs. 1

PERSISTENCE IN THE WORD Vs. 2

PROOF THROUGH THE WORD Vs. 3

The Christian who is constantly in the Word of God is proving that he or she has truly "tasted that the Lord is gracious."

1 Peter 2:1-3 TRANSFORMED LIVING

ELIMINATION - "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings."

ENTHUSIASM - "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word.."

EXPLANATION - "...that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

1 Peter 2:1-3 BIBLE STUDY

Here is a simple format for studying the Word of God:

EXAMINATION FOR SIN - Vs. 1

Make sure there is nothing that will hinder your study of God's Word.

Confess any known sin. 1 John 1:9

If the Spirit of God is grieved, you will not get much out of God's Word. Ephesians 4:30

ENDEAVOR IN THE SCRIPTURES - Vs. 2

As a baby is eager for milk, we should be eager to learn from the Scriptures.

Our purpose for studying God's Word should be to grow! 1 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 15:4

EXPRESSION OF SALVATION - Vs. 3

The examination for sin and endeavor in God's Word is proof that we have been saved.

We have "tasted that the Lord is gracious".

1 Peter 2:9-10 ABOUT OUR CHURCH

Often people want to know things about our church. They want to know our denomination, our beliefs, our service times and our activities. In our text we find three important facts true of our church and all churches that truly proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

WE ARE A PEOPLE. - "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people;"

WE HAVE A PURPOSE. - "...that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;"

WE RECEIVED A PROMOTION. - "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

1 Peter 2:9-10 THE CHRISTIANS

GOD'S IDENTIFICATION

God identifies us as:

1. A Chosen Generation
2. A Royal Priesthood
3. A Holy Nation
4. A Peculiar People

GOD'S INTENT

"...that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;"

GOD'S INTERVENTION

Past - Not a people and without mercy.

Present - The people of God

1 Peter 2:11-14 PROVE IT!

You say you're a Christian? Prove it!

ABSTAIN FROM FLESHLY LUSTS - Vs. 11

ADVERTISE THROUGH GOOD WORKS - Vs. 12

ACCEPT THOSE WHOM GOD HAS PLACED OVER YOU - Vss. 13-14

1 Peter 2:11-17 BEFORE A WATCHING WORLD

The unsaved world is watching us. We need to behave accordingly.

ABSTAIN - Vs. 11 - Worldly lusts are to be avoided.

ADVERTISE - Vs. 12, 15-16 - Honest behavior advertises positively for Christ.

ADHERE - Vss. 13, 14 - We are to submit to those leaders God has placed over us.

ABOUND - Vs. 17 - Practicing these things will help us prosper as a testimony for Christ.

1 Peter 3:1-7 A MARRIAGE THAT PLEASES GOD

God established marriage and approves of it. - Genesis 2:22-24, Hebrews 13:4

Christians should only marry Christians - 2 Corinthians 6:14-15

God has plans for your marriage.

Christian men will only be truly happy with Christian women that practice 1 Peter 3:1-6.

Christian women will only be truly happy with Christian men that practice 1 Peter 3:7

THE CHRISTIAN WIFE - Vss. 1-6

EXHORTATION - Vss. 1-2

Women are encouraged to live in submission to their husbands.

This does not mean that the man is superior to his wife, but for the sake of God's order, she is to submit to her husband's leadership.

Husbands need to remember, however, that they are to help the wives to be submissive by loving them as Christ loved the church. Ephesians 5:25

Women are also encouraged to win their husbands to a Godly obedience by their quiet, chaste conversation.

EXPLANATION - Vss. 3-4

Peter is not saying that is wrong to fix one's hair, or to wear jewelry or nice clothes. He is saying that true adornment is that of a "meek and quiet spirit".

EXAMPLE - Vss. 5-6

Sara, and other Godly women of the Bible (Ruth, Esther, Mary) serve as positive examples for the women of today.

THE CHRISTIAN HUSBAND - Vs. 7

REQUIREMENTS

The husband is to understand his wife.

The husband is to honor his wife.

REASONS

The wife is considered to be the "weaker vessel".

The wife is a "joint heir" of the "grace of life".

A husband's prayers are hindered when he doesn't treat his wife properly.

1 Peter 3:1-9 ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY

SUBMISSIVE WIVES Vss. 1-6

SUPPORTIVE HUSBANDS Vs. 7

SENSITIVE FELLOWSHIP Vss. 8-9

1 Peter 3:8-12 A WONDERFUL LIFE

It is no fiction that countless thousands of Christians have had wonderful lives in spite of their struggles and hardships. Think of some of the folks from this church that you know or have known. They have seen many blessings and have been a blessing to many of you. Because of their relationship to Christ they led and are leading wonderful lives.

You might ask the question, "How can I be sure of having a wonderful life?" As we examine 1 Peter 3:8-12 we will learn how to be sure of having a wonderful life despite frustrations, hardships and trials.

To begin with, I need to remind you that having wonderful life begins at the cross of Calvary where Jesus paid for your sins. Your wonderful life begins with a faith commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. You can't have a wonderful life without knowing you have eternal life. That's step #1! (You might want to take the time to elaborate on Ephesians 2:1-9 here. I did.)

For those of us who know Christ 1 Peter 3:8-12 shows us how to have this wonderful life. I have summed up what Peter is saying in three words.

CONDUCT - Vss. 8-9

Here is a list of ways to conduct ourselves as part of the body of Christ.

I suggest that you elaborate on each one of them.

CONFIRMATION - Vss. 10-11

When I preach I constantly quote the Scriptures to confirm that what I'm saying is the truth. It is not important what I have to say. It is important what God has to say! Peter confirms that what He is saying is true by quoting Psalm 34:12-16. We need to note that we are to shun evil actions and words in favor of doing good and seeking peace.

CONSOLATION - Vss. 12

Peter is still quoting from Psalm 34. We can be consoled that the Lord is looking over the righteous and listening to their prayers. The Lord is also hardened against those who do evil, even though He loves them.

1 Peter 3:7 A GODLY HUSBAND – GOOD FOR MOTHER'S OR FATHER'S DAY

WISDOM - It is the duty of the husband to understand his wife. He is to dwell with her according to knowledge. Ephesians 5:25

WORTH - The husband is to give honor to his wife. A Christian Husband should not be constantly embarrassing their wives. Proverbs 5:15-21

WARNING - A husband who does not obey this verse will have his prayers hindered. God does not honor the prayers of a man who is sinning against his wife. Psalm 66:18

1 Peter 3:15-16 THE LIFE THAT WITNESSES

SEPARATION (Sanctify) Vs. 15a - *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts:*

PREPARATION Vs. 15b - *and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*

PURIFICATION (a good conscience) Vs. 16 - *Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.*

***** **1 Peter 3:15-16 AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST**

We are to be good ambassadors or representatives of Christ, especially during times of suffering (Vs. 14).
Here is how we can be good ambassadors for Him:

BE SANCTIFIED - "But sanctify the Lord Jesus Christ in your hearts..."

BE READY - "And be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason..."

BE HOPEFUL - "...of the hope that is in you..."

BE RESPECTFUL - "...with meekness and fear."

BE CLEAN - "Having a good conscience..." - Vs. 16

1 Peter 4:7-11 SO, YOU'RE A CHURCH MEMBER!

In these last days, the church member who does these things will not "sit, soak and sour", but have a vital ministry for Christ and His church.

BE SENSIBLE (sober) Vs. 7

BE PRAYERFUL Vs. 7

BE LOVABLE (loving) Vs. 8

BE HOSPITABLE Vs. 9

BE USEABLE Vss. 10-11

1 Peter 4:7-11 Share Time

Ever since we were small children we have been taught to share.

We've been told that it is not nice to be selfish.

We've been told that it is good to let others have some of what we have.

Sharing is a Biblical principle.

The Bible teaches us to share our faith with others. In light of eternity, that's something too important not to share.

The Bible also teaches us to share our joys and sorrows with fellow believers, and to share our wealth with the church and with those in need.

In 1 Peter 4:7-11 we find some verses that encourage us to do some sharing.

The beginning of verse 7 says, "But the end of all things is at hand."

The next event on God's prophetic calendar is something we call the rapture. Jesus Christ will come for his church, His followers and take us to Heaven. 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

Of course there are more events that will take place after the Rapture of the church, but we won't get into them now. We might say that the Rapture is the beginning of the end.

In verse 7 Peter says, "The end of all things is at hand." That means the end could come at any time!

There is no other event on God's prophetic schedule that needs to be fulfilled before Jesus returns. Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 3:8-9

Jesus could come at any time for His church and we will all go home on "the family pan".

But let me remind you of something else. Jesus could come at any time for you. Just after Christmas a man in our son Dave's church died suddenly of a heart attack. He was only about 50 years old. When I was in college a 19 year old friend of mine named Dave Davies went to Florida on Spring break. He never returned. There was a wreck. Dave was killed. Dave has been in Heaven for almost 35 years.

We never know when Jesus will say, "My child, it's time for me to take you home." Therefore, in a real way the coming of the Lord Jesus is always at hand.

If the coming of Jesus is so close at hand, we need to be those who live in a way that pleases the Lord. We need to obey the teachings of verses 7-11 and learn to share.

SHARING WITH GOD - Vs. 7

The end of all things could happen to us at any time. Therefore, God says be sober. This means to be "sober-minded".

People who are "drunk" do not think clearly.

Christians who are "sober-minded" think clearly and seriously.

When we are thinking clearly we will be watching in prayer, because the Lord could come and take us home at any time!

We share with God when we pray. He has decreed that He will accomplish His work on earth through our prayers. Matthew 7:7-11, 1 John 5:14-15

Is living a Godly life God's will for you? Ask God to help you!

Are people getting saved God's will? Ask God to save souls!

Is Christians living Godly lives, God's will? Ask God to help your Christian friends. We should pray for our friends the way Paul prayed for his in Ephesians 1:16-23, 3:14-21, Philippians 1:9-11 and Colossians 1:9-14.

SHARING LOVE - Vs. 8

We are to have fervent love for fellow believers. Such love covers the multitude of sins.

I believe that this means that we deal with sin Biblically, not broadcasting the sins of others when it is not necessary.

I believe this also means that when we love fervently we will forgive others. Ephesians 4:32
SHARING OUR HOMES - Vs. 9

Although there does not appear to be as much need for hospitality today, we should open our homes to fellow believers. When we open our homes we should not do so grudgingly, but willingly. On our missions trip we visited in a home that was poor by Suriname standards. And yet, we were received warmly and graciously. We were served coffee and friend bananas as a snack.

SHARING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS - Vss. 10-11

Vs. 10 - God has given you a Spiritual gift. It is a supernatural ability given to you so you can bless others. We are to use these gifts as good stewards. A steward was a household manager who was responsible for the distribution of his master's property.

Vs. 11 - Spiritual gifts fall into two categories. There are speaking gifts and serving gifts. Those who speak should speak as they are speaking for God. Those who serve should serve according to the ability that God has given. Whatever our gift, we are to use it for the glory of God.

1 Peter 4:7-11 END TIMES BEHAVIOR

Whether we want to admit it or not, we are living in the end times. I say that because Jesus could come at any time. How should we behave as we anticipate the Second Coming of Christ?

THE WATCH OF PRAYER - Vs. 7

THE WALK IN LOVE - Vss. 8-9

THE WORK OF STEWARDS - Vss. 10-11

A steward is responsible for something that belongs to someone else.

We should use whatever spiritual gifts God has given us for his glory.

1 Peter 4:12-19 PREPARED FOR THE WORST

It has been over two months since Y2K. There was the possibility that when Y2K arrived there would be terrible problems with the computers. Many difficulties were anticipated, including the loss of power, banking, gas, food deliveries and a number of other things.

In the months, weeks and days before the arrival of Y2K people handled the possible difficulties in various ways. Some people simply ignored the warnings and did nothing. Others, like myself made a few last minute preparations, just in case. Still others were fully prepared. They had lots of food and water on hand, generators ready to fire up, full gas tanks, and cash money available if needed. These people were prepared for the worst.

As it turned out, enough preparatory work had been done on the computers, and there were no major problems. Those who had done the most work to be ready for Y2K were probably not too disappointed.

After all, they were prepared if something did happen, and there's nothing wrong, within reason, with being prepared for the worst.

We know that as Christians, we will face some trials. We also know that these trials are a tool by which we learn patience. James 1:2-4

1 Peter 4:12 seems to take these trials to an even more intense level. Here, they are called "fiery trials". Peter is telling his followers not to be surprised, that is, think it strange, when fiery trials come. Indeed these trials, which may have had already started, did come to the early church. Once the Romans figured out that Christianity was not just a sect of the Jewish religion, but its own separate religion, Nero and other emperors began to persecute the church.

Peter warns here in Verse 12, "Don't think it strange if you are persecuted for your faith." And I say to you my friend, don't think it strange if in the near future in this country Christians are more actively persecuted for their faith in Christ. Persecution took place in the 20th century in many parts of the world. It can happen in the 21st century here in America.

This passage before us can help us to be prepared for the worst.

If it turns out that there is no fiery trial there is no harm done if we are prepared.

If there are fiery trials of persecution, we will be glad we were prepared for the worst.

When fiery trials come we must do four things.

WE MUST REJOICE - Vss. 13-14

As Christians, according to Verse 13, we should count it a privilege to suffer for the sake of Christ. 2 Timothy 3:12, Philippians 1:29

Why should we consider it a privilege to be a "partaker of Christ's sufferings"? Because He suffered for us that we might have eternal life. He went to the cross in your place. He went to the cross in my place, that we might have forgiveness of sins and everlasting life. Isaiah 53:3-7

Verse 13 continues by telling us that those of us who suffer for Christ's sake will have exceeding joy when Christ comes. Those who have been faithful to the Lord during times of suffering for his sake will have great joy when He returns. Why? Those who suffer willingly for Jesus' sake love Him! Therefore they also love

His appearing. They are most eager for His return. Also, those who suffer willingly for Jesus' sake will receive rewards. James 1:12

Vs. 14 tells us that we have reason to be "happy" when we are approached for the name of Christ.

"The spirit of glory" in the Old Testament was called the Shekinah Glory. This glory appeared to Israel during the wilderness wanderings. It appeared as a cloud by day and as a pillar of fire by night. Also, the Shekinah glory appeared in the temple when it was dedicated. 1 Kings 8:10-11

The spirit of this Glory rests upon us because the Spirit of God rests on God's children. Actually He indwells us. We go nowhere without the Spirit of God.

He is always present to help, to encourage and to strengthen us, especially in the times of our greatest need
WE MUST REFUSE - Vss. 15-16

It is not easy for us as Christians to think of all forms of punishment as persecution. That just isn't so. Some times we are punished because we deserve to be punished. Sometimes things don't work out well for us because we've simply messed up. God doesn't promise to insulate us from the consequences of mistakes that we make or sins that we commit. (Proverbs 13:15) Peter is making it clear here that we as Christians should not be suffering because we have chosen to sin. We must refuse to act the way that the unsaved act. In Vs. 16 Peter tells us we have nothing to be ashamed of if we suffer as Christians. To call someone a "Christian" in those days was not a compliment. My friend if you suffer today because you are making a true stand for Christ do not be ashamed. Instead of being ashamed of being a Christian, we should bring glory to God by our behavior as Christians.

WE MUST REMEMBER - Vss. 17-18

Vs. 17 - God allows "judgment" or discipline, or trials to come upon the Christian. These judgments, when handled correctly become a strong testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, and they help mature the Christian. It is very easy to get discouraged during trials.

It is very easy to wonder why God permits so many bad things to happen to His children.

And yet, consider the non-Christian who is persecuting you.

If judgment is so hard on us, how much harder is judgment going to be on the person without Christ?

What does the unsaved person have to look forward to? He can look forward to the Great White Throne judgment. (Revelation 20:10-14) Eternity without Christ is eternity in hell.

Your persecutors who do not know Christ are in far worse shape than you'll ever be as a Christian.

Vs. 18 - If the righteous, those who know Christ as Savior have so much trouble on the way to Heaven, think of how much more trouble the unsaved are in! They are in big trouble!

Our attitude should not be one of anger towards our persecutors, but one of compassion. We have eternal life. They do not. They face eternal death. We do not! Jesus prayed for those who persecuted Him on the cross. He prayed, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do."

WE MUST REST - Vs. 19

This verse is addressed to the one who is suffering for Christ's sake. He is suffering because God has decided according to His perfect will that this man or woman should suffer for Christ's sake.

The person who suffers for Christ sake should first commit the keeping of His soul to Christ.

Jesus has promised, "...I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Hebrews 13:5

Jesus has promised, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Matthew 11:28

Not only do we commit our very souls to Christ, but we are also to continue to do well.

We are to continue to do what's right in spite of mistreatment. Romans 12:19-21

I believe that the coals of fire mentioned in Romans 12:20 are conviction. When we are kind to our persecutors we are heaping coals of conviction upon their head. This will help them to see their wicked ways and come to Christ. If we do evil to our persecutors, they will feel justified in persecuting us. If we are kind to our persecutors, they will not feel justified in persecuting us.

When persecuted let us commit ourselves to the one who is called here the faithful creator. He created us twice. He created the first time as human beings. He created us the second time as new creatures in Christ. As new creatures in Christ, let us rest in Him, and do well to those who would persecute us!

I hope the worst never comes. But if fiery persecution ever does come, let us be prepared!

1 Peter 5:1-4 UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF PASTORS

Peter gives a message to elders in this passage.

In most churches the Pastor is considered the "elder" or "teaching elder."

Here Peter tells us what to expect of the pastor.

Most important, he tells the Pastor what he should do.

EXHORTATION - Vss. 1-2 - "Feed (shepherd) the flock of God..."

EXAMPLE - Vs 3 - "...being ensamples to the flock."

(The pastor is not to be a dictator.)

EXPECTATION - Vs. 4 - "...a crown of glory that fadeth not away..."

1 Peter 5:1-11 WHAT TO EXPECT OR GREAT EXPECTATIONS

When we buy a new car we expect the dealer to be honest. We expect the car to be reliable. We expect the company to stand behind the warranty. We expect a good price and reasonable payments.

When we eat in a nice restaurant we expect the food to be good and plentiful. We expect the service to be prompt and courteous. We expect the kitchen and dining room to be clean.

When we are looking for a church we expect an attitude of worship, music that praises the Lord, effective preaching, conviction, and a friendly atmosphere.

In 1 Peter 5:1-11 we discover some things we can expect:

FROM OUR LEADERS - Vss. 1-4

We should expect our leaders to:

Shepherd the Flock - Vs. 2 - The word "feed" means to shepherd. (You might want to refer to Zechariah 11:16. What the false shepherd did not do in this verse is what a true shepherd for Christ should do.)

Set the Example - Vs. 3 - Leaders are not dictators. They should lead by example. See 1 Timothy 4:12 for the example leaders should set.

FROM OURSELVES - Vss. 5-9

We should expect ourselves to:

Relinquish Our Rights - Vss. 5-6

Rely on God - Vs. 7

Resist the Devil - Vss. 8-9

FROM GOD - Vs. 10

We can expect:

GOD'S GRACE

GOD'S GLORY - One day we will be in Heaven, seeing Jesus face to face. 1 John 1:1-3

GOD'S GREATNESS - After we have suffered (James 1:2-4) we can expect God to perfect us, establish us, strengthen us and settle us.

1 Peter 5:5-9 A GODLY PATTERN FOR LIVING

RELINQUISH YOUR RIGHTS Vss. 5-6

RELY ON GOD Vs. 7

RESIST THE DEVIL Vss. 8-9

2 Peter 1:2-4 GREAT RESULTS

Here are five great results of knowing God through Christ:

GRACE - Vs. 2

PEACE - Vs. 2

LIFE - Vs. 3

GODLINESS - Vs. 3

DIVINE NATURE - Vs. 4

1 Peter 1:3-11 CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT

Just as a baby develops into adulthood, we as Christians should develop in our Christian lives. 2 Peter 3:18
WHAT TO APPRECIATE? - Vss. 3-4 - We are partakers of the "divine nature".

WHAT TO ADD? - Vss. 5-7 - These qualities are to be added to our faith:

Virtue

Knowledge

Temperance

Patience

Godliness

Brotherly Kindness

Charity

WHAT TO ANTICIPATE - Vs. 8 - Fruitfulness

WHAT TO AVOID - Vs. 9 - Forgetfulness

WHAT TO ATTEMPT - Vss. 10-11 - Making "your call and election sure"

2 Peter 1:5-11 GROWING UP

A Christian is to "grow up" in the Lord (2 Peter 3:18).

BUILDING BLOCKS - Vss. 5-7

Faith

Virtue (moral excellence)

Knowledge

Temperance (self-control)

Patience

Godliness

Brotherly Kindness

Charity (love)

BLESSINGS - Vss. 8, 10-11

If we do these things, we will not be "barren" or "unfruitful".

If we do these things we will make our "calling and election sure".

If we do these things we will have a victorious entry to "glory".

BLINDNESS - Vs. 9

If we fail to add the building blocks, we are "blind, and can not see afar off".

If we fail to add these building blocks, we have forgotten that we have been purged from our old sins.

2 Peter 1:12-21 FAITHFUL TO THE END

Most of us remember Peter as the man who often put his mouth in gear before he engaged his brain! Peter was the one who denied his Lord three times. What we might forget is that Peter went on to be a faithful servant of the Lord until the end of his life. Here are some of Peter's comments about that faithfulness.

CURRENT RESPONSIBILITY Vss. 12-13, 15

Peter knew that people needed to be reminded of the truths that they already knew. He wanted them to be so reminded of the truth that they wouldn't forget it after he died. Praise God for a preacher who continues to remind his people of the truths which they must never forget!

CERTAIN REMOVAL Vs. 14

Peter knew that there would be a day when he went home to be with the Lord.

CONCLUSIVE REASONS Vss. 16-21

Peter's faithfulness was based on two things:

1. His vision of the Lord Jesus in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. Vss. 16-18

See Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:1-8, Luke 9:27-36

2. The Word Of God. Vss. 19-21

2 Peter 1:12-21 A GOOD PREACHER

Those of you who have studied Acts 2, 3 and 10 know that God made Peter a good preacher.

This passage shows us some of the reasons Peter was a good preacher.

PETER'S METHOD - Vs. 12-13

Peter continued to preach the truth and remind people of the truth even if they believed and practiced the truth. Peter was not afraid to repeat himself. He wanted his congregations to be grounded in the Word.

PETER'S MOTIVE - Vs. 13-15

Peter wanted others to follow the truth even after he was gone.

PETER'S MASTER - Vs. 16-18

Peter's authority for his teaching was the Lord Jesus Christ whom he had seen in all His majesty.

Peter also mentions the voice of the Father who commanded that Jesus be followed.

PETER'S MATERIAL - Vs. 19-21

Peter's authority was the Word of God.

2 Peter 2:1-10 BE PREPARED

There are all sorts of false teaching around today. We must be prepared to counter them, and prepared for God's judgment of the wicked and preservation for the just.

REBELLION BY FALSE TEACHERS Vss. 1-3

REMINDER OF GOD'S JUDGMENT Vss. 4-6

1. The angels. Vs. 4 2. The world in Noah's day. Vs 5 3. Sodom and Gomorrah Vs. 6

REASSURANCE OF GOD'S JUSTICE Vss. 7-10

God will preserve the righteous. Vss. 7-9a

God will reserve the unjust for punishment. Vss. 9b-10

2 Peter 3:7-14 JUDGMENT IS COMING

The judgment of God is coming.

Peter addresses coming judgment and encourages us to do what is right.

RESERVATION FOR JUDGMENT Vss. 7, 10

RESTRAINT FOR SALVATION Vss. 8-9

The Lord is holding back judgment so more can come to Christ.

RESPONSE BY LIVING Vss. 11, 12, 14

We respond to the coming of the Lord and the need for others to be saved with Godly living.

REASSURANCE FOR THE FUTURE Vs. 13

1 John 1:1-4 IT'S REAL!

Have you noticed how many imitation products there are on the market today? There's imitation butter, vanilla extract, chocolate chips, milk, sugar, artificial flavors, and a host of other things. Now products are advertised as "real" butter, "real" chocolate chips, "real" sugar, "real" milk etc. Not only in food products do people want what is real, but in interpersonal relationships as well. Many people are artificial. They look nice on the outside, but on the inside they can be angry or unhappy, or empty, or a bunch of "fluff".

We like it when people are real! When they act like they really are. We like when they do not put on "fronts", when they are sincere, honest, frank.

Even in religion there are those that are imitations of the real thing. They pretend or claim to have what is real, when in reality all they have is a cheap imitation.

Biblical Christianity is real! It's genuine! It's alive! It's sincere!

In 1 John 1:1-4, John is saying, "Christianity is real. There's nothing artificial about genuine Christianity."

REALITY WAS SEEN - Vs. 1

John reminds us at the end of this verse that reality is in a person. He calls this person "The Word of Life." In John 1:1-2 and John 1:14 Jesus is called "the Word".

Why is Jesus called "the Word"? Our words reveal to others just what we think and just how we feel. As "the Word" Jesus reveals to us the heart and mind of God. He is God's living communication to us, God's Word in the flesh.

He is called "The Word of Life". He came to earth to communicate eternal life for you and I, which is available through Him. He made this life possible through His death on the cross for our sins, and his subsequent resurrection from the dead. When a person believes on Christ, eternal life becomes a reality. 1 John 5:11-12

Also, when we believe on Christ we have real life, real living, right now. John 10:10

In verse 1 John is saying "We have heard, seen, and handled the Word of life!"

REALITY WAS SHOWN - Vs. 2

Reality was seen because reality was shown. The life was manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 14:6 The word "manifested" means "to make visible, clear, known." John is saying that the life was made visible, and that he saw it. After John had seen the life he communicated with his readers.

REALITY THAT IS SHARED - Vs. 3

One way that we know that what we have is real is because it can be shared.

The key word in this verse is "fellowship". Fellowship means a partnership, a having in common, sharing. I have something in common with every other person who knows Christ as Savior. I have the same Savior, the same Heavenly Father, the same Bible, the same joys, sorrows, and trials. It matters not the amount of time I've known someone, or what color a man's skin is, or what denomination a person belongs to. When we both have Christ, we have something real to share with each other.

Not only is our fellowship to be with each other, but also with God the Father and God the Son. We are to abide in intimate sharing with them. In order to have real fellowship with other Christians, we must have real fellowship with God!

REALITY THAT IS SURE - Vs. 4

How am I sure when I have reality?

When I have real fellowship with the Lord and others, I will have joy!

A sure reality in Christ is a joyful reality, in spite of difficulties.

1 John 1:1-4 LIFE!

JOHN EXPERIENCED LIFE - Vss. 1-2

He heard it.

He saw it (in Christ).

He looked upon it.

He handled it.

JOHN EXPRESSED LIFE - Vss. 2-4

For salvation (eternal life) - Vs. 2

For Fellowship - Vs. 3

For Joy - Vs. 4

1 John 1:5-10 IN THE LIGHT!

COMMUNICATION - Vs. 5 - God is light and in Him is no darkness.

CHOICES - Vss. 6-7 - We will either walk in light or darkness.

CAUTION - Vss. 8,10 - Never claim to be without sin.

CLEANSING - Vs. 9 - When we confess our sins, "coming clean" before God, naming our sins, we are forgiven and cleansed by Him.

1 John 1:5-10 IT MATTERS

There are three important matters for us to consider here:

A MATTER OF LIGHT - Vs. 5

God is light. In Him there is no darkness! His purity and His holiness are beyond our human comprehension.

A MATTER OF LIES - Vss. 6, 8, 10

1. If we claim to know Christ and our life is characterized by habitual sin, we are lying and not practicing truth.
Vs. 6

2. If we claim not to sin we are fooling ourselves and lack truth. Vs. 8

3. If we to claim not to sin we are calling God a liar (Romans 3:23) and His word is not inside of us. Vs. 10

A MATTER OF LIFE - Vss. 7, 9

As Christians, if we walk in fellowship with God, His light will expose our sins and we will deal with them through confession. His blood will continue to cleanse us. As we walk in the light we will experience life at its finest!

1 John 1:5-10 GOD'S BEST

Some people may think that Christianity is negative. However to have God's best for our lives we must deal with the negativity of sin.

God's best:

NO DARKNESS - Vss. 5-7 - walking in the light

NO DECEIT - Vss. 8, 10 - we should not try to fool God or ourselves

NO DIRT - Vs. 9 - confession brings about cleansing

1 John 2:1-2 JESUS TO THE RESCUE

1 John 2:1-2 - *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: [2] And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

GOD'S PLAN - Sin not

MAN'S PROBLEM - He does! - *And if any man sin...*

See 1 John 1:8-10

CHRIST'S PROVISION - He is our advocate and the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 2:1-6 THE CONSISTENT WALK

OUR ADVOCATE - Vss. 1-2 - HELP FOR GOD'S CHILDREN

OUR ADHERENCE (To God's Word and Christ's example.) - Vss. 3-4,6 -

HONESTY OF GOD'S CHILDREN

OUR ASSURANCE - Vs. 5 - HOPE FOR GOD'S CHILDREN

1 John 2:6 etc. WALKING AS HE WALKED

Just about all of us have been an example to others at one time or another. All of us have followed the example of others at one time or another. We will be an example to others. We tend to follow the example of others.

The best example we have is the Lord Jesus Christ.

He lived the perfect life.

He is God in the flesh.

He is the perfect example.

Our text for this is 1 John 2:6 - "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

After a person is saved, his life has been changed.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

As part of this new life in Christ, a person is to learn to walk closely to the Lord. It is called abiding in Christ. A person abides in Christ, as he studies God's Word, thinks on God's Word, and obeys God's Word. He also abides in Christ, as he stays in constant communication with the Lord through prayer.

The first requirement for any individual to be right with God is to be saved.

If you and I claim to abide in Christ as Christians, we are to walk as he walked! We are to follow His examples!

My challenge to you this morning is to "walk as He walked."

Follow the examples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In this message we will take all our examples from Matthew, as we show some of the examples of Jesus which we should follow.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."

JESUS CHRIST WAS BAPTIZED. I SHOULD BE BAPTIZED. Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 10:44-48

JESUS CHRIST RESISTED SIN. I SHOULD RESIST SIN. Matthew 4:1-11

JESUS CHRIST SERVED. I SHOULD SERVE. Matthew 8:1-4

JESUS CHRIST PLEASED THE FATHER. I SHOULD PLEASE THE FATHER. Matthew 17:1-5

JESUS CHRIST PRACTICED FAITH. I SHOULD PRACTICE FAITH. Matthew 17:14-21

JESUS CHRIST HAD COMPASSION. I SHOULD HAVE COMPASSION. Matthew 20:29-34

1 John 2:28-3:1 JESUS IS COMING!

As Christians we know that Jesus is coming soon. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Titus 2:13, Revelation 22:20. Because Jesus is coming soon Christians are to be:

STANDING IN CONFIDENCE - Vss. 28-29

When Jesus comes there will be a judgment for the Christian. This will not determine our place of eternal rest (That was decided when we trusted Christ as Savior. John 3:36), but it will determine our rewards. 2 Corinthians 5:10, 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, 4:5

As Christians, if we expect to stand before Him in confidence and not be ashamed at the Judgment Seat we must abide in Him now! Vs. 28, John 15:1-7

Because we know that Jesus is righteous, we are to practice righteousness now. Vs. 29

SEEING HIS LOVE - Vs. 1

God has shown tremendous love towards us by declaring us to be His children. John 1:12-13

The world does not understand us because it has rejected Christ.

SHARING HIS RESURRECTION - Vs. 2

We are now God's children.

Because of this we will share in the resurrection of Christ.

We shall be like Him!

SHOWING OUR APPRECIATION - Vs. 3

Because we have this "blessed hope" of seeing Jesus as He is and being like Him, we are to purify our lives and strive to live like Jesus.

1 John 3:1-3 SOMETHING SPECIAL

A SPECIAL PEOPLE - Vs. 1

A SPECIAL PROMISE - Vs. 2

A SPECIAL PURITY - Vs. 3

1 John 3:1-3 IT'S AMAZING!

AMAZING LOVE - Vs. 1 - "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

AMAZING LIKENESS - Vs. 2 - "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

AMAZING LIVING - Vs. 3 - "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

1 John 3:1-3 THE FAMILY OF GOD

FAMILY LOVE Vs. 1a

FAMILY UNIQUENESS Vss. 1b, 2a

FAMILY FUTURE Vs. 2b

FAMILY PURPOSE Vs. 3

1 John 1:1-3 THREE CONSIDERATIONS

CONSIDER THE LOVE OF GOD - Vs. 1

God has loved us so much that he has declared us to be His children if we know Christ as Savior (John 1:12-13). That amount of love is simply amazing!

Because the world did not know Christ (John 1:10-11) the world will not know, or understand us either.

CONSIDER THE LOOK AT CHRIST - Vs. 2

We are the children of God right now!

There will be a day however when we will see Christ face to face and be like Him! We will see him as he is!

CONSIDER THE LIFE OF PURITY - Vs. 3

Because we are looking forward to being like him in the future, we should purify our lives now! See Titus 2:11-15

1 John 3:11-18 TRUE LOVE

When someone says "I love you", it can mean many different things. It can mean:

1. The person is physically attracted to the other person's body.
2. The person is very fond of another person.
3. The person is attached because of family ties or friendship.
4. The person is committed to the other because of Christ.

Of course, true love, genuine love on the highest plain is the love that Christ has for us and that we should have for fellow Christians. Our text shows us the qualities of true love:

TRUE LOVE REMEMBERS THE LORD'S COMMAND - Vs. 11

The command from the beginning is found in John 14:34-35.

We are to love others as Jesus loves us.

We in our churches are to be known for our love for each other, not our fights with each other!

TRUE LOVE REJECTS HATRED - Vss. 12-15

Although the world will hate us (Vs. 13) we are not act like Cain did. Vs. 12, Genesis 4:1-8

We are to love each other because the one who doesn't love abides in death. Vs. 14

The one who hates his brother is a murderer. Vs. 15, Matthew 5:21-23

TRUE LOVE REQUIRES SACRIFICE - Vs. 16

We are to lay down our very lives for each other.

TRUE LOVE REACHES OUT TO OTHERS - Vss. 17-18

The one who sees a need, is able to help, and doesn't does not have the love God indwelling. Vs. 17

True love does not give lip service to those in need, but acts to help those in need. Vs. 18

1 John 3:19-24 CONFIDENCE

Christians are in need of confidence. In this text we discover how to have:

CONFIDENCE OF HEART - Vss. 19-20

We will have confidence of heart as we practice verses 16-18.

CONFIDENCE TOWARDS GOD - Vs. 21**CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER - Vss. 22-23****CONFIDENCE BY THE SPIRIT - Vs. 24**

1 John 4:1-6 IDENTIFYING FALSE TEACHERS.

THERE IS A TEST Vs. 1

THERE IS A TESTIMONY Vs. 2

THERE IS TREACHERY Vss. 3, 5

THERE IS TRIUMPH Vss. 4, 6

1 John 4:1-6 ON GUARD

We must be constantly on guard against the doctrines of false teachers. Here's how to make sure that you are not taken advantage of.

BE CAREFUL - Vss. 1,5

Just because a person sounds good, it doesn't mean the person is right. We must be careful to test the spirits to make sure we follow those teachers that are from God.

False teachers are of the "world". Because they are worldly, those who love the world want to hear them.

BE COGNIZANT - Vss. 2-3, 6

Be aware that only those who believe that Jesus came in the flesh to the world are of God.

Be aware of the spirit of anti-Christ that is in the world.

Be aware that those who are not of God will not adhere to the true teachings of the Word of God.

BE CONFIDENT - Vs. 4

We can overcome false teachers because "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

1 John 4:8, 10,11,18,19 HEREIN IS LOVE

Introduction - God is love. Vs. 8

THE DESCRIPTION OF LOVE Vs. 10

THE DUTY OF LOVE Vs. 11

THE DISTINCTION OF LOVE Vs. 18

"There is no fear in love..."

THE DELIGHT OF LOVE Vs. 19

1 John 4:8 etc. YOU ARE LOVED!

Lloyd Ogilvie is Chaplain in the U.S. Senate. He grew up with this attitude towards himself: do and you'll receive, perform and you'll be loved.

"When (he) got good grades, achieved, and was a success (he) felt acceptance from his parents." His dad taught him to fish and hunt and worked hard to provide for his family, but he rarely said,

"Lloyd, I love you." His dad tried to show love by his actions and sometimes there was a twinkle of affirmation in his dad's eyes. But Lloyd still felt empty.

When Ogilvie became a Christian, he immediately got so involved in discipleship activities, that he says, "I did not experience the profound healing of the grace I talked about theoretically..."

Eventually Ogilvie became a post-graduate student at the University of Edinburgh. Because of financial pressures, he took a double course load all at once. This was very demanding, and he was exhausted by the constant feeling of never quite measuring up. No matter how good his grades were, he thought they should be better. He was not experiencing the very grace and joy that he was studying about.

Then one day, one of his professors, a short energetic man named Dr. James Stewart, confronted him in a corridor. Stewart knew exactly what Lloyd Ogilvie's problem was. He looked Ogilvie in the eye intensely. He smiled warmly, grabbed Ogilvie's coat lapels, drew him down to within a few inches of his own face and said, "Dear Boy, you are loved now!"

And I say to you this morning, "YOU ARE LOVED NOW!"

You are loved by family.

You are loved by friends.

You are loved by me.

But most of all, YOU ARE LOVED BY GOD!

Oh how much happier you would be if you realized that no matter what happens in your life today, God still loves you!

No matter what losses you experience, God still loves you.

No matter how badly you fail, God still loves you.

No matter how badly you feel, emotionally, Spiritually, or physically, God still loves you.

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU IS AUTHENTIC - 1 John 4:8

Not all love is true love.

We say "I love Pizza," or "I love steak." That kind of love is just a personal preference.

Sometimes somebody will tell you good news or do something nice to you and you might say, "I love you man!" But that kind of love is not true love. It is a spur of the moment, response of joy.

Many a guy has told many a girl that he loves her, wanting her to do things that are only appropriate in marriage. These guys will appeal to the girls and say, "If you love me, you'll do this."

A great answer for the girl to use to that kind of guy is "If you really love me, you'll wait until we are married."

God's love is the real deal. It is authentic.

1 John 4:8 - "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

God has various attributes or qualities that are part of His nature.

One of those qualities is love.

Notice from 1 John 4:8 that one can not know real love unless they know God. It is God who is the source and originator of true love.

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU IS ATONING - 1 John 4:10

We said that God's love is an attribute or quality of God.

But it is not the only attribute of God.

God has many attributes.

God is not only love, but He is holy. Leviticus 11:44, Psalm 99:3, Isaiah 40:25

Not only is holiness an attribute of God but so is righteousness.

Righteousness is closely related to holiness. God is separate from sin and that's holiness. God demands justice for sin. That's righteousness. Psalm 11:7,

God's holiness and righteousness holds you accountable for your sin. Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23

You deserve to die. You deserve the punishment of hell.

But this is where God's wonderful atoning love comes into play.

God in His love sent His Son to earth. Being perfect, without sin, Jesus could have condemned us all! He could have condemned us because He was righteous and we are not. He was sinless and we are not! John 3:17

So what did Jesus do to save the world?

God in His justice demanded that someone pay for our sins.

God in His love sent the sinless Lord Jesus to die in our place.

That is God's atoning love! Man could not pay for or atone for his own sins. He needed help. And God in His love sent the Lord Jesus. 1 John 4:10

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU IS AVAILABLE

Jesus has died for your sins.

Jesus has risen from the dead.

As God, Jesus is present now.

And through His Spirit He says, "Come".

"Come, and accept my forgiveness."

"Come, and put your trust in me."

"Come, and accept my love."

My friend, Jesus did all that was necessary for you to be forgiven of your sins. There is only one thing he wants from you, and he will not do this for you.

All the Lord Jesus wants is for you to place your faith in Him.

Loving forgiveness for all your sins is available if you but trust Him as your Savior, as your forgiveness from sin. Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16

God's love for you is available, but it is you who must decide.

You may have been attending church all your life, but if you have not made a personal decision to trust Christ, you have not accepted God's available love. You have rejected it. If you continue to reject it, the outlook is bleak. John 3:36

God's love was available to you for salvation.

God's love is available for you on a daily basis.

He loves you still and wants you to avail yourself of that love.

There was a great Old Testament saint by the name of Enoch.

It is said of Enoch that he walked with God.

Enoch talked to God all day. Enoch listened to God all day.

As he talked to God and listened to God he made himself available to the love of God.

Christian, God wants you to feel His love.

Christian, God wants you to enjoy His love.

Christian, God wants you to accept His love on a daily basis.

How do we accept His love? By abiding, remaining close to Him, just as Enoch did. John 15:4-5, John 15:7

Christian, God's love is available to you.

When you hurt, come to Him. Matthew 11:28

When you have sinned, come to Him. 1 John 1:9

When you need peace, come to Him. John 14:27

When you don't know which way to turn, turn to Him. Psalm 32:8

When you need a friend, come to Him. - He's the friend that sticks closer than a brother.

When you are disappointed come to Him. 1 Peter 5:7

GOD'S LOVE FOR YOU IS ABIDING

Christian, God does stop loving you.

To me, one of the greatest verses in all Scripture is Ephesians 1:6 - "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

If you are a born again Christian, you are accepted by God.

What more can you ask for.

Friends and Family might not always accept you.

Your enemies will not accept you.

Your government, your employer and perhaps even your church may not always accept you.

But you are always accepted in Christ!

Oh God does not accept your sin. You need to confess that.

But God does accept you as His child in Christ.

And this kind of love is an abiding love.

One of my favorite passages that shows this abiding love is Psalm 121. This Psalm uses the idea of God's keeping power as the expression of God's love. (I closed this message by reading Psalm 121 as the congregation listened with their eyes closed.)

YOU ARE LOVED BY GOD!

1 John 5:1-4 BE AN OVERCOMER!

An overcomer is a victor. He is a winner. He is one who has conquered! Here is how you can be an overcomer!

1. BELIEVE GOD FOR SALVATION Vs. 1a
2. LOVE GOD AND HIS CHILDREN Vss. 1b-2
3. OBEY GOD 3
4. TRUST GOD FOR DAILY LIVING Vs. 4

1 John 5:3-4, 11-15 CONFIDENCE

We've all met people who are confident in their abilities and strengths. Sometimes this confidence is a false confidence. Christians can have true confidence because of what Christ has done for them.

CONFIDENT PRACTICE - Vss. 3-4

The Christian can practice victorious living through faith.

CONFIDENT POSSESSION - Vss. 11-13

The Christian knows that he possesses eternal life.

CONFIDENT PRAYER - Vss. 14-15

When a Christian prays according to the will of God he knows that his prayers are answered.

1 John 5:11-13 THIS IS!

THIS IS THE RECORD - Vs. 11 - *And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

THIS IS THE REQUIREMENT - Vs. 12 - *He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

THIS IS THE REASSURANCE - Vs. 13 - *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

1 John 5:11-13 LIFE!

THE AVAILABILITY OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 11

THE ATTAINMENT OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 12

THE ASSURANCE OF ETERNAL LIFE Vs. 13

1 John 5:11-13 ETERNAL LIFE

THE GIFT OF LIFE - Vs. 11

THE POSSESSION OF LIFE - Vs. 12

THE ASSURANCE OF LIFE - Vs. 13

1 John 5:14-15 CONFIDENT PRAYER

It's nice when we can be confident. We like it when we can be confident in our ability to perform a task, or in the reliability of someone else or a product. Of course, when we have faith in Christ, we can be confident of eternal life (1 John 5:11-13).

God wants us to be confident when we pray. Our text gives us the details of confident prayer.

THE OBJECT OF CONFIDENT PRAYER - "And this is the confidence that we have in him..."

When we pray, we are to come in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:13-14, John 16:24, Hebrews 4:14-16) Our confidence is in God and in His Son.

THE OPPORTUNITY OF CONFIDENT PRAYER - "...that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us;"

The opportunity is to ask in confidence according to the will of God.

If we want to know what to pray for, we should search the Scriptures and find God's will. We will know God's will for ourselves, our friends, the unsaved, and the world as we study His Word. Then we can pray accordingly. If we do not know the will of God, we should ask for God to reveal it to us. (James 1:5-8)

THE OUTLOOK OF CONFIDENT PRAYER - Vs. 15

We know that we have what we ask for when we pray according to the will of God.

2 John A WORD OF WARNING

Even the strongest churches need warnings. Warnings help keep the saints alert and active in resisting error. The apostle John, referred to as the "elder", is the human author of this letter. He is writing to the "elect lady and her children", which is, evidently, a local church.

COMPLIMENTS - Vss. 1-4

John expresses his love in Verses 1-2.

He wishes them mercy and peace in Verse 3.

He rejoiced when he heard that the church was "walking in truth"(Vs.4).

COMMANDMENTS - Vss. 5-6

They were to continue to walk in his commandments, specifically the commandment to love one another.

CAUTION - Vss. 7, 9

There are deceivers around who do not have the correct doctrine of Christ.

CONDUCT - Vss. 8, 10-11

The church should hold to correct doctrine, for fear of losing reward. Vs. 8

False teachers are not to be entertained as brothers in Christ. Vss.10-11

CONCLUSION - Vss. 12-13

John hoped to visit soon.

He sent greetings from a "sister" church.

3 John 1-12 THE TRUTH

In the life of every church there will be times when the truth of God's Word will be challenged in some way.

It is our responsibility to know and live the truth. In this little epistle, truth was an issue in a local congregation. There were those who lived in truth and those who did not.

Through this epistle we are encouraged to:

PRACTICE THE TRUTH - Vss. 1-4

John loved Gaius in truth. Vss. 1-2

Gaius practiced the truth and this brought joy to John's heart. Vss. 3-4

PROMOTE THE TRUTH - Vss. 5-8

Gaius encouraged believers and unbelievers alike through his show of hospitality. Vs. 5

He was of particular help to those who traveled to preach the Word of God. Vs. 6

We should do all that we can to promote those who are not relying on Gentiles for their support but are taking the Word of God to the Gentiles. We should support missions! Vss. 7-8

PERCEIVE THE TRUTH - Vss. 9-12

Christians must be able to perceive who is living and teaching truth and who is living and teaching falsehood. If falsehood can not be perceived a church can be destroyed. If truth can not be perceived the church will not grow! We must be able to distinguish between good men and false teachers.

Diotropes - Vss. 9-11

Wanted to be a dictator. Vs. 9-10, Mark 9:33-35, Mark 10:42-45

Did not do what was good. Vs. 11

Demetrius - Vs. 12

Demetrius had a good testimony concerning his knowledge and practice of the truth.

Jude 20-23 END-TIMES BEHAVIOR

BUILDING ON FAITH Vs. 20a

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT Vs. 20b

KEEPING IN GOD'S LOVE Vs. 21a

LOOKING FOR JESUS' COMING Vs. 21b

RESCUING OTHERS Vss. 22-23

Jude 24-25 BENEDICTION

At the end of services in some churches the minister will give a benediction or a blessing.

Some Bible Books also end with a benediction or a blessing. Much can be learned from these benedictions, such as the one found here in Jude. This benediction is especially appropriate for times of thanksgiving.

GOD'S ABILITY - Vs. 24 - "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,"

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES - Vs. 25a - "To the only wise God our Saviour,"

1. Only wise God

2. Our Savior

GOD'S ADORATION - Vs. 25b - "be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

I should ascribe (give credit) to God all the glory, majesty, dominion and power. I should do this with my lips, but also in the way I conduct my life. I should let Him have all the glory and majesty in my thoughts and actions. I should let Him have the dominion and power over me.

Revelation 1:5-6 JESUS IS

And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

JESUS IS THE PROCLAIMER - ...who is the faithful witness...

JESUS IS THE PROOF (OF RESURRECTION) - ...and the first begotten of the dead...

JESUS IS THE PRINCE - ...and the prince of the kings of the earth.

JESUS IS THE PROPITIATION - Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood...

JESUS IS THE PROVIDER - And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father;

Revelation 1:5-8 LORD JESUS CHRIST

HIS IDENTITY Vs. 5a

Faithful Witness

First Begotten of the Dead.

Prince Of the Kings Of The Earth

HIS INVOLVEMENT Vss. 5b-6

He Loved Us.

He Washed Us.

He Made Us. (kings and priests)

HIS IMPACT Vss. 7-8

He's Coming! Vs. 7

He's Eternal! Vs. 8a

He's Almighty! Vs. 8b

Revelation 1:9-20 CALLED TO WRITE

The Apostle John was called by the Lord Jesus to write the last book of the Bible.

JOHN'S CONDITION - Vss. 9-10a

He was their brother.

He was their companion in tribulation.

He was prisoner on the Island of Patmos.

He was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day."

JOHN'S COMMANDER - Vss. 12-16

In this passage John sees the glorified Son of God. He is the one calling John to write.

JOHN'S COMMISSION - Vss. 17-20

John was to "fear not".

John was to write the things which he had seen (Chapter 1), "the things which are" (Chapters 2-3), "and the things which shall be hereafter" (Chapters 4-22). This, by the way, is the simplest outline of the Book of Revelation that I have ever seen.

JOHN'S CONGREGATION - Vss. 10a-11, 20

John was to write to the seven churches.

Revelation 2:1-5 FIRST LOVE!

In a physical sense every married person is to have a first love! That first love is to be the husband or wife that God has provided. Ephesians 5:25, Titus 2:4

There are problems when a marriage partner develops another "love" that takes the place of the original partner. Sometimes that "love" is another person, sometimes that "love" is wealth, fame, alcohol, drugs, or something else. It is also possible to leave a first love in a Spiritual sense. This is what the church in Ephesus did to Jesus. We must be careful because we can leave our love for the Lord Jesus just as easily.

INTRODUCTION

Our Lord is giving this message to the "Angel" of the church in Ephesus. I personally feel that He is referring to the pastor. The "stars" refer to the angels or pastors for the churches mentioned in Revelation 2-3 (Revelation 1:20). It is encouraging to me that He holds each pastor in His hand.

Also he walks among the candlesticks which refers to the churches (Revelation 1:20).

COMMENDATION - Vss. 2,3,6

Vs. 2 - Our Lord knows the work of each church. This church was a hard working, diligent church. They hated the activities of evil workers and false apostles.

Vs. 3 - Life wasn't easy for the Ephesian Christians, but the people labored faithfully during times of opposition and they did not faint!

Vs. 6 - There was a group of false teachers called the Nicolaitans whose deeds the Lord hated. The Ephesians hated these deeds as well.

CONDEMNATION - Vs. 4

They had left their first love! They were still busy, but no longer loved the Lord the way they once did.

Do you know what a person is called who cheats on his wife? He is called an adulterer. Our Lord hates spiritual adultery! James 4:4

How about us? Do we love anything or anyone more than we love Christ? Luke 14:26-27

COUNSEL - Vs. 5

They were to remember from where they had fallen. They were to repent. They were to go back to doing their first works. They were to beware lest their candlestick (testimony) be removed.

CHALLENGE - Vs. 7

We are to hear what our Lord is saying.

If we heed, there is reward!

Revelation 2:1-5 THE CHURCH WITH A SUBTLE PROBLEM

Walk into some churches and it's not hard to pick out problems which the church is experiencing. In other churches, however, the problems are not as obvious. Some churches have subtle problems, which do not appear upon casual observation. The church in Ephesus, addressed by the Lord Jesus in this passage, was such a church. (You might want to point out that if the church has a problem, the people have a problem.

The church is a reflection of the people in it, because people are the church.)

A GREAT PROGRAM Vss. 1-3

A GREAT PROBLEM Vs. 4

A GREAT PLAN Vs. 5

REMEMBER

REPENT

REPEAT ("...do the first works;")

OR REMOVAL (The candlestick represents the testimony of the church. The testimony of the church that does not make things right will eventually taken away.)

Revelation 3:1-6 WHEN GOD'S WORD HITS HOME

There will be times when the preaching of God's Word will bring conviction. The message that Jesus gave to the church of Sardis gives us some ideas of what to do when we are convicted.

BE APPALLED - Vs. 1

The people at Sardis should have been shocked, sorrowful and concerned that they were a dead church. We should be shocked, sorrowful and concerned when God's Word exposes our sins.

BE ACTIVE - Vss. 2-3

We need to actively repent of sin.

BE ASSURED - Vss. 4-5

The Lord Jesus promises blessings for those who overcome.

BE ATTENTIVE - Vs. 6

When God's Word is being presented, we need to hear and respond accordingly.

Revelation 3:7-13 THE CHURCH WITH THE OPEN DOOR

There have been times in my ministry when I had an "open door".

Someone was ready to receive Christ, and I was able to quickly lead that person to Him.

My friend Peggy is an example of that. Her husband had died, and she knew she needed the Savior. In a matter of moments, the transaction was completed.

We not only receive open doors for soul winning, but for other types of ministry as well. Sometimes the opportunities are just there to take advantage of. While pastoring in New York, I had an open door into cable television on the local public access station for five years.

It is a real blessing when our Lord Jesus gives us open doors of opportunity. The church in Philadelphia was told "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." (Vs. 8)

CHARACTER OF CHRIST - Vs. 7

The success of this church is based on the character of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is in charge.

He is holy.

He is true.

He has the key of David. This is a reference to Eliakim, who was evidently steward to King Hezekiah's house. He had access to, and was responsible for all the king's wealth. Isaiah 22:20-22

Spiritually speaking, our Lord Jesus has access and the key to the King's riches. He opens and closes as he pleases. He is responsible for all blessings. What he opens no man can close.

What He closes, no man can open.

COMPLIMENTS TO THE CHURCH Vs. 8

They had a little power, and evidently used it.

They kept His word.

They did not deny His name.

As a result, the Lord gave them an "open door".

CONFRONTATION WITH THE ENEMY Vs. 9

False Jews, those who did not believe on Messiah were persecuting the church.

The Lord would defeat them. Philippians 2:9-11

COMFORT FOR THE FUTURE Vs. 10

I personally think that the "hour of temptation" or testing is the Great Tribulation.

The church will be taken out before it happens by way of the rapture.

CHALLENGE TO PERSEVERE Vss. 11-13

Revelation 3:7-13 LOVE LETTER

In Revelation 2 & 3 our Lord Jesus Christ gives messages to 7 churches in Asia. Each message is to a certain type of church. The church in Philadelphia was a church that was being faithful to her Lord. This is a love letter from the Lord Jesus to this church.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE LORD - Vs. 7

ACTIONS FOR THE LORD - Vs. 8

ASSURANCE FROM THE LORD - Vss. 9,10,12

ADVICE BY THE LORD - Vss. 11, 13

Revelation 3:14-21 THE LUKEWARM CHURCH

The last of the seven churches addressed by our Lord Jesus seems to be very prevalent in our world today. This is the lukewarm church of Laodicia. Drinks that are lukewarm are rarely pleasant. I never offer someone a nice "luky" cup of coffee. The lukewarm church is not pleasant to our Lord.

THE LORD'S APPRAISAL Vss. 14-17

THE LORD'S ADVICE Vss. 18-19

THE LORD'S AVAILABILITY Vss. 20-22

Revelation 4 A GLIMPSE OF HEAVEN

HEAVENLY SUMMONS – Vss. 1-2

HEAVENLY SCENE – Vss. 3-7

HEAVENLY SERVICE – Vss. 8-11

Revelation 4:11 EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

The day after Thanksgiving marks the beginning of the holiday shopping season for Christmas. If you value your sanity, the best thing to do the Friday after Thanksgiving is to stay out of the department stores! Christmas is coming, and most of us have a sizable Christmas shopping list. I wonder how many have on their list the one who's birthday we celebrate? He's the only one I know who celebrates a birthday and watches others get more presents than He does.

Revelation 4 is an heavenly scene showing the worship around the throne of God. The four and twenty elders are worshipping God, and cast crowns at His feet. As they cast these thrones they say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power..."

Here are three things that every Christian can give the Triune God as an early Christmas present.

GLORY

Glory is praise. We can and should continually give God praise and Thanksgiving. Hebrews 13:15, Philippians 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Psalm 29:2, Psalm 100

HONOR

We honor God by:

1. Trusting Christ As Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9
2. Doing good works Ephesians 2:10
3. Using fitting speech. Ephesians 4:29
4. Avoiding the wrong places. Psalm 1:1
5. Doing all things for His glory. Colossians 3:23
6. Thinking the right thoughts. Philippians 4:8
7. Being Obedient. John 14:15

POWER

Allow God's power to work in you. Ephesians 5:18-21, Galatians 5:22-23

Allow God's power to work through you. Philippians 4:13

Revelation 5 A GREAT DAY IN HEAVEN

SEALED BOOK - Vs. 1

STRONG ANGEL - Vs. 2

SAD STATE - Vss. 3-4

SAVING KING - Vss. 5-7

STUPENDOUS WORSHIP - Vss. 8-14

Revelation 6 OPENED SEALS

THE HORSES – Vss. 1-8

THE HONORED – Vss. 9-11

THE HARM – Vss. 12-14

THE HOPELESS – Vss. 15-17

Revelation 7 INTERLUDE

The seven seals were being opened. In between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals, there is an interlude described here.

A PAUSE IN THE ACTION – Vss. 1-3

THE PLACEMENT OF THE SEAL – Vss. 4-8

(This was a seal of protection and ownership.)

THE PRAISE IN HEAVEN – Vss. 9-12

THE PEOPLE WHO WORSHIPPED – Vss. 13-17

Revelation 16 IMPACT!

During the Great Tribulation there will be a time when vials of wrath will be poured out in judgement upon the earth. They will have a tremendous impact!

THE SORES - Vs. 2

THE SOURCES - Vss. 3-7

The sources of water will be turned to blood.

THE SUN - Vss. 8-9

THE SEAT - Vss. 10-11

THE SPIRITS - Vss. 12-16

The River Euphrates is dried up and three unclean spirits come out of the mouth of the Dragon, The Beast, and the False Prophet. They lead their followers to Armageddon.

THE SHOCK - Vss. 17-21

There is a tremendous earthquake and "great hail out of heaven".

Revelation 19:11-20:3 THE KING ESTABLISHES HIS RULE

At the end of the "Great Tribulation" the Lord Jesus will come to earth and establish His rule. Here is what will happen.

ARRIVAL OF THE KING 19:11-16

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE KING 19:17-18

ATTACK BY THE KING 19:19-20:3

Revelation 20:1-10 SATAN'S LAST HURRAH

Satan will lose the Battle of Armageddon to the Lord Jesus.

He will be imprisoned and then released for one last rebellion.

SATAN RESTRICTED - Vss. 1-3 - TO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT

SAINTS RESURRECTED - Vss. 4-6 - TO REIGN WITH CHRIST

SATAN RELEASED - Vss. 7-9a - TO INDUCE REBELLION

Those entering the Millennium will have children who will not all become believers. It is these unbelievers who will follow Satan.

SATAN REMOVED - Vss. 9b-10 - TO THE LAKE OF FIRE

Revelation 20:11-15 WHY I BELIEVE IN MISSIONS

There are many reasons to believe in missions. The best reason is the great commission of Matthew 28:19-20. However the account of The Great White Throne Judgment of unbelievers gives me four more reasons to believe in missions.

I believe in missions because of:

1. THE MAJESTY OF THE JUDGE (The Lord Jesus) Vs. 11

2. THE MULTITUDES THAT ARE PRESENT Vss. 12a & 13a

3. THE METHOD OF JUDGMENT Vss. 12b & 13B.

Unsaved men will be punished for their works, just as saved men will be rewarded for their works (1 Cor 4:5, 2 Cor 5:10) This only has to do with severity of judgment or reward, not salvation.

4. THE MISERY OF THE MISSING ENTRY. Vss. 14-15

When a person is born again he or she has his name written in the "Book of Life." When a person is not born again, he or she faces the punishment of the Lake of Fire. If a person's name is missing, so is Heaven for that person.

Revelation 21:8 ALL THINGS NEW!

After the return of Christ to earth (Revelation 19), the millennial reign of Christ for a thousand years (Revelation 20:6-7), the final rebellion of Satan (Revelation 20:7-10) and the final judgement of the unsaved (Revelation 20:11-18), God is going to make all things new! There will be:

NEW PLACES - Vss. 1-2

New heaven

New earth

New Jerusalem

NEW PRESENCE - Vs. 3

NEW PEACE - Vs. 4

Tears will be wiped away.

Death, sorrow, crying and pain will be eliminated.

NEW PEOPLE - Vss. 5-7

Those who are made over new in Christ in this life (John 3:1-17) will enjoy the benefits of eternal life.

NEW PROHIBITION - Vs. 8

Those who sinned without coming to Christ will be prohibited from entering.

Revelation 21:8 ETERNALLY HIS!

Most Christians look forward to Heaven! For all eternity we will be in the place described in these verses.

We will be eternally God's possession in Christ! We can look forward to:

NEW ADDRESS (New Jerusalem) Vss. 1-2

NEW ASSOCIATION (With God) Vss. 3-4

NEW ASSURANCES (From God) Vss. 5-8

Revelation 21:6-27 WHAT A PLACE!

Those of us who are born again look forward to a New Heaven and a New Earth. Our home will be the New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:1-5

BLESSINGS - Vss. 6-7

BANISHMENT - Vs. 8

BRIDE - Vss. 9-27

The Gates - Vss. 12-13

The Grounding - Vss. 14,19-20

The Grandeur - Vss. 15-18

The Glory - Vss. 10-11, 22-27

Revelation 21:22-27 WHAT WON'T BE

There will be a day when there will be a new Heaven, a new earth, and a New Jerusalem! Revelation 21:1-2
In New Jerusalem some things will be conspicuous by their absence.

THERE WILL BE NO SANCTUARY (TEMPLE) Vs. 22

God the Father and God the Sun will be there. They will be the temple.

THERE WILL BE NO SUN - Vss. 23-24

God's glory will be all the light that is needed!

THERE WILL BE NO SHUTTING - Vss. 25-26

The gates will not be shut during the day, and there won't be any night.

THERE WILL NO SIN - Vs. 27

Only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life will be allowed to enter. Revelation 20:15

Revelation 22:1-7 FOUR THINGS THAT WON'T LAST

When the Lord brings in the New Heaven, New Earth and New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-2), there are four things that won't be there. They are with us now, but they'll be gone.

THERE WILL BE NO CURSE Vss. 1-3a See Genesis 3:17-19

THERE WILL BE NO SHAME Vss. 3b-4 - His servants will serve Him freely and openly.

THERE WILL BE NO NIGHT Vs. 5

THERE WILL BE NO DOUBT Vss. 6-7

Revelation 22:16-21 FINAL WORDS

These are the last words written in the Word of God. Here we find:

THE IDENTITY OF JESUS - Vs. 16

1. Root and offspring of David.

2. Bright and morning star.

THE INVITATION OF JESUS - Vs. 17 - "Come"

THE INTENT OF JESUS Vss. 18-21

1. To discipline those who add to or delete from the Word of God. Vss. 18-19

2. To come quickly. Vs. 20

3. To give grace. Vs. 21

Revelation 22:21 WISHING YOU GOD'S BEST

What is the nicest thing that you can wish for somebody? I believe that it's wishing that they would have God's best in their lives! What is God's best for every person? John sums it up in the last verse found in the Bible, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

It is interesting to note that John ends his great book of prophecy with a benediction. After giving the most complete description of the end times, He wishes his readers "grace" or unmerited favor.

What are some of the blessings of grace that we should wish on others, that God has wished on us?

SALVATION BY GRACE

Ephesians 2:8-9

STRENGTH BY GRACE

Philippians 4:13, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 3:16, Peter 5:10

SERENITY BY GRACE

Isaiah 26:3-4, John 14:27, Philippians 4:6-7

SUPPLY BY GRACE

Psalm 23:1, Philippians 4:19, Matthew 16:33

May you, my friend, have the grace of salvation, the grace of God's strength, the grace of God's serenity, and the grace of God's supply.

FUNERAL OUTLINES

Genesis 23 ABOUT DEATH

In this chapter Abraham deals with the death of his beloved wife, Sarah.

Some things about death have not changed since the days of Abraham.

DEATH IS A TIME OF SORROW - Vss. 1-2

DEATH IS A TIME OF SUPPORT - Vss. 3-6

Dealing with the death of a loved is easier when there are those there to support you.

In Abraham's case, the Sons of Heath were supportive, offering to him a place of burial of his choice.

Praise God for those Christians who "...weep with them that weep." (Romans 12:15)

DEATH IS A TIME OF SPENDING - Vss. 7-16

Abraham purchased a field with a cave in order to bury Sarah. We can't escape expenses when someone dies. However, I personally feel that we can spend too much. Although a casket is necessary, I don't think it needs to be the most expensive. After all, the body is only a shell that God will raise again.

DEATH IS A TIME OF SEPARATION - Vss. 8, 17-20

A dead person is placed out of sight. - Vs. 8

The dead person is gone.

The dead person is separated from the land of the living and his loved ones and friends.

For the Christian however, this separation is temporary. 2 Corinthians 5:8-9, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Job 19:25-27 LIFE! (Possibly a good funeral sermon)

Those of us who know Christ as Savior realize that we have life beyond the grave.

That's because we have:

A LIVING REDEEMER - Job 19:25a - "For I know that my redeemer liveth..." Isaiah 53

A LIVING REIGN - Job 19:25b - Job 19:25 "...and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:"

Psalm 2, Isaiah 11

A LIVING REALITY - Job 19:26-27 - "And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." 1 John 3:1-2, 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18

Psalm 116:15 THE DEATH OF HIS SAINTS (A Funeral Message)

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

The death of a saint (born again Christian) is precious because of:

1. THE PERSON WHO DIED - A CHILD OF GOD - John 1:12, Romans 8:15-16
2. THE PRICE THAT WAS PAID - THE SHED BLOOD OF CHRIST - 1 Peter 1:18-19
3. THE PLACE THAT HE HAS GONE - HOME - Philippians 1:21, 2 Corinthians 5:6-8, Revelation 21:1-4
4. THE PROMISE OF RESURRECTION - RAPTURE - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Matthew 11:28 THE GREATEST INVITATION (A FUNERAL SERMON)

As we go through life, we receive many invitations.

Lately we have received invitations to graduation parties and weddings.

We also get invited out for dinner, to go to parties, and to attend sporting events.

We are used to getting invitations.

Today I would like to share with you the greatest invitation anyone has ever given. The Lord Jesus Christ gave it.

Matthew 11:28 - "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There are times in our lives, especially at a time of sorrow like this one, that we sense a need for rest. We feel like the whole world is caving in on us. We wonder where to turn. The Lord Jesus Christ invites us to turn to Him!

Jesus Christ, the Son of God says, "Come unto me!"

He says "I will give you rest!"

There are two types of rest needed that Christ will provide in this current situation:

REST FROM SIN

Each and every one of us has sinned.

Each and every one of us has failed almighty God.

Most of us are not bank robbers or murderers.

However, we have been unreasonably angry.

We have been disobedient.

We have had bad attitudes.

We have not done things we knew we should have done.

We have done things we knew we shouldn't have done.

We have thought things we should not have thought.

The Bible says "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

The Bible says "There is none righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:10

The Bible says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4

There is guilt and punishment associated with sin.

We need someone to relieve the burden of sin.

On the cross Jesus made the way to relieve the guilt and burden of sin. 2 Corinthians 5:21

On the cross Jesus took the punishment for your sins and mine on his own shoulders. He died in our place!

But Jesus didn't stay dead. He arose from the dead.

Because He is alive, he still says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

So, how do we come to Him?

John 3:16 - We come to Christ by faith, trusting Him alone for forgiveness of our sin, believing that He took care of it on the cross. If you haven't found rest from sin, I invite you to put your faith in Christ.

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

REST FROM SORROW

There are many sorrows in this world.

We are experiencing just one of them right now.

However, the Lord Jesus says to us "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Bring your sorrow to the Lord Jesus.

First, find rest in Him from sin.

Then, find rest in Him for sorrow.

Come, and pour out your heart to Him and find His peace. John 14:27, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

REST FROM SIN

REST FROM SORROW

John 14:1-6 BE AT PEACE (A funeral message)

INTRODUCTION - Vs. 1 - "Let not your heart be troubled..."

A PREPARED PLACE - Vs. 2 - "I go to prepare a place for you..."

Jesus is preparing a place for us in Heaven.

But, in a real sense He already prepared a place for us by dying for our sins on the cross. Without the cross there would be no forgiveness. Without forgiveness there would be no place in Heaven. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:6-9

A PROMISED RETURN - Vss 3-4 - "I will come again..."

Jesus will return for the resurrection of all believers. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But when a believer dies, his spirit enters into Heaven. Therefore, in a sense, Jesus has already come for that individual. Philippians 1:21, 2 Corinthians 5:8

A PERSONAL WAY - John 14:5-6 - "I am the way..."

Jesus is personally the way to Heaven.

Each person must personally trust Christ as his Savior. John 3:36

John 14:1-6 HE'S (SHE'S) DEAD BUT... A FUNERAL MESSAGE

HE'S DEAD BUT JESUS CAN BE TRUSTED – Vs. 1

The dead Christian has trusted Jesus as Savior

HE'S DEAD BUT JESUS PREPARED FOR HIS ARRIVAL IN HEAVEN – Vss. 2-3

HE'S DEAD BUT JESUS CAME AGAIN FOR HIM – Vs. 3

HE'S DEAD BUT JESUS IS SUFFICIENT – Vss. 4-6

A MODEL MOM (PARENT) Selected Scriptures

Introduction - Titus 2:3-5 teaches that older women are to be good teachers and models for younger women. Mary, the mother of our Lord, was not perfect or sinless, but she was a good example of sound parenting for moms and dads alike. Consider:

1. HER CHARACTER

Highly Favored, or "Full of Grace" - She was a saved woman. Luke 1:26-28

2. HER COURAGE 1:30-38

She accepted what the angel had to say, realizing she would be falsely accused of immorality.

3. HER CONTEMPLATION Luke 2:19, 51

Mary meditated on what was said about and by her son.

She attempted to understand. Understanding is something all our children need.

4. HER CONFIDENCE John 2:1-11

Mary believed in her son. See Vs. 5

5. HER COMMITMENT John 19:25

Mary stayed committed to her son right up to the cross!

Selected Scriptures I'D RATHER SING

Some of the darkest days in our nation's history were the days when we practiced slavery.

The Black people showed remarkable spirit and faith. Their attitude was, "I'd rather sing."

Out of their pain came some great Spirituals:

Nobody Knows the Trouble of I've Seen

There is a balm in Gilead

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

He Never Said a Mumbling Word

"I'd rather sing" is a good philosophy.

Most of us would rather sing than cry.

Most of us would rather sing than complain.

Most of us would rather sing than think evil thoughts.

Most of us would rather sing than be angry.

Most of us would rather sing than do evil.

"I'd rather sing" is a Biblical attitude. The Book of Psalms mentions singing on many occasions.

Three of these occasions are Psalms 47:6-7, 89:1, 49:1,3

Colossians 3:16 - *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

Ephesians 5:18-19 - *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; [19]*

Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

As a result of the Word of Christ and the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, our attitude should be I'd rather sing.

Using our hymnbooks, let's consider songs that we can sing that will minister to our hearts not just on Sundays, but all through the week.

I'D RATHER SING HIS PRAISE

Our praise is to be continual - Philippians 4:4, 1 Thessalonians 5:16, Hebrews 13:15

Our praise is an act of worship - Psalm 100:2

Some of the songs in our hymnbooks that encourage us to praise include:

Holy, Holy, Holy

O Worship The King

How Great Thou Art

Blessed Assurance

I'D RATHER SING OF HIS PEACE

Romans 5:1 tells us that a saved person has peace with God.

Not only do we need peace with God, but the peace of God is also promised. John 14:27, Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7

When we become disturbed at the world situation or our own situation, we can focus on the peace of God by singing about it.

Abide With Me

Tell It to Jesus

The Haven of Rest

I'd Rather Have Jesus

It is Well With My Soul

The Solid Rock

Blessed Quietness

I'D RATHER SING A PRAYER

We are called to pray. Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 7:7-11, 1 Thessalonians 5:17

Sometimes we wonder how to pray. Sometimes hymns that are prayers will help us express ourselves.

Breathe on me Breath of God

Send the Old Time Power

Showers of Blessing

Have Thine Own Way, Lord

King of My Life I Crown Thee Now

Take My Life and Let It Be

I'D RATHER SING OF HIS PRESENCE

In John 15:4-5 Jesus tells us to abide in Him. Singing of His presence will help us abide in His presence.

Some hymns that help us abide:

Turn You Eyes Upon Jesus

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Near the Cross

Face To Face

Saved By Grace

What a Friend We Have in Jesus

In The Garden

I'D RATHER SING OF PERFORMANCE (OBEDIENCE)

Obedience is an essential to our lives. We will perform well as we obey the admonitions of some of our favorite hymns.

Trust and Obey

Onward Christian Soldiers

Joy in Serving Jesus

Take Time To Be Holy

Are Ye Able Said the Master

Who is on the Lord's Side?

Make Me A Blessing

I'D RATHER SING A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Psalm 107:2 reminds us that we are to testify of our salvation.

We can sing our personal testimonies with hymns like:

The Old Rugged Cross

At The Cross

Standing On The Promises

O Happy Day

I Love To Tell The Story

Amazing Grace

As for me, I'D RATHER SING! How about you?

MISSIONS OUTLINES

Selected Scriptures THE CHALLENGE TO MISSIONS

We must not forget the importance of missions in our preaching.

The words of Romans 10:13-15 serve as a good introduction to this

message "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?". "How shall they hear without a preacher?" "How shall they preach except they be sent?"

THE COMMAND TO MISSIONS - Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20

THE CONCERN FOR MISSIONS - Revelation 20:15.

Why should we be concerned about missions? Whoever does not believe in Christ as Savior will end up the Lake of Fire.

THE COMMITMENT OF MISSIONS - Romans 12:1-2, Galatians 6:14

The missionary has a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, and the preaching of His cross. The missionary's main goal is to proclaim Christ.

THE CONTINUATION OF MISSIONS - 2 Timothy 2:2

The missionary is to train those He wins to Christ to teach others.

Missionaries are to be recruited from those who are won to Christ.

THE COMMENDATION OF MISSIONS - Daniel 12:3, 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

BEYOND THIS CHURCH

"Once upon a time, there was a giant who liked to sleep all the time. Mind you, this giant was not always like that; when he was much younger, he used to go outside all the time to work in the garden. His father had given him this garden as a gift many years ago. The giant was very good at gardening; he used to raise some prized produce there. Now, that he was older, he became lazy and laid around his house all the time. He neglected the garden that he once loved.

"One day a friend stopped by his house to see how the giant's garden was doing. When the friend got there, he discovered that the garden was a total wreck. The soil had not been tilled in months, the weeds were taking over the whole thing , there were even ugly black crows pecking at the fruits in the garden. It was a mess!

"The friend began to knock on the giant's door to find out just what had happened to his friend. 'Hello! Are you there my friend?', cried the man at the door. But the giant kept on sleeping. The man at the door heard the loud snoring of the giant and tried even harder to wake him. 'Mr. Giant! are you OK in there, please wake up!' shouted his friend as he pounded on the door of the house.

"The giant snorted loudly and was aroused from his slumber. The friend continued, 'Mr. Giant, time to wake up and tend you fathers garden!' When the giant heard this, he was wroth. 'How dare this so called friend of mine wake me up while I am sleeping!', said the giant, 'Go away you pest!!!' But, his friend at the door was very persistent, 'Time to wake up Mr. Giant, there is much work to do and very little time before the winter comes!' The giant reached over his bed, picked up a shoe and threw it at the door with great force. 'I said go away!!! I don't want to work in that stupid old garden, besides, I have plenty of produce stored up in my pantry to last me a lifetime.'

"When he saw that the friend would not leave, he reached over and turned on his radio. A soft and soothing lullaby drifted out of the speakers like dandelion seeds in the summer breeze. His friend continued pounding at the door insistently. The giant covered his head with a pillow and began to drift off into sleep again. He thought to himself, 'Maybe my friend is right. Perhaps I should tend father's garden.' Part of him knew it was the right thing to do, but the urge to sleep drowned out those thoughts, as the sounds of his friend's voice faded like the whispers of a dream. His friend went away very sad."

"The winter wind swept into the village. All the produce in the garden was lost. The giant slept peacefully."

In this story, I (Jack) think of the sleeping giant as the local church. The church is a giant because here is found the secrets of eternal life and Spiritual happiness in Jesus Christ. The garden I view as the world. The garden needs to be tended by the church so there will be produce or people saved through witnessing. Most churches are like this giant. We tend to be asleep while the world is rotting away. Soon wintertime will come. Jesus will return. Much of the crop will be lost , because the church was asleep.

Most Gospel preaching churches tend to be sleepy. They may support missions and rejoice when people get saved, but they basically busy themselves with their own programs that have little outreach.

The church tends to be sleepy because you and I are sleepy. We busy ourselves with our own affairs, our work, our families, our homes, our friends, and our pleasures. But we don't look past ourselves to see the world as it is. We need a "worldview" which goes beyond our local church and our own families.

Does God have a worldview? You find the answer to that question in John 3:16, Mark 16:15, 1 Timothy 2:1-4 and Ephesians 6:18.

We need:

A WORLDVIEW OF SIN - Romans 3:10-12, 23, Ezekiel 18:4, Revelation 21:27, John 14:6

Give examples of sin around the world.

A WORLDVIEW OF SALVATION - Hebrews 9:27-28, Matthew 11:28, John 3:16-18, Revelation 22:17, Romans 10:13-15

A WORLDVIEW OF SUCCESS

God is at work around the world. Give examples.

A WORLDVIEW OF SUFFERING - Hebrews 13:3, 2 Timothy 3:12

Again, give examples of suffering saints you know of.

A WORLDVIEW OF SUPPORT

We support God's worldview:

When we go. Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 28:19-20

When we pray. Luke 10:2, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Ephesians 6:18

When we give. 2 Corinthians 9:6-11

Selected Scriptures WHAT NOW PETER?

If anyone knew what it meant to have "ups and downs" it was the Apostle Peter.

He was certainly up when his brother Andrew found him and took him to Jesus.

Not only did he find the Messiah, the Savior, The Son of God, but Jesus told him,

"Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."

(John 1:42)

Not too long after that Peter allowed Jesus to use his boat for some teaching. Jesus then told him to launch out for a catch. Peter was up when he said, "Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net." (Luke 5:5) Imagine Peter's surprise when two boats began to sink as a result of the catch of fish. Peter was brought low enough to say, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke 5:8) Peter was brought back up by Jesus' encouraging words, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men." (Luke 5:10)

Peter had similar "ups and downs" when Jesus walked on the water (Matthew 14:25-32) and when he identifies Jesus as Son of God and then rebukes the Lord for talking about His death (Matthew 16:13-23).

Peter's greatest down time is recorded in Matthew 26:31-35 and 69-75. Peter had "blown it" and done dumb things before, but this denial of Jesus was his greatest failure, his biggest "down".

He was totally done! Was there forgiveness for Him? Was there a second chance? Would Peter ever serve the Master again?

Some time in your life you will feel just like Peter. You will wonder if the Lord can or will forgive you or if the Lord will ever use you in His service again. When you feel this way you will be asking the same question that Peter was asking, "What now?" When this happens, remember the answers that Peter received.

What now, Peter?

NOW THERE IS FORGIVENESS

Failure because of sin requires forgiveness.

After the final events of Jesus' life, Peter, of all the Apostles, needed forgiveness the most.

He had been most adamant in his loyalty to Christ and most flagrant by denying Him.

In Mark 16:6-7 an angel told the women to tell the Apostles and Peter of the resurrection.

In Luke 24:34 we find that before he appeared to the rest of the disciples, the Lord appeared to Peter. Of course, I am speculating a bit, but I feel the appearance of was so Peter could confess his sin and receive the needed forgiveness.

Sin separates our fellowship with God (Psalm 66:18), but confession restores it (Psalm 32:5, 1 John 1:9).

What now, Peter?

NOW THERE IS A FUTURE - John 21

Vss. 1-3 - Why did Simon decide to go fishing? Could it be that although he was forgiven, he went back to secular work? Could it be that although he was forgiven, he no longer felt qualified to serve?

The first time Peter was commissioned, Peter had fished all-night and caught nothing. He then had a great catch at the Lord's command. He was then told to fear not, for he would catch men (Luke 5:1-11).

Vss. 4-7 - The second commissioning of Peter was also preceded by a night of fishing in which nothing was caught. There was also another supernatural catch of fish.

Vss. 9-12 - There is an invitation to "Come and dine." It was after this meal that Jesus talks to Peter. Probably Peter had not yet forgiven himself for the events that had transpired. Note that as Jesus had been publicly denied by Peter around a fire, now Peter publicly affirms his affection for Jesus before the disciples and before a fire.

Vss. 15-17 -Peter had denied Jesus three times. Peter now reaffirms his love for Jesus 3 times. (You may want to discuss the meanings of the two Greek words for love used in this passage.) After each question Jesus says to Peter "Feed my lambs", or "Feed my sheep."

Peter had a future for the Lord.

Even when we fail it does not mean that we are done being used in service by the Lord.

Perhaps it might not mean service in the same capacity, or ministry, or town, or on the same level. However, there is still work to be done!

What now, Peter?

NOW THERE IS FILLING

Peter was repentant and forgiven. Peter had a future. But Peter needed help. Jesus had promised the help that Peter needed. It was the help of the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-17, Acts 1:8

The help came at Pentecost. Acts 2:1-4

For us being filled with the Holy Spirit is a key ingredient for service. Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16, Galatians 5:22

What now, Peter?

NOW THERE IS FRUITFULNESS

In Acts 2-3 Peter preaches two sermons and there are thousands of converts.

Peter ended up being a key leader in the early church.

This man who once denied his Lord wrote 1&2 Peter.

Our lives can also be fruitful for our Lord.

What now, Peter?

NOW THERE IS FAITHFULNESS - John 21:18-19

One day Peter would show his faithfulness to Christ. He would also be crucified.

As we read the story of Peter's ministry after Pentecost we find a man who was faithful to his Lord.

What more can we ask for ourselves? 1 Corinthians 4:2

TIME TO VOTE! (A Topical Message)

We are drawing close to another election in the United States, and I feel that it is the responsibility of every Christian to vote. But there is a greater election taking place and there are eternal issues at stake. Every person must vote in this election.

GRASP THE ISSUE

The issue is Heaven or Hell. John 3:14-18, 36

GO TO THE POLLS

Vote for the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12

GET OUT THE VOTE

Tell others about the Lord Jesus - Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15

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Pastor Jack Peters
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