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Genesis 1 THE GOD OF CREATION

Genesis 1 gives us some repeating thoughts about creation which are worth considering. They give us a better insight into the nature of our God.

"GOD SAID" - HIS AUTHORITY OVER CREATION - Vss. 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26

"IT WAS SO" - HIS ACTION IN CREATION - Vss. 7, 11, 15, 24, 30

"IT WAS GOOD" - HIS APPROVAL OF CREATION - Vss. 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31.

Genesis 2:4-25 INTRODUCING...MAN!

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 4-6

A LOWLY START - Vs. 7a - "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground,"

A LIVING SOUL - Vs. 7b - "...and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

A LOVELY SPOT - Vss. 8-24

1. The Resources Of Eden - Vss. 8-14
2. The Responsibilities In Eden - Vss. 15-16
3. The Restrictions Of Eden - Vss. 17-18
4. The Rejoicing In Eden - Vss. 19-24 - Adam gets a bride!

Genesis 2:15-24 FATHER KNOWS BEST

In real life no human father always knows what is best. Our heavenly Father, however, always does know what is best, and does it for us. In dealing with Adam, God shows us that as Heavenly Father, he knows what is best.

There are 4 needs mentioned in this passage which God met for Adam. He meets these same needs for us.

THE NEED TO LABOR - Vs. 15

God knew that man should not just sit around.

God created him to be useful and productive.

Adam was to till and maintain the garden.

God has made Christians to be productive as well. 2 Thessalonians 3:10, Ephesians 2:10

THE NEED FOR LIBERTY - Vss. 16 & 19

Adam was no robot. He was given certain freedoms. He was able to choose what to eat and to name the animals as he pleased.

We are given a special kind of liberty as Christians.

We are at liberty to have freedom over sin (Romans 6:14) and to love and serve God and others (Matthew 22:37-40, Galatians 5:13-14)

THE NEED FOR LIMITATIONS - Vs. 17

God limits us because He loves us. We don't always know what's is best for us, but God does.

Adam was limited from eating "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

God gives us limitations as well. Good examples of these limitations are found in Proverbs 6:16-19 and Galatians 5:17-21. The Ten Commandments also provide certain limitations.

THE NEED FOR LOVE - Vss. 18-25

God knew that Adam needed a mate, a woman to love and help him. He provided Eve for Adam.

God provides the love of husband and wife today, as well as love within a family.

God's greatest show of love was on the cross. Through faith in Christ one can have eternal life. (John 3:16).

Nothing separates Christians from the love of God (Romans 8:35-39). Christians are to love each other (John 13:34-35).

Genesis 2:18-25 FIRST FAMILY (LITERALLY!)

ADAM'S PROBLEM - Vss. 18-20 - No helpmeet.

GOD'S PROVISION - Vss. 21-22 - Rib surgery!

WOMAN'S PLACE - Vss. 23-25 - One flesh with man.

Genesis 2:18 etc. EVE!

EVE'S STANDING 2:18, 24

1. Helper Vs. 18
2. One flesh with Adam 24

EVE'S SIN 3:1-6, 13

EVE'S SAVIOR 3:15

Here is the first promise of our wonderful Lord and Savior.

EVE'S SORROW 3:16, 22-24, 4:1-8

1. In childbirth 3:16
2. In separation from God 3:22-24
3. In experiencing the murder of her son by her son 4:1-8

GENESIS 3 THE FALL

THE WORK OF SATAN

Prodding Eve - Vss. 1-5

THE WORK OF ADAM AND EVE

Picking Sin - Vs. 6

Panicking Before God - 7-11

Passing The Blame - Vss. 12-13

THE WORK OF GOD

Promising A Savior - Vss. 14-15

Proclaiming Judgment - Vss. 16-25

Genesis 3:1-6 THE BIG "D"

Hebrews 3:12 warns, *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

Another word for unbelief is doubt. Satan has been working at creating doubt in the hearts of men ever since the Garden of Eden.

There are four things that Satan wanted Eve to doubt.

1. HE WANTED HER TO DOUBT THE WORD OF GOD - Vs. 1

Satan asked "Hath God said?" He was wanting Eve to doubt the very words spoken of God.

2. HE WANTED HER TO DOUBT THE HONESTY OF GOD - Vs. 4

God said man would die if he ate of the fruit. Genesis 2:17 Satan claimed differently.

3. HE WANTED HER TO DOUBT THE GOODNESS OF GOD - Vs. 5

Satan tried to make Eve think that God was withholding something good from her. In reality, God was protecting Eve.

4. HE WANTED HER TO DOUBT THE WISDOM OF GOD

The whole passage implies to us that Satan was challenging how wise God really is.

Satan still tries to get us to doubt today. He wants us to doubt what the Bible tells us to be true.

He wants us to doubt the Word of God - 2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12, Romans 15:4

He wants us to doubt the honesty of God - Psalm 145:17, Psalm 119:137, 1 Peter 1:15-16

He wants us to doubt the goodness of God - Psalm 145:8-9, John 3:16, 1 John 4:10

He wants us to doubt the wisdom of God - Romans 11:33, James 3:17

Genesis 4:1-8 ABEL, THE MAN WHO PLEASSED GOD

Pleasing God is the most important thing in the world. Abel shows us how to please God.

PROPER APPROACH TO GOD Vss. 2-4

1. He came in the righteousness of another.

(He came an offering from the flock. We come in the righteousness of Christ. 1Corinthians 1:30)

2. He came through a blood sacrifice.

(We come through the shed blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:22, Romans 5:9)

3. He came to God by faith. Hebrews 11:4

(We come to God by faith. Hebrews 11:6, Romans 5:1)

PERFECT ACCEPTANCE BY GOD Vs. 4

(When we come to Christ by faith, we are accepted by Him. Ephesians 1:6)

PREDICTABLE ATTACK BY THE UNGODLY Vs. 8

(John 15:18-25)

Genesis 4:1-15 KIDS ARE DIFFERENT

Everyone is unique. We are not the same. Adam and Eve had many children, but two are mentioned here. Cain and Able were different . One was Godly. The other was not.

TWO OFFSPRING Vss. 1-2

TWO OFFERINGS Vss. 3-4

TWO OUTCOMES Vss. 4-15

Genesis 4:1-16 DIFFERENT!

TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE - Vss. 1-2

1. Cain was a farmer.
2. Abel was a shepherd

TWO DIFFERENT OFFERINGS - Vss. 3-4

1. Cain brought vegetables.
2. Abel brought an offering from the flock - a blood sacrifice.

TWO DIFFERENT RESPONSES (FROM GOD) - Vss. 4-5

1. God accepted Abel's offering.
2. God rejected Cain's offering.

TWO DIFFERENT REACTIONS (TO GOD'S REJECTION) - Vss. 6-8

1. Cain could have repented and given the right offering.
2. He chose to get angry and kill his brother.

TWO DIFFERENT FUTURES - Vss. 9-16

1. Abel is in Heaven.
2. Cain is in hell because he was separated from God.

Genesis 5 SOMEONE SPECIAL

Most of us find genealogies difficult to follow. In the middle of this genealogy we find someone special by the name of Enoch. He is a "breath of fresh air", "a rose among the thorns".

MAN'S FAILURE - Vss. 5-20, 25-31

Since Adam and Eve's failure in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) there has been both physical and spiritual death. In this genealogy there is a recurring phrase, "and he died" that applies to the various people in this genealogy. Enoch was the only exception.

ENOCH'S FRIEND - Vss. 21-24a

Enoch walked with God by faith (Hebrews 11:5-6).

If our faith is in Christ, we are God's friends (Romans 5:1).

If our faith is in Christ, we can have the fellowship with God that Enoch had as God's friend (John 15:1-7).

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS - Vs. 24b

God took Enoch home to be with Himself (Hebrews 11:5)

God takes those who know Christ home to be with Him (John 14:1-3)

Genesis 5:21-24 etc. THE RIGHT VIEW OF LIFE

We all need to have a view of life which get us through. If we have the right view of life as Christians, we will serve God well.

Someone who developed a good healthy view of life was Enoch, first met by us in Genesis 5. Enoch was a man known for his walk with God and other characteristics that gave him a great life's view.

DIRECTION - HE WALKED WITH GOD Vss. 21-24

DEPENDENCE - HE RELIED ON GOD Hebrews 11:5

DEMONSTRATION - HE LIVED FOR GOD - Hebrews 11:5

"...he had this testimony that he pleased God."

DECLARATION - HE SPOKE FOR GOD - Jude 14-16

Genesis 5:21-24 etc. MAY I

MAY I WALK WITH GOD LIKE ENOCH - Genesis 5:21-24, Hebrews 11:5-6

MAY I WORK FOR GOD LIKE NOAH - Genesis 6:22

MAY I WAIT FOR GOD LIKE ABRAHAM - Romans 4:3, 20-21

Genesis 6 NOAH

A MESS - Vss. 1-7, 11-12 - The wickedness of man abounded.

A MAN - Vss. 8-10 - Noah found grace in God's eyes.

A MESSAGE - Vss. 13-21 - God instructed Noah to build the ark.

A METHOD - Vs. 22 - Noah did exactly as he was told!

Genesis 6 APPRECIATING A GREAT MAN

I know a man If I were to call this man today and ask for help, he'd give to me.

I know. I'm his oldest boy. Thanks Dad!

Just as I appreciate my parents for good reasons, we should appreciate the Bible Characters which God has placed in the Bible as examples for us. One man that we should certainly appreciate is Noah.

THE TIMES OF NOAH Vss. 1-7, 11-13

Noah lived in the hardest of times.

THE TESTIMONY OF NOAH Vss. 8-9

1. Noah found grace.

2. Noah was a just (righteous) man.

3. Noah was a perfect (sincere, not sinless) man

4. Noah walked with God.

THE TESTING OF NOAH Vss. 14-22

Vs. 14 - Noah was told to make an ark. It is likely that it had never rained. This was a test of his faith. Also, imagine the ridicule Noah received from the neighbors. It might have been called "Noah's folly".

They also rejected his preaching (2 Peter 2:5).

Vs. 15-21 - Noah's obedience was tested. He was told exactly what to do. There was to be no variation.

Vs. 22 - Noah passed the test. He did exactly as he was told.

Genesis 6-9 ADVENTURE IN THE WILL OF GOD

Many men and women have a sense of adventure.

They would like to go where few have gone, do what few have done, and be what few have been.

With a desire for adventure, folks have gone into the air, out of planes, into the jungle, into the desert, into the arctic, into space, into the military, and a host of other places.

In this passage we look at the life of a man who probably didn't have much sense of adventure, but had a great adventure simply doing the will of God.

This best adventures we can have are found in doing God's will.

According to Romans 12:2, God's will is good, acceptable and perfect.

Noah's adventure included:

PREPARATION

Preparing the ark - Genesis 6:14-22

Preaching to men - 2 Peter 2:5

Procuring the animals - Genesis 7:1-4, 11-16

Possessing the ark - Genesis 7:1-7

PRESERVATION - Genesis 7:16, 8:1-4, 13-14

PRESCRIPTION - Genesis 8:15-9:7

There were certain things which God required of man, as new life began.

Everyone was to leave the ark. Genesis 8:15-16

Everyone was to multiply. Genesis 8:17

Man was not to eat blood. Genesis 9:4

Man was given responsibility to take the life of the murderer. Genesis 9:6

PROMISES

God has kept the promises he made found in Genesis 6:13,20, 7:1-4, and 9:13-17

PROBLEM - Genesis 9:20-29

Although Noah was a great man, he still had his own adventure with sin. Let us always be on guard against following this example.

Genesis 7 THE ARK - A PICTURE OF SALVATION

SUMMONS TO THE ARK - Vss. 1-4

God summoned Noah into the ark.

Jesus summons us to salvation. Matthew 11:28, John 3:16, Revelation 22:17

SAFETY IN THE ARK - Vss. 5-16

Noah and all that were with him were safe.

Those who saved are safe in Christ. We are not condemned. John 3:17-18a

SUFFERING OUTSIDE THE ARK - Vss. 17-24

What was not in the ark was destroyed.

Those without Christ are condemned. John 3:18b, John 3:36

Genesis 8:15-22 AFTER THE FLOOD

GOD'S ASSIGNMENT TO NOAH - Vss. 15-19

NOAH'S APPRECIATION OF GOD - Vs. 20

GOD'S ASSURANCE TO NOAH - Vs. 21-22

Genesis 8 A NEW START

GOD REMEMBERED NOAH - Vs. 1

GOD REMOVED THE WATER - Vss. 2-13

He removed it slowly, steadily, surely.

GOD RECOMMISSIONED MAN - Vss. 14-19

GOD REASSURED MAN - Vss. 20-21

There would not be another worldwide flood.

Genesis 9:1-17 STARTING AGAIN

After the flood, Noah and his family were to start over again.

GOD'S COMMISSION - Vss. 1-3

GOD'S COMMANDS - Vss. 4-7

GOD'S COVENANT - Vss. 8-17

Genesis 11:1-9 BABEL!

DEFIANCE OF GOD - Vss. 1-4

DECLARATION BY GOD - Vss. 5-6

DISPERSION FROM GOD - Vss. 7-9

Genesis 11:30 etc. THANKS, SARAH!

Sarah teaches us some very important lessons.

1. BEAUTY DOES NOT BUY HAPPINESS

Genesis 12:11 - She was beautiful.

Genesis 11:30 - She was barren

Genesis 12:10-20, 20:1-16 - She was betrayed (Forced to lie.).

2. HELPING GOD DOESN'T HELP. Genesis 16

(The descendants of Ishmael have been a challenge to Israel ever since.)

3. WHAT GOD SAYS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER Genesis 18:9-15

4. GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES Genesis 21:1-5

Genesis 12:1-13:4 JOURNEY WITH GREATNESS

Abraham was a great man. God made him great as the father of faith, the father of the nation Israel, and as the ancestor of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus. Let us take a journey with this great man.

3 STEPS UP:

1. To The Land Vss. 1,4,7,8

2. To A Nation Vs. 2a

3. To Blessing Vss. 2b-3

3 STEPS DOWN

1. Fleeing Vs. 10

2. Fearing Vss. 11-13

3. Fabricating Falsehood Vss. 14-20

1 STEP BACK 13:1-4

Abraham went back to Bethel. Back to where he once was with God. (12:8)

Genesis 12:1-3 GREAT PROMISES

The Bible is full of great promises. Here are 3 which God gave to Abraham.

"I WILL SHOW YOU" - Vs. 1 - GUIDANCE

"I WILL MAKE YOU" - Vs. 2 - GREATNESS

"I WILL BLESS YOU" - Vss. 3 – GRACIOUSNESS

Genesis 12, 15, 18, 22 AT THE CROSSROADS (Four possible sermons)

There have probably been many times when you have been driving your car that you have come to what we call a "crossroads". This is when two or more roads intersect. Here you needed to decide which way to go!

There are often crossroads experiences in our lives. We come to a point where we can go in two or more directions, and need to decide which way to go. Such crossroads experiences include decisions about our careers, our marriage partners, our behavior, our church affiliation etc.

A Bible character who often found himself at the crossroads was Abraham. He didn't always make the right spiritual choices, but very often he did. Here are four "crossroads" where Abraham made the right decision.

THE ROAD TO GOD, OR THE ROAD TO GODLESSNESS Genesis 12:1-3

Abraham did not grow up in what we would call a Godly home. His relatives were idol worshipers. Joshua 24:2

In our text God called Abraham to follow Him, and promised him great blessings. Abraham had to choose whether he would follow the true God, or would follow the false God's of his relatives, which was really Godlessness. He chose to follow the road to God.

THE ROAD TO FAITH OR THE ROAD TO FRET (WORRY) Genesis 15

Abraham had just rescued Lot and others in chapter 14.

In Vs. 1, he was evidently worried about possible retaliation against him. In Vss. 2-3 he is worried because he does not yet have a child.

God tells Abraham "Fear not." He also takes him out and shows him the stars and tells him that his seed will be numerous like the stars. In Vs. 6 it says that Abraham "believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness."

THE ROAD TO PASSIVENESS OR THE ROAD TO PETITION Genesis 18:17-33

God showed Abraham his plan for the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham could have chosen to be passive about the information, but chose to intercede in behalf of the righteous in those cities. Of course he was also praying for his nephew Lot.

THE ROAD TO OBSTINACY OR THE ROAD TO OBEDIENCE Genesis 22

God called on Abraham to sacrifice his only son.

Abraham could have balked. He could have refused.

Instead, he obeyed God, and was praised for it.

Genesis 13 etc. Tale of Two Fathers

Abraham and Lot were both saved men. The ways they conducted their lives, raised families and received results were in stark contrast. They lead us to ask ourselves four questions.

WHERE AM I LOOKING?

Lot looked to Sodom 13:6-13

Abraham looked where God told him to look. 13:14-15

WHERE AM I LIVING?

Lot lived in the city of Sodom, in the middle of wickedness. 19:1

Abraham was living in the land God had promised him.

WHERE AM I LEADING?

When it was time to leave Sodom at God's command, Lot could not lead his family the way he should have been able. 19:14

His wife turned around in disobedience and was judged. 19:17, 26

When Abraham had to lead his son Isaac, he was compliant. 22:6-14

WHAT IS MY LEGACY?

Lot's legacy was two nations as a result of immorality. Genesis 19:32-34

Abraham's legacy was a son who respected and loved his father, and followed God.

Genesis 13:5-14:24 GODLINESS IN SHOE LEATHER

You have probably heard the expression; "He's so Heavenly minded, that he's no earthly good!" There are people who never make their professed Christianity practical. They talk like saints, but they don't act like saints. Abraham however demonstrated his Godliness in everyday life. He lived out his Godliness in a practical way. To use an American expression, "He put it into shoe leather."

ABRAHAM WAS A GRACIOUS MAN - 13:5-13

Abraham and his nephew, Lot, were living in the same area. They traveled together, but were two large, wealthy, individual family units. Because they were so large, the land could not support the needs of both families' flocks and herds. (Vs. 6) Strife developed between the herdsmen of the two families. (Vs. 7) As the senior member of the family, Abraham decided to settle the dispute. He wanted no strife (Vs. 8) Abraham very graciously gave Lot the choice of where he wanted to settle. This was really a choice Abraham could have reserved for himself. Instead, he was gracious about it. Lot chose the best area for himself, in spite of the wickedness that abounded in Sodom. (Vss. 9-13)

ABRAHAM WAS A BLESSED MAN - 13:14-18

Abraham made the right choice. It was Abraham who received God's encouragement and blessing, not Lot. Let us remember that God blesses us when we do what is right.

ABRAHAM WAS A RESPONSIBLE MAN - 14:1-16

"Am I my brother's keeper?" Abraham was. When Lot got into trouble, Abraham didn't give him a lecture. He gave him help!

ABRAHAM WAS A GENEROUS MAN - 14:17-20

Abraham gave tithes to "the priest of the most high God", Melchizedek. Today we'd say that he gave to the Lord's work.

ABRAHAM WAS A CONVICTED MAN - 14:21-24

Abraham was a man of conviction. He would not take what didn't belong to him, although he could have. He was convicted to do what was right.

Genesis 13:5-18 A GRACIOUS MAN

You probably know more than one gracious man or woman. When someone is gracious he or she is easy to get along with, generous, and flexible. (Give examples of gracious people that you know.) Christians should be gracious, reflecting "the wisdom that is from above" found in James 3:17-18. Abraham was a gracious man, especially in his dealings with his nephew, Lot.

CONGESTION - Vss. 5-7

Both Abraham and Lot were wealthy men. Both had large herds and both needed lots of resources (water) to exist. Because of minimal resources, there were disagreements between Abraham and Lot's servants.

CONFRONTATION - Vss. 8-9

Abraham was the senior member of the family. He confronted Lot gently, not wanting them to have strife between them because they are brethren. As Christians we should have that same desire that there be no strife between us and fellow Christians. John 13:34-35, Ephesians 30-32

Abraham very graciously gave Lot his choice of locations. Whatever direction Lot was willing to go, Abraham would go in the opposite direction. Abraham allowed Lot to have the choice, when, in reality Abraham could have had his choice.

CHOICE - Vss. 10-13

Lot chose the Plain of Jordan, although it contained the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham chose to remain in the Land of Canaan, which was God's choice for Abraham in the first place. Abraham actually remained in the will of God by remaining in the Land of Canaan.

COMFORT - Vss. 14-18

God brought comfort to Abraham by promising Abraham that land forever. When we are gracious and remain in the will of God, God will also bring comfort to us.

Genesis 15 & 18 ABRAHAM, FRIEND OF GOD

Friendship is wonderful. Being a friend of God should be our great desire. Abraham was God's friend.

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD BROUGHT COMFORT - 15:1, 18:9-15

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD MEANT CONFIDENCE (TRUST) - 15:2-6

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD REQUIRED COMMITMENT - 18:1-8

Abraham served.

FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD RESULTED IN COMMUNICATION 18:16-33

God shared with his friend, Abraham. Vss. 16-22

Abraham interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah. Vss. 22-33

Genesis 16 A PROBLEM IS SOLVED?

Abraham and Sarah had a difficulty. Sarah was childless. Abraham had no heir. Sarah made the mistake of trying to produce a solution for the difficulty. In reality, she did not solve the dilemma, but made matters worse. God had promised Abraham an heir in Genesis 15:1-6. So often we try to take matters into our hands instead of waiting on the promises of God.

PROPOSAL FROM SARAH - Vss. 1-3

Sarah proposed that Abraham have sexual relations with her maid. Any children born would be in Sarah's name. This was proper in the culture of the day, but not God's perfect plan. Abraham and Sarah should have waited on God, and not tried to help him out!

PROBLEM WITH HAGAR - Vss. 4-6

Hagar despised Sarah. Vs. 4

Sarah blamed Abraham. Vs. 5

Abraham gave permission for Sarah to deal with Hagar, so Sarah mistreated her. Vs. 6

Hagar ran away. Vs. 6

PROMISES FROM GOD - Vss. 7-14

An Angel of the Lord found Hagar and listened to her problem. Vss. 7-8

He instructed Sarah to return to her mistress. Vs. 9

He promised that her seed would be multiplied and that she would have a son named Ishmael, 'God hears'.

PRESENTATION TO ABRAHAM - Vss. 15-16

A son was born. He was named Ishmael.

Genesis 17 AFFIRMATION

God had called Abraham years before. Genesis 12:1-3

God affirms to Abraham what He will do for him.

GOD'S CALL - Vss. 1-3

He is Almighty God, and Abraham is to walk before Him perfectly. Vs. 1

God promises to keep His covenant with Abraham and to multiply him exceedingly. Vs. 2

GOD'S COVENANT - Vss. 4-14

God's covenant with Abraham would make Abraham and his descendants great. Vss. 4-8

God's covenant was to signified by the act of circumcision. Vss. 9-14

GOD'S CHOICE - Vss. 15-22

It was Sarah who was going to have a child, through which all these promises would be kept. God's choice was a child named Isaac, who's name means "laughter".

Genesis 18:1-15 A SPECIAL VISITOR

DELIGHT OF A VISIT FROM THE LORD - Vs. 1

DILIGENCE TO MAKE THE LORD WELCOME - Vss. 2-8

DECLARATION OF THE LORD'S FAVOR - Vss. 9-10

DOUBT OF THE LORD'S WORD - Vss. 11-15

Genesis 18:16-33 THE INTERCESSOR

ABRAHAM'S INTEGRITY - Vss. 16-19

GOD'S INTENT - Vss. 20-21

ABRAHAM'S INTERCESSION - Vss. 22-33

It was sincere

It was humble - Vs. 27

It was persistent

Genesis 22:1-14 A FAITHFUL FATHER

Before Isaac was born, God said that Abraham would be a good father in Genesis 15:18-19. In one of the most trying moments of Abraham's life, he showed 3 qualities that should be imitated by fathers everywhere.

HE FOLLOWED GOD Vss. 1-6

HIS FAITH WAS IN GOD Vss. 7-8

HE FEARED GOD Vss. 9-14

Genesis 22:1-14 JEHOVAH-JIREH - THE LORD WILL PROVIDE (MANY SERMONS)

- A missionary on the foreign field is stranded in a foreign land in the middle of a war. No checks from the mission can get through. Jehovah-jireh - the Lord will provide!
- A young Christian lady marries a young Christian man. Soon they have two small girls. Suddenly the man tragically loses his life. The wife has no work skills, and there are two small children to feed, clothe, and house. Jehovah-jireh - the Lord will provide!
- Another Christian woman, living for the Lord, is divorced by her husband. Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide.
- An elderly couple is retired, living on a fixed income. Medical costs escalate. There is little money. Jehovah-jireh - the Lord will provide.
- A Christian worker is faced with what appears to be insurmountable odds in the work of the ministry. Jehovah-jireh - the Lord will provide.
- It was not unusual for Bible characters to name places after the experiences that happened in that place. That is why Abraham named the place where he almost offered Isaac as a sacrifice "Jehovah-jireh". The word means "the Lord will provide".

Our God is a God of provision. When we serve Him, He takes the responsibility for all our needs. Phil.4:19
Abraham found this to be true when he received what was probably the greatest test of all in his walk with God. We want to look at this test and see that "the Lord will provide".
God had promised Abraham a Son. Genesis 12:1-3, 15:3-6, Genesis 17:19, Genesis 18:9-15
Isaac, whose name means "laughter" was born when Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 99.
Abraham's life after the birth of Isaac was evidently spent in comparative quiet. He was a rich old man raising a young son. He had experienced many tests and trials in his life time, but probably now things seemed to be just fine. Then, one day, Abraham faced what was the biggest challenge of his lifetime.

UNBELIEVABLE TEST - Vss. 1-2

God decided to test Abraham. No saint is immune from tests or trials. Because God loves us, He tests us. Romans 5:3-5, James 1:2-4, Psalm 66:10
Notice that Abraham responded to God's call quickly because he knew the voice of God.
God asks Abraham to give Him his most valued possession, which was his only son.
What is your most valued possession? Are you willing to part with it if God wants you to? Luke 14:26-27

UNCONDITIONAL OBEDIENCE - Vs. 3

For Abraham there was no argument, no stalling, or talking to Sarah.
He took the wood, the servants, and Isaac. He didn't even take a lamb in case God would "change His mind".

UNWAVERING TRUST - Vss. 4-8

Vss. 4-5 - Notice that Abraham says "We'll be back." God had promised Abraham that he would be blessed. He believed God. Abraham believed that God would resurrect Isaac. Hebrews 11:17-19
Vss. 7-8 - Notice that Abraham trusted in the provision of God. God indeed provided a lamb for Abraham on the mountain, but he also provided Himself a lamb at Calvary.
God will take care of our needs today. We can still trust Him. Matthew 6:25-33

UNDENIABLE SUBMISSION - Vss. 9-12

Vss. 9-10 Isaac's submission was admirable through all of this. Abraham's submission was even more admirable. He was willing to do what God asked, even if he ended up with a broken heart.
Vss. 11-12 - God was watching all the time. Abraham had passed the test of submission. There was no reason for Abraham to slay his son.

UNLIMITED SUPPLY - Vss. 13-14

What did God provide for Abraham?
He provided a lamb in the thicket.
He provided the strength to go through the most difficult time of his life.
God provided the wisdom to handle the servants and Isaac.
God provided the emotional stability to handle such a great load.
God provided Himself through the whole experience.

Genesis 22:1-18 A LESSON IN TRUST

We know that Abraham was a man of faith. The day his faith might have been tested the most was when God asked Abraham to sacrifice his Son, Isaac.

ABRAHAM'S AVAILABILITY - Vss. 1-3

Abraham was available to do as God asked, even though he certainly didn't like it.

ABRAHAM'S ASSURANCE - Vss. 4-8

Abraham indeed believed that God would provide a lamb for the sacrifice.

ABRAHAM'S ACQUIESCENCE - Vss. 9-10

Abraham actually tried to do what God told him. He lifted up the knife to take his own son's life.

GOD'S ACTION - Vss. 11-12

God intervened to stop Abraham.

GOD'S ALTERNATIVE - Vss. 13-14

A ram was available for sacrifice.

GOD'S APPROVAL - Vss. 15-18

God promises blessing upon Abraham and his seed.

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

Genesis 24 etc. SPUNKY WOMAN

Rebekah was a woman with spunk, tenacity, or courage.

In Genesis 24:1-9 Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for Isaac.

In Genesis 24:10-14 that servant is asking God to send a woman with spunk. This is exactly the type of woman he got for good and bad.

REBEKAH'S DETERMINATION Genesis 24:14-26

Watering the camels was no easy task, but she stuck with it.

REBEKAH'S DECISION Genesis 24:35-53

She decided to go, and to go quickly to be Isaac's bride. She evidently knew how to determine God's will for her life.

REBEKAH'S DISCERNMENT Genesis 25:1-3

When Rebekah did not understand what was going on inside of her she went to God and asked Him.

REBEKAH'S DEVOTION Genesis 25:24-28

There was unnecessary division in this family.

Favorites should never have been chosen, but at least Rebekah was devoted to the individual God had chosen.

REBEKAH'S DECEIT Genesis 27:1-16

If spunky people are not careful, they can become deceptive people.

Rebekah's deception resulted in Jacob running for his life, and never seeing his mother again.

Genesis 24 A MODEL SERVANT

Would you like to be a better Christian?

Would you like to be more effective in your walk with God?

Would you like to have a greater impact on your family and friends for Christ?

Would you like to see your life really count for Jesus Christ?

THEN YOU MUST LEARN TO BE A SERVANT!

Joseph learned to be a servant in Potiphar's house and in prison.

Moses learned to be a servant by caring for his father-in-law's sheep in the wilderness.

David learned to be a servant by caring for his father's sheep and serving as Saul's armor bearer & musician

Elisha learned to be a servant by ministering to Elijah.

The Bible gives us an excellent example of servanthood in Genesis 24. Abraham's servant, who was in charge of all of Abraham's household, was called upon to go on a special assignment for Abraham.

Consider Abraham's servant as a model servant:

HE HAD A MASTER - Vss. 1-2

This man did not have many bosses, many masters. He only had one master. That was Abraham. What Abraham wanted from this man, Abraham got.

Each of us has a master. There is something or someone that is boss in your life.

Some make their job or business their master.

Some make money their master.

Some make the opinion of others their master.

Some make a specific person their master.

Some make sex their master.

Some make alcohol their master.

Some make sports or hobbies their master.

Some make their home their master.

Some make a bad habit their master.

Wise people make the Lord Jesus their master.

Matthew 6:24 - No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Abraham was a good master, a rich master, a powerful master and a holy master.

Jesus is much greater than Abraham as a good master, a rich master, a powerful master, and a holy master.

John 13:13, Romans 12:1

Who is your Master?

HE HAD A MISSION - Vss. 2-9

His mission was to secure a bride for Isaac.

As Christian servants, we also have a mission.

Our mission is two-fold:

First, we are to fulfill the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20.

Second it is our mission to minister to fellow believers.

John 13:34-35, Matthew 23:11, Galatians 5:13, 6:2,10, 1 Peter 4:10

HE HAD A METHOD

1. WAIT - Vss. 11-14

The servant prayed and waited on God to provide the answer. If we are going to be effective as servants, we too must pray and wait for God's instructions.

2. WANT - Vss. 15-67

The servant wanted to get the job done. In fact, he didn't stop until he had finished his assigned task. He didn't eat until he stated his business and he wouldn't wait before taking the girl away. We won't accomplish much for the Lord unless we want to.

3. WORK

The servant was not afraid of hard work. We must not be afraid of hard work either, if we are going to be good servants.

The end result was Isaac got the bride that God intended for him. Vs. 67

Genesis 24 SENSES FOR SERVICE

In order to function well as human beings we have the 5 senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and sight. In order to function well as servants of God, it helps if we have certain "senses" illustrated by Abraham's servant.

SENSE OF AVAILABILITY Vss. 1-10

He was willing to go.

He asked questions to make sure he understood what was expected of him.

He went to do his master's will.

SENSE OF DEPENDENCY Vss. 11-14

He asked God for help.

SENSE OF GUIDANCE Vss. 15-25

He watched to see how God would guide him.

He waited to make sure that God had indeed guided him to Rebekah.

SENSE OF APPRECIATION Vss. 26-28

He gave praise to God for the guidance he received.

SENSE OF URGENCY Vss. 29-33, 55-60

He would not eat until his business was stated.

He would not stay, but wanted to see the mission completed.

SENSE OF LOYALTY Vss. 61-67

The servant was so committed to Abraham, that he was also committed to Abraham's son, Isaac. He was loyal to his master.

Genesis 26:1-6 A MESSAGE FROM GOD

There was a famine in The Promised Land. Isaac was evidently thinking of leaving for Egypt. God appeared to him to warn and encourage Him.

RESTRICTION – Vs. 2a

Isaac was not to leave the land as His Father once did. He was not to go to Egypt like Abraham had.

Genesis 12:10-20

REASSURANCE – Vs. 2b-3

Isaac was to dwell in the land that God stipulated. One day the land would belong to Isaac's descendants.

REPRODUCTION – Vs. 4

Many descendants were promised.

REMINDER – Vs. 5

Isaac was to remember his Father Abraham's obedience to God

Genesis 27 WRONGS DON'T MAKE IT RIGHT!

Have you heard of a sure cure for a toothache? Next time you have one, drop a rock on your foot. You will forget that you have a toothache! The trouble is, after your foot stops hurting, you will still have the toothache. "Two wrongs don't make it right!" You have also heard of that famous hero of yesteryear-named Robin Hood. Robin lived in Sherwood Forest with his band of "Merry Men". Somehow they felt justified in robbing from rich people in order to take care of poor people. Granted, the poor may have been abused by the rich, but stealing is still stealing. "Two wrongs don't make it right!" If a friend of yours does something wrong, is it right for you to lie for him to keep him out of trouble? No! "Two wrongs do not make it right!"

How do I know that two wrongs, or any number of wrongs can not make it right? The Bible tells us so! When you study Romans 3 sometime make a close examination of verses 7-8. In those verses Paul condemns those who say, "Let us do evil, that good may come." He is saying that doing wrong does not make things right. When people do wrong to make things right they forget a key principle in the Word of God. Numbers 32:23 says, "...and be sure your sin will find you out." You can not escape the penalty for hidden or unconfessed sin. Many a man thought he could hide an affair from his wife, only to have her discover it. The marriage was ruined. Many a woman thought she could hide her drinking habit only to discover she paid for it with family and health problems. Even if a person could or can hide a secret sin from people, God always knows about it and will hold the person accountable. 1 Corinthians 3:13

Wrongs do not make it right. Today we want to learn about four people who tried to do wrong in order to make things right. They failed miserably.

BACKGROUND:

God's intent was that the older son, Esau, would serve the younger son, Jacob. Genesis 25:22-23

Isaac, the father, loved Esau because of the venison he prepared. Rebekah, the mother, loved Jacob.

Genesis 25:28

Esau despised his birthright and because of hunger sold it to Jacob. Jacob took advantage Esau in order to gain the benefits of the birthright. Under God's plan, the birthright would be Jacob's. Jacob went about getting it the wrong way. Genesis 25:29-34

ISAAC'S PLAN - Vss. 1-3

Isaac planned to give the blessing God to Esau. This was not God's plan according to Genesis 25:22-23. Also, the deal over the birthright indicated that Jacob should be the one receiving the blessing. His wrong did not make things right, and other problems followed.

We have to give credit to Isaac. When he realized that his plan had failed, he yielded to the will of God.

Genesis 27:23

SARAH'S PLOT - Vss. 6-16

Rebekah overheard Isaac's plan. She should have confronted her husband. Instead she schemed in order to do what was right. Her plan was to fool her husband into thinking Jacob was Esau.

The deception worked, but it did not make things right. It developed an animosity between Esau and Jacob. Esau was ready to kill Jacob and Jacob needed to leave for his safety. As a result she never again saw the son she loved. Genesis 27:41-28:5

JACOB'S DECEIT - Vss. 18-29

Jacob told a string of lies in order to deceive his father.

Although he received the blessing, it did not make things right.

Jacob had to flee for his life, and he ended up being deceived by his father-in-law.

It wasn't until Jacob finally humbled himself before his brother that things were made right. Genesis 32:3-5, 33:8-11

ESAU'S DEFEAT - Vss. 30-41

Esau was evidently in agreement about taking the blessing away from Jacob.

He also knew that the birthright had been sold to Jacob.

His plot only ended up in defeat and disappointment.

As a result, he became so angry that he planned to murder his brother.

WRONGS DO NOT MAKE IT RIGHT!

Genesis 32:1-12 IN PRAYER

Introduction - Vss. 1-9 - Jacob was in trouble. He was returning home which much wealth and a large family. But Brother Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men. After getting a birth right and blessing that Esau thought was rightfully his, Esau had, years earlier, promised to kill Jacob. Jacob needed help and turned to God. When we have a need, we too, can turn to God.

RELY ON GOD'S WORD - Vss. 9, 12 - Remember what God has promised, and claim the promises of God.

RECOGNIZE YOUR OWN UNWORTHINESS - Vs. 10 - When we come in prayer, we do not come in our own righteousness, but in the name of Christ. John 14:13-14

REQUEST GOD'S HELP - Vs. 11 - Be honest with God about your need..

(To show how God answered this prayer, discuss the rest of Genesis 32.)

Genesis 37 VICTIM OF JEALOUSY

A DEPENDABLE SON – Vs. 2, Vss. 5-10

Joseph was dependable to report evil and to share what God had revealed to Him in dreams.

A DOTING FATHER – Vs. 3

A DESPISED BROTHER – Vss. 4, 11

A DIABOLICAL PLOT – Vss. 14-24

The plan was to kill Joseph.

A DESPICABLE ALTERNATIVE – Vss 25-36

Joseph was sold into slavery and the brothers deceived their father, Jacob.

Genesis 35:1-15 BACK TO BETHEL

Jacob was returning home after being with his Uncle Laban for many years.

When he traveled to Laban's house, God appeared to him at a place Jacob called "Bethel," or "house of God." See Genesis 28:10-22. This is a place where Jacob had made specific promises to God.

RETURN - Vss. 1, 3

God was calling Jacob back to the place of his original commitment. Sometimes we need to return to our original commitments and to the "first love" that we once had for Christ. (Revelation 2:4-5)

REMOVAL - Vss. 2, 4

Jacob knew that false Gods and the one true God were not compatible. He called on his household to remove all false Gods. There are times when false Gods creep into our lives. We must remove them.

REMEMBRANCE - Vss. 3, 6-7

Jacob returned to Bethel, remembering how God had delivered Him.

We must remember all that God did for us when he saved us. 2 Corinthians 5:17

RENEWAL - Vss. 9-15

A Renewed Name - Vs. 10, Genesis 32:8

A Renewed Commission - Vs. 11

A Renewed Promise - Vs. 12

A Renewed Fellowship - Vss. 13-15

All of these things are renewed for the Christian when he comes back to God.

Genesis 39 WHEN GOD IS WITH YOU

God is with you if you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. The Holy Spirit indwells you (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9) and Jesus will never leave you (Hebrews 13:5). Because God is with you, we should live up to a certain standard (2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 Peter 1:15-16, Romans 12:1-2). God was with Joseph and had a certain standard of conduct that we should imitate.

BE CONSCIENTIOUS WHEN GOD IS WITH YOU - Vss. 1-6

Joseph had been mistreated by His brothers and sold into slavery (Genesis 37). He could have had a bad attitude because of the mistreatment, but instead he evidently did his best and God prospered Him. Doing our best, being conscientious, is a requirement for all Christians, even when we have to do things that we don't like (Colossians 3:17&23).

BE COURAGEOUS WHEN GOD IS WITH YOU - Vss. 7-19

Joseph was doing a great job, but temptation came his way through the advances of his boss's wife. Joseph could have given in, but he was courageous enough to say "no" and to run when he had to. His goal was to please God! May we be courageous to always do what is right and to flee evil (1 Corinthians 10:13, 1 Peter 5:8-9)

BE CONSISTENT WHEN GOD IS WITH YOU - Vss. 20-23

God did not deliver Joseph from jail because God had a plan that involved the jail (See Genesis 40-41). But even in jail God showed Joseph mercy. He had favor with the one in charge. Remember, however, that Joseph was consistent. He did not stop being faithful to God and to doing a good job.

Even when we face set backs, we must be faithful to God (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Genesis 39 STANDING FOR GOD

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. In Egypt, he became the slave of Potiphar. In spite of being in terrible conditions, he took his stand for God.

HE ACTED PRODUCTIVELY - Vss. 1-6

HE AVOIDED TEMPTATION - Vss. 7-13

HE WAS ACCUSED FALSELY - Vss. 14-20

HE ACCEPTED HIS PUNISHMENT - Vss. 21-23

Although Joseph did not deserve to be in jail, he continued to do what he had always done. He worked hard.

The Lord was with him. The Lord blessed.

Genesis 45-46 REUNIONS (can be 2 parts)

Classes have them. Military units have them. Families have them.

When people who have something in common gather together to renew acquaintances, it is called a reunion. Sometimes reunions are times of sadness because it is held at a funeral, or because there is unresolved tension between some of those attending. Sometimes reunions take people by surprise, because two people are suddenly reunited through unplanned circumstances.

There are many reunions found in the Bible. Two such reunions involved Joseph.

Joseph had been separated from his family because of his brothers' cruelty. Genesis 37:12-36

Joseph suffered much hardship in Egypt, but eventually became Prime Minister. Genesis 39-41

Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to get food during a famine and were forced to deal with him.

They did not know that the Prime Minister was Joseph.

Review the events of Genesis 42-44.

1. THE REUNION BETWEEN JOSEPH AND HIS BROTHERS

FEAR - 45:1-3

The brothers were afraid because they had mistreated their brother, and now he was in a position of power over them.

FORGIVENESS - 45:4-5, 50:15-21

Joseph forgave his brothers for their sins, and saw God's hand in their actions. We should be as quick to forgive. Ephesians 4:32

FORESIGHT - 45:6-13

A message was to be sent to Jacob. There were more years of famine coming. God had sent Joseph on ahead to preserve life. "Come on down!"

FELLOWSHIP - 45:14-15

There was sweet, emotional fellowship between brothers.

2. THE REUNION BETWEEN JOSEPH AND HIS FATHER

EXPLANATION - 45:26-28

Joseph was alive! Jacob saw the evidence. He believed it, and was ready to travel to Egypt.

EXCURSION - 46:1-7

EXCLAMATION - 46:28-30

Jacob made an exclamation of joy because he had seen his son alive whom he thought to be dead.

Genesis 50:15-21 FORGIVEN!

Jacob was dead! The patriarch of the clan had gone on. What would happen now? As long as Jacob had been alive Brother Joseph, Prime Minister of Egypt, had treated his brothers kindly in spite of how miserably they treated him as a child.

CONCERN OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS - Vs. 15

In Genesis 37 we are told that Joseph's brothers had sold Joseph into slavery.

Now they were concerned that Joseph would "get even".

CONFESSION OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS - Vss. 16-18

They basically sent to Joseph and begged for mercy. Then, they came and submitted themselves to him.

COMPASSION ON JOSEPH'S BROTHERS - Vss. 19-21

Joseph realized that God was the judge, not him. (Romans 12:19) - Vs. 19

Joseph saw God's purpose in his mistreatment. "God meant it for good." - Vs. 20

Joseph showed his forgiveness by continuing to take care of his brothers and their families. - Vs. 21

- When we are concerned about our sins and confess our need for a Savior, God has compassion and forgives us. Romans 10:13, Ephesians 2:8-9

- When we are concerned about our sins as Christians and confess them, God has compassion and forgives. 1 John 1:9

- When others are concerned about their offenses towards us and confess, seeking forgiveness, we are to have compassion and forgive. Ephesians 4:32

Genesis 50:20 etc. MEANT FOR GOOD

"...ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good..."

The life of Joseph is perhaps the best Old Testament example we have of the accuracy of Romans 8:28.

The sale of Joseph as a slave was meant for harm by his brothers. The end result was Joseph becoming prime minister of Egypt, becoming reunited with his family, and saving their lives. Joseph endured many trials but God "meant it for good."

JOSEPH WAS HONEST, BUT HUMILIATED Chapter 37

JOSEPH WAS STEADFAST, BUT SLANDERED Chapter 39

JOSEPH WAS FAITHFUL, BUT FORGOTTEN Chapter 40

Exodus 1:7-22 CHANGES IN EGYPT

When things are going well, we never know when things will change.

While residing in Egypt Israel faced changes that made it very difficult.

A NEW PRODUCTIVITY - Vs. 7

A NEW PROBLEM - Vs. 8

Israel was respected in Egypt because of the work of Joseph many years before. Evidently a new ruling family took over, and did not know or remember Joseph. Israel went from being a friend to being a threat.

A NEW PERSECUTION - Vss. 9-11, 13-16, 22

A NEW PROTECTION - Vss. 12, 17-21

God protected his own. He still does!

Exodus 2 GOD'S HAND ON A LIFE

Those who know the Lord can certainly see God "hand" of influence on their lives. We can see how God guided us to salvation, the right marriage partner, the right job, the right church, and the right friends. We've seen God's "hand" on us through good times and bad times. Moses also had the "hand" of God upon him. We can see this in the earliest accounts of Moses' life found in our text.

A REFUGE - Vss. 1-3

Pharaoh had commanded that all newborn male children be killed (Exodus 1:22).

Moses' mother hid him, and then placed him in an ark and placed him in the reeds by the river.

This was Moses' refuge from harm.

A RESCUE - Vss. 4-10

God touched Pharaoh's daughter's heart. Moses grew under her care. He was raised in the Egyptian court

A REVOLT - Vss. 11-14

This was a dark time for Moses. In protecting a Hebrew slave he killed an Egyptian. He was forced to run.

A RETREAT - Vss. 15-22

Moses retreated to the wilderness where he became a shepherd and where he met and married his wife.

A REMEMBRANCE - Vss. 23-25

God remembered his covenant with Israel and heard their cry from bondage. Actually God never forgot!

God also remembered Moses and was preparing to use Moses in a mighty way to deliver God's people.

Although Moses had been set aside, he was soon going to be at the head of God's plans.

Sometimes God will set us aside for a while. This time should be a time of growth and learning for us. We never know when God will say to us, "It's time to do my work."

Exodus 2:1-10 WOMEN GOD USED

A PROTECTIVE MOTHER Vss. 1-3

A WATCHFUL SISTER Vss. 4, 7

A COMPASSIONATE PRINCESS Vss. 5-10

God would use all of us if we were to be protective, watchful, and compassionate.

(Could be used as a Mother's Day message.)

Exodus 2:1-10 MOSES' STORY

SON - Vss. 1-2

Moses is born and he's a beautiful child. However, Pharaoh had commanded that all Hebrew male children be thrown in the river. (Exodus 1:22)

SAFETY - Vss. 3-4

Moses' mother hid him as long as she could and then placed him in the river in an ark. Moses' sister watched.

SOVEREIGNTY - Vss. 5-6

God, in his sovereignty touched the heart of Pharaoh's daughter. She had compassion on him.

SECURITY - Vss. 7-10

Moses was allowed to be nursed, and eventually was raised in Pharaoh's house.

Exodus 3:1-10 CALLED!

When God calls someone to service, He will probably use these same steps.

1. GOD MADE MOSES ISOLATED. Vs. 1

2. GOD MADE MOSES INTERESTED. Vss. 2-3

3. GOD SHOWED MOSES HIS (GOD'S) IDENTITY. Vss. 4-6

4. GOD GAVE MOSES INSTRUCTION. Vss. 7-10

Exodus 3:1-4:18 GOD SAID "GO!" - MOSES SAID "NO!" or EXCUSES

People make excuses about serving the Lord or attending church. In Exodus 3:1-10 God called Moses to go back to Egypt to deliver the Israelites. Immediately Moses began to make excuses.

HE WAS UNWORTHY - Exodus 3:11-12

Moses asks, "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh..."

Moses came from a nation of slaves and might have considered himself unworthy for that reason.

He might have thought of himself as unqualified because he had killed a man.

When God calls us, we often can think of things that make us unworthy to serve God.

God's answer is very simple "I will be with thee." We are all unqualified in one way or another, but when God calls us He will be with us to enable us.

HE WAS UNKNOWING - Exodus 3:13-22

Moses pleaded ignorance! He did not know what to say to these people.

God gave Moses the answers that were needed. God will help our ignorance when we are truly serving Him.

HE WAS UNAUTHORIZED (IN ISRAEL'S EYES) - Exodus 4:1-9

Moses is afraid that the people will not follow his leadership. In verse 1 he is saying:

"They will not believe me."

"They will not listen to me."

"They will say I'm lying."

God gives Moses various signs that will prove that Moses has authority.

A rod will become a snake. Vss. 2-5

A hand will become leprous and then normal again. Vss. 6-8

Water will turn into blood. Vs. 9

HE WAS UNABLE - Exodus 4:10-12

Moses appealed to his handicap. He claimed to be "slow of speech". Vs. 10

God answered by reminding Moses that God was his creator and that God would be with his mouth and would teach him what to say. Vss. 11-12

HE WAS UNAVAILABLE - Exodus 4:13-17

Moses had seen the glory of God in the burning bush.

God talked with Moses intimately.

God answered all of Moses' objections.

In spite of all this, Moses basically says to God in verse 13, "Send anybody but me!"

This prompted God's anger. He promised that Moses would have help from his brother Aaron. Later, Aaron would cause Moses problems.

At this point Moses decided it was time to say "Yes", and started to obey God (Vs. 18).

Exodus 10:1-2 WHY GOD DOES WHAT HE DOES!

We often wonder why God does His great works. As Moses is sent by God into Pharaoh to warn him again to let Israel go, God gives three reasons for his actions. I believe that these are three reasons why God does marvelous things today.

TO SHOW THE UNSAVED - Vs. 1 - "...that I might show these, my signs before him:"

TO SHARE WITH OUR CHILDREN - Vs. 2a - "And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son..."

TO STRENGTHEN BELIEVERS - Vs. 2c - "that ye may know that how I am the Lord."

Exodus 12:1-13 etc. DOORS (can be 4 sermons)

Doors - I've been through thousands of them in my lifetime. I remember the big, heavy wooden church doors of my childhood. And the screen doors of a favorite cabin in the woods. I recall revolving doors in stores and hospitals, and doors to closets and cupboards. Of course we use the term "door" figuratively as well as literally. In its own inimitable way, the Bible has something to teach us about doors. With that in mind, we want to look at four of the many doors that are mentioned in the Bible.

1) THE DOOR OF OFFERING - Exodus 12:1-13

The place is Egypt. The situation is that the nation of Israel is in bondage to the Egyptians. Their God-given leaders, Moses and Aaron, have been crying out to Pharaoh, "Let my people go!"

God had hardened Pharaoh's heart, and Pharaoh had also hardened his own heart and steadfastly refused to let Israel leave. God had sent nine terrible plagues among the Egyptians, and He had one more plague planned. God planned to send his Angel of Death upon Egypt.

God told Israel to select lambs for each household.

These lambs were to be perfect, with no blemish.

They were even to be tested.

At the appointed evening, the lambs were to be slain, roasted and eaten.

The blood of the lambs was to be applied with a plant called hyssop to the top and sides of the door.

When the death angel saw the blood, he would "pass over" that house.

Hence we have the name for the feast that God told the Jews to celebrate yearly, Passover.

Passover is a picture of the work the Lord Jesus Christ did in order to give us eternal life.

The Angel of Death that came over Egypt was the angel of judgment. According to verse 17 this judgment was over the false God's of Israel.

Our God is a righteous God, and our God hates and judges sin. Isaiah 59:2, Isaiah 64:6, Ezekiel 18:4

John the Baptist introduced the Lord Jesus in this way,

...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:29)

Jesus was the perfect, sinless, Son of God who was offered upon the cross of Calvary as payment for the sins of the world. He is the "Lamb of God." Isaiah 53:5-6,

1 Corinthians 5:7 - ...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

When an Israelite killed his lamb, the job was not done. He had to apply the blood to the door of his house. When the Angel saw the blood, He knew that an offering had already been made for that household and he passed over.

My friend, knowing that Jesus has died as a perfect sacrifice for your sins is not enough. There must be a Door of Offering in your life. The blood of Jesus must be applied to the door of your heart. You must believe that Jesus died for you, was buried and rose again. You must believe that is the blood of Jesus Christ that gives you forgiveness of sin and eternal life. When you do, there will be no judgment of eternal death of you. Instead there will be eternal life! Romans 10:13

2) THE DOOR OF OBEDIENCE - John 10:9

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.

According to James Montgomery Boice, when sheep were grazing in the countryside of Palestine the shepherds would build rough sheepfolds. They would take stones and build a place to keep their sheep during the night, to help protect them from predators. A narrow opening was made in this sheepfold so the sheep could get in and out, but there was no door. That is, there was no door until the shepherd himself laid down in the doorway and became the door. No predator could get in without getting past the shepherd and no sheep could get out without getting past the shepherd. The sheep were secure.

Jesus says that He is the door. That implies that he is the only door. In fact He actually says that in John 14:6.

There is a door of obedience whereby we are saved from sin and given eternal life. The door of Obedience is to place your faith and trust in Christ as your door to Heaven. You enter in by faith. Acts 16:31

Actually, the Door of Offering and the Door of Obedience are conveying the same idea. You come to Christ and trust Him by faith that He has died for your sins.

3) THE DOOR OF OPPORTUNITY - 1 Corinthians 16:9

For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

Paul had an open door for ministry! Opportunity was knocking and Paul was answering.

Sometimes we think that the only ones who ever had open doors for ministry are great nationally known preachers and the Apostles. We are not surprised if Paul had an open door for ministry, after all, He was the great Paul the Apostle! God opens doors of opportunity for us as well. Galatians 6:9-10

God wants us to look for opportunities to do good to others, especially to fellow believers. This makes sense when we consider the purpose for which God saved us. That purpose is to do good works.

Ephesians 2:10

God not only provides open doors of opportunity for good works. He provides also provides opportunities to speak for Him.

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:*

As we sanctify or prepare our hearts to love and serve God, He will give us opportunities to share our faith.

We must be ready to open our mouths when people give us an opening.

Warning! With opportunities come opposition. There will be times because you are doing good and being effective for the Lord that you will run into opposition! We should take to heart the advice the Lord gave Paul while he was in Corinth. Acts 18:9-10

4) THE DOOR OF ONENESS - Revelation 3:20

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.*

You might have seen that classic picture of the Lord Jesus knocking on a door. There is no handle on the outside of the door, meaning that the one on the inside had to let him in.

I have used this verse as an illustration that each one of us must open the door of our hearts by faith to receive Christ as Savior. It is our decision.

But I believe that this verse is an invitation primarily for believers.

The Lord Jesus is inside our hearts because we have trusted Him as Savior. But there are rooms that remain shut to Him. He knocks and says, "Won't you let me in? Won't you spend time with me? Won't you get to know me better?"

And the more we spend time with the Lord Jesus, in meditation, in prayer, and in learning His word, the more we will become like Him. The more we abide in Him, the more we will be like Him!

That's oneness with Christ! 1 John 2:6

Jesus is knocking on the door.

Let's open it and spend time with Him.

Exodus 12:3-7, 13 THE LAMB

The People of Israel were preparing to leave Egypt. There would be one last plague before Pharaoh would agree to release the Israelites. The death angel would pass through. The Children of Israel were told to offer the Passover Lamb as a sacrifice and to spread the blood on the doorposts. The death angel saw the blood and passed over. Exodus 12:13 The Passover Lamb is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ who is the "Lamb of God" and "our Passover". John 1:29 1 Corinthians 5:7

Consider:

A CHOSEN LAMB - Vs. 3

A lamb needed to be chosen by each family.

Jesus was chosen by God to be the Passover Lamb for the world. Philippians 2:5-8

A CLEAN LAMB - Vs. 5

The lamb needed to be perfect.

Jesus was perfect. He was sinless. 1 Peter 1:18-19

A CONSECRATED LAMB - Vs. 6

The Lamb was kept. He was set apart for the task of being the Passover Lamb.

Jesus was set apart to go to the cross to die for sin. Mark 14:36

A CRUSHED LAMB - Vs. 6

The Lamb was killed.

Isaiah 53:5

A COVERING LAMB - Vs. 7, 13

The blood was applied to the doorposts.

When the blood of Christ is applied to our lives we have forgiveness and our sins are covered. Romans 5:9

Exodus 14 SOVEREIGN GOD AT WORK

God is sovereign, even when God's people are in a panic! The children of Israel appeared to be in great jeopardy, but never were. Their sovereign God was at work!

THE CONTROL OF GOD - Vss. 1-9

THE CONFUSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE - Vss. 10-12

THE CONFIDENCE OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vss. 13-14

THE COMPLETION OF GOD'S PLAN - Vss. 15-31

Exodus 14 NOT SURPRISED!

We are often surprised by a sudden turn of events, which causes us to worry or to fret. As Moses and the children of Israel fled from Egypt, the people were probably surprised that Pharaoh followed them and that Israel was kept from fleeing by the red sea. Although we are often surprised by sudden difficulties, let's remember that God is not surprised!

1. GOD HAS A PLAN Vss. 1-9

2. GOD WILL PROTECT Vss. 10-14

3. GOD WILL REVEAL HIS POWER Vss. 15-31

Exodus 14 DELIVERANCE

GOD'S PLAN FOR DELIVERANCE - Vss. 1-9

GOD'S PROMISE OF DELIVERANCE - Vss. 10-14

GOD'S PATH TO DELIVERANCE - Vss. 15-23

GOD'S POWER IN DELIVERANCE - Vss. 24-31

Exodus 17:1-7 WATER SHORTAGE

PROBLEM - Vs. 1

The children had no water.

PROTEST - Vss. 2-3

The Children of Israel did what they did best. They complained!

PRAYER - Vs.4

Moses cried to God for help.

PROVISION - Vss. 5-7

God answered prayer and provided water from the rock.

Exodus 17:11 HANDS UP! Read Exodus 17:8-13 (can be 4 sermons)

In the Scriptures there were times when, if a person lifted up their hands, they were praying. Psalm 28:W, Psalm 63:3-4, 1 Timothy 2:8

Now, you don't need to literally stick up your hands in prayer in order to be heard, but you need to pray in order to be heard. In the Scriptures we find a story about Moses and the Children of Israel. They had left Egypt and were headed to the Promised Land, when an enemy, Amalek, or the Amalekites, came to attack Israel.

Moses instructed Joshua to form an army and to go fight Amalek. For his part, Moses would stand on a hill above the battlefield and hold up the rod of God. This was the same rod that was used in the parting of the Red Sea.

So Joshua chose his army and went out to battle. Moses and two assistants, his brother Aaron and a man named Hur, went up to the hill. When Moses held his hands up Israel would begin to win the battle. But when Moses allowed his hands to fall out of weariness, Amalek, the enemy would begin to win the Battle. Eventually, Aaron and Hur helped Moses by holding his hands up. The end result was that Joshua and his army had a great victory.

I would like you to think in terms of Moses' lifted hands as a picture of prayer. And thinking this way, we can learn some important things about intercessory prayer.

1) PRAYER IS PROPER

If we think of Moses as praying when he had his hands raised, Moses was certainly doing the right thing.

He was asking God for help.

He was depending on God for help.

He was interceding in behalf of others who were fighting the Lord's battles.

MOSES WAS ASKING GOD FOR HELP

Makes sense doesn't it?

If God is stronger than we are, and He is...

If God is wiser than we are, and He is...

Then we should forget our pride of trying to solve our own problems and give the problems them to Him!

Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 7:7-8

MOSES WAS DEPENDING ON GOD

Prayer is not only the most effective thing you can do, sometimes it's about the only thing you can do.

Psalms 121:1-2 - *I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. [2] My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.*

The Psalmist realized that his help did not come from the hills where there was idol worship. He realized that He was dependent on the help of the very God who made Heaven and Earth!

MOSES WAS INTERCEDING IN BEHALF OF OTHERS WHO WERE FIGHTING THE LORD'S BATTLES.

All over the world missionaries and pastors are fighting the Lord's battles (Give examples that your church will be familiar with.) Ephesians 6:18

2) PRAYER TAKES PERSISTENCE

Moses had to keep his hands up. That would imply that we need to persistently pray.

As long as Moses kept his hands up, Israel prevailed. When he let his hands down, the enemy would prevail

1 Thessalonians 5:17 says very simply, *Pray without ceasing.*

As you read the letters of the Apostle Paul you will discover a man who was continually praying for Christians everywhere. Not only was this man a great evangelist, theologian, missionary, pastor, and writer of Scripture, but he was a man of persistent prayer!

If you want to know how to pray for others in the church family, look at the prayers Paul prayed for other Christians in Ephesians 1:15-23, 3:14-21, Philippians 1:9-11, and Colossians 1:9-11.

Jesus was told a parable about a woman who was not receiving justice from an unrighteous judge. What did the woman do? She bugged him until the judge got weary of the continual pressure and granted her justice. God of course is not like the unjust judge and will gladly hear and answer His children.

Luke 18:1 tells us what the point of the parable about this persistent woman is, *And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*

3) PRAYER IS A PARTNERSHIP

Vs. 12 - Moses' hands got heavy. So what did Aaron and Hur do? They held up Moses' hands. You can say that they assisted in the prayer battle.

Are missionaries supposed to pray? Of course they are!

Are pastors supposed to pray? Of course they are!

Do missionaries get weary? Of course they do!

Do pastors get weary? Of course they do!

You can help by getting under and helping with your own outreached prayers to Heaven.
The missionary should not carry the whole prayer load.
The pastor should not carry the whole prayer load.

A couple of years ago our missionary to Papua New Guinea, Matt Hall, and his partner started teaching the Bible with a view towards laying a groundwork so they could present the Gospel to the tribal people with whom they were working.

Before that, people in our church and other churches were asked to pray for specific tribe members by name. We were holding up Matt's hands by praying for the salvation of these people. The end result was that many of the people that were prayed for by our church people came to a saving knowledge of Christ.

Is it worth it to sacrifice time and energy in prayer for the missionaries, the church people, and the pastors you know? Is it worth it to be a prayer partner for others?

If one soul is saved, it's worth it.
If one Christian is protected from Satan's onslaught, it's worth it.
If one believer grows in Christ and becomes a stronger Christian, it's worth it!
If only one person were helped by our prayers, it's worth it.

4) PRAYER IS POWERFUL

Exodus 17:13 - *And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.*

With the help of Aaron and Hur Moses kept his hands up.

His prayer was proper and persistent, and a partnership.

His prayer was also powerful. The enemy was defeated.

Matthew 7:9-11- We have a reasonably good idea of how to properly answer the requests of our children.

We also desire to answer the reasonable requests of our children. How much more does God know how to answer our requests! And how much more does God want to answer our requests!

John 14:12-14 - Jesus tells us that we are going to accomplish great things!

He also tells us that these great things will be accomplished in answer to prayer.

When something is asked in Jesus' name, according to His pleasure, the prayer request will be answered so that God will be glorified through the Lord Jesus.

Beloved, it's time to get our hands up! It is time to pray.

Exodus 17:8-16 MOSES THE INTERCESSOR

Joshua and the armies of Israel went to battle. Moses went to a mountain to pray.

While God's children fight Spiritual wars in this life. Prayer support is needed.

As the battle raged, Moses had:

HIGH HANDS - Vs. 11 - Moses held up his hands and Israel prevailed.

HEAVY HANDS - Vss 11-12 - When Moses' hands got heavy and started to drop, the enemy started to prevail.

HELPFUL HANDS - Vs. 13 - Moses was helped by Aaron and Hur. They held up his hands.

The end result was victory for Israel. - Vss. 13-16

We think of the pastor as a man of prayer. He is helped by those that hold up his hands, taking on some of his responsibilities so he has time to pray.

Exodus 17:9-18 PRAYER LESSONS

We all need to learn more about prayer. I feel that Moses holding up the rod of God is symbolic for our prayer lives today. Notice these lessons:

THE PURPOSE FOR PRAYER - Vs. 9a - Someone is out there fighting.

In this case it was Joshua and the children of Israel.

There are unsaved fighting for life whether they know it or not. They need our prayers.

There are Christians who are in difficult situations who need our prayers. Hebrews 13:3

THE PROMISE OF PRAYER - Vs. 9b - Those fighting are encouraged when they know people are praying.

The Apostle Paul was constantly telling others that he was praying for them. Ephesians 1:15-15, Philippians 1:2-4, 1 Thessalonians 1:2

PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER - Vss. 10 - The results of the battle are in direct relation to the faithfulness of prayer. Luke 11:5-10, Luke 18:1-8

THE POWER OF PRAYER - Vss. 13-16 - Joshua experienced victory.

Others will experience victory as we pray for them! Ephesians 6:18

Exodus 18:13-27 OVERWORKED!

It is very easy for those in leadership positions to get overworked.

Such was the case of Moses. Jethro, his father-in-law, pointed out the problem, and gave the solution.

THE WEIGHT OF LEADERSHIP Vss. 13-18

Jethro watched as a long line of people came to Moses from Morning until night. Moses was doing all the interpreting of the law, and judging specific situations. Jethro pointed out that this was a job too big for just one man. Both people and leader would grow weary.

THE WISDOM OF JETHRO Vss. 19-23

Moses was to do three things.

Intercede - He was to be a man of prayer for the people. Vs.19

Instruct - He was to teach what God's word says and what the people were to do. Vs. 20

Involve - Other Godly men were to be appointed and to take care of judging small, simple matters. The big problems they were to bring to Moses.

THE WORK OF MOSES Vss. 24-27

Moses did as he was instructed.

Exodus 18:13-26 ELEMENTS OF PASTORING

This story about Moses and Jethro is a reminder of three key ingredients of pastoring.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 13-18

1. INTERCESSION FOR THE PEOPLE Vs. 19

2. INSTRUCTION OF THE WORD Vs. 20

3. INVOLVEMENT BY GODLY MEN Vss. 21-22

CONCLUSION - Vss. 23-26

Exodus 20:1-11 (The Ten Commandments) (can be 2 sermons)

1) TEN COMMANDMENTS (God First #1-4) – Exodus 20:1-11

COMMITMENT TO GOD - Vss. 1-3

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S WORSHIP - Vss. 4-6

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S NAME - Vs. 7

COMMITMENT TO GOD'S DAY - Vs. 8

2) TEN COMMANDMENTS (Others #5-10) Exodus 20:12-17

COMMITMENT TO THE RESPECT OF MY PARENTS - Vs. 12

COMMITMENT TO THE LIFE OF MY NEIGHBOR - Vs. 13

COMMITMENT TO THE PURITY OF MY NEIGHBOR - Vs. 14

COMMITMENT TO THE PROPERTY OF MY NEIGHBOR - Vss. 15, 17

COMMITMENT TO THE REPUTATION OF MY NEIGHBOR - Vs. 16

Exodus 20:1-20 FOUND FAITHFUL

We are told in 1 Corinthians 4:2 that stewards are to be "found faithful".

As Christians we are 'stewards of the mysteries of God'. 1 Corinthians 4:1

As faithful stewards we should strive to keep God's commands. Although nobody but Jesus has kept the Ten Commandments perfectly, we should still strive to obey them out of love for Christ. John 14:15

We should be "found faithful" -

FAITHFUL TO GOD - Vss. 1-11

FAITHFUL TO PARENTS - Vs. 12

FAITHFUL TO OTHERS - Vss. 13-20

Exodus 31:1-6 NOT TRIVIAL (our spiritual gifts)

I have a Bible question for you. Who was Bezaleel? Bezaleel is probably one of the more obscure Bible characters in the Bible. Bezaleel and the impact that he had were not trivial at all. Bezaleel was responsible for the construction of all the things involved in the worship that took place in the tabernacle, including the ark, the mercy seat, the tabernacle furniture, candlesticks, the altar, and the high priest's garments. See Exodus 31:7-11. Bezaleel also shows us how God can use people who may feel obscure.

HE WAS SELECTED - Vss. 1-2

God had a plan for his life. He was selected "by name" for a very important task.

God has a specific plan for the life of each Christian.

God has something for each one of us to do. Ephesians 2:10, Ephesians 5:15-17, 1 Peter 4:11

HE WAS SKILLED - Vss. 3-5

God had made this man skilled in a number of areas.

God has given at least one Spiritual Gift to each Christian. Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 12:1-7, Romans 12:3-8

HE WAS SUPPORTED - Vs. 6

There were other gifted people who were to work along with Bezaleel.

There was a partnership formed to get the job done.

The church is viewed as a body. For a body to work well, each part of the body needs to function. Pastors and missionaries need other gifted people to work along with them in order for the church to reach its full potential. 1 Corinthians 12:13-27

Leviticus 1:2-9 A PICTURE OF JESUS

As we look at the burnt offering, we see a picture of the offering that the Lord Jesus made for our sins.

A PERFECT OFFERING - Vs. 3 - As the offering from the herd was to be "without blemish", Jesus was sinless, and therefore, the perfect offering for our sins. 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2 Corinthians 5:21

A VOLUNTARY OFFERING - Vs. 3 - The person making the offering did it voluntarily. Jesus voluntarily gave His life as a sacrifice for sin. John 10:17-18

AN ASSOCIATED OFFERING - Vs. 4 - The one bringing the offering associated with the sacrifice by putting his hand on the offering. His sins were being associated with the innocent sacrifice. Jesus went to the cross in our place. We associate with Jesus when we place our faith in His shed blood. Just as the one bringing the offering realized that the animal was taking his place by paying for sin, we must realize by faith that Christ has taken our place. 1 Peter 3:18, Ephesians 2:8-9

A SACRIFICIAL OFFERING - Vss. 5-8 - The innocent animal sacrificed his life. The innocent Son of God sacrificed His life so that we might have eternal life. Hebrews 10:14

A COMPLETE OFFERING - Vs. 9 - A complete offering on the altar. Jesus gave His all that so we have life.

Leviticus 7:1-7 A SAD DAY

It was the official day of ordination for Aaron, the High Priest and his sons. In many ways it was a glorious day (See Leviticus 8-9). However, what should have been a glad day became a sad day, because of the sinful actions of Aaron's oldest sons, Nadab and Abihu.

STRANGE FIRE - Vs. 1

Nadab and Abihu chose to offer something other than what was commanded by God.

Sometimes we think we can be creative and do our own thing and still please God. In reality, when we offer to God anything that He has not asked for, we are offering "strange fire". I think that this a similar mistake made by Cain in Genesis 4. He offered something "strange" instead of what God required.

STRONG FORCE - Vs. 2

God in His holiness and righteous anger struck Nadab and Abihu dead. God's discipline is a strong force.

When we experience it, we need to repent. 1 Corinthians 11:28-32, Hebrews 12:4-11

STRICT FOCUS - Vss. 3-7

Although there was a death in the family Aaron and his remaining sons were to remain focused on God.

Everyone else did the mourning while they remained set apart for God's service.

Numbers 6:22-27 BLESSED!

The blessing that the priests were to give was a blessing from God. When God blesses us we are:

BLESSED BY GOD'S PROVIDENCE

Numbers 6:24 - *The Lord bless thee...*

Numbers 6:25 - *The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:*

BLESSED BY GOD'S PROTECTION

Numbers 6:24 - *...and keep thee:*

BLESSED BY GOD'S PEACE

Numbers 6:26 - *The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

Numbers 10:1-10 THE SOUND OF TRUMPETS (encourage pastors)

Israel was to make and use two silver trumpets. These trumpets had five different purposes.

A CALL TO ASSEMBLY - Vss. 3,7

When the people were to gather, both trumpets would sound.

A CALL TO AUTHORITIES - Vs. 4

One trumpet was sounded for the leadership to assemble.

A CALL TO ADVANCE - Vss. 5-6

When the people were to break camp and move out the trumpets would sound.

A CALL FOR ASSISTANCE - Vs. 9

When there was an enemy attack in the land of Israel, the alarm would sound. This sounding of alarm indicated Israel's need of God's help.

A CALL TO ADORATION - Vs. 10

This sounding of trumpets was for the marking of the calendar, the celebration of holy days, and the offering of sacrifices.

I think of pastors as God's trumpets today.
Pastors call their congregations to assemble.
Pastors call the leaders together.
Pastors call the congregations to advance.
Pastors call to God publicly and privately for assistance.
Pastors call the people to adoration.

Numbers 12 "BE CAREFUL LITTLE LIPS WHAT YOU SAY"

Sing: "Be careful little lips what you say. Be Careful little lips what you say. There's a Father up above and He's looking down in love. Be careful little lips what you say."

This song makes a point. James 3 warns about the sins of the tongue, as do other passages. One of the sins of the tongue which is prevalent today is the using it to be critical of God's servants. We must remember that each person who is saved is a child of God. Therefore, we must be careful what we say about them (1 Corinthians 4:1-5). Aaron and Miriam discovered this truth the hard way.

1. ATTACKS ON GOD'S SERVANTS ARE NOT ALWAYS JUSTIFIED. Vss. 1-3
2. ACTION WILL BE TAKEN BY GOD TO DEFEND HIS SERVANTS. Vss. 4-10 (Romans 12:19)
3. ADMISSION OF GUILT DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN A STAY OF DISCIPLINE Vss. 11-16 (Even though there was confession of sin here, God still chose to discipline. He did the same with David, who was disciplined after his confession of sin with Bathsheba.)

Numbers 12 DEFENDED!

Moses, God's man, was under attack by those who should have known better, his brother and sister. Here we see how God defends the person who is walking in the will of God.

MOSES ATTACKED BY AARON AND MIRIAM - Vss. 1-2

MOSES' ATTITUDE OF MEEKNESS - Vs. 3

MOSES ASSISTED BY GOD - Vss. 4-10

MOSES ASKED FOR HIS SISTER - Vss. 11-13

MOSES ANSWERED WITH A CONDITION - Vss. 14-15

Miriam was to be exiled for a week.

Numbers 13 THE MAJORITY IS NOT ALWAYS RIGHT

Very often politicians do not care as much about right and wrong as they do about public opinion.

They want to please the majority of their constituents. Because of this attitude wrong decisions are made.

Moses sent a group of spies into the Promised Land to bring back a report. There were actually two reports and the people believed the majority of the spies. The end result was that the children of Israel believed the wrong report. The majority is not always right.

RECRUITS - Vss. 1-16

Spies were recruited to spy out the land. Each man was a leader in his tribe.

RESPONSIBILITIES - Vss. 17-20

The spies were given their duties as they spied out the land.

RECONNAISSANCE - 21-25

The spies' mission is described.

REPORTS - Vss. 26-30

Majority Report - The majority of the spies told of a wonderful land, but also described the people of the land. They were afraid of their size and their defenses. Vss. 26-29

Minority Report - Vs. 30 - Caleb spoke up. He wanted to go forward to conquer the land. He didn't deny the information, but realized that God would enable them to conquer the land. Numbers 14:6-10

REBUTTAL - Vss. 31-33

In response to Caleb's words, the majority brought up a negative report on the land. They said "no" to God's plan. The people believed the majority report, and ended up wandering in the wilderness for 40 years.

Numbers 13-14 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING (encourage people)

Israel had left Egypt and was headed for the promised land. They were on the verge of entering into a great land. Opportunity was knocking, but Israel balked.

WHAT A COUNTRY! Numbers 13:1-3, 17-20, 26-27; Exodus 3:8, Leviticus 20:24

WHAT A CONTRAST! Numbers 13:26-33

10 spies - A faithless report.

Caleb - A faithful report. Vs. 30

WHAT A COMPLAINT! Numbers 14:1-10

WHAT A CONDEMNATION! Numbers 14:20-37

WHAT A COMPLIMENT! Numbers 14:24,30, 38

Numbers 14 FIGHTING GOD

When Israel revolted concerning going into the Promised Land, their revolt was actually against God.

REBELLION OF ISRAEL - 1-10a

RESPONSE OF GOD - Vss. 10b-12

REQUEST OF MOSES - Vss. 13-19

RETRIBUTION FROM GOD - Vss. 20-38

Numbers 14:24 MINORITY MAN

"But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it."

Comic books, radio and television have come up with more than their share of super heroes. To name a few, there's been Superman, Batman, Spiderman, Aquaman, Supergirl, Batgirl, Wonder Woman.

It is best to get our heroes and role models from the Bible. Perhaps if we gave them nick names they would be more appealing to today's youth.

David could be "Slingshot Man", Daniel could be "Lion Man". Gideon could be "Pitcher Man". Shadrack, Mishack and Abednego could be "The Asbestos Triplets." And what about our hero in this passage. Caleb could be "Minority Man" because he stood for God in a minority of two (Joshua was the other person.)

Review the story of Numbers 13:26-33 and 14:1-10.

Caleb, "The Minority Man" was commended by God.

HIS IDENTITY AS GOD'S SERVANT ("my servant")

THE INFLUENCE OF ANOTHER SPIRIT ("another spirit with him")

HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH GOD'S LEADERSHIP ("followed fully")

INHERITANCE IN GOD'S LAND ("his seed shall possess it.")

Numbers 14:24 SOMEBODY SPECIAL

Okay, admit it! You'd like to be known as "somebody special". Surely you should be "somebody special" in the eyes of your wife or husband, son or daughter, mom or dad.

You might want to be considered "somebody special" because of the quality of work you do on the job or as a student. Although it is nice to be considered "special" by someone else, people do not always make you feel special when they should. However, if you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, you are special in God's eyes. See Ephesians 1:3-7.

As Christians, we can also continue to distinguish ourselves as "somebody special" through our Godly behavior. Caleb, who stood for God during a very trying time in Israel's history, distinguished himself as "somebody special". The story of the stand which he took along with Joshua is found in Numbers 13:26-33 and Numbers 14:1-10.

In Numbers 14:24 God shows us what made Caleb so special.

HE WAS A SERVANT - *But my servant Caleb,*

He put God's plans ahead of his own. God owned him. Galatians 2:20, Luke 9:23-24, Romans 1:1

HE HAD ANOTHER SPIRIT - *because he had another spirit with him,*

I personally feel that the Spirit he had with him was the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is with each Christian (1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9) and wants to fill or control each Christian (Ephesians 5:18).

HE HAD A STRATEGY - *and hath followed me fully,*

All Caleb did was follow God's directions. He was obedient. What better strategy for life than to obey God? 1 Samuel 15:22-23, John 4:34, 8:31

HE HAD SUCCESS - *him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.*

Caleb received what he was promised (Joshua 14:6-15).

As we imitate Caleb, we will be successful in the eyes of God, and rewarded. Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Timothy 4:7-8, James 1:12, 1 Peter 5:4, Daniel 12:3

Numbers 16:1-40 REVOLT!

REBELLION OF KORAH Vss. 1-3

RESPONSE OF MOSES Vss. 4-19

RETRIBUTION FROM GOD Vss. 20-35

REMINDER OF GOD'S HOLINESS Vss. 36-40

Numbers 20:1-13 ONE LITTLE ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE

We generally evaluate our sins and the sins of others by their magnitude. We consider some sins "little things". Other sins we consider to be big violations. A "little" act of disobedience in our eyes is a "big" act of disobedience in God's eyes. Most of us would not consider Moses' act of disobedience of striking a rock instead of speaking to it a big sin. But it was big in the eyes of our righteous and holy God.

COMPLAINT OF THE PEOPLE Vss. 1-5

There was no water, and it seemed to the Children of Israel that Egypt was now a better place.

COMMAND OF GOD Vss. 6-8

Moses and Aaron wisely sought counsel from God. Moses was told to take his Rod and speak to the rock.

Water would come out of the rock.

CONDUCT OF MOSES Vss. 9-11

Moses had a "few choice words" for the rebellious people, and then struck the rock twice with his rod. Water did come out of the rock, but Moses had not done as he was told.

COMMENTARY BY GOD Vss. 12-13

Moses was rebuked for his unbelief.

He had failed to sanctify God in front of the people.

His little act of disobedience got water, but also caused Moses to not enter the promised land. Even "little" sins have consequences. There are no "little" sins with God.

Numbers 25:1-15 GOD HATES SIN!

Many do not like the violence of the Old Testament. However, God is justified to hate sin because He is a holy God. After the ten commandments had been given there was no reason for the behavior practiced by some Israelites in Numbers 25.

CORRUPTED VALUES Vss. 1-5

Some of the people committed adultery in two ways. First, there was literally adultery with the daughters of Moab. Second, there was the Spiritual adultery of worshiping false gods. God does not want us to commit either type of adultery today. We are warned against Spiritual adultery in James 4:2-5.

COURAGEOUS VIGILANCE Vss. 6-9

While many were weeping before the tabernacle, an Israelite man and a Moabite woman headed for the man's tent. Phinehas, the priest, noticed it, he followed and killed both people. God, who was angry with the sin, required judgment. Phinehas is remembered for standing for what was right. May we be remembered the same way.

COMPLIMENTARY VOICE Vss. 10-15

There was praise and blessing for Phinehas because he did what was right.

NUMBERS 27:12-23 CHANGING OF THE GUARD

There are always times when leadership changes. Sometimes it is because of age, or death, or resignation, or incompetence, or some other reason. When leaders change we sometimes call it "The Changing of the Guard". This alludes to an act of soldiers.

In Israel there was a changing of the guard before they entered the Promised Land. Joshua replaced Moses in leadership.

GOD'S CALL OF MOSES TO HEAVEN -Vss. 12-14

MOSES' CRY FOR A SUCCESSOR - Vss. 15-17

GOD'S CHOICE OF JOSHUA - Vss. 18-23

Numbers 32:1-33 A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Much is accomplished when people work together! (Nehemiah building the walls, etc.)

The children of Israel were on the verge of crossing over into the Promised Land. Some of the tribes wanted to settle on the other side of the Jordan River because of the good pastureland. This could have weakened the strength of the attacking force that went over the Jordan. By working together in a spirit of cooperation the matter was resolved.

A REQUEST FOR A COUNTRY (INHERITANCE) - Vss. 1-5

The request was to settle in a land that was very suitable for cattle.

A REACTION OF CONCERN - Vss. 6-15

Moses was afraid that the other tribes would be discouraged. He envisioned them sitting in their new land while the other tribes had to fight for their territory. He used the example of the previous generation, which refused to enter the Promised Land through unbelief.

A RESPONSE OF COMMITMENT - Vss. 16-19

These people proposed building cities and sheepfolds and then joining the other tribes in conquering the Promised Land. They said they would not return until the others had been successful in securing their inheritance.

A RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT - Vss. 20-33

Moses made the agreement with warnings.

These tribes were faithful in fulfilling their obligation (Joshua 22:1-9)

Numbers 32 PEACEFUL RESOLUTION

The children of Israel were ready to enter into The Promised Land. All of a sudden an issue came up that caused great concern. How it was resolved is a good lesson in peaceful resolution.

PETITION – Vss. 1-4

Two tribes wanted to stay on the side of the Jordan River that was already conquered. They had much cattle, and the land was suitable for raising livestock.

PROTEST – Vss. 6-15

Moses was concerned that this meant that the two tribes would not help conquer The Promised Land.

This would hurt morale. He cited the rebellion of the Children of Israel 40 years earlier as an example to heed.

PROPOSAL – Vss. 16-19

The two tribes proposed building sheepfolds for their livestock and then joining the invasion of The Promised Land. They would not return home until Israel was done conquering.

PACT – Vss. 20-32

It was agreed that the two tribes would build their sheepfolds and get their families settled. Then they would go forward armed to help conquer the enemy.

PREPARATION – Vss. 33-42

Joined by the half tribe of Manasseh, the two tribes made the needed preparations to take care of their families. They then joined the rest of the people in conquering The Promised Land.

Deuteronomy 1:19-46 REFUSING GOD'S BEST

Very often our lives are miserable because we refuse to accept what God knows is best for our lives. This is exactly what the Children of Israel did as they were on the verge of entering The Promise Land. Moses reviews the sad story.

REQUIREMENT - Vss. 19-21

The children of Israel were required to go in and possess the land that God had given them. They were not to fear nor be discouraged.

RECONNAISSANCE - Vss. 22-25

At the peoples' request spies were commissioned to go in and search the land.

REVOLT - Vss. 26-33

In spite of the goodness of the land, the people revolted against the plan of going into the land because of the report of the majority of spies. Their biggest problem is summed up in Deut. 1:32 - *Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God,*

REBUKE - Vss. 34-40

The generation that refused to believe God and possess the land never entered the Land with the exception of Caleb and Joshua. They were to continue to take their journey, one that lasted 40 years.

REFUSAL (TO ACCEPT GOD'S JUDGMENT) - Vss. 41-46

The people tried to enter the land instead of accepting God's judgment. The effort was a failure.

Deuteronomy 1:19-46 REMEMBERING A SAD TIME

Sometimes it is good to remember a sad situation. As we reflect on sad situations, we might not make the same mistake a second time. The Children of Israel had failed God by refusing to go into the Promised Land when God said it was time to go. In our text Moses is reflecting on that time originally described in Numbers 13-14.

PRONOUNCEMENT FROM GOD - Vss. 19-21

The people were to go into the land that God had designated as their inheritance. They were not to fear nor be discouraged.

PERUSAL OF THE LAND - Vss. 22-25

Spies were sent in to check out the land.

PANIC BY THE PEOPLE - Vss. 26-33

The people panicked because they refused to trust God.

PUNISHMENT FROM GOD - Vss. 34-46

The generation in charge would not enter the Promised Land but die in the wilderness. 34-39

An attempt to enter the land after God had said "not now" was met with defeat. Vss. 40-46

Deuteronomy 6:1-15 LOVING GOD

Does it sound trite if I say, "God loves you"? It's a statement you have heard often.

It's a statement that you usually don't reflect upon when you hear it. But it is a true statement!

God's love appears in the first verse of the Bible!

Genesis 1:1- "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

It is God who loved us enough to create the world in all its beauty. It is God who loved us enough to create every living creature, including you and I. If God didn't love us, we would be here.

God's love doesn't stop with creation. Every man and woman, boy and girl has disobeyed God. We've all blown it! In His love, God sent His Son to pay for the sins that we have committed. In paying for our sins, God made it possible for every person to have forgiveness of sin, and everlasting life! John 3:16
Now, must of you hearing this message have already experienced forgiveness of sin, and are on your way to heaven. God's love continues towards you.

Because God loves you as His child, He has promised to never leave or to forsake you. Hebrews 13:5

Because God loves you, He answers your prayers. Matthew 7:7-11

Because God loves you, He, through the Holy Spirit, lives inside of you. Romans 8:9

Because God loves you, we are promised that nothing can separate us from that love in Romans 8:38-39.

Now, if you are saved and know that you are going to Heaven, what is the logical response to God's love?

WE ARE TO LOVE HIM IN RETURN! 1 John 4:19

How can we go about loving God? Deuteronomy 6:1-12 shows us how. Vss. 4-5 gives us the central theme of the passage preached by Moses before the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land.

Vs. 4 reminds us that there is but one God.

What does the existence of one true God mean to you and I as Christians?

He alone is to be worshipped in our lives.

He is to be considered first when we make a decision.

Pleasing Him should be the most important thing in the world.

After all, he is God! What does it matter what anyone else thinks?

Anyone else is just human like you!

Vs. 5 - Love for God is to a total commitment. All that is inside of me, the real me, heart and soul, is to love God. All my strength is to go into loving God.

If you love God, He will be the principle part of your decision making process. You will want to please Him, want to talk to Him, want to talk about Him, want to spend time with Him. You will want to read His love letters, the Bible. You will want to understand His word. You will want to listen to music about Him, and music dedicated to Him. You will want others to experience the same love you have experienced.

This kind of love for God is impossible without God's help.

It is the Holy Spirit who will assist us. When the Spirit of God fills us, we will be successful in loving God the way He wants to be loved. Ephesians 5:18-20

When we love God as Verse 5 tells us to, with all our heart, soul and might, certain things will be true of us.

1) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD, FEARS GOD - Vs. 2

If I love God with all my heart, soul, and strength, I will reverence Him. I will respect Him. I will be afraid to displease Him.

If I love Him, He will have the reverence of my praise.

If I love Him, He will have the reverence of respectful approach to Him in Jesus' name.

If I love Him, He will have the reverence of my speaking well of Him. Nobody can take the Lord's name in vain and truly claim to love Him.

If I love Him, His Word will be respected.

If I love Him, I will realize that disobedience hurts Him, and is a show of disrespect.

If I love Him, I realize that I am accountable to Him, that He is my judge, and disobedience breaks his Heart.

If I love Him, I desire to hear, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

2) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD, OBEYS GOD - Vs. 2

We do not keep commands in order to earn our way into Heaven or to stay saved. Hebrews 10:14

We keep his commands because we love Him.

Much of the Old Testament Law is no longer necessary for us to keep, such as the sacrifices and keeping of holy days. This is because Christ has fulfilled these things.

But Jesus did say, "If you love me keep my commandments." John 14:15

And Jesus did say, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15:14

1 John 5:3, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

3) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD REMEMBERS GOD'S WORD - Vs. 6

The words that Moses was giving the Israelites were the Words of God.

These were words worth remembering. These were valuable words. We try to remember important things, like dates, instructions, appointments, and valuable sayings. What could be more valuable than remembering the Word of God? Hiding God's Word in your heart is very valuable, not only because God tells us we should, but because of what it will do for you.

Hiding God's Word in your heart will:

Keep you from sin. Psalm 119:11 Lead you to obey. - Joshua 1:8 Help you to pray. - John 15:7

4) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD TEACHES HIS CHILDREN VS. 7

Your goal should be to train you children in the things of God!

Your God is the true God. Your children need to know that!

They will see God as you live the Christian life before them.

They will learn of God, as you talk about the Word of God at the table and at appropriate places in your travels.

When God answers a prayer, tell your children.

When God shows you something special in his Word, show them.

When God gives you a special blessing, tell them.

When God takes care of you during a trial, share it.

And be sure to read the Bible together as a family!

Also be sure to apply god's word to the problems and successes that your child is experiencing.

5) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD KEEPS GOD'S WORD IN VIEW Vss. 8-9

God's Word is not something to be forgotten,

It is something that should be in our view, and the view of our families.

We can literally place it in front of our eyes with plaques.

We can literally put it into our hands and read it!

We can literally put it before our minds eye through memorization.

6) THE ONE WHO LOVES GOD TAKES PRECAUTIONS TO REMEMBER GOD Vss. 10-12

The Israelites were warned that God's goodness would lead to their complacency. They had to be careful not to get so comfortable in their new land, that they forget the Lord and slip into idolatry.

In Verse 12, the Israelites are not to forget Egypt.

They were not to forget the bondage.

They were not to forget the slavery.

They were not to forget that God had delivered them!

We are to do the same. Egypt reminds me of the bondage of sin.

We are to never forget what god has delivered us out of.

We must never forget the slavery that sin causes, and the great victory that Jesus gave us.

We must continually remember that it was the grace of God that delivered us.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NARROW-MINDED!

Generally, we do not like the thought of being known as narrow-minded. We think of narrow-minded people as less than gracious, not accepting the opinions of others or the thought of change. However, when it comes to the things of God, there is a good kind of narrow-mindedness. Jesus was narrow-minded when he spoke of the way to Heaven. (John 3:1-7, John 14:6), The Christian is to be narrow-minded in his devotion to God, as shown in our text. The Christian is to have:

1. ONE LORD Vs. 4
2. ONE LOVE Vs. 5
3. ONE LESSON (God's Word) Vss. 6-9
 - In our hearts Vs. 6
 - On our lips Vs. 7
 - Before our eyes Vss. 8-9

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 SOMETHING SPECIAL

The people of Israel were special, so God had a special message for them. We too, are a special people, and the same message applies to us today.

SOMETHING TO HEAR - Vss. 1-4 - The Word of God

SOMETHING TO HEED - Vss. 1-4 - Not only are we to hear the Word of God, but we are to obey it.

SOMETHING TO HIDE - Vs. 6 - God's Word is to be hidden in our hearts.

SOMETHING TO HONOR - Vss. 7-9 - We honor God's Word by teaching it to our families, and displaying it in our homes.

SOMEONE TO HOLD - Vs. 5 - We are to cling to the Lord our God with a complete love.

Deuteronomy 6:10-19 INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PROMISED LAND

Israel was about to enter the Promised Land. Here are some instructions from God:

A DELIGHTFUL PLACE - Vss. 10-11

The Promised Land would be a terrific place to live.

A DANGEROUS POSSIBILITY - Vs. 12, 14-15

The dangerous possibility was forgetting and/or forsaking the Lord and receiving His Judgment.

A DEVOTED PEOPLE - Vss. 13, 16-18

They were to fear the Lord. Vs. 13

They were not to tempt the Lord. Vs. 16

They were not to obey. Vs. 17

They were to do what was right and good.

A DELIGHTED PEOPLE - Vss. 18b-19

It would go well with them.

They would possess the Land.

They would cast out the enemies.

Deuteronomy 7:1-11 BEGINNING A NEW LIFE

The children of Israel were going into the Promised Land. God had set them free from Egypt, and after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness they would begin a new life in a new land. As Christians, we have left the bondage of sin, and shouldn't wander, but settle into a new life in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). The instructions Israel was given for new life in the land also apply to us concerning our new lives in Christ.

REMOVAL OF THE OLD - Vss. 1-5

Because of the bad influence the people of the land and their idols were to be destroyed.

We should remove all things in our lives that are not pleasing to Christ! Of course, we are talking about killing anyone, but to get away from detrimental influences.

REASONS FOR THE NEW - Vss. 6-8

We should act in a new way because:

1. We are a holy people. Vs. 6, 1 Peter 2:9
2. The Lord loves us. Vss. 7-8a, John 3:16
3. The Lord has delivered us. Vs. 8b Ephesians 2:1
4. The Lord has redeemed us. Vs. 8b, 1 Peter 1:18-19

REPAYMENT FOR BEHAVIOR - Vss. 9-10

The Lord rewards us according to our behavior.

REMINDER TO OBEY - Vs. 11

Deuteronomy 7:1-16 SETTLING IN

Moses is giving instructions to the Children of Israel for entering the Promised Land.

CONQUEST OF THE LAND - Vss. 1-5

Israel was to conquer the land completely and destroy everything that would influence them to behave as the inhabitants of the land behaved.

COMPASSION OF GOD - Vss. 6-8

Israel was chosen of God.

Israel was reminded that they were not blessed because of their merit but because of God's great love.

COVENANT WITH ISRAEL - Vss. 9-16

Israel was to behave as God's covenant people.

They were to obey God's law.

Obedience would bring physical blessing.

Deuteronomy 9:1-6 VICTORY FOR ISRAEL

PROMISE OF VICTORY - Vss. 1-2

Moses was telling Israel that they were going into the Promised Land to possess it and have victory over those mightier than they. That's exactly what we do, when we have victory over sin. Romans 6:11-13

POWER FOR VICTORY - Vs. 3

God would give the victory for Israel. God gives the victory for us. Romans 6:14

PROHIBITION IN VICTORY - Vss. 4-6

Israel was not to think that it was because of her righteousness that they had secured victory. Israel was a "stiffnecked people". It was because of the wickedness of the nations in the Promised Land that caused God to evict them and give the land to Israel. Our victories in Christ have nothing to do with our righteousness, but everything to do with God's grace and mercy. Titus 3:5, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

Deuteronomy 10:12-21 REMINDERS

Some people tie a string around their finger. Others write themselves a note. Others say to someone else "Remind me to..." God gives us reminders in His Word. Our text contains three such reminders. Remember:

THE GRACE OF GOD - Vss. 14-15

God chose Israel above all nations. God has chosen you and I above all people, if we are born again Christians. It is us who are the children of God (John 1:12). We did nothing to deserve this. It is all God's grace, unmerited favor.

GOODNESS FOR GOD - Vss. 12-13, 16

Because Israel belonged to God, she, as a nation was to act accordingly. As Christians we are to act as the children of God. We should live out these verses in our lives today.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD - Vss. 17-21

Israel had experienced God's greatness. As a result, Israel was to be motivated to behave as God would have her to behave. Because of God's greatness to us, we too, should motivated to behave like His children

DEUTERONOMY 12:1-9 THE WAYS OF WORSHIP

You are in a worship service. My understanding of the word worship is that it is a heart response to God.

Here are some guidelines for true worship as set out in this passage. I call them the "ways of worship."

ASSIGNMENT FOR WORSHIP Vss. 1-4

There is to be no compromise with, no association with and no sympathy for any gods but the Lord our God.

AREAS OF WORSHIP Vs. 5

The Israelites were to worship in the place which the Lord chose them to worship. Generally speaking this was the tabernacle or the temple. There are two places for us to worship today. We worship inside our bodies which is temple of the God, or with fellow believers who make up the church. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 5:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Hebrews 13:15,

ACTION IN WORSHIP Vs. 6

Three actions are involved here. Giving is involved in worship.

Sacrifices - The ultimate sacrifice is paid for the Christian. 1 Peter 1:18-19. However, as a part of worship I should offer my body, and my praise, my good works and sharing with others. Rom 12:1-2, Heb 13:15-16.

Tithes - I feel are still appropriate for today. I believe it's where we should start. Malachi 3:8-12

Offerings - That which is given above the tithe. 2 Corinthians 9:5-11

ATTITUDE IN WORSHIP Vs. 7

Our attitude is to be one of joy or praise.

Deuteronomy 20 RULES FOR BATTLE

Israel was given instructions for the battles that she would face. There are some good lessons for us here as we fight "the world, the flesh, and the devil".

BE CONFIDENT – Vss. 1-4

We are to fight the Lord's battles. When we fight the Lord's battles the Lord is with us and fights for us.

BE COMPASSIONATE – Vss. 5-9

There were those excused from battle because they had reasons for not fighting. Although we can not excuse people from fighting the Lord's battles, we should remember that there are some good reasons sometimes for people not participating in church activities.

BE CONSIDERATE – Vss. 10-15

Women taken in battle were to be treated fairly.

BE CLEAN – Vss. 16-18

There were cities in the Promised Land which were to be totally destroyed.

There was to be do comprise with them so there would be no influence to worship their Gods. 2 Cor 6:14-7:1

BE CAREFUL – Vss. 19-20

There was not to be the waste of trees during a battle. Only trees that didn't give fruit were to be used. We, too, should be careful with the resources that God gives us, and not waste them.

Deuteronomy 27:11-26 CURSES!

There was to be a ceremony once the Children of Israel entered the Promised Land. During this ceremony curses were pronounced upon people who did things that displeased God. We must remember that when we Christians sin against God, we are under the "curses" of God not hearing our prayers (Psalm 66:18) and of our grieving and quenching the Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19). Here is a list of sins that will bring on these curses.

THE CURSE OF IDOLATRY - Vss. 15

THE CURSE OF DISRESPECT - Vs. 16

THE CURSE OF DISHONESTY - Vss. 17-19

THE CURSE OF SEXUAL IMPURITY - Vss. 20-23

THE CURSE OF VIOLENCE - Vss. 24-25

THE CURSE OF DISOBEDIENCE - Vs. 26

Deuteronomy 29:29 REVELATION

God has revealed Himself in His Word.

OMNISCIENCE OF GOD - "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God:" - God knows everything, and rightfully keeps some things to Himself. See Psalm 139.

OPENNESS OF GOD - "but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever..." -

God has given us His Word so we can understand all that we need to know. See Psalm 119:97-104,

Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

OBEDIENCE TO GOD - "that we may all the words of this law." We are expected to be obedient to the truth which God has revealed to us in His Word! 1 Samuel 15:22-23

Deuteronomy 31:7-8 MOVING FORWARD

One of the reasons the Allied Forces won World War II was the invasion of Normandy. There was tremendous loss of life, but the only way to defeat Hitler was to move forward. There are many unsaved people who live all around us. The only way to win them is to move forward thru various ways of evangelism. There are many issues confronting our churches and families. The only way to solve them is by moving forward under God's direction.

In our text Moses is getting ready to pass off the scene. He is turning over leadership of Israel to Joshua, and challenging Joshua to move forward.

JOSHUA'S CONDUCT - "Be strong and of a good courage... fear not, neither be dismayed."

Moving forward requires that a Christian's character be right.

We are to " ...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Ephesians 6:10

We are to be of good courage. Psalm 27:14 We are not to fear. Psalm 27:1-6

JOSHUA'S COMMISSION - "...for thou must go with this people unto the land

which the LORD hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it."

We have a commission from our Lord and Master. Matthew. 28:19-20 We are to help people inherit Heaven by witnessing to them. 1 Peter 3:15 We are to help Christians inherit their rewards by encouraging them and training them. Hebrews 3:12-13, 2 Timothy 4:2, Ephesians 4:11-12

JOSHUA'S COMPANION - " And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee..."

Moving forward under God's direction, we do not lack His active presence or help. Heb 13:5, Isa 41:10

Deuteronomy 33:27 WHAT A MIGHTY GOD!

THE SHELTER OF HIS PRESENCE - "The eternal God is thy refuge."

THE SAFETY OF HIS PROTECTION - "...and underneath are the everlasting arms;" (Just as performers at the circus often use a safety net, we have the Lord as our safety net to catch us when we fall.)

THE STRENGTH OF HIS POWER - "...and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, Destroy them." (See Deuteronomy 33:25)

Deuteronomy 33:25b STRENGTH FOR TODAY (pastors / people)

You have probably noticed that some days require more strength than others do. There are easy days and there are hard days. For most of us, today will be one of those hard days. Therefore we need to remind ourselves of a special promise from God tucked back in Deuteronomy 33.

"...and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

A day is a 24 hour capsule of time.

We all have a certain number.

Some have more days, some less, and no one knows how many they will have.

Some days require much strength, because much is happening.

Some require not as much strength, for not as much is happening.

The God who gives "us each day our daily bread" is also the God who gives us each day our daily strength. When much strength is required much strength is given. When only a little strength is required, then a little strength is given.

"...and as thy days, so shall thy strength be."

One man who proved this promise to be true was David. He had many different days and God gave him strength for each one. We will have the same types of days that David had.

DAYS OF PREPARATION - He spent many days isolated from others while watching his father's sheep. Perhaps it is then when he first thought of the 23rd Psalm. He was alone much with God. God was able to prepare him for the adventures that would follow. It was here that David learned that God could be trusted for strength. 1 Samuel 17:34-37

DAYS OF PRESSURE - David faced the pressure of facing the giant. 1 Samuel 17:20-58

DAYS OF POPULARITY - David went from being unknown to being well known. 1 Samuel 18:5-7

DAYS OF PERSECUTION - There were two great times of persecution for David. Saul persecuted him. 1 Samuel 18:8-11 and many other passages show this. His own son, Absalom, also persecuted David. 2 Samuel 15-18

DAYS OF PENITENCE - David's best known sins were his affair with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. David was given the strength to repent. 2 Samuel 11-12, Psalm 51

DAYS OF PROBLEMS - David had various difficulties with his general Joab, other kings, and the people. Yet through all of this David was given strength to handle the problems.

DAYS OF PROSPERITY - David used his wealth wisely when he was rich. 1 Chronicles 28.

DAYS OF PARTING - David died victoriously. He went into the presence of God. 2 Samuel 12:22-23, 1 Chronicles 29:28, Psalm 116:15.

Deuteronomy 34 THE PASSING OF A GREAT MAN

MOSES WAS SHOWN THE PROMISED LAND – Vss. 1-4

MOSES SUCCUMBED TO DEATH – Vss. 5-7

MOSES' SADDENED THE PEOPLE THROUGH HIS DEATH – Vs. 8

MOSES WAS SUCCEEDED BY JOSHUA – Vs. 9

MOSES STOOD OUT AS A TESTIMONY – Vss. 10-12

Joshua 1:1-9 WAKE UP CALL!

When on a business trip, a person staying in a motel will ask the person at the service desk to call the room at a certain time. This is known as a "wake up call".

In America, we use the term "wake up call" to mean something that has happened to get our attention or make us alert. For instance the death of a friend or loved one is often a "wake up call" for someone to get serious about the things of God.

In Joshua 1:1-9, Joshua received a "wake up call" concerning his leadership of the children of Israel.

REALITY - THIS JOB IS MINE, Vss. 1-2

Moses was dead. Joshua was the new leader. He was responsible. Sometimes God will startle us into the reality that a job that once belonged to someone else now belongs to us.

REASSURANCE - GOD IS WITH ME, Vss. 3-5

Just as God was with Moses, God would be with Joshua.

Just as God is with other Christians, He will also be with me.

RESPONSIBILITY - DO AS GOD SAYS, Vss. 6-9

The secret to success for doing God's work, is to do things God's way.

The biggest responsibility I have is to obey God.

Joshua 1:1-9 AFTER A LOSS

GOD SHARES THE PROBLEM - Vss. 1-2a

Moses, the leader of Israel, was dead.

GOD SHARES THE PLAN - Vs. 2b

Joshua and the people were to enter the Promised Land.

GOD SHARES THE PROMISE - Vss. 3-5

There would be victory.

God would be with Joshua as He was with Moses.

GOD SHARES THE PRINCIPLES - Vss. 6-9

Strength

Courage

Obedience

Meditation

Joshua 1:5 AS WITH MOSES

"...as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee:"

Moses was dead! (Joshua 1:2) The responsibility for leading the children of Israel into the Promised Land was up to Joshua. In our text Joshua is encouraged that God will be with him just like He was with Moses. This statement is also true for us today in at least four ways.

WE HAVE THE SAME PRICE PAID FOR OUR SINS.

Moses was given a system of sacrifices, which was a picture of the supreme sacrifice paid for Moses and ourselves. That supreme sacrifice is the blood of Christ. Hebrews 9:11-14

WE HAVE THE SAME PRESENCE OF GOD IN OUR LIVES.

Moses was aware of the presence of God in His life and God communicated to him through the burning bush, the meetings on Mt. Sinai, the pillar of fire, and the cloud of smoke and several other ways. We have the presence of the Holy Spirit of God in our lives. John 14:15-18

WE HAVE THE SAME POWER OF GOD ON WHICH TO DEPEND.

Moses saw God's power many times including the plagues in Egypt, the appearance of manna, the parting of the Red Sea, and many other ways.

Jesus promised power the Holy Spirit to His followers. Acts 1:8

WE HAVE THE SAME PROMISES OF GOD TO CLAIM

Moses had the promises of the Pentateuch. We have the promises of the entire Bible. Romans 15:4

Joshua 1:7-8 READY!

Getting ready is an important part of life. We get ready to entertain company. We get ready to go to church, work or school. We get ready for a career by going to school. We get ready to retire by saving money and making right investments.

In our text Joshua is shown that he had to be ready to do the job God wanted him to do. He was to lead the Children of Israel into the Promised Land after Moses had died (Vss. 1-6). If we follow the instructions given to Joshua in Verses 7-8 we will be ready to live for God the way God wants us to live. We will be ready!

SUBMISSION - Vs. 7

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest."

Joshua was to be strong and very courageous to obey God's Word. He had to submit to God's authority in life by doing as God had instructed.

SATURATION - Vs. 8a

"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:"

Joshua was to meditate on God's Word, constantly thinking and talking about it. See Psalm 1:2-3.

SUCCESS - Vs. 8b

"...for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Joshua 1:8 BOOKWORM!

In America, the expression, "bookworm" refers to someone who is always reading or studying. "His nose" we might say, "is always in a book." When it comes to the Bible, Christians should all be "bookworms."

MY PORTION - "This book of the law..."

Joshua only had the first five books of the Bible. We have the completed Word of God. The portion on which I build my life is to be "this book". Jeremiah 15:16, 2 Timothy 2:15

MY PERMANENCE - "...shall not depart out of thy mouth..."

I am to refer to, and talk about the Word of God as I speak.

In order to do this, I must memorize God's Word. Psalm 119:11, John 15:7

MY PROCESS - "...but thou shalt meditate therein day and night..."

Again, to meditate, we must memorize! Meditation involves reflection upon the meaning of God's Word, and application to my own life. Psalm 1:2, Psalm 119:97

MY PURPOSE - "...that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein..."

I hide God's Word in my heart and meditate on it, so I will learn to obey the Book!

MY PROMISE - "...for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

See Psalm 1:3

Joshua 1:12-18 LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

When we think of great leaders we think of men and women of character and strong leadership ability. We must remember, however, that good leaders must have good followers or they will not be successful.

Joshua was a good leader and he had many good followers.

Israel was planning to cross the Jordan River and conquer the Promised Land. Joshua as a good leader had to have everyone working with him for this to be accomplished.

CHALLENGES FROM A GOOD LEADER Vss. 12-15

The tribes mentioned in verse 12 had settled on the other side of the Jordan River. They had, however promised to help with the conquering of the new land. Joshua challenged them in three ways:

1. REMEMBER - Vs. 13

Joshua reminded these people of the commitment that they had made to Moses (Numbers 32:20-33). He wanted them to remember what they had promised to do.

A good leader will constantly remind people of their commitments (2 Peter 1:12-15).

2. RESPOND - Vs. 14

It was time for these people to keep their promises. They were to lead the procession into the promise land. He was telling them that it was time to respond to their previous promise by doing what they said they would.

3. RETURN - Vs. 15

Joshua encouraged these tribes that they would return and enjoy the land which they had possessed.

A good leader encourages his followers that there is reward for faithful obedience.

COMFORT FROM GOOD FOLLOWERS Vss. 16-18

Not only should good leaders inspire their followers, but also good followers should inspire their leaders.

The response of these people was an encouragement to Joshua.

1. THEY EXPRESSED OBEDIENCE - Vss. 16-17

2. THEY ENFORCED THE RULES - Vs. 18a

They promised to discipline those who would not cooperate. It is an encouraging to leaders when followers help to enforce the rules among other followers.

3. THEY ENCOURAGED THE LEADER - Vss. 17b, 18b

They wished him the Lord's best. - Vs. 17b

They encouraged him to be strong and of good courage. Vs. 18b

Joshua 2 etc. WOMEN GOD USED

RAHAB WAS A CHANGED WOMAN - Joshua 2

DEBORAH WAS A COURAGEOUS WOMAN - Judges 4

RUTH WAS A COMMITTED WOMAN - Ruth 1:16-17

Joshua 2:1-22 A SPECIAL HELPER

Two Israelites had gone into Jericho to spy before Israel attacked the city. God provided a special helper, a harlot by the name of Rahab, to assist the spies. Rahab had become a believer, and was used of God. In return, her life and the lives of family members were spared.

RAHAB'S PROTECTION OF THE SPIES - Vss. 1-7

Rahab protected the spies from the soldiers which were looking for them.

RAHAB'S PROFESSION OF FAITH - Vss. 8-11

Her faith, based on what God had done for Israel, was in the Lord.

There was no doubt in her mind.

RAHAB'S PETITION FOR LIFE - Vss. 12-13

Rahab wanted her and her family to be protected when Israel conquered the land.

RAHAB'S PACT WITH ISRAEL - Vss. 14-22

Protection was promised as long as:

Rahab was silent. - Vss. 14, 20

The scarlet thread was in the window. Vs. 18

Her family remained in Rahab's house. Vss. 8-19

Joshua kept the promise which the spies made to Rahab. See Joshua 6:22-23.

Joshua 3 REMOVING OBSTACLES

When in the army, one of the things they have to do in basic training is run an obstacle course. In our Christian lives we will face many obstacles. There will be health problems, people problems, work problems, school problems and sin problems. Just as a regular obstacle course is beneficial for our bodies, the obstacles Christians face can also be valuable. As we face life's obstacles we will develop stronger spiritual muscles, increase our spiritual endurance, and our spiritual agility. We must learn to remove the obstacles in our lives. We find out how to do this in our text.

The children of Israel were going over to the Promised Land, the Land of Canaan. They had an obstacle in front of them. Their obstacle was the Jordan River. This river was overflowing its banks during the spring thaw and spring rains. This was not a river that could be waded through. It was a formidable obstacle.

A WORD OF WARNING - Vss. 1-4

The warning here is actually two-fold:

1. Be Ready When God Is - Vs. 3

The Ark of the Covenant was symbolic of God's covenant with Israel. It was a symbol of the Lord's presence. In essence when the ark moved, God moved. If the Ark moved, it meant that God was moving and Israel needed to follow.

The situation is still the same today. If God is moving, or leading in our lives, we need to follow. In dealing with an obstacle, our eyes must be on the Lord. As God opens doors, we must be ready, willing and able to move through them.

2. Let God Go First - Vs 4

This was a large multitude. Jehovah was going to lead. By giving a distance between the ark and those following, the ark could be clearly seen by the people.

Very often Christians don't give the Lord room to lead. They rush ahead without keeping their eyes on Him. Then they wonder why they fail!

When I was a home missionary I needed an office. In my own strength I tried very hard to find one. Finally, I gave up and asked the Lord to provide one. Once I got my eyes on Him, He answered.

The Lord provided an office within walking distance of my home and also provided the people who promised to pay the rent. This all happened in one day! And as a bonus the landlady was the local baker's wife. If I was around at the end of the day I left with free baked goods.

A WORD FOR SANCTIFICATION - Vs. 5

If you were leading a military expedition in Joshua's day, what would you tell your troops? You might say, "Make sure your sword is sharpened and your shield and helmet in good order. Instead Joshua tells the people, "Get yourselves ready spiritually!"

The word "sanctify" means to separate or to be set apart. Usually this separation is from that which is unholy. When we set ourselves apart from that which is unholy, we are setting ourselves apart for God. Although God does sanctify us at salvation, during our Christian lives and at death, He also expects us to set ourselves apart for him. If we expect Him to remove obstacles, we must set ourselves apart for Him! 2 Timothy 2:19-22, 2 Corinthians 6:16-7:1

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT - Vs. 7

Notice that it was after Joshua told the people to sanctify themselves that God encouraged Joshua. Have you ever noticed how some people receive more encouragement from the Lord than others? I personally think that it has to do with the amount that we are sold out to God. The more we obey, the more we are encouraged. The more we pray, the more answered prayer encourages us. The more we lift up Jesus Christ to our friends, the more people come to Christ.

A WORD OF DIRECTION - Vs. 8

In verse 8 the Lord gives Joshua specific instructions. The priests had to take the first step into the water. It was a step of faith. When facing obstacles the Lord will give you specific instructions to follow. It is up to you to take the first step of faith. If you lack wisdom God will give you wisdom (James 1:5). If you face temptation, God will provide the way to escape. You only have to take it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

A WORD OF PROMISE - Vss. 9-13

Vs. 9 - Notice that the promise was coming from God, not Joshua. This was not blind faith. Joshua and God's people were to rest on God's promises.

Vs. 10 - This removal of the Jordan River obstacle was to be a sign or a promise that God would remove even greater obstacles. God gives us little victories so we will trust Him for bigger ones.

Vs. 11 - The Lord was going ahead.

Vs. 13 - Dry ground was promised. No Israelite got stuck in the mud!

God hasn't promised us a dry Jordan, but he has given us many promises on which to depend. These promises include Matthew 7:7-8, Hebrews 13:5, Psalm 16:8, Isaiah 55:11 and many more.

AN ACT OF FAITH - Vss. 14-17

It was time to go forward by faith.

Wet feet lead to dry ground.

When God tells us to move forward it is time to move forward. Israel did. The obstacle was removed. Isa43:2

Joshua 6:1-5 FORMULA FOR VICTORY

BE PERCEPTIVE - Vss. 1-2

Learn what God wants accomplished. Get into the Word of God and pray!

BE PROPER - Vs. 3

Do whatever God tells you to do.

BE PERSISTENT - Vs. 4

Continue to do what God tells you to do.

BE PRODUCTIVE - Vs. 5

God will give the victory! Hebrews 11:30

Joshua 6 ACCOMPLISHING THE IMPOSSIBLE

I have seen God do the impossible. He has saved souls that were hardened against the Gospel. He has provided for needs when there seemed to be no way they could be provided. He has changed attitudes in people that no human could have changed. He has healed when there was no human explanation for the healing.

There are times when we will be in what appears to be impossible situations.

There will seem to be no way out. There will seem to be no logical reason for expecting victory or deliverance. It is at these times that we need to remember Joshua's victory at Jericho. There are some principles found here for accomplishing the impossible.

INTRODUCTION

When we face impossible situations we must remember that the most important thing of all is that God's will be done! (Matthew 6:10, Luke 22:39-42)

Joshua and Israel had entered the Promised Land at God's command.

God's plan was for them to have victory over the enemy.

CONSIDER IT DONE - Vss. 1-2

Jericho was a formidable city.

Jericho had shut its doors to Israel.

Jericho looked like an impossible enemy, but God said to Joshua, "I have given unto thine hand, Jericho".

When God makes a promise He keeps it.
When God makes a promise to you, He will keep that promise.
Some of the promises that we can consider done are Luke 1:37, Philippians 1:6, Philippians 4:13, Philippians 4:19, and 1 John 5:4.
CIRCLE IT WITH PRAYER - Vss. 3-11
Here were some unusual orders.
This was a test of Joshua's faith.
Humanly speaking what God asked Joshua to do did not make sense.
Joshua and the people were to circle the city once a day for six days.
On the seventh day they were to circle the city seven times.
This reminds me that God wants us to circle our problems with prayer!
Before we do anything else, problems should be prayed about. 1 John 5:14-15, James 1:5-8, Jeremiah 33:3, Mark 11:22-24, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 18:1

Some of our "Jerichos" never fall simply because we do not circle the problem enough with prayer!
Some problems will be solved after one season of prayer, while others will require several seasons of prayer.
We must continue to pray until God gives victory!
CLAIM IT BY FAITH - Vss. 15-16
After the children of Israel had circled Jericho 13 times, the Israelites were told to shout because the Lord had given them the city. There was still no outward evidence that the city would fall, but they were to claim the victory by taking action! The action was the shout of faith.

I see the shout as the final claim to a conquered Jericho.
I see the shout as an outward expression of an inward confidence.
As we pray the Lord may ask us to give a "shout" by taking some sort of action.
He may ask us to talk to someone. He may ask us to do something.
He may ask us just to have total confidence that He is about to work and to praise Him for it.
CONCLUSION - Vss. 20-27
God conquered Jericho!

Joshua 7 THE ENEMY WITHIN or, ACHAN WAS A PAIN!

Sometimes the biggest problems we have are on the inside of us. Often, we are our own worst enemies. Such is the case with Israel. It was the enemy within the camp that caused the defeat at Ai.

ISRAEL'S COMPROMISE Vss. 1-5

Note that when Achan sin, Israel sinned. This shows how important it is for us to deal with sin in our own lives. It affects more than just ourselves. You will also want to note the failure of Joshua and Israel to consult with the Lord before they went to battle. If they had, no doubt, God would have revealed then that there was sin in the camp!

JOSHUA'S COMPLAINT Vss. 6-9

GOD'S COMMAND Vss. 10-15

JUDGMENT'S COMPLETION Vss. 16-26

Joshua 7 POWER FAILURE!

Christians should be more concerned about a Spiritual power failure in their lives than an electric power failure. We need to take Psalm 66:18 to heart!

One group that experienced a severe power failure was the nation Israel as it was conquering the Promised Land. After a great victory at Jericho, the Israelites experience a great defeat or power failure at Ai.

THE COVETOUSNESS OF ACHAN - Vss. 1

Notice that one man sinned here, but Israel was held accountable. Our sins affect others. Also notice that sin does not escape the eye of God!

THE CONQUEST OF ISRAEL - Vss. 2-5

Joshua listened to the spies, instead of consulting with God. Israel expected an easy victory. Instead, because of Achan's sin, there was a miserable defeat!

THE COMPLAINT OF JOSHUA - Vss. 6-10

THE COMMAND OF GOD - Vss. 10-15

God told Joshua to "get up" because it was a time of action. The sin had to be dealt with, if Israel would have victory. Israel had to deal with sin! The same principle is found in Matt 18:15-17 and 1 Cor 5:1-2, 9-11

THE CONFRONTATION OF SIN - Vss. 16- 26

Israel is called together. Vs. 16

The guilty party is found. Vss. 17-18

He is proven guilty. Vss. 19-22

He is judged. Vss. 24-26

Joshua 7:1-8:2 DEALING WITH SIN

THE LORD IS ANGERED BY SIN - Vs. 1

THE LORD ABSTAINS FROM HELPING - Vss. 2-9

THE LORD ANNOUNCES THE PROBLEM - Vss. 10-12

THE LORD ASSISTS IN THE DISCIPLINE - Vss. 13-26

(But Joshua had to carry it out.)

THE LORD ASSURES JOSHUA - Vss. 1-2

Joshua 8:1-29 WELCOME BACK!

When I returned home from Vietnam there was a big sign in front of my house. It said, "Welcome home, Jack!" A few weeks ago some folks who had been in Florida and North Carolina returned to church. We said to them, "Welcome back!" We saw a young man get far away from God and then return. When he did return, many conveyed the message, "Welcome back!"

Israel had left the Lord, and suffered a great defeat at Ai (Joshua 7). They did deal with the sin in the camp.

They had come back. When they came back, it was as if God was saying:

WELCOME BACK TO CONFIDENCE - Vs. 1 - "Fear not, neither be dismayed."

WELCOME BACK TO SERVICE - Vs. 1 - "Arise and go to Ai."

WELCOME BACK TO GUIDANCE - Vss. 1-2

WELCOME BACK TO OBEDIENCE - Vss. 3-19

WELCOME BACK TO VICTORY - Vss. 20-29

When we have sinned, and then return to God, we might feel tentative.

God says, "WELCOME BACK!"

Joshua 9 I'M NO FOOL - OR AM I?

We like to think that we are not easily fooled, and yet there are times when we can be deceived.

Satan is the master of deceit. Ephesians 6:11, 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Corinthians 11:14-15, John 8:44

Joshua and the Children of Israel had great success conquering the promised land. They were given

specific instructions for destroying the inhabitants of the land. Exodus 23:31-33, Deuteronomy 7:2,16.

The residents of Gibeon realized that they would be destroyed,

They decided to use trickery to deceive Israel. Although the Israelites probably didn't consider themselves very gullible, they were deceived for three reasons.

1. THEY JUDGED BY APPEARANCE Vss. 1-13

2. THEY ASSUMED THEY WERE BEING TOLD THE TRUTH Vss. 14-15 - They could have checked out the story first.

3. THEY FAILED TO ASK GOD Vs. 14-15

Note the consequences of the decision.

DISOBEDIENCE Vss. 15-17

CRITICISM Vs. 18

LIVING WITH THE SITUATION Vss. 19-17

PROTECTING THEIR ENEMIES (See Chapter 10)

Joshua 14:6-16 FAITH ENDURES

God does not always keep His promises with the speed that we wish he would. There are times when God expects us to trust Him for what seems to us a long time before we see Him keep His promise. One Bible character who teaches endurance by faith is Caleb. He waited for 45 years for God to keep His promises and it doesn't seem like he even got discouraged by the wait.

It is time to divide the conquered land of Canaan. The Tribe of Judah is receiving her portion. Caleb, along with other tribal leaders visits Joshua. Caleb approaches Joshua concerning the promise of God.

FAITH'S REMEMBRANCE Vss. 6-9

You will probably want to take your listeners back to Numbers 13:1-14:10 as you discuss Caleb's recollections.

FAITH'S REQUEST Vss.10-12

FAITH'S REWARD Vss. 13-15

Joshua 14:6-15 CALEB CLAIMS A PROMISE

Israel had come into the Promised Land and had conquered much of it. It was time to divide the land among the tribes. Caleb, who with Joshua were the only two men who entered the land from the older generation, is looking to claim a promise that had been given him by God through Moses.

CALEB'S PERFORMANCE - Vss. 6-8

Caleb followed God completely. Numbers 13:25-14:10

MOSES' PROMISE - Vs. 9

Moses promised land to Caleb. Numbers 14:24

CALEB'S PETITION - Vss. 10-12

He was asking for what he had been promised.

JOSHUA'S PRONOUNCEMENT - Vss. 13-15

The land was given to Caleb as promised.

Joshua 15:13-19 GOD'S INCENTIVE PLAN

People use all sorts of incentives to get us to do things or buy things. There is the "free gift" if you make a purchase. There is the commission earned by sales people. There the reward offered for information leading to the arrest of criminals.

God also uses incentive plans. We should need no incentive to serve the God that has saved us when we placed our faith in the finished work of Christ. However, God has chosen to reward those who are faithful to Him. The story of Caleb using an incentive plan to capture the city of Debir is also a reminder of God's incentive plan. Caleb had received from Joshua, the inheritance God had promised. (Joshua 14:10-15)

GOD'S INCENTIVE PLAN INVOLVES OTHERS Vss. 13-16

Caleb conquered Hebron. Caleb was fully capable of conquering Debir by himself, but chose to involve others. God is fully capable of accomplishing His work, but has chosen to involve Christians.

See Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Corinthians 1:21, Matthew 5:16, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Peter 4:10-11

GOD'S INCENTIVE PLAN INCLUDES REWARDS Vss. 16-17

Caleb offered his daughter as reward for a job well done. Othniel was the one who earned the reward by taking Debir. God offers rewards for jobs well done. They are called "crowns." James 1:12, Revelation 2:10, 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 1 Peter 5:1-4

GOD'S INCENTIVE PLAN INSPIRES PRAYER Vss. 18-19

Othniel is encouraged by his wife to ask Caleb for a field. After that she is secure enough to ask of a loving father springs which would water that field. She was given more than she asked. Our Heavenly Father includes us in His work and rewards us. He also encourages us to pray, so that we will be empowered to get the job done. Matthew 7:7-11

Joshua 22:1-8 HONORABLE DISCHARGE!

I am proud to say that I am a Vietnam veteran. The most valuable result I have from that experience is an honorable discharge! An honorable discharge is given to men and women who have served their countries well while being in the military.

There was a time when Joshua handed out an honorable discharge to the 2 1/2 tribes who had settled on the other side of the Jordan River. They helped the other tribes conquer the land. See Numbers 32:1-33, and Joshua 1:12-18.

THEY WERE REWARDED Vss. 1-3, 8

1. They received their commander's "Well done!" Vss. 1-3

2. They received physical rewards. Note that they were to share with those who stayed home to take care of things there. Numbers 31:25-27,

1 Samuel 30:21-25 (The Christian is looking for the Savior's "Well done!" and crowns.)

THEY WERE RETURNED Vss. 4,6,7

For the Christian, we are looking for our return to Heaven.

We are citizens of that land. This life is temporary. Philippians 3:20

THEY WERE REMINDED Vs. 5

They were to stay loyal to their God to "take diligent heed".

Joshua 22:10-34 PEACEFUL RESOLUTION

THE ALTAR AT THE JORDAN – Vs. 10

THE ALARM OF THE OTHER TRIBES – Vss. 11-12

THE APPEAL FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS – Vss. 13-20

THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE ACCUSED – Vss. 21-30

THE APPEASEMENT OF THE CONCERNED – Vss. 31-34

Joshua 23 AN OLD SOLDIER SPEAKS

Introduction: Vss. 1-2

REMINDER OF PAST VICTORIES Vss. 3

REMINDER OF FUTURE CONQUESTS Vss. 4-5

REMINDER OF CURRENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Obedience Vs. 6

2. Separation

Negative, Vss. 7,12,

Positive Vs. 8

3. Devotion Vs. 11

REMINDER OF GOD'S JUDGMENT Vss. 12-16

Joshua 23:10 etc. ONE MAN

Joshua 23:10 - *One man of you shall chase a thousand: for the Lord your God, he it is that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.*

The Lord often works through a group of believers. However, there are also many times when God works through one man. Here are some examples:

ONE MAN SLEW A GIANT - David - 1 Samuel 17

ONE MAN STOOD AGAINST FALSE RELIGION - Elijah - 1 Kings 18

ONE MAN SHARED THE GOSPEL - Philip - Acts 8:5-12, 26-40

ONE MAN SUPPORTED A NEW CONVERT - Barnabas - Acts 9:26-28

Joshua 24:14-15 MAKE UP YOUR MIND

Joshua 24:14-15 - *Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. [15] And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*

At the end of his life, Joshua was challenging the children of Israel to be faithful to their God.

They needed to make up their minds (decide) whom they would serve.

PREFERRED CHOICE – Vs. 14

Of course, the preferred and best choice was to “fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and truth”. All other Gods were to be put away!

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES – Vs. 15a

There were other gods that could be worshipped including the gods of Egypt and the gods of the Amorites.

The God of Israel was superior to these gods that really weren't gods. It is still not wise or logical to choose alternatives to the true and living god, but people do it all the time.

PERSONAL DECISION – Vs. 15b

As far as Joshua and those he led in his family - he and his family would serve the Lord!

Joshua 24 CHALLENGE TO GODLINESS

He had served as Moses' servant and had been Moses' general for the armies of Israel.

He and Caleb had been the only spies that came back from the promised land, wanting to go in.

He had taken over leadership of Israel after Moses' death and had led Israel into the promised land.

Now at the end of his life. He would pass on the torch to men known as judges, who would rule the land.

It was time for him to give his farewell speech to the nation. What would this man of God, General Joshua, say to the people? He knew their bent towards sin. He knew that they were prone to wander away from God.

Under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, he challenged them to Godliness.

REVIEW OF THE PAST - Vss. 1-13

It is always good to remember past blessing.

Joshua reminds Israel of God's blessing on them in the past.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PRESENT - Vss. 14-15

God's blessings require our current cooperation. Because He has been so good to us, we should chose to serve Him now.

RECOGNITION OF A PROBLEM - Vss. 16-20

When Joshua gave his challenge to the people to chose whom they would serve, they evidently answered quickly. In Vs. 19 he reminds them of their bent towards sin. He basically tells the Israelites that they can't do what they were promising to do. And it's true for us as well. In our own strength we can not live Godly lives.

We need God's strength.

RESOLVE TO PERFORM - Vss. 21-24

The people are persistent.
They claim that they will serve the Lord.
Joshua points out that they are witnesses against themselves.
Later on their own words could be witnesses against them if they did not do as they said they would. The people agreed with Joshua and resolved to serve the Lord.
REMINDER OF THE COMMITMENT - Vss. 26-28
A stone was put up as a reminder.
People would see the stone and remember their commitment.
Reminders of our commitments are good as well.

Joshua 24:1-14 GOD AT WORK

At the end of his life Joshua is reviewing what God has done for Israel. We see God at work.

THE GRACE OF GOD - Vss. 2-4

God, in His grace,

1. Called Abraham out of idolatry to serve Him.
2. Allowed Abraham to walk the Promised Land
3. Gave Abraham "seed", Isaac, Jacob, and Esau.

THE GREATNESS OF GOD - Vss. 5-12

God, in His greatness:

Sent Moses and Aaron – Vs. 5

Plagued Egypt – Vs. 5

Brought Israel from Egypt – Vs. 5

Delivered Israel at the Red Sea – Vss. 6-7

Gave Military Victories – Vss. 8-12

THE GENEROSITY OF GOD - Vs. 13

God gave Israel the land, its cities, and vineyards and oliveyards which they did not work for.

THE GIFT TO GOD – Vs. 14

In appreciation for what God had done, Israel was to:

Fear the Lord

Serve Him in sincerity and truth

Put away false Gods

Judges 1:1-18 A GOOD START

There are many people who believe in getting a good start on the day by having a good breakfast. There are also many of us Christians who believe in the importance of a good start to our day by spending time in the Word and prayer. Many like to get a good start on school or work projects. Christian parents should want to get a good start on training their children in the things of God (Proverbs 22:6).

In chapter 1 of Judges the Children of Israel did get a good start in serving the Lord after Joshua died.

Unfortunately, they did not continue in their walk with the Lord. We can still learn from their good start, and copy their good example.

THEY ASKED GOD Vs. 1

It was Israel's responsibility to conquer the promised land. They asked God for guidance. It is our responsibility to be good soldiers for Christ. We should ask for guidance. See James 1:5-8

THEY BELIEVED GOD Vss. 2-3

God said that the Tribe of Judah should go first. They believed what God told them, and acted!

THEY OBEYED GOD Vss. 4-8

They simply did what God told them to do.

There is no substitute for obedience (1 Samuel 15:22-23)

THEY DISPLAYED COURAGE Vss. 9-15

Othniel is an example of the courage displayed by the Tribe of Judah.

It will take courage to obey God! (Joshua 1:9)

Judges 2:10-19 SO, WHO'S STUBBORN?

For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry...

1 Samuel 15:23a

The children of Israel were being stubborn. What they did leads us to ask three questions about ourselves.

If any one of the answers to these questions is yes, perhaps, we are being stubborn too.

AM I ON THE RUN? (Defection) Vss. 10-13

Israel was running away from God and His laws. Am I?

AM I ON THE ROPES? (Discipline) Vss. 14-15

Israel was being disciplined by God. Am I?

AM I ON THE "REV."? (Dissension) Vss. 16-19

("Rev." here is short for Reverend, and refers to spiritual leaders in my life)
Israel would not hearken to their judges.
Instead of accepting spiritual leadership, am I "on" Spiritual
leadership with unjust criticism or antagonistic confrontation?

Note: If you don't like my questions, you can just use the three "D" words in parenthesis.

Judges 2:11-23 THE STORY OF THE JUDGES

Here is a good summary of Israel's conditions during the time of the Judges, and why God sent the Judges.

ISRAEL'S APOSTASY - Vss. 11-13

GOD'S ANGER - Vss. 14-15

GOD'S ASSISTANCE - Vss. 16-18

God was faithful to send Judges to deliver Israel out of her predicaments.

ISRAEL'S ABANDONMENT - Vs. 19

In spite of the work of the Judges, when a judge died, Israel returned to apostasy.

GOD'S ANSWER - Vss. 20-23

God allowed the nations to remain in the land as a test for Israel.

Judges 3 GOD'S VOLUNTEERS

Have you ever noticed how much community work is done by volunteers? (Congregation examples)

Much of the work in our church is done by volunteers. (Use examples from your congregation.)

Just as community organizations and churches actively seek volunteers, God also recruits volunteers willing to serve Him at His request. Judges 3 tells of 3 judges who were God's volunteers. Each one was different.

OTHNIEL - THE REUSABLE JUDGE Vss. 8-11

Many people hit a certain age and think that their work is done for the Lord. They often "retire" without the Lord ever telling them to retire. There are others, however, who are reusable. They've been used by God in the past, but keep on volunteering until they are no longer able. Othniel had been used by the Lord earlier (Judges 1:9-15), and he was used again, as mentioned in this passage.

EHUD - THE REFLECTIVE JUDGE Vss. 12-30

Serving the Lord often takes thought. Often, there needs to be a God-directed plan in order to get the job done. Ehud thought through a plan that used his job of delivering money to the king, his being left handed, his locking some doors, and calling together Israel to fight.

It was a successful plan because God was in it, and it was a well thought plan.

SHAMGAR - THE RESOURCEFUL JUDGE Vs. 31

Shamgar's name is only mentioned twice in the Bible, but he teaches us an important lesson. We should use what we have in order to volunteer for God's service. Shamgar used an ox goad, an instrument used to prod oxen, in order to defeat 600 Philistines, and deliver Israel.

God expects us to use what we have in order to serve Him.

Judges 3:1-11 DELIVERANCE FROM BONDAGE

ISRAEL'S TEST - Vss. 1-4

Because of Israel's disobedience (Judges 2:1-4) enemies were left in the land to test Israel.

ISRAEL'S TRESPASS - Vss. 5-7

She flunked the test by intermarrying and worshipping false God's

ISRAEL'S TRAP - Vs. 8

She was placed in bondage.

ISRAEL'S TURN (To the Lord) - Vss. 9a

They cried out to God for help.

ISRAEL'S TRIUMPH - Vss. 9b-11

Through Othniel the enemy was defeated.

Judges 3:7-11 WHEN THE SPIRIT WORKS

Have you ever watched a craftsman at work? It's fun to watch someone who has a specific skill. Glass blowers can make beautiful vases, bottles, and other things simply by blowing into hot glass.

Have you ever thought of God as a craftsman? He takes a crusty old sinner and turns him into a trophy of God's grace. And the Spirit of God, who entered your life the moment you were saved, is also a craftsman. He is inside your life to produce learning, power, peace, fruit, and a host of other things. As the Spirit works, using us as the natural resources, He produces a masterpiece of mature Christianity. That is, if we cooperate.

The Book of Judges covers a dark time in the history of Israel. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Most of the time Israel lived in apostasy, away from God. But God would raise up judges, military and civil leaders who would be used of God to deliver Israel. Judges 2:11-23, 17:6

We want to examine a brief account of the career of the first judge, Othniel. Othniel was either a nephew or brother of Caleb. He had already distinguished himself as a military hero, winning the hand of daughter by conquering a city (Judges 1:12-13). Othniel's work is summed up in our text.

The most important characteristic of Othniel's life was that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him". God's Spirit, craftsman that He is, produced a wonderful masterpiece in the life of Othniel.

Using Othniel as an example, I want us to see what happens when the Spirit of God works. The Spirit hasn't changed. If He produced a masterpiece in Othniel, he can inside of us as well. There are five things that will happen when the Spirit of God works.

1. THERE IS A PERSON - Vs. 9

It was a dark time - Talk about verses 1-7.

In answer to prayer God raised up Othniel as a deliver.

God's Holy Spirit works through people. Therefore there needs to be a person available whom the Spirit of God can use. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9,14,16

The Spirit of God worked inside of Othniel, but the verses listed above make it obvious that the Spirit wants to work inside of every Christian.

Othniel was obviously available. We must make ourselves available to the control of the Spirit of God. We are available when we do not grieve nor quench the Spirit. Ephesians 4:30-32,

1 Thessalonians 5:19

2. THERE IS CONTROL - Vs. 10

We do not know exactly what Othniel did to defeat the enemy, but we do know that God's Spirit controlled him. If you are going to defeat the enemies of God, and be used of God, you must be under the control of the Holy Spirit! Ephesians 5:18, Galatians 5:16

3. THERE IS LEADERSHIP - Vs. 10

It says that "He judged Israel, and went out to war." He led the people.

When you are controlled by the Holy Spirit there will be times when the Spirit will lead you to take charge of a situation. God might call upon you to talk to a sinning brother or sister, or invite a person to church or teach a Sunday School class, or work on the building or serve on the board. Even when not in charge, we should lead by example. Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Timothy 4:12

4. THERE IS DELIVERANCE - Vs. 10

The enemy was defeated, and Israel was delivered from bondage.

The Spirit of God is in your life to deliver you from the bondage of sin. Romans 6:14

The Spirit of God is in your life to help others be delivered from sin. Acts 1:8, Hebrews 3:11-12, 10:25

5. THERE IS REST - Vs. 11

There was rest for almost 40 years because of the Spirit working upon Othniel.

We are promised rest as the Spirit of God works inside of us. John 14:16-17, 26-27

Judges 3:12-20 LIMITED ABILITY, UNLIMITED POSSIBILITIES

"There is at least one thing you do well. What is it?"

"There is at least one thing you don't do well. What is it?"

In this passage of Scripture we meet Ehud, a man who was probably handicapped. Although he had limited ability, because God controlled his life, he had unlimited possibilities for usefulness.

Othniel, the last judge, had passed away (Vs. 11). Israel went back to sinning against God (Vs. 12).

Eglon and his helpers were allowed by God to dominate Israel and Israel served him for 18 years (V. 12-14).

Israel cried out to God for help (Vs. 15)

Because God was in control of Ehud's life:

HE WAS ASSIGNED - Vs. 15

God raised up a deliverer. He assigned Ehud to the task. God does not always assign the most obvious person to a task. Ehud had a problem. In a right-handed world, he was left-handed. Although we can not be certain, there is evidence that Ehud had little or no use of his right hand.

The phrase left-handed can be translated 'handicapped in the right hand.'

There is encouragement here for you and I. When God makes it obvious that He wants us to do something, we look at our limitations or "handicaps." We think that God surely find someone better for the job. However God has a way of using those who just may not appear to be as talented or skilled as others (Zechariah 4:6, 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, 2 Corinthians 12:9).

HE WAS AVAILABLE

We have no record that Ehud ever thought of doing other than what God called Him to do.

He could have used his handicap as an excuse, but didn't. When God calls us we can find all sorts of excuses, but shouldn't! God is looking for men and women who are available (Ezekiel 22:30, Isaiah 6:8, Romans 12:1).

HE WAS ALERT - Vss. 16-26

God guided Ehud to devise a plan. A great plan it was. It even took advantage of his handicap.

When we are called upon to serve the Lord, our plans should be as well thought out and prayed over as these apparently were (Ephesians 5:15-17).

HE WAS AGGRESSIVE - Vss. 27-30

Ehud put quite a thrust into the belly of Eglon.

Then he took leadership responsibilities.

The fords were guarded. Nobody was allowed to escape.

Jesus told us to be "...wise as serpents, and harmless as doves"(Matthew 10:16).

If we are wise we will take initiative. We will be involved. We will often be zealous.

Judges 5:1-31 SOME PEOPLE

There are different types of people involved in the service of the Lord. Some are willing to fight for the Lord, others are not. Judges 5 is a poem, a song of praise to God for the victory He gave over Sisera and his army in Judges 4. Here we find different types of people. Some were involved in the victory, some were not.

SOME PEOPLE RISE TO THE OCCASION - Vss. 6-7

There was a problem. The enemy was intimidating Israel until Deborah rose up to take a stand.

SOME PEOPLE CHOOSE OTHER GODS AND PAY THE CONSEQUENCES - Vs. 8

Israel, in general was living in apostasy.

When we place other gods, other than the true God in control of our lives, there will be trouble for us too.

SOME PEOPLE GIVE OF THEMSELVES WILLINGLY - Vss. 9-15, 18

SOME PEOPLE REFUSE TO GET INVOLVED - Vss. 15-17, 23

Reuben - All talk, no action - Vss. 15-16

Gilead - No fellowship, no involvement - Vs. 17

Dan and Asher - Business as usual - Vs. 17

Meroz - Didn't help the Lord - Vs. 23

SOME PEOPLE SHOW REMARKABLE COURAGE Vss. 24-31

Judges 6:1-23 GOD TO THE RESCUE

ISRAEL'S DISTRESS - Vss. 1-6

ISRAEL'S DISOBEDIENCE - Vss. 7-10

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE (Gideon) - Vss. 11-23

A Man of God's Choosing - Vss. 11-12, 15

A Mandate to Go - Vss. 13-14, 16-17

A Miracle for Encouragement - Vss. 18-21

A Message of Peace - Vss. 22-23

Judges 6:1-32 THE TENDERFOOT

A "tenderfoot" is a rookie, an inexperienced person. God can use a "tenderfoot", as He shows in Gideon.

Introduction: Israel's Circumstances Vss. 1-10

GOD WILL CALL A TENDERFOOT Vss. 11-14

GOD WILL CONVINCE A TENDERFOOT Vss. 15-24

GOD WILL COMMAND A TENDERFOOT Vss. 25-32

(Or, you can shorten point 3 to verse 27 and add a fourth point -

GOD WILL CONTROL A TENDERFOOT'S CIRCUMSTANCES 28- 32)

Judges 6:33-7:23 CONCERNING GOD'S WILL

In this passage we find some lessons which are important to us because they involve the will of God.

GOD IS PATIENT - 6:33-40

The enemy returned.

Gideon assembled an army.

Gideon put out two fleeces.

God had already called Gideon, and Gideon should not have been questioning God's will, but God very patiently honored his request for further guidance.

God is patient with us when He calls us to service, but we should not try His patience, nor should we be continually looking for "signs". When we know something is God's will, we should do it.

GOD IS PARTICULAR - 7:1-8

He wants things done his way.

GOD IS PROVIDENT - 7:9-14

God knew that Gideon needed reassurance and He provided it.

He will reassure us as we seek to do His will.

GOD IS POWERFUL - 7:15-23

There was a great victory

Judges 6-8 FROM BLUES TO BLESSING

It is very easy to start "singing the blues", that is, to be depressed or discouraged.

Look at the state of the economy and you can become discouraged.

Look at the state of your own finances and you can become discouraged.

Look at world events, especially in the Middle East, and you can become discouraged.

Look at the behavior of most unbelievers and you will become discouraged.

Look at the behavior of many believers and you can become discouraged.

Look at the sickness, pain, suffering experienced by you, your family, & friends and you can be discouraged

Are you "singing the blues"? Are you discouraged? Learn a lesson from Gideon and the Children of Israel.
6:1-6 - The Midianites were nomads who dwelled in the dessert. At the time of Harvest, they would show up and steal what was in the land.

6:11-13 - In the midst of this problem, an Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon.

Gideon is called a "man of valor" by the Angel of the Lord and told him that the Lord was with him. Gideon asked two questions that showed his discouragement.

"Why us?"

"Where's God?"

We often ask the same two questions.

In the case of Gideon, God took him from being defeated to being victorious. He took him from blues to blessing! In this story about Gideon we can find some guidelines for handling discouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGE THE REASONS FOR DISCOURAGEMENT

There are reasons for discouragement. It behooves us to analyze and ask, "What exactly has me discouraged?" We can't look at just surface reasons, but need to dig deep. There are many reasons for discouragement. Allow me to share just four:

1) An Unpleasant Condition

This is the most obvious. Gideon and the children of Israel were discouraged by the unpleasant conditions that they needed to face.

Life is full of unpleasant conditions. (You can share your own list.)

2) An Uncommitted Burden

If you are a Christian, there is a procedure we need to follow when we start to feel overwhelmed and discouraged.

We need to commit our burdens to the Lord in prayer. All too often we try to handle our own problems instead of giving them to the Lord. 1 Peter 5:7, Psalm 37:5, Psalm 81:10, Philippians 4:6-7

3) An Unconfessed/ Unforsaken Sin

Many times we will blame other things or people for our discouragement, when in reality, the problem is ourselves! It is very easy to say, "I'm discouraged by the sins of other Christians" when in reality we are discouraged by our own sins. This was Israel's problem in Judges 6. They had failed God. They were worshipping false Gods. Therefore they were under God's hand of discipline so that they would confess and forsake their sins and return to Him. Proverbs 3:12-13, Isaiah 55:6-7

4) An Unchecked Physical Problem

Sometimes folks are discouraged or depressed simply because there is something physically wrong. When a person can say, "It's not circumstances that has me discouraged. It's not an uncommitted burden or a sin that has me discouraged" perhaps it's time to see the doctor.

II. ADJUST YOUR VISION

All too often people are looking in the wrong places for solutions to their problems.

Some look to circumstances and wish for them to get better.

Some look to others and depend on them to solve the problems.

Some look to themselves as the solution to their problems.

Our vision needs to be adjusted so that we look to God as the solution of our problems.

In Judges 6:6, the Children of Israel did the right thing when they cried to God for help.

When Gideon started looking to the Lord there was victory.

Two interesting things about the call of Gideon:

God says "I have sent thee" in verse 14. Problems are solved and there is peace in the soul when we are following God's leading.

There is peace in the soul when God goes with us.

Let's get our vision adjusted so that we look to God for the solution to our problems.

III. ALIGN YOURSELF PUBLICLY WITH GOD

6:33-35 - Notice that God's Spirit came upon Gideon and he was not the same. He rallied the people around God. He publicly took his stand for the Lord. That is exactly what we should do. Especially when there is a problem, people should know that you are aligning yourself with God! Psalm 34:1-4

IV. ALLOW GOD TO WORK THROUGH A REMNANT (YOU!)

You will lose your discouragement, when you realize that usually God works through individuals and small groups instead of large crowds. 1 Samuel 14:6

Notice Judges 6:12. God calls Gideon "a mighty man of valor". Gideon was anything but!

God saw the potential Gideon had and He sees our potential. We have to allow God to work through us.

God reduced Gideon's initial fighting force to 300 in Judges 7.

God is only hindered by numbers when we fail to let Him work through us.

V. ASCRIBE ALL GLORY TO GOD

When God delivers you give Him the credit. Psalm 98:1, Psalm 29:2

When God gives the victory make sure that He is praised and thanked!

A sad aftermath to Gideon's victory was the failure of Israel to remember that God gave them the victory and to thank Him. Judges 8:34

Judges 7:1-7 VICTORY!

Gideon had been called by God to lead Israel against their enemy, the Midianites (Chapter 6). In this chapter we see the victory come to Gideon through unusual means. God indeed had to receive the glory for this remarkable triumph.

THE ARMY WAS REDUCED - Vss. 1-7

God did want Israel to be swelled with pride. Therefore, God told Gideon to send those who were afraid home. The army was reduced by 22,000 men. Vss. 1-3

The army was still too large, so God reduced the army down to 300 men. Vss. 4-7

THE LEADER WAS REINFORCED - Vss. 8-15

Gideon was sent by God to spy on the Midianites.

He heard men talking. A dream was given and the interpretation, indicating that Gideon would be victorious.

THE ENEMY WAS ROUTED - Vss. 16-25

Following God's directions and working in God's strength, Gideon was victorious.

Judges 9 WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

The expression "What goes around comes around," reminds us that whatever we do to others comes back to ourselves. Galatians 6:7 - "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This truth is illustrated by the life of Abimelech.

REBELLION AGAINST GOD AND FAMILY Vss. 1-6

REBUKE BY JOTHAM Vss. 7-21

REVOLT OF SHECHEM Vss. 22-29

RETRIBUTION UPON SHECHEM (Vss. 30-49) AND ABIMELECH (Vss. 50-57)

Judges 10:6-16 GOD'S RESPONSES

How do you respond to a gift?

How do you respond to bad news?

How do you respond to a kind word or deed?

How do you respond to good news?

We do not always respond to situations in the same way, however, we do respond. As we see in our text, God chooses to respond to certain conditions and circumstances certain ways. Please remember that our responses are not always the right responses. God's response is always the right response, because He is God, and He is righteous.

GOD'S RESPONSE TO REBELLION IS CHASTISEMENT Vss. 6-10, See Hebrews 12:5-13.

GOD'S RESPONSE TO REGRET IS CONFRONTATION Vss. 11-14

Israel was sorry, by not repentant. Israel "regretted" her sin, so God confronted her with her sin. He confronted her so that she would sincerely repent.

GOD'S RESPONSE TO REPENTANCE IS COMPASSION Vss. 15-16

Israel repented and now God was grieved for Israel's misery. Deliverance followed through Jephthah's leadership in Judges 11

Judges 13 SAMSON AND ME

We can relate to many of the Bible Characters. We have all been impetuous like Peter and disturbed like Martha. We've all fallen into sin like David and seen the Lord deliver us from trouble like Daniel.

Other Bible characters are not as easy for us to relate to. One such character is Samson. We may not think that we have much in common with him, but we do.

SAMSON WAS SPECIAL - I AM SPECIAL Vss. 1-5

Samson had a special birth. - Vss. 1-3 As a Christian, so did I. - John 3:1-16

Samson was a special person - Vs. 5 - As a Christian, so am I. - Ephesians 1:3-6

Samson lived a special life - Vss. 4-5 - As a Christian, so should I - Titus 2:11-13

SAMSON WAS SELECTED TO SERVE GOD - I HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO SERVE GOD Vs. 5

He was selected to deliver Israel. I am selected to be a faithful servant to my Lord Jesus Christ and to be his ambassador. John 15:16, 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

SAMSON WAS SEPARATED - I AM SEPARATED Vss. 4-5, 13-14

Please note that there are two types of separation. The first kind is positional. That comes with birth. The other kind is practical. That is lived out on a daily basis. Samson was born separated, and did practice some forms of separation (long hair of a Nazarite). However, his biggest problem was a lack of separation from foreign women.

As Christians, we have been separated unto God. - 1 Peter 2:9

As Christians, we are to live a separated life. - 1 Peter 1:15-16

SAMSON WAS SPIRIT MOVED - I SHOULD BE SPIRIT FILLED - Vss. 24-25

See Acts 1:8, Ephesians 5:18-21, Galatians 5:22-23

Judges 14:1-15:8 UNDER CONTROL

When a vehicle is "out of control" there is no stopping what it will do.

When a child is "out of control" he or she behaves in outrageous ways.

The opposite of being out of control is being "under control".

Through the power of the Holy Spirit a Christian should allow God to control all areas of his life (Romans 12:1, Ephesians 5:18).

Samson was a great man, but would have been greater if he wasn't often out of control. There are at least four areas in this passage in which Samson should have been under control. We can learn from Samson's mistakes to:

CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS - 14:1-4

People say "You are what you eat." In reality, you are what you think. Proverbs 23:7a, Matthew 15:19

Samson saw a woman, and it was "Lust at first sight." He hadn't met her but wanted her. He was having all sorts of fantasy in his mind. Vss. 1-2

Samson's parents were rightfully opposed. Vs. 3, Deuteronomy 7:1-4

Samson insisted on having his own way. Vs. 3

Vs. 4 - God did not approve of Samson's sin. In fact, the sin that comes Samson's way is certainly an indication that he was out of the will of God. God, however, would use the situation to bring glory to himself, and to give a problem to the Philistines. If you look carefully, you will notice that God does not need perfect people or perfect situations in order to accomplish His perfect purposes.

Samson would have avoided this whole situation if his thoughts had been under control. We will avoid a lot of grief too if our thoughts are under control. Romans 12:2, Philippians 4:8

CONTROL YOUR TESTIMONY - 14:5-11

Samson was to be a Nazarite from his birth. A Nazarite was to live a life of separation. He was not to touch dead bodies. He was not to partake of the fruit of the vine, and he was not supposed to cut his hair. In these verses we find:

1. Samson in a vineyard Vss. 5-7

2. Samson touching a dead body Vss. 8-9

3. Samson hosting a drinking party Vss. 10-11

All of these things hurt Samson's testimony for God.

We must be careful to maintain a clear testimony for our Savior. Matthew 5:14-16, 1 Thessalonians 5:22

CONTROL YOUR TONGUE - 14:12-18

Often Samson's tongue got him in trouble. In this case, if he hadn't given the riddle there would have been no problem. Then, if he hadn't told his wife the solution to the riddle there would have been no difficulty. We must learn to keep our tongues under control as well. Psalm 141:3, James 3:2-5.

CONTROL YOUR TEMPER - 14:19-15:8

Samson's temper was certainly not under control. When we do not have our tempers under control we will also do damage. Ephesians 4:26-27, Galatians 5:22-23

Judges 14:1-15:8 LIFE IN CONFLICT

Samson's life was full of conflict, as this passage shows us.

STUBBORN WILL - Vss. 1-4

SECRET ADVENTURE - Vss. 5-9

STRANGE RIDDLE - Vss. 10-14

SURRENDERED ANSWER - Vss. 15-20

SECURED REVENGE - 2:1-8

Judges 15:9-16:31 A MIXED BAG

When we use the term "a mixed bag" we are thinking that what we are talking about has a variety of good and bad elements. If we say, "The concert was a mixed bag," we are thinking that it was good and bad.

Samson's life was also "a mixed bag". God used him mightily in spite of his personal failures.

PRESUMPTION

1. Israel presumed that the Philistines had to be appeased. Judges 15:9-13

Sometimes we are like the Israelites. We would rather appease than confront.

2. The Philistines presumed that Samson could be stopped. Judges 15:9-14, 16:1-3, 5, 21-25

Satan will be constantly trying to stop the Child of God, just as the Philistines tried to stop Samson.

3. Samson presumed that He could live as he pleased. Judges 16:1-20

Samson especially seemed to think that he could do whatever he wanted with the ladies. He kept company with a Harlot and then with Delilah.

Samson seemed to think that he could maintain a relationship with Delilah, who was actually trying to deliver him into the Philistines' hands, and not pay any consequences.

We must realize that like Samson, we are not beyond God's hand of discipline. Proverbs 3:11-12, Galatians 6:7-8

POWER

1. To Win - Judges 15:14-17

2. To Escape - Judges 16:1-3

3. To Retaliate - Judges 16:26-31

I believe that He was used of God to bring Glory to God through this action.

PRAYER

1. Samson prayed and his thirst was quenched. Judges 15:18-20

2. Samson prayed and his strength was used one last time for God's glory. Judges 16:28-31

Judges 16:6-31 VICTORY AT A PRICE

There are times when people win great battles, but they pay a great price in order to win. Samson ultimately won a great battle over the Philistines, but because of his sin, he paid a great price (He lost his life during the final victory.).

SAMSON WAS PLAYFUL WITH DELILAH Vss. 1-14

Samson shouldn't have been with this woman in the first place.

They weren't married. When Delilah started to probe about the secret of his strength, it seems to me that Samson was playful, telling her great tales. Samson should have realized that this was more than a game and left Delilah alone.

DELILAH WAS PERSISTENT WITH SAMSON Vss. 15-18

She kept pestering Samson until he finally stopped playing with her and told her the truth.

THE PHILISTINES WERE PREDOMINANT OVER SAMSON Vss. 19-25

Samson's strength was gone. He was blinded. False gods were praised. He was made to entertain his enemies. But, his hair grew back.

SAMSON PRAYED TO GOD Vss. 26-30

Samson asked God for one last victory.

GOD PREVAILED Vss. 30-31

Ruth 1:1 THE HOUR OF DECISION

We go through life making decisions. Every day is a day of decision. Today you decided what you were going to eat for breakfast, what clothes you would wear, and with whom you would spend time. This week you will make decisions that will effect where you go, what you do, and how you use the abilities that God has given you.

There are times in our lives when major decisions must be made. These decisions, being major, cause us to stop and think before we make a decision. When we come to the point of making such a serious choice, I think of it as "The Hour of Decision" (with apologies to Billy Graham!) The hour of decision is a time in my life where I will end up being blessed or not so blessed based on the choice I make. Such major hours of decision include, choosing a marriage partner, making a career move, selecting a church to join, or choosing a standard of morals by which I will conduct my life.

In Ruth 1 we meet four people who came to "The Hour of Decision". Two of them made wise decisions.

Two of them made unwise decisions. Their choices are important to us because we will be forced to make the same types of decisions today.

BACKGROUND TO THE BOOK OF RUTH

Probably written in the days of David.

Events of this book might have taken place during the time of Gideon.

Ruth 1:1 tells us that it was during the days that the Judges ruled that these events took place. These were not good days, as Judges 2:11-19 indicates.

THE HOUR OF DECISION FOR ELIMELECH - HE CHOSE TO RETREAT - Vss. 1-5

Vs. 1 - It was a time of famine. It was a time of judgment from God. The land was dry and not producing. People were hungry. Elimelech had a decision to make. He was in the land that God had given the Jewish people. He could stay in the land and endure God's discipline, or he could leave and seek blessing elsewhere. Abraham faced a similar decision in Genesis 12:10-20 and made the same wrong choice. I feel Elimelech was wrong to leave Israel. The Israelites had been commanded to have nothing to do with Children of Moab. Elimelech reminds me of what I would call a backsliding Christian. There was a time when they were on fire, in the right place, excited, and enthused about the work of Jesus Christ. Then, they chose to stop walking with the Lord and serving Him the way they once did. Those who backslide should not be surprised when they receive God's discipline as described in Hebrews 12:5. In Ruth 1:3-5 we find God's judgment on Elimelech and his family.

THE HOUR OF DECISION FOR NAOMI - SHE CHOSE TO RETURN - Vss. 6-7

Here is the story of a backslider who did all the things that her husband did, but came back to the Lord. She heard that God's people were being blessed, and decided to return to Israel. It is a good thing when a backsliding Christian hears how God is blessing His people. It might influence him to repent. The backsliding Christian needs to confess sin and return to the service of the King!

THE HOUR OF DECISION FOR ORPAH - Vss. 8-14 - SHE CHOSE TO REJECT

Orpah looked good. She was following her mother-in-law back to Israel. Instead of staying to worship false Gods, she was going to come into the land of Israel and worship the God of Israel.

Orpah reminds me of many a person I have met who claims to have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior.

They start by making a profession of faith, but go no further. Their lives showed no change. 2 Cor.5:17

Vss. 8-13 - Naomi explains the truth. She gives the cold, hard facts. Orpah decided that the cost of following Naomi was too high. When professing Christians who never truly trusted Christ lean of the required commitment to Christ, they reject their new found faith (If not in word, they do it by deed.) Matthew 13:20-21

Vs. 14 - Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and left. She rejected Naomi and her God.
THE HOUR OF DECISION FOR RUTH - Vss. 14-18 - SHE CHOSE TO RELY
When Orpah left Naomi, Ruth clung to her. Ruth shows us a person who is truly born again. She would not be taken from her faith and made a total commitment to Naomi and her God. Seeing her sincerity, Naomi stopped trying to dissuade Ruth. Ruth chose to rely on God. Christians choose to rely on faith in Christ!

Ruth 1:1-6 THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME

RETREAT FROM THE LAND OF PROMISE - Vss. 1-2

REAPING OF SORROW - Vss. 3-5

RETURN TO PLACE OF BLESSING - Vs. 6

Ruth 1:1-18 TALE OF THREE WOMEN

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-6

There are three women in this story. Naomi had left the promised land with her husband during a time of famine. He had died. Naomi's two sons had married Orpah and Ruth. The sons had died as well.

NAOMI CHOSE TO RETURN Vss. 6-7

She once left the promised land and was coming back to the place where she should be. When we do what is wrong, we should return to the ways of our God by repenting of, and forsaking sin. 1 John 1:9, Rev.2:5

ORPAH CHOSE TO RETREAT Vss. 8-14

Naomi told her daughters-in-law to return home.

There was much trouble ahead for her. At first, Orpah was going to faithfully follow her mother-in-law.

Finally however she retreated to

her old way of life. Many people make professions of faith or commitment and then retreat from them when the road gets rough.

RUTH CHOSE TO RETAIN Vss. 15-18

Ruth retained her commitment to her mother-in-law, and her commitment to her mother-in-law's God. In the end, she was the one who was blessed. (She became great grandmother to David. Ruth 4:13-17)

Ruth 1:6-18 WOMEN AT THE CROSSROADS

A "crossroads" is when a person needs to make an important decision that will affect the rest of their lives.

Three women, a mother in-law and two daughters in-law reached a cross roads at the same time.

INTRODUCTION - Explain Naomi's story Vss. 1-5

NAOMI WAS REALISTICALLY DESCRIPTIVE - Vss. 6-13

Naomi decided to return home. It was time to be back in the Promised Land. Upon deciding to go home, her daughters in-law decided that they would follow her. Naomi was honest about her state and the probable future for the daughters in-law if they followed her.

ORPAH WAS READILY DETERRED - Vss. 13-14

RUTH WAS REALLY DETERMINED - Vss. 14-18

Ruth 1 and 3 MOTHER IN-LAW

There have been many jokes about mother in-laws, however there have been many good and godly mother in-laws. In the book of Ruth we meet Naomi, who was by no means perfect, but in the end, had a positive witness on her daughter in-law, Ruth. Here is her story.

SHE WANDERED FROM GOD - 1:1-5

In a time of famine Naomi went with her husband Elimelech into the land of Moab.

They should have remained in God's land among God's people.

During this time of wandering her sons married unsaved girls, Moabites.

Her husband died, and so did her sons.

SHE WENT HOME - 1:6-7

She was returning to God's land of blessing. She was coming back to where she once had been.

SHE WITNESSED TO HER DAUGHTERS IN-LAW - 1:8-18

This was not traditional witnessing as we would think of it. However, she must have talked enough about the Lord, that Ruth was willing to follow her and claim her God. Naomi actually tried to send her daughters in-law back, and Orpah did return to Moab. Her influence on Ruth was strong enough, however, that she stayed by Naomi and went to Israel with her. She also claimed the God of Israel as her God.

Mother in-laws can have a very strong influence on their daughters and sons in-law for good or bad.

SHE WORKED TOWARDS RUTH'S WELL-BEING - 3:1-4

It was Naomi who told Ruth to approach Boaz, seeking that he redeem her as a kinsman-redeemer.

It was her advice that led to the redemption of Ruth, her marriage to Boaz, and the birth of Obed, the grandfather of David. See chapters 3-4 to fill in the details.

Ruth 1:19-2:23 THE HOUR OF SERVICE

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 - This passage conveys a truth we see throughout our lives and the lives of others. There is a time for about everything! Each emotion and each circumstance has its hour in which to shine. Last time we started talking about the various hours in the Life of Ruth. We saw Ruth's Hour of Decision. She chose to follow her mother-in-law back to Israel and to believe on Israel's God (Ruth 1:15-16). Ruth's decision was a salvation decision. This week we find Ruth in the Hour of Service. Ruth worked after she was saved. This principle is true for all believers (Ephesians 2:10).

SHE SAW THE NEED - 1:19-21

Because Ruth had stuck by Naomi, she was able to see the desperate state that she was in. She became aware of Naomi's needs. She saw that Naomi was both depressed and destitute.

As Ruth saw Naomi's needs, we also need to be aware of those around us. Perhaps someone needs encouragement, or salvation, or physical or financial help. Let us try to be sensitive to the needs of others.

SHE SOUGHT A SOLUTION - 1:22-2:2

They returned during Barley Harvest. Vs. 22

Boaz, a relative of Naomi's late husband, is introduced. He was a wealthy farmer. Vs. 1

Ruth saw the problem of poverty and requests that she be allowed to go glean. Gleaning was an activity of the poor. Vs. 2, Leviticus 19:9

Like Ruth, when we see problems, with God's help we should seek solutions.

SHE SECURED A POSITION - Vss. 3-8

God guided Ruth to just the right field, belonging to Boaz. Vs. 3, Psalm 32:8

Boaz learned about Ruth. Vss. 4-7

Boaz gave Ruth a generous offer. Vss. 8-9

SHE SHOWED APPRECIATION - Vs. 10

Ruth indicated how much she appreciated the kindness of Boaz

SHE SHARED HER REWARD - Vss. 11-23

Boaz showed further kindness and generosity. Vss. 11-17

Ruth shared the results of Boaz' kindness and her own efforts with her mother-in-law.

Ruth 2 PRINCIPLES FOR GLEANERS

In Ruth 2, Ruth goes forth to "glean." To glean meant "to gather" or to "pick up." According to the Word of God, gleaners were allowed to pick up grain that was missed by the harvesters. See Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22, and Deuteronomy 24:19-21. The gleaners were poor people, such as widows.

In a real sense, each one of us are gleaners. Today we will glean from somewhere and feed our minds and hearts with material. It is important that we gather from the right source, God's Word. Based on this passage, here are 8 principles for us to be aware of as gleaners.

1. WE WILL ALL GLEAN SOMEWHERE TODAY. Vss. 1-2

Each of us will go out to glean, whether we realize it or not. We will pick up things from others, from the media, from reading material etc. We are not isolated. We will be influenced by something.

2. THE FIELD OF GOD'S WORD IS AVAILABLE Vs. 3

There were friendly farmers and hostile farmers in Israel. Some showed compassion on the poor, others hostility. Ruth found a friendly, available field. God's Word is a field from which we can glean (Jeremiah 15:16, Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2-3). We can gather Spiritual nourishment from this field.

3. GLEANING TAKES EFFORT Vss. 4-7

It was noted to Boaz that Ruth had been working all morning, with the exception of a little rest.

Studying God's word will also take effort. (Acts 17:10-11, 2 Timothy 2:15)

4. WE SHOULD CHOOSE AND REMAIN IN THE RIGHT FIELD Vss. 8-9

Ruth chose the right field in which to glean. Boaz told her to stay.

The field of God's Word is certainly the place to choose to glean, and the place to remain. (John 15:7,10)

5. GOD WILL GIVE US "HANDFULS ON PURPOSE" AS WE GLEAN. Vss. 15-16

Boaz instructed his harvesters to leave handfuls of grain in the way so Ruth could pick them up. As we search God's Word and ask for help, God will leave us all sorts of good things from which to learn. (Psalm 119:27, 97-104)

6. GLEANING BRINGS REWARD Vs. 17

Just as Ruth received a good harvest from gleaning in Boaz's field, we will receive a great Spiritual reward as we glean from God's field. (Jeremiah 15:16, John 5:39, Psalm 1:3)

7. WE SHOULD SHARE WHAT WE GLEAN WITH OTHERS Vs. 18

Ruth shared her gleanings with Naomi. We need to share our gleanings with others. (2 Timothy 2:2, Matthew 18:19-20)

8. THE BIG QUESTION FOR US IS "WHERE HAVE WE GLEANED TODAY?" Vs. 19

Have we gleaned in someone else's field, or in the field of God's Word?

Ruth 3 THE HOUR OF FAITH

We preach that salvation is the result of faith in Christ. Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12-13, 3:36
However, faith does not end at salvation. It begins with salvation! Hebrews 11:6
Four times in the Scriptures God says that the just shall live by faith. (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17;
Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38) This statement is not only a commentary on salvation, but also how we are
to live after salvation. Proverbs 3:5-6

Everything the Christian does requires faith. That would include witnessing, suffering or watching someone
you love suffer, dying or watching someone you love die, working, going to school, driving, raising a family,
serving in church and a host of other things.

We have already seen Ruth in "The Hour of Decision" choosing the God of Israel by faith as her God. Ruth
1:16 Last time we saw Ruth working in "The Hour of Service" (1:19-2:23). In this message we find Ruth in
"The Hour of Faith". We want to see four things about faith that we can relate to our own lives.

FAITH IS BASED ON FACT - Vss. 1-4

Vs. 1 - Naomi is the agent who gives Ruth the facts on faith.

There is a good reminder for Christians in these verses. Faith is not based on feeling, assumption, or some
"leap in the dark". Faith is based on the facts found in God's Word.

Naomi is looking for rest or security for her daughter-in-law. But for it to happen, Ruth was going to have to
believe the facts.

Vs. 2 - Naomi directs Ruth's faith to the fact that Boaz, the one in whose field Ruth had gleaned, was a near
kinsman. Boaz was kinsman, or relative or Elimelech, Naomi's late husband. This placed him in an important
position. Naomi had a piece of land to be sold, and redeemed by a near kinsman. Also, as part of the
transaction, the one who redeemed the land would be required to marry Ruth. See Leviticus 25:23-28 and
Deuteronomy 25:5-9.

Vs. 2-3 - Ruth was instructed by Naomi to bathe and change her clothes, removing those of widowhood.

She was then to go down to the threshing floor and hide until Boaz settled down for the night. He was
winnowing grain (throwing it up in the air and allowing the wind to blow away the chaff.)

Vs. 4 - Do not judge this suggestion or action by our own society. Bear in mind that the threshing floor was a
public place. There were probably many people present. Also, this was a case in which Ruth had to do the
asking. Because she was a widow, it was proper for her to request that Boaz redeem the property and marry
Ruth. She did it in such a way that Boaz could have said no and not be embarrassed.

The faith exercised by Ruth was based on facts given to her by Naomi. They were also facts based on the
Word of God.

FAITH REQUIRES OBEDIENCE - Vs. 5

Ruth was willing to do as she was told. We show our faith in God when we obey His Word.

FAITH TAKES ACTION - Vss. 6-13

Vss. 6-8 - Ruth did as she was told.

Vss. 9-13 - Boaz responded favorably.

Ruth's faith would have meant nothing unless she had taken action. James 2:17

Study Hebrews 11 and discover that men and women of faith were also men and women of action.

Many times there is nothing we can do and we must wait on God by faith. Other times there are specific
things that God wants us to take definitive action.

FAITH WAITS PATIENTLY - Vss. 14-18

Ruth had done all that she could do.

Vss. 14-15 - Boaz sent her away, giving her an indication of her intentions (six measures of barley).

Vss. 16-18 - Ruth was instructed to "sit still". All she could do was to wait patiently. When we have done all
that God wants us to do in a situation, all we need to do is wait on Him. Psalm 130:5-6

Ruth 4 - THE HOUR OF REDEMPTION

Naomi had a piece of property that needed to be redeemed. With the redemption of the property came the
responsibility of marrying Ruth. See Leviticus 25:23-28 and Deuteronomy 25:5-9.

Boaz, as kinsman redeemer was:

READY TO REDEEM - Vss. 1-3

Boaz took the initiative to settle the matter. He was in line to be a kinsman-redeemer, but could not do it until
a nearer kinsman relinquished his rights. Great works for God never get done til we take the first step

ABLE TO REDEEM - Vss. 4-6

Boaz approached the man about the business at hand. Right away the man wanted the property. But to go
with the property was marriage to Ruth. The one who redeemed the property needed also to father a child
as an heir to the dead. The other man was not able to do this without doing harm to his own inheritance. He

gave Boaz permission to redeem the land and marry Ruth. Boaz was able to meet the requirements for redemption.

WILLING TO REDEEM - Vss. 7-17

Boaz was not only able to redeem the property and marry Ruth, but he was willing! His willingness was reflected in the actions that he took. Many times people have ability, but are not willing to act.

Boaz was READY, WILLING AND ABLE!

Now think of our Lord Jesus as our redeemer.

JESUS WAS READY TO REDEEM - He came to earth to die for our sins.

JESUS WAS ABLE TO REDEEM - He had no sin of his own. No man was able to redeem us from our sins, but Jesus was able. 2 Corinthians 5:21

JESUS WAS WILLING TO REDEEM - He showed his willingness to obey the Father's will in Gethsemane. He also showed His willingness to redeem us by suffering all the pain leading up to the cross and actually going to the cross.

JESUS WAS READY, WILL AND ABLE TO REDEEM US! PRAISE GOD!

1 Samuel 1-3 PROPHET IN TRAINING

1. Samuel was given to God before and after he was born. 1:11, 28

2. He was trained at his mother's knee. 1:24

3. He was raised in the house of God. 2:18

4. He was called by the Lord. 3:1-10

5. He responded properly to the Lord. 3:10

6. He developed a Godly testimony. 3:19-21

1 Samuel 1:1-10 ANSWERED PRAYER

Hannah was a Godly woman who teaches us to fervently ask God, and believe His promises of answered prayer.

THE PROBLEMS OF HANNAH Vss. 1-8

THE PERSON WHO CARED Vss. 9-10

Hannah cared enough to cry out to God for help. We need to care about our problems and cry out to God

THE PETITION FOR HELP Vss. 10-11

THE PROMISE OF AN ANSWER Vss. 12-18

THE PROVISION OF THE ANSWER Vss. 19-20

1 Samuel 2:1-2 REASONS TO REJOICE

Hannah was very happy because God had answered her prayer for a son (See 1 Samuel 1). The beginning of Hannah's prayer reminds us of four reasons that every Christian has for giving praise to God:

REJOICE IN GOD'S SALVATION - Vs. 1

REJOICE IN GOD'S SANCTITY (HOLINESS) - Vs. 2a

REJOICE IN GOD'S SIGNIFICANCE ("There is none beside thee.") - Vs. 2b

REJOICE IN GOD'S STRENGTH AND SECURITY (ROCK) - Vs. 2c

1 Samuel 3 LEARNING FROM SAMUEL

BE AVAILABLE - Vss. 1-10

Samuel thought that he heard Eli calling.

When Eli perceived that Samuel was being called by the Lord he gave some great advice.

Eli Samuel to say "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."

We must be available to hear from God through prayer, Bible reading, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

BE ATTENTIVE - Vss. 11-14

God gave Samuel specific information. Samuel had to pay attention so that he would get the message straight. As we pay attention as we read God's word, pray, and hear God's Word preached and taught, we will have our own message from God straight.

BE AN ANNOUNCER - Vss. 15-18

Samuel was encouraged by Eli to tell all him all that God had said.

We should be willing to announce what God has taught us.

BE ACCURATE - Vss. 19-21

Samuel's information was always reliable because he shared exactly what God had told him. May the words we share from God be equally as accurate.

1 Samuel 3 THE CALL OF SAMUEL

During one of the darkest times of Israel's history, God called a boy named Samuel to be a prophet.

IT WAS A PRECIOUS CALL - Vss. 1-4

Anytime God speaks it's precious. But the word of God was rare ("precious" in KJV) in those days, so when God spoke it was very special. Actually when God speaks it's always precious or special.

IT WAS A PERSONAL CALL - Vs. 4

God called Samuel. God will call out special people for specific tasks. Salvation is also a personal call. God calls us to be saved. We must believe on Christ (Acts 16:31).

IT WAS A PERSISTENT CALL - Vss. 4-10

God called until Samuel answered God. He was a little confused because this was the first time God had called him.

Let's not keep God waiting, and answer His call whenever He gives it.

IT WAS A PRACTICAL CALL - Vss. 11-14

God had a message for Samuel to deliver to Eli (Which he did in verses 15-18). When God calls us, He has practical reasons for doing so.

1 Samuel 3:9 GREAT ADVICE

I have received and have given some good advice in my team.

One good word of advice came from my Dad when I was dating her. He said, "If you let this one get away you're crazy." I didn't. We've been married for 28 years.

In pre-marital counseling I give what I feel is a good piece of advice. I tell the future husband to eat whatever his wife serves him for a year without complaining. He'll make a great cook!

In 1 Samuel 3:9 Eli the priest gives the young boy Samuel a piece of great advice, that we should take as well. "Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place."

There are several lessons that we learn from this passage and other Scriptures.

GOD SPEAKS AT QUIET TIMES

When God spoke to Samuel it was at night.

When God spoke to Joseph, or Daniel it was often in a dream.

When God spoke to John it was at a quiet time. He was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." (Revelation 1:10)

When God spoke to Elijah on Mount Horeb, it was with a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12).

It seems that it is during the times of solitude and quiet. Psalm 46:10-11, Isaiah 30:15

GOD WOULD SPEAK TO US REGULARLY

Once God started speaking to Samuel, He continued to communicate. 1 Samuel 3:19-21

God wants to communicate with us regularly as we abide in Christ. John 15:4-7

GOD WANTS A WILLING LISTENER

Eli told Samuel to say to the Lord, "Speak."

In other words, Samuel was to be willing to hear from the Lord.

God wants a willing listener.

God wants his servants to listen for His voice.

GOD WANTS A YIELDED LISTENER

Eli told Samuel to say "Speak Lord; for thy servant heareth."

Jesus is Lord and He has every right to instruct and command us.

We are also the Lord's servants. If we are the Lord's servants, we must therefore be yielded to His plans for our lives.

GOD WANTS AN ATTENTIVE LISTENER

Samuel was told to say "Thy servant heareth."

In other words, Samuel was to be alert.

He was to be desirous of hearing what the Lord had to say.

He was to listen with a "ready ear".

We are to listen to God, trying to get as much from Him as we can. For God to speak, we are to hang on every word.

1 Samuel 4 DEFEAT!

There was war with the Philistines. Things were not right Spiritually in Israel. God was not blessing His people. 1 Samuel 2:22-36, 3:11-14

FALSE HOPE - Vss. 1-5

Israel was being defeated. It was concluded that if the "Ark of the Covenant", God's presence, was brought into the battle, there would be victory. This was presumption. God was not going to bless when there was sin in the camp (See Joshua 7).

FORTIFIED EFFORT - Vss. 6-9

The Philistines were scared at first, but then increased their courage and their effort. Because God was not pleased with Israel, the Philistines prevailed.

FAILED PLANS - Vss. 10-11

30,000 soldiers lost their lives.

The Ark of the Covenant was captured.

Hophni and Phineas, Eli's sons, were killed.

FUTILE (FRUITLESS) REACTIONS - Vss. 12-22

Eli - Vss. 12-18 - His reaction led to his "accidental" death.

Phineas' Wife - Vss. 19-22 - She went into labor, had the child, but died herself.

1 Samuel 7 MIGHTY IN BATTLE

Introduction - Vss. 1-2

REPENTANCE TOWARDS GOD - Vss. 3-6

REACTION OF THE ENEMY - Vs. 7

RELIANCE ON GOD - Vss. 8-9

RETRIBUTION FOR THE ENEMY - Vss. 10-14

1 Samuel 7:1-14 VICTORY AT MIZPEH

Israel had been under Philistine domination for many years.

Then, under the direction of Samuel, they were set free.

THE GUIDANCE OF SAMUEL, Vss. 3-4

1. Return - "...If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts..."

2. Reject - "then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroah from among you..."

3. Reflect - "...and prepare your hearts unto the LORD..."

4. React - "...and serve him only..."

5. Results - "...and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines."

THE GATHERING OF ISRAEL, Vss. 5-9

1. Repentance Vs. 6

2. Judgment Vs. 6

3. Conflict Vs. 7

4. Prayer Vss. 8 & 10

5. Sacrifice Vs. 9

THE GREATNESS OF GOD

1. His Thunder Vs. 10

2. His Power Vs. 11

3. His Memorial Vs. 12

4. His Victory Vss. 13-14

1 Samuel 8:1-22 "BE REASONABLE, DO IT MY WAY!"

Sometimes people can be very stubborn. As Samuel was getting to the end of his life, the Israelites were clamoring for a king. No matter what he told them, they wanted to have a king. They were stubborn.

REQUEST FOR A KING - Vss. 1-5

EXPLANATION FROM GOD - Vss. 6-9

Notice that Israel was not rejecting its prophet, Samuel.

Israel was rejecting God, not wanting Him to rule over them.

DESCRIPTION OF THE KING - Vss. 10-18

God told Samuel to warn Israel about having a king (Vs.9).

In these verses Samuel tells Israel what will happen when they have a king.

STUBBORNESS OF THE PEOPLE - Vss. 19-20

Israel rejected the appeal of God through Samuel, and insisted on having a king.

We must be careful not to be stubborn when God warns us. Psalm 106:14

1 Samuel 9:1-10:8 IN TOUCH WITH GOD

Samuel was a man of God who was in constant communication with God.

This passage shows us what will be true of a person who is in touch with God.

INTRODUCTION - 9:1-14

Israel had demanded a king in 1 Samuel 8.

In these verses we are introduced to the king that God had chosen for Israel at this time. We see how God brought him into Samuel's life because Samuel was a man in touch with God. A man in touch with God:

KNOWS THE TIME - 9:15-16

When a person is in touch with God, he will know when it is time to do things. Ephesians 5:15-17

KNOWS PEOPLE - 9:17-20

The more we spend time with God the more we will understand people. He helps us to understand human nature in general, and individuals in particular. In this case, Samuel was being shown the person that God had chosen to be the next king.

KNOWS HIS RESPONSIBILITY - 9:25-10:1

The person in touch with God knows what His role is in God's plans. Samuel's role was to anoint Saul as King.

KNOWS THE FUTURE - 10:2-8

The person in touch with God has a good understanding of God's plans. Although you and I will not predict the future as Samuel did here, our time with God will help us grasp what He intends to do. Such understanding comes from study of God's Word and prayer.

1 Samuel 11:1-13 A TIME OF VICTORY

We tend to think of Saul's reign as King of Israel a total failure. However, there were a few times of precious victory. Here is a time when Saul did what was right, and God blessed.

URGENCY OF THE MOMENT - Vss. 1-4

UNCTION OF THE LEADER - Vss. 5-6

UNITY OF THE PEOPLE - Vss. 7-10

UNLEASHING OF GOD'S POWER - Vs. 11

UNDERSTANDING THE VICTORY - Some wanted Saul's enemies put to death. Saul understood that the day was not a day of vengeance, but a day of rejoicing in what God had done.

1 Samuel 12 SERMON AT GILGAL

The new king, Saul, had been given a great victory by God. Samuel called the people to renew their covenant with God at Gilgal. 1 Samuel 11:14-15

REVIEW OF SAMUEL'S INTEGRITY - Vss. 1-5

Samuel makes sure that his reputation is clean. This gave credibility to what he was going to say.

REMINDER OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS - Vss. 6-15

Samuel itemizes certain ways that God had been faithful to deliver Israel and encourages them to continue to serve Him.

REBUKE FOR SEEKING A KING - Vss. 16-19

Israel had done the wrong thing to demand a king. This is made evident by the storm that came up.

REASSURANCE OF SUPPORT - Vss. 20-25

They were to fear the Lord - Vss. 20-21, 24-25

God would not forsake His people - Vs. 22

Samuel would continue to pray and teach - Vs. 23

1 Samuel 12:23 etc. PRAYERS

There are many kinds of prayer found in the Bible. Here are three types of prayer that we should imitate.

FAITHFUL PRAYER - 1 Samuel 12:23

Samuel was not going to sin against the Lord by failing to pray for others. He would faithfully lift them up before the "Throne of Grace". Ephesians 6:18

FORCEFUL PRAYER - 1 Kings 17:17-24, 1 Kings 18:36-46, James 5:17-18

When Elijah prayed things happened! Elijah's prayers were prayers of faith. Mark 11:24, 1 John 5:14-15

FRUITFUL PRAYER - Job 42:10

Job was delivered from his own problems when he prayed for his friends. 1 Timothy 2:1-4

God blessed Job greatly when he prayed.

1 Samuel 13 & 15 THE SAUL IN US

I would be glad if the apostles John, Peter and Paul were members of my local church.
I wouldn't mind if Rahab, Esther or Ruth worshiped with our congregation.
I'd be delighted if Timothy, David or Mark were part of our Sunday gathering.
But I don't think I'd be too happy if King Saul were to be in our assembly of believers!

For the prophet Samuel, Saul was trouble with a capital "T"! He caused the prophet much grief.
We must realize that, like Saul, we sinners. We must realize that we have the same capacity to sin as Saul.
We must realize that, very possibly, some of Saul's sins are our sins! We must examine our lives to make sure that there are none of the characteristics of Saul in our lives. We must watch out for:

IMPATIENCE - 1 Samuel 13:8-9

Saul was having trouble with the Philistines. Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days. The seventh day was not complete and Paul was impatient. We must remember that there are times in our lives when God wants us to wait (Psalm 27:14). We must be careful not to be impatient with God's timing, because His timing is perfect!

INVOLVEMENT - 1 Samuel 13:9-13

Saul took matters into his own hands. Samuel was told to wait, and he didn't!
Saul took matters into his own hands because of:

1. Pressure of Circumstances Vs. 11
2. Promise delayed Vs. 11
3. Prospect of a "quick fix" or easy solution Vs. 12

What Saul did was foolish because he did not obey God! Vs. 13

IMPERFECTION - 1 Samuel 13:14

Saul did not have a perfect heart that sought after God.

We must be careful not to have a divided heart which one moment wants to please God, and the next moment wants to please ourselves. James 1:8, Matthew 6:24, Psalm 16:4

INSURRECTION (REBELLION) - 1 Samuel 15:22

Saul was given specific instruction. 1 Samuel 15:1-3

Saul did not do exactly as he was told. 1 Samuel 15:7-9

Saul tried to cover up his sin with:

1. Smooth Words 1 Samuel 15:13
2. Feigned obedience 1 Samuel 15:13
3. Blaming Others 1 Samuel 15:15
4. Offering Sacrifice 1 Samuel 15:15

Samuel made it very clear to Saul that God is more concerned about obedience to Him than anything else we could possibly do for Him. Disobedience is rebellion against God. 1 Samuel 15:22-23

INSISTENCE (STUBBORNESS) - 1 Samuel 15:23

Stubbornly insisting on having our own way is just as bad as iniquity and idolatry.

Let's make sure that there are no characteristics of Saul inside of us!

1 Samuel 14:6-15 AGAINST GREAT ODDS

JONATHAN'S PURPOSE - Vss. 6-7

Jonathan wanted to act if the Lord would work for them. I believe Jonathan's purpose was to please God.

JONATHAN'S PROPOSAL - Vss. 8-10

Jonathan proposed that he and his armor bearer reveal themselves to the Philistines.

If the Philistines invited themselves up, they would know that it was God's will to fight.

JONATHAN'S POWER - Vss. 11-15

There was a great victory over the Philistines.

1 Samuel 14:24-45 THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK

All too often we speak before we think. It is very easy to look back and say, "I shouldn't have said that," or "I should have said this." King Saul didn't think before he spoke and almost lost his son as a result of his own foolishness.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-23

Due to the efforts of Jonathan and his armor bearer and the intervention of God, a great battle began against the Philistines.

A FAULTY (OR FLAKY) ORDER - Vss. 24-26

Saul stated that any soldier that ate during the battle was under the curse. The woods were full of nourishing honey, but the soldiers were afraid to eat.

A FAULTLESS VIOLATION - Vss. 27-32

Jonathan had not heard his father's proclamation, and ate some of the honey. He was refreshed. Jonathan rightly observed the foolishness of his father's command. When the day was over and the men could eat, they were so famished that they did not properly drain the blood from the animals. Leviticus 17:10-14

A FOOLISH CONDEMNATION - Vss. 33-44

It was discovered that someone had violated the curse placed on eating by Saul.

Jonathan was discovered as the guilty party. Saul was ready to condemn him to death.

A FAITHFUL RESCUE - Vs. 45

Jonathan was largely responsible for the day's victory.

The people wisely intervened and stopped Saul from killing his son.

1 Samuel 15:1-29 HE DIDN'T FOLLOW DIRECTIONS!

A DISTINCT COMMAND - Vss. 1-3

Saul was told what to do.

A DANGEROUS WORD - "BUT" - Vss. 4-9

Although partially obedient, there was that big "BUT". There were things Saul failed to do.

A DIRECT INTERROGATION - Vss. 10-21

Through his questioning Samuel got to the bottom of the matter and exposed Saul's sin.

A DIVINE PRONOUNCEMENT - Vss. 22-29

Saul was disqualified from leadership because he failed to obey.

1 Samuel 15:1-31 A WAYWARD KING

DIRECTIONS FOR SAUL - Vss. 1-5

Saul was to be an instrument of God in judging Amalek. He was to go and totally destroy Amalek and all their animals. While we might view this as a rather violent thing for God to do, let us remember that He is God and had his reasons for doing this at this time.

DISOBEDIENCE OF SAUL - Vss. 6-9

Saul did 2 things wrong. He destroyed everyone except the king, Agag, and he kept alive the best of the livestock.

DISTRESS OVER SAUL - Vss. 10-11

Samuel the Prophet was informed by God of Saul's disobedience and of God's displeasure. Samuel was greatly grieved.

DECEIT OF SAUL - Vss. 12-13

When Saul met Samuel he claimed to have kept the commandment of the Lord. Saul had only been partially obedient. He was trying to deceive Samuel. Let's remember that partial obedience is disobedience.

DECLARATION ABOUT SAUL - Vss. 14-31

Of God's Displeasure - Vss. 14-23

Of the Kingdom's Departure (from Saul) - Vss. 24-31

1 Samuel 16:1-13 LOOKING FOR A LEADER

There will be times in the course of God's work that a new leader will be needed.

Saul had been the king of Israel, but Saul had disqualified himself. 1 Samuel 13:5-16, 1 Samuel 15:1-31

The prophet Samuel, who had anointed Saul to be king, would be called upon again to appoint and anoint a new leader for Israel

SAMUEL'S MISSION - Vss. 1-3

Vs. 1 - There is a time to stop lamenting for a leader who is gone or has disqualified himself. Joshua had to stop lamenting the loss of Moses, a very good leader, and move on (Joshua 1:1-2).

Samuel had to stop lamenting the loss of Saul, who had failed, and move on. Sometimes we fail in our churches to get over the loss of a leader good or bad and move on under God's direction.

Vss. 2-3 - Samuel was to step out in faith to find and anoint a new leader. God would protect him from the enemy and guide him to the man of God's choosing. Although God provides His leaders, he gives His children the job of looking for them.

SAMUEL'S METHOD - Vss. 4-11

Each "candidate" in Jesse's family was brought before Samuel.

Samuel, in a sense, examined them. But the ultimate choice was up to God. Samuel set aside his own personal opinions in order to do the will of God. He listened for God's voice during this process. As we search for leaders, we must also set aside our own opinions to find the men and women of God's choosing. We must look to the Lord for His choice. Psalm 32:8

SAMUEL'S MAN - Vss. 12-13

Samuel's "man" was closer to being a boy. Samuel's man was lowest in rank in a large family. Samuel's man was a man God filled with His Holy Spirit. Samuel's man was a man after God's own heart. 1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22

As we search for leaders, let's make sure our man is really God's man.

1 Samuel 16 FEELING ADEQUATE

With all our short comings it is easy for us to feel inadequate, especially when we remember our sinful nature and habits. Christ died for our sins, and indwells us with His Spirit so we have every reason to feel adequate today. If anyone could have felt inadequate, it was David, and I'm sure there were times when he did. But generally speaking, David was a man who felt adequate, and he had good reasons. If we do what David did, we will feel adequate as well.

1. HAVE A HEART FOR GOD Vss. 1-10

Eliab and David's other brothers were rejected because they didn't have a heart for God. David did. Acts 13:21-22.

2. HAVE THE SPIRIT OF GOD Vss. 11-13

As Christians, we have the Spirit of God. Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:13. We need to allow the Spirit to fill or control us. Ephesians 5:18

3. HAVE A TESTIMONY FOR GOD Vss. 14-22

Much good is said about David in Vs. 18, but the most important words are "the Lord is with him." Matthew 5:14-16

1 Samuel 16:1-13 MOVING ON

Life is full of disappointments. Our own actions, circumstances, health conditions, people, and a host of other things will disappoint us. It is very easy to let the disappointments get us so discouraged that we stop serving the Lord! When things aren't going the way we'd like them to go we have a tendency to give up. There is a time to accept the disappointments and move on to whatever God has planned for us next.

The prophet Samuel was discouraged. He had anointed Saul as King of Israel, but in God's eyes, he was a great failure. 1 Samuel 13:5-16, 1 Samuel 15:1-31

Through the life of Samuel, God teaches some lessons about moving on after a disappointment.

1. THERE IS A TIME TO STOP MOURNING. - Vs. 1 - Samuel mourned because of Saul's failure. All the mourning in the world does not change situations. There is a time to stop grieving, realizing that in spite of disappointments, God is in control.
2. THERE IS A TIME TO ACCEPT GOD'S WILL - Vs. 1 - Saul had been rejected! Samuel had to accept the fact that God had another plan for Israel and for him. So often we stubbornly hold on to what we think God's will should be, when in reality, God has another plan. God's plan is always the best plan.
3. THERE IS A TIME TO MOVE ON IN MINISTRY - Vss. 1-5 - God's plan was for Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint another king. Although Samuel was afraid of what Saul would do, he chose to obey God and go to Bethlehem. When we finally stop mourning and accept God's will in a disappointment, it is time to move forward and do as God directs.
4. THERE IS A TIME TO BE SENSITIVE TO GOD'S LEADING - Vss. 6-13 - It would have been easy for Samuel to anoint the wrong son of Jesse as king. He had to listen for God's guidance and God led him to His choice as King. After we have been grieving, we especially need to get back "in tune" with God and allow Him to guide us.

If we think about it, it is always time to accept God's will, move on in ministry and to be sensitive to God's leading.

1 Samuel 16:1-13 FINDING THE RIGHT MAN FOR THE JOB

A CHANGE WAS NEEDED - Vss. 1-5

Saul had disqualified himself from being the King of Israel. God would appoint a new king. It would be Samuel's job to anoint the new king.

A CHOICE WAS MADE - Vss. 6-12

The choice that was made was God's choice, a shepherd boy named David. God looked at David's heart and liked what He saw!

CONSECRATION FOLLOWED - Vs. 13

God's Spirit came upon David at the moment of consecration.

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GOOD BEGINNINGS 1 Samuel 16:7 etc.

Getting started right is so important. David was a great man of God who got started right. Let's see how:

TRUST - 1 Samuel 16:7 - His heart was right with God.

TRAINING - 1 Samuel 17:34-36 - Wilderness

1 Samuel 16:14-23 - Saul's Court

TOUCH - 1 Samuel 16:12-13

1 Samuel 16:14-23 PROBLEM IN THE PALACE

King Saul had fallen into disfavor with God. 1 Samuel 13:1-14, 1 Samuel 15, 1 Samuel 16:1
His falling into disfavor caused him to have a specific problem.

THE TROUBLE WITH SAUL - Vss. 14

The Spirit of God had been replaced with an evil spirit.

THE TESTIMONY OF DAVID - Vss. 15-18

The servants of Saul prescribed soothing music for the king.

David's good testimony got him the job.

The Spirit of the Lord rested on David. - Vs. 13

THE TOUCH OF GOD - Vss. 19-23

King Saul was soothed when David played.

1 Samuel 17 PRIZE FIGHT

THE CHAMPION - GOLIATH

1. He Was Big. Vss. 1-7

2. He Was A Bully. Vss. 8-11

3. He Was Brash. Vss. 41-44

4. He Was Beatable. Vs. 54

THE CHALLENGER - DAVID

1. His Courage Vss. 20-40

2. His Confrontation Vss. 45-48

3. His Conquest Vss. 49-54

1 Samuel 17 THE GIANT

Vs. 1 - Imagine waking up one morning and discovering that there is an invading army in your country ready to attack. A similar thing happened to King Saul and the nation Israel. One day the Philistines moved into Israeli territory and set up camp! They were there to invade Israel.

Vss. 2-3 -Word came to King Saul, who mustered his army and went down to the same valley and set up for battle against the Philistines. They were on opposite mountains from each other with a valley in between.

Vss. 4-7 - It appears that there was little or no action between the two armies until a giant named Goliath appears. He was big and their best warrior. He was their champion! This guy with all his height, equipment and power stood out in the valley and began to yell a challenge to the Israeli army.

Vss. 8-10 - The giant called for one warrior from Israel to come out and fight him in a "winner take all" match.

Vs. 11 - The response of King Saul and the Israelites was fear and dismay.

Vs. 16 - This intimidation went on for 40 days.

Such was the impact of the GIANT. Do you have any giants in your life? Is there a habit, a sin, a person, a situation that is bullying you around and taking control of your life? It could be worry, smoking, cursing, gossip, alcohol, bad temper, illicit sex, or a bad influence. There are many giants who might try to dominate you. It could be that these giants have been harassing your for so long, that you have given up hope of ever being delivered from their influence. If you have such a giant in your life, you can be sympathetic towards Saul and the men of Israel. They needed help. They needed deliverance
They needed a champion greater than the giant they faced! Perhaps today, you need help. You need deliverance. You need a champion greater than the giant that you face.

LET ME TELL YOU FROM THE BEGINNING THAT THE CHAMPION OF ISRAEL WAS NOT DAVID! David was just an instrument in the hands of Israel's champion. ISRAEL'S CHAMPION WAS THE LORD OF HOSTS! Vs. 45

Your champion against the giants in your life is also the Lord of Hosts!

THE ENEMY IS REAL - Vss. 4-7, 33

Goliath was a real person. Goliath was big (10 feet tall), strong, and dangerous!

Our enemy is real too. His Name is Satan. Isaiah 14:12-15

He caused Eve to fall in the Garden. Genesis 3

He is the Father of lies. John 8:44, 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

He is powerful. Ephesians 6:12, 1 Peter 5:8

THE STAKES ARE HIGH! Vss. 8-11

Much was at stake when Goliath came out and taunted Israel.

The personal integrity of every soldier was at stake.

The integrity of the nation was at stake.

God's integrity was at stake. Vs. 26

Much is at stake when giants torment you.

Personal integrity is at stake.

Church integrity is at stake.

God's integrity is at stake. He is your God. Giving in to a "giant" implies that God is not strong enough to deliver you.

THE BATTLE IS THE LORD'S! Vss. 20-37

David arrived to see Goliath at work taunting Israel.

Vss. 23-26 - David wanted to know the reward for defeating Goliath. He realized that Goliath had no right to "defy the armies of the living God."

Satan has no right to defy us who are God's children. Victory over Satan was won at the cross. Romans 6:10-14, Galatians 2:20

Vss. 32-37 - David appears before Saul and confidently announces that God will give him the victory!

THE VICTORY IS GOD'S! Vss. 38-54

Vs. 45 - David confronted the giant in the name of his God.

Let us confront our giants in the name of the Lord Jesus!

As we trust Him, he will give the strength to defeat any giant. Philippians 4:13

Ultimately, God gave the victory!

1 Samuel 17 PERSPECTIVE

Perspective or how we look at things is important. If we have the right perspective about something we will do well. If we have the wrong perspective, we are in trouble.

1 Kings 17 tells the well-known story of David and Goliath. In this particular story we see that the rest of the Israelites and David looked at the problem Goliath caused with different perspectives. In fact in this passage I see three different factors that affected the perspective of those involved.

BACKGROUND:

Vss. 1-10 - Goliath was a giant threatening the well being of Israel

Let me remind you that we all face "giants" in our lives.

Sometimes our "giants" are influential people who oppose us such as family members, bosses, teachers or fellow workers.

Sometimes our "giants" are habitual sins that we have trouble standing up to.

Sometimes our "giants" are the opinions of others. We don't want to go against popular opinion.

Sometimes our "giants" are difficult circumstances that threaten to overwhelm us.

Sometimes our "giants" are illnesses in ourselves or in those we love.

Sometimes our "giants" are huge financial problems.

Just as the giant, Goliath, was real, your giants will be real too and will pose real threats to your well being.

THE FEAR FACTOR

Vs. 11 - Saul and the rest of the Israeli army were terrified. They were filled with fear. Nobody wanted to face this giant. And that's part of our problem with our giants as well. We live in fear of these giants. We allow them to intimidate us, and even run from them instead of facing them. In fact, according to verse 24, running is exactly what Israel did when Goliath came out to challenge them.

Fear is one of the most paralyzing forces known to men.

People are often gripped with fear that renders them totally ineffective.

THE FOCUS FACTOR

Vss. 12-22 - Our hero, David, now enters the story. He has been at home looking at his father's sheep. He is now sent to the battlefield to bring provisions to his brother and to get a report on the war. As David arrives the battle for the day was about to start.

Vss. 23-24 - David witnessed Goliath's daily taunt that had now been going on for weeks. He also witnessed the fear on the part of the Israelites.

Vs. 25 - Evidently the king had made offers of reward for anyone who would defeat the giant.

Saul's focus, and the focus of the Israeli army was not on defeating the giant. Their focus was on self-preservation. Saul and the rest of the army would not face the giant personally because they were afraid of losing their own lives. They wanted to preserve their own lives.

Vs. 26 - David's focus was different.

David didn't focus on self-preservation.

David focused on the glory of God.

David was asking, "Who is this unbeliever, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" What right did this guy have to intimidate God's people?

David's focus included the thought that God's armies were far more powerful than Goliath.

David saw the issue as God's issue. God's glory suffers when unsaved people are allowed to have the upper hand.

Christian, what right does any giant have to rule your life?
When you give in to the giants in your life, you are not allowing God to have the glory.
When you stand up the giants, you are giving the God glory. 1 John 4:4

Now, here's a word of warning. When you start to focus on the real issue in facing giants, the glory of God, there will be people who will oppose you, or think you are nuts.

Vss. 28-29 - David's brother accused him of meddling.

Vss. 31-33 - Saul told David that he was incapable.

Because Saul and the Israeli army were focused on self-preservation any suggestion of a victory over the giant seemed to be folly. They saw this as impossible.

One of the great reasons we fail to see more victories over giants is because we deem things to impossible. We forget the Scriptures. Jeremiah 32:17, Luke 1:37, Luke 18:27

THE FAITH FACTOR

Because David focused on the issue of God's glory being at stake, he had the faith that God would give him the victory.

Vss. 34 -37 - David remembered past victories that the Lord had given him. He trusted by faith that God would continue to deliver by giving victory over Goliath. Goliath had no right to intimidate Israel. He could and would be stopped!

Vss. 38-39 - Saul meant well. He gave David his armor for protection, but it was too big and too bulky for David. Sometimes people try to help in our fight with our giants, but their help relies on human wisdom and not on God.

Vss. 40-44 - David took with him what he knew how to use.

He took his sling, and probably his shepherd's staff.

Goliath was unimpressed and even insulted, and gave David a good cursing out.

Vss. 44-48 - David confronted Goliath in the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel.

David was confident that God would get the glory - Vs. 46.

David was also confident that the Israeli army would also discover that the Lord "saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the Lord's..."

Vss. 48-54 - David won the battle using what seemed to be an insufficient weapon, a slingshot. But David won the battle because His confidence was in the Lord!

1 Samuel 17:38-54 GIANT VICTORY

DAVID'S CHOICE (OF WEAPONS) – Vss. 38-40

GOLIATH'S CURSE OF DAVID – Vss. 41-44

DAVID'S COURAGE AGAINST GOLIATH – Vss. 45-47

GOD'S CONQUEST OF HIS ENEMIES – Vss. 48-54

1 Samuel 18:1-4 FRIENDS

The expression "Birds of a feather flock together." is true in a negative sense. Those who are less than honorable seem to find each other and hang out together. However this expression is also true in a good sense. Honorable people manage to find honorable friends. (passages from proverbs about friends.)

After the death of Goliath two men of God formed a fast friendship.

The older of the two men, Jonathan is really spotlighted as responsible for this great friendship between he and David. There are four qualities of friendship that I want us to see that were true of Jonathan and David.

1. THEY WERE SOUL BROTHERS - Vs. 1 - "...the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David..." (This was a binding together of two people.) We are bound together in the same body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:12-13 John 17:20-21
2. THEY WERE SOUL LOVERS - Vs. 2 - "...and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." (John 13:34-35, 1 Corinthians 13)
3. THEY WERE SOUL SUPPORTERS - Vs. 3 - "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant..." (This was a commitment to bear the burdens of the other. Jonathan protected David from Saul. He also encouraged him in 1 Samuel 23:16. See Galatians 6:2)
4. THEY WERE SOUL SHARERS - Vs. 4 - Jonathan gave of what he had to David. As Christians we are to be ready to share in the needs of other Christians. Also, we are to share more than money. We can share our time, our talents, our emotions, and our help.

1 Samuel 18:1-11 "AFTER GOLIATH" OR "NEVER THE SAME"

When David defeated Goliath his life changed completely. He had to adapt to a new lifestyle. He was no longer the shepherd boy taking care of his father's sheep, but a national hero. There are times in our lives, when we will be forced to adjust to changes in our life styles as well.

COVENANT WITH JONATHAN - Vss. 1, 3-4

David had a new friendship based on love!

CHANGE OF SERVICE - Vss. 2, 5

Saul would not permit David to go back to care for his father's sheep. He was now be in the service of King Saul. There are times when our Lord will require us to change our place or type of service.

We should make the change joyfully.

CHALLENGE OF PRAISE - Vss. 6-7

David is now the "matinee idol" of Israel.

It is important that when we receive praise that we don't let it go to our heads, or actually believe that was said about us.

Vs. 14 tells us that David "behaved himself wisely in all his ways."

The praise did not have a negative effect on Him.

CONFLICT WITH SAUL - Vss. 8-11

Saul was not happy with the praise that David received.

He immediately figured out that David was to be the next king.

David's life certainly changed, and he had to be on the alert against possible attacks.

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1 Samuel 18:5-16 etc. LONG LIVE THE KING?

"Long live the king!" - a common and familiar blessing for a ruling monarch.

"Long live the king!" - words wishing someone in authority a long and happy reign.

"Long live the king!" - easy words to say when the king is good, and loving, and kind!

"Long live the king!" - but what if the king is a tyrant? What if the king has a personal hatred for me? What if the king seems to have a personal vendetta against me?

I might start to question and say, "Long live the king?"

David was in this position.

David had already been secretly anointed king over Israel. 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Although Saul was still on the throne, David and a few select people knew David was the next king.

David had played soothing music for King Saul when Saul was visited by an evil spirit. He had also been the king's armor bearer. 1 Samuel 16:14-23

David became a national hero when he, with God's help, defeated Goliath. 1 Samuel 17

David became a good friend of the King's son, Jonathan. 1 Samuel 18:1-4

Vss. 5-9 - A problem arose. Saul knew that his days as king were numbered (1 Samuel 15:58).

Saul became the enemy of David when, in his jealousy, he figured out that David would be the next king.

David was a faithful, loyal servant, who wasn't looking to take over. David was just striving to serve his God, and serve the king that God had placed over him. Vss. 10-12 tells us of the beginnings of a vicious assault by Saul on the life of David!

As we study these Scriptures we want to place more emphasis on the reaction of David than on the actions of Saul. We can't control how people treat us, but we can, with God's help, control our reactions.

I want us to think of a "king" as anyone who God has placed over us. It might be a parent, a husband, a boss, a teacher, a leader, or a pastor. Sometimes these leaders will seem to be against us, and we are going to have to react to unfair treatment. There will be times when somebody over us has a personal vendetta against us.

The way David reacted to Saul, is the way we should react to the "kings" in our lives.

DAVID RETREATED WHEN HE HAD TO

Vs. 10 - Saul threw a spear, and David got out of the way. David escaped again in 19:8-11.

20:1 - David had been faithful, but was forced to run.

Sometimes we need to "retreat" before our kings. Often this retreat may mean humbling ourselves before those in authority over us when something is not our fault. My son had to do this in high school when a teacher was picking on him. He apologized because I insisted. The end result later was peace between him and the teacher. There are times when we can retreat to get out from another's authority. However, we must

be careful that we are doing this according to God's will. Retreat should only be practiced after every effort for reconciliation has been exhausted.

DAVID NEVER RETALIATED AGAINST SAUL

David had slain a giant, and defeated the Philistine enemy on more than once occasion. But even when Saul was at David's mercy, David never got "even". 1 Samuel 24 & 26

May we practice Matthew 5:43-48 and Romans 12:14, 17-21

DAVID RESPECTED SAUL'S AUTHORITY

God raised Paul up. God put Saul in power. David allowed God to remove Saul from power in God's perfect time. As long as God allowed Saul to reign, David never questioned Saul's right to the throne. There are times when you will be under a tyrant. May sure you let God do the removing, and only do what is Biblically right. Don't take matters into your own hands.

DAVID REMAINED LOYAL

Even when David appeared to join the opposing Philistines, he remained loyal to his King and to Israel. 1 Samuel 27

Even when we can not agree with all that a person does, let us strive to remain loyal as much as possible.

DAVID RESPONDED WITH FORGIVENESS

One day God removed Saul. David indicates his forgiveness of Saul by his response to his death. 2 Samuel 1:17-27

May we remember our obligation to forgive those who have hurt us! Matthew 6:12, Ephesians 4:31-32

May we from the bottom of our hearts exclaim, "LONG LIVE THE KING!"

1 Samuel 19:1-7 TRUE FRIENDSHIP

Jonathan was a true friend to David. 1 Samuel 18:1-4

Jonathan reveals his true commitment to David in this incident involving King Saul, Jonathan's father.

A TRUE FRIEND INFORMS - Vss. 1-2

A TRUE FRIEND INTERVENES - Vss. 4-6

A TRUE FRIEND IS INVOLVED - Vss. 3, 7

1 Samuel 19:1-7 A GOOD FRIEND

Jonathan showed himself to be a good friend of David.

HE WAS PERCEPTIVE – Vs. 1

He was alert enough to know when David was in danger.

HE WAS PROTECTIVE – Vs. 2

He warned David of the danger.

HE WAS PROACTIVE – Vss. 3-7

He interceded for David with Saul. He brought David back into Saul's presence.

1 Samuel 21 THE FEAR OF MAN

When I was in college, I decided to change denominational affiliation, leaving the church of my childhood, in favor of a church that reflected my faith in Christ and Biblical convictions. Almost 30 years later, I still feel that I made the right decision. However, because I was afraid of my Dad, I did not tell him. I did tell a member of his church, and he told my Dad. The results of that "fear of man" hurt my Dad, harmed my testimony, and caused an unnecessary strain in our relationship. I've long since apologized and have been forgiven, but the fear of man certainly hurt! See Proverbs 22:25

There was a day when David, who was fleeing from King Saul, allowed the "fear of man" to be a hindrance in his life. As a result of the fear of man:

DAVID FAILED TO TELL THE TRUTH Vss. 1-9

He claimed to be serving Saul when he was running from Saul.

DAVID FELLOWSHIPED WITH THE ENEMY Vs. 10

See 2 Corinthians 6:14.

DAVID FALTERED IN HIS TESTIMONY Vss. 11-15

Out of fear, he pretended to be insane.

1 Samuel 22:1-2 BUILDING A GREAT ARMY

2 Timothy 2:3 - *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.*

DAVID - MOLDING 400 MEN INTO A KEY FIGHTING FORCE

1. HE LIVED WITH THEM

2. THEY LEARNED FROM HIM

3. HE LED THEM

CHRIST - MOLDING THE INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER

1. HE LIVES WITH US - Galatians 2:20
2. WE SHOULD LEARN FROM HIM - Matthew 11:28-30
3. HE LEADS US - Psalm 32:8,

CHURCH LEADERSHIP - MOLDING THE LOCAL CHURCH

Church Leaders should:

1. THEY SHOULD LIVE WITH US - Hebrews 13:7
2. WE SHOULD LEARN FROM THEM - 1 Timothy 4:2
3. THEY SHOULD LEAD US - Hebrews 13:17

1 Samuel 24:1-22 YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION

There are times when we are going to be tempted to take matters into our own hands. Even our Christian friends might encourage us to do something that will evidently give us some relief, but will be totally against the will of God. God, through Samuel, had told Saul that he and his family would be removed from the throne of Israel. 1 Samuel 15:26-28

David had already been anointed to be the next king of Israel. See 1 Samuel 16:1-13

When King Saul figured out who the next King of Israel would be, he became David's enemy. 1 Samuel 18:5-11 and 1 Samuel 20.

David was forced to flee from Saul. 1 Samuel 20. In time, as Saul was seeking to find David, they ended up in the same cave. What a temptation there was for David to do what was wrong.

DAVID AVOIDS DOING EVIL Vss. 1-8 (1 Corinthians 10:13)

DAVID APPROACHES SAUL Vss. 9-15

SAUL ACKNOWLEDGES DAVID'S GOODNESS Vss. 16-20

SAUL ASKS FOR DAVID'S BLESSING Vss. 21-22

1 Samuel 24 FAITHFUL IN THE DARK

What do I mean by the term "Faithful in the dark"? I mean that when few people or no people are watching, something is done in the dark. We want to look at an incident in the life of David when he was faithful literally in the dark, the darkness of a cave.

As you know there will be times of temptation in our lives.

We will be tempted to do what is wrong.

We will be tempted to get even with someone.

We will be tempted to take matters into our own hands. James 1:13-15

In this instance David's temptation would be to take vengeance on his enemy Saul. He was tempted to take matters into his own hands and remove Saul from the land of the living.

Vss. 1-2 - Saul was told that David was hiding at Engedi.

Vs. 3 - Saul comes calling. He was actually in the cave to answer the call of nature. Perhaps he fell asleep. Meanwhile, David's and his men were hiding against the sides of the walls of the cave. They could see Saul, but Saul could not see them. Their eyes were adjusted to the darkness, Saul's were not.

RESTRAINT - Vss. 4-7

One of the problems with temptation is knowing when something is a temptation, "a solicitation to do evil", or an opportunity. Sometimes, what we take as an opportunity to get even is really a temptation to do what is wrong.

Vs. 4 - The trouble with temptation is that sometimes, we are encouraged to do wrong by those who are dearest and closest friends. In this case David's men's encourage him to get even with his enemies. "Take vengeance David!"

Vs. 5 - David's conscience bothered him, even though he did not hurt Saul. I think his conscience bothered him, because he did something to belittle the king.

Vs. 6 - David may not have respected Saul for the way he acted, but David respected Saul for who he was. David viewed Saul as God's anointed leader, as his master. David would not take vengeance on Saul. God had made Saul King, God would remove Saul from being King without David's assistance. David is example of some New Testament Scriptures. Matthew 5:44, Romans 12:14, Romans 12:17-19

Vs. 7 - Evidently there was quite a heated discussion, and David won out, persuading the others to do what is right.

RESPECT - Vs. 8

I can picture David waiting for Saul to proceed some distance before popping out of the cave, and saying "My Lord, the King".

He bowed in sincere respect as to who Saul was. Romans 13:7, 1 Peter 2:17

REPORT - Vss. 9-11

Vss. 9-11 - Saul was evidently being told by others that David wanted to do him harm.

David made it clear that this wasn't true.

He showed him the evidence of the truth.

David explained how he had Saul "dead to rights". Saul would have been executed by David, if indeed that was David's plan.

There is a time when we need to speak up.

There are times when those who are against do not understand the facts, and the Lord may give us opportunity to explain the facts.

RELIANCE - Vss. 12-15

Vs. 12 - David was dependent on the Lord to avenge Him. He was expecting the Lord to avenge Him. But David himself would not take action.

Vs. 13 - David quotes an ancient Proverb here. "Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked." This is an allusion to David's innocence.

Vs. 14 - David seems to be implying that Saul is wasting his time hunting a dead dog or one insignificant little flea. Both are harmless.

Vs. 15 - David concludes by repeating his words of reliance on God. God is the judge. He will vindicate David. God alone will give the deliverance. I am reminded of some verses on reliance. Psalm 62:5-6, Psalm 118:6, Psalm 118:14, Psalm 125:1

REPRIEVE - Vss. 16-22

This response on the part of Saul is a good example of

Proverbs 6:7 - *When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.*

Vs. 16 - Saul, at least temporarily, was convicted. He weeps

Vs. 17 - He admits that David is more righteous than Saul.

Vss. 18-19 - He admits that David has dealt well with Saul.

Vs. 20 - He admits that David will be king.

Vs. 21 - He asks for mercy on his family.

Vs. 22 - Saul stopped following him for a period of time.

1 Samuel 25 DEALING WITH A FOOL

I guarantee that some time in the next month or so, you are going to deal with a fool. A fool is not necessarily someone who is stupid, although he or she can be. A fool, as described by the Bible, is foolish in the eyes of God. Consider the following verses about fools: Psalm 14:1, Proverbs 10:18, 12:15, 12:16, 13:16, 14:16, 15:5, 17:10, 18:2, 23:9, 28:26, Ecclesiastes 10:14.

It is possible for a fool to provoke you into acting like a fool as well. This almost happened to David when he was in contact with Nabal, whose name means "fool".

Tell the story of David, Abigail, and Nabal as found in Vss. 1-24. We learn the following principles about dealing with a fool in the next verses:

1. RECOGNIZE A FOOL FOR WHAT HE IS Vs. 25

Abigail gives good advice. Don't let his behavior ruin your testimony. God will judge him (Romans 12:19). He is not worth imitating. God will take care of you, in spite of his behavior.

2. REFRAIN FROM GETTING EVEN Vss. 26-31

Abigail makes it clear it would not be right for David to take matters into his own hands. Matthew 5:43-48, 7:12, Romans 12:17-21, Ephesians 12:17-21

3. RECEIVE GODLY COUNSEL Vss. 32-35

David accepted the counsel of Abigail.

4. REST IN GOD'S ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM. Vss. 36-39

In this case, God chose to completely remove the fool. At other times he will give you grace to deal with the fool on a regular basis. Eventually Abigail became David's wife. Vss. 40-42

1 Samuel 25 A WISE WOMAN

Abigail was married to a fool named Nabal. Nabal foolishly refused to help David and his men who had been very kind to him. It was her wisdom that saved the day.

SHE ACCEPTED GOOD ADVICE - Vss. 14-17

SHE ACTED QUICKLY AND DISCREETLY - Vss. 18-23

SHE APPEALED HUMBLY AND REASONABLY - Vss. 24-31

SHE ACHIEVED PEACE AND POSITION - Vss. 32-35, 39-42

1 Samuel 28 VISIT TO ENDOR

ABSENCE OF GOD'S MESSAGE - Vss. 1-6

Saul was in trouble.

Samuel, the prophet who gave God's word to Saul, was dead.

God was not answering Saul's requests for guidance.

ALTERNATIVE SOUGHT - Vss. 7-10

Saul had rightfully outlawed witchcraft, but because he got no help elsewhere, he sought the help of the Witch of Endor. At first the witch did not know that she was dealing with Saul. However, she was cautious, because she was afraid that she might be walking into a trap.

APPEARANCE OF SAMUEL - Vss. 11-14

This lady was shocked and frightened when Samuel actually did appear.

God was allowing Samuel to give one last message to Saul from the grave.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOD'S WILL - Vss. 15-19

Saul was told that the Kingdom would be taken out of his hand and that David would be king.

He was also told that he and his sons would die the next day.

ACCEPTANCE OF A MEAL - Vss. 20 - 25

Saul was rightfully afraid.

He had not eaten.

The woman and Saul's servants encouraged him to eat.

1 Samuel 30 FROM TRAGEDY TO TRIUMPH

While David and his men are away, their city is looted, and families are carried away. This is a real tragedy. With God's enabling, this tragedy is turned into a triumph. There are practical lessons here for those of us who face tragedy.

PROBLEM - DAVID FORSAKEN - Vss. 1-6a

David's men were so distraught over the loss of family that they were ready to stone him!

PERSON - DAVID FINDING (HELP FROM GOD) - Vs. 6b-8

When things are at their worst, find your strength in the person of Christ. 1 Peter 5:7

PURSUIT - DAVID FOLLOWING - Vss. 9-15

David follows God's directions. Some were not strong enough to go with him, so guarded the supplies.

PROVIDENCE - DAVID FULFILLED - Vss. 16-20

The victory was his!

PRIZES - DAVID'S FAIRNESS - Vss. 21-25

All shared in the reward, whether they were support personal or the actual soldiers. A good reminder that those who "stay with the stuff" by praying and supporting missionaries will receive an equal reward.

2 Samuel 1, 1 Samuel 30:31-36 KINGLY QUALITIES

Let's pretend for a moment. Let's make believe that the United States of America has decided to become a monarchy. And I mean an absolute monarchy. The King would have total control. What qualities would you want that King to have? From what you know about King David, what qualities made him a good king?

Some day the Lord Jesus is going to reign. What qualities does He have that will make Him the best King ever? I want us to see three kingly qualities David demonstrated. These are three qualities worth imitating by us, and also three qualities demonstrated by our own King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

DAVID SHARED WITH OTHERS

DAVID STOOD FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

DAVID SORROWED OVER LOSS

BACKGROUND

David had been hanging out with the Philistines. He was forbidden from participating in battle against Israel. He returned home to find Ziklag burned looted by the Amalekites. The women and children were all taken captive. Under God's direction David followed. They attacked the Amalekite camp and recovered everyone. Not only did they recover their own materials, but the Amalekites had been on raiding parties, and had much spoil, much of which belonged to parts of Judah. While David was on his mission, there was a battle between Israel and the Philistines. The Philistines won this battle and Saul and his sons were killed.

David has returned to Ziklag.

DAVID SHARED WITH OTHERS

READ 1 SAMUEL 30:26-31

It seems that the loot was substantial.

Remember David's city had just been destroyed.

Money was probably needed to rebuild.

David's share of all the spoil would have made him independently wealthy.

Instead of hoarding it, he shared it.

Some of it would have gone to cities that had also been raided by these same Amalekites.
Some of it would have gone to friends who had supported him over the years.
Some would have gone to places that helped protect him.

It would be easy for us to see this as a political move on His part. However, at this point he did not know that Saul was dead. He wasn't buying votes. I believe that David shared out of a generous and grateful heart. We as Christians should also share out of gratitude. What have we to be grateful to God for? Our of gratitude we should practice Galatians 6:9-10 and 2 Corinthians 9:7 David shared. We are to share. But our king, the Lord Jesus also shared. (Read and Comment on Philipians 2:5-9)

How does Jesus share now?

Answered Prayer - John 14:13

Spiritual Gifts - Ephesians 4:7-8, Peter 4:10

His Presence - Matthew 28:20, John 14:18

His Prayers - Hebrews 7:25, 1 John 2:1-2

DAVID STOOD FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Read 1 Samuel 31:1-7

Read 2 Samuel 1:1-10

How do we reconcile the two accounts?

I believe the Amalekite was lying. He might have even watched what had happened. He probably expected a reward from David. He thought this information would make David happy, because Saul had been David's enemy. The Amalekite received the last surprises of his life.

First of all in 2 Samuel 1:11-12 we find that David and his men go into mourning for Saul and Jonathan.

Secondly, the Amalekite finds that he is in big trouble.

Read 2 Samuel 13-16 - Although David knew that he was going to be king, he had never taken matters into his own hands.

Even when he could have, he failed to take Saul's life or to allow his soldiers to do so.

David's feeling was that God had anointed Saul King, and nobody had any right to take Saul's life, no matter how meanly he had acted towards David. David was not perfect. David was guilty of many sins. But in spite of his failures, David did strive to stand for righteousness.

Righteousness is a kingly quality. Proverbs 14:34

Righteousness is a quality of our Lord. Psalms 11:7, Isaiah 53:11, Isaiah 11:1-5

Of course, we are not righteous, apart from Christ. Romans 3:10, Romans 5:1

Now that we know Christ as Savior our behavior should be righteous. Titus 2:1-12, 1 John 3:7

DAVID SORROWED OVER LOSS

2 Samuel 1:17-27

David's mourning for Saul is interesting.

He sorrows for Saul as if Saul had never hurt him.

I think this was only possible because David forgave Saul.

As a king, David would need to have empathy with those he was leading. A good leader hurts with His people.

And that leads us to thinking about the Lord Jesus.

Jesus, of course, bore our sorrows on Calvary. Isaiah 53:3-4

Jesus also wept over Jerusalem. - Luke 19:41-44.

The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35. It says *Jesus wept*.

Why do you think Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus?

I like to think that he was entering into the suffering of his servants. Jesus does that today. Hebrews 4:15-16

We are to follow the example of our King. Romans 12:15, Galatians 6:2, Hebrews 12:3

2 Samuel 6 GETTING IT RIGHT

King David was known as a man after God's own heart. However David was not perfect. He tried to do the right thing in the wrong way. Eventually however, he would end up getting it right.

By way of background, David had been crowned King of the Tribe of Judah after the death of Saul. There was rebellion on the part of the rest of Israel. After a long war, the two nations were united as Israel. David conquered Jerusalem, and made it the capital city.

HAVE GOOD INTENTIONS - Vss. 1-2

Vss. 1-2 - The Ark was probably the most valuable artifact that Israel possessed. But it wasn't a big boat!

The Ark of the Covenant was the place where God chose to place His presence in a tangible form on earth.

It was to be kept in the "Holy of Holies" in the tabernacle or temple.

Years before the Philistines had captured the Ark, but returned it in a few months. They put it on a new cart, had a couple of cattle pull it, and sent it back to Israel. Eventually it was brought to the house of a man named Abinadab, and remained there for many years.

When David became king this is where the Ark was still residing.

David decided that it was time to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. Jerusalem was the capital city, and the place where the Ark should have been. This would also allow David to centralize the worship of the Lord, and David would also have the Lord's tangible presence close to himself.

David had good intentions.

He gathered his army together, probably for safety, and traveled the few miles it was away in order to bring the Ark to Jerusalem. I personally feel that good intentions are, well, good! Good intentions are good especially when they are centered around loving, serving, and knowing God. Deuteronomy 6:4-5

I have to add that good intentions are not enough. David acted on his good intentions, and we need to act on ours. As we'll see in a moment, David didn't do what he intended to do in the right way. We need to act in the right way to accomplish our good intentions.

LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP - Vss. 3-5

In other words, think and pray it through. Do it right the first time.

Make sure you are doing it the way God wants it to be done.

Vss. 3-5 - They put the ark on a new cart. This was not the way that the Lord wanted the Ark transported.

There were even rings attached to the ark so polls could be put through them. Exodus 37:3-5

It was the Levites who were to carry the Ark and the Ark was not to be touched. The sons of Kohath, who were to transport the holy things were told not to touch them lest they die.

DON'T TAKE GOD LIGHTLY - Vss. 6-10

Vss. 6-7 - God's word, said, "Don't Touch!" Uzzah did what he shouldn't have done.

He touched it! God struck him dead.

Vss. 7-10 - David had two reactions. First, he was displeased with God. God did what David didn't want.

God was not as gracious as David thought he should be. David was forgetting just how holy and righteous God is.

Secondly David was afraid of the Lord. He was afraid that something else would happen. And rather than take any chances of another catastrophe, the ark was move to the home of a man named Obed-edom.

TRY AGAIN - Vss. 11-19

We don't always get a second chance after we've tried to do the right thing the wrong way. But when we do get a second chance, we should take it.

Vs. 11 - For three months the Ark stayed in the home of Obed-edom. Obviously nobody touched it. But because the presence of God was there, the people were blessed.

Vs. 12 - David heard of the blessings, and I believed that this prompted Him to have the blessings of God's presence.

1 Chronicles 15 tells us that David prepared a tent in which to put the Ark. Then it tells us that David realized that the Ark was to be carried by the Levites. Then David gathered the religious leaders together and gave them instructions. 1 Chronicles 15:12-14

Vs. 13 - They took six steps and then stopped and offered a sacrifice to God. I believe now that David was sincerely trying to do what was right.

Vss. 14-15 - There was great joy and worship on the part of David and his people.

There was joy because they were doing it the right way and knew it.

There was freedom in their worship because they were doing it the right way.

David and his people were free because they were going according to the Book.

What good intentions have you had that have failed?

Go to the Word of God. Find out how to do it right, and try again!

EXPECT CRITICISM - Vss. 20-23

Whenever we try to do what is right for God there will be opposition. Psalm 34:19, 2 Timothy 3:12

Vs. 16 - David's original wife, Michal, was King Saul's daughter. And although she loved David at one time, she didn't love him now. For whatever reason, she despised him.

Vss. 17-19 - David worshipped, offered, and gave his people a portion of food.

Vs. 20 - David comes home to bless his own household, and he is confronted by Michal.

Watch it! When things are going the best, Satan will attack, and often through someone you know. She accused him of acting in an indiscrete way.

Vss. 21-22 - David's reaction was to remind her that God had given him the kingdom instead of her father, and that he had every right to worship God.

2 Samuel 7:1-17 etc. LEARNING FROM A LEADER

Nathan The Prophet was a leader as a man of God in the court of David. His job was to advise the king in Spiritual matters this was not always easy. We learn at least 3 things about being a leader from Nathan.

1. BE SENSITIVE TO GOD'S DIRECTION 2 Samuel 7:1-17

(Nathan had spoken too quickly when he said, "The Lord is with thee." When God told Nathan something different than what David wanted to hear, Nathan obeyed God and delivered the message.)

2. BE STRONG IN GOD'S DECLARATION 2 Samuel 12:1-14

(What Nathan had to say for God would not be popular with a king caught up in sin. Nathan said what had to be said no matter what the circumstances.)

3. BE STABLE IN GOD'S DOMAIN. 1 Kings 1

(When others were leaving to follow Adonijah to make him King, Nathan stood firm behind the man God intended to be King, Solomon.)

2 Samuel 7 WHEN GOD SAYS "NO"

There are times when we feel like we want to do something for the Lord, however we find that God says "No" to our plans. We find David in a similar situation. David wants to do something great for God, but God said "No!"

GOOD ATTITUDE - Vss. 1-3

Vs. 1 - This was a time of peace. For what was a probably a long time, David had rest from his enemies. He had time to think

Vs. 2 - We meet Nathan the Prophet for the first time. Nathan was a great man of God. Nathan would be the one to confront David when David sinned with Bathsheba. It is apparent that Nathan and David had a good relationship.

David realizes that he, David was living in a nice house made of cedar, while God's house was a tent. Remember the ark was a box containing the Ten Commandments, the rod of Aaron, and a jar of manna. On top of the ark was the mercy seat. God made his physical presence known by dwelling above the mercy seat.

David's plan was to build a house for the Lord, and what better person to bounce it off of than the preacher! David's desire was a good desire.

God does not always say "yes" to our desires. Sometimes he has another plan for our lives, and chooses to use us in other ways. Psalm 47:4, Psalm 75:6-7

Vs. 3 - Here's Nathan's response. "Sound's good to me! Go for it! God is with you."

There was nothing wrong with David's desire.

Nathan could see the value of a permanent house for God.

He did what we probably would do. He gave his blessing and even God's.

Perhaps he should have offered to pray about it before he gave an approval. But I can certainly see how and why it was easy for Nathan to approve.

GOD'S ANSWER - Vss. 4-6

Vs. 4 - I imagine that the message came from God to Nathan during a time of sleep. The important thing is that God had a different plan than David or Nathan. It was Nathan who got the word from God.

Nathan was going to have to return to David with a different answer than what Nathan had given the day before. He was going to have to rescind the blessing that he had given. He was going to have to humble himself to admit that he, the prophet of God, had been wrong.

One of the hardest things to do sometimes is to admit that we are wrong. Our pride keeps us from being humble enough to say "I blew it. I was wrong."

Nathan gives us a good example to follow. When Nathan realized that he was wrong, he went to David with the corrected message.

Vs. 5 - It is very important to see what God calls David.

He calls him, "My servant".

David was not in the proverbial "dog house".

God did not have a low opinion of David.

David was special in the eyes of God, even though God was not going to let David do what he wanted. In fact later it was stated that David's thoughts and desires were good. 2 Chronicles 6:8

And when God doesn't let you do what you want, if your heart and motives are pure, God could very well be pleased with your plans and desires. He just may feel however, that it is not part of His plan for your life.

And remember this. When God says "no" to His children, we are still His children! 1 John 3:1

And when God says "no" to his servants, they are still very precious in His sight. Ephesians 1:3-6

Vs. 5 - Nathan was to go and ask David, "Are you going to build me a house?" In a parallel passage, **1 Chronicles 17:4**, it says, - *Go and tell David my servant, Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not build me an house to dwell in:*

Vss. 6-7 - God makes His point. He has dwelled in tents since they left Egypt. He never asked for anyone to build Him a house.

Vss. 8-9 - David was to realize just how much God had blessed Him. God had taken him from being a humble shepherd to being a great king with a great name. David was being blessed of God, in spite of the fact that God did not want him to build a temple.

When God says "no" to something we want to do, it would do us well to remember all the ways God has blessed us and has used us.

Also, remember that God has different jobs for each of us. David was told later by God that because David was a soldier, a man of blood, he would not build the temple. 1 Chronicles 22:8-9

We need to remember that God will not give us every job. He has not qualified us for every job. But whatever job God has given us we should do well for Him. 1 Peter 4:10-11

Vs. 10 - God gives David another assurance. There will be a day when Israel will be secure. That day is yet to come, but it is coming. God had given David so much! God has given us so much! When God says "no" we can still relax.

GOD'S ALTERNATIVE - 11-17

Vs. 11 - David wanted to build God a house.

God tells David that instead, He, God, would build David a house!

Vss. 12-15 - The promise was that Solomon would build the temple.

Vs. 16 - There will be a time when David's Kingdom will be established forever through one of his descendants. This of course will be the Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mary was told by the Angel Gabriel in Luke 1:30-33,

This is so much like God. We want to do something for God, and well we should. But God wants to do so much more for us. John 14:12-14

God has a work for us to do, even though it might not be the work we think it is.

GREAT ACCEPTANCE - Vss. 18-29

David accepted God's plan for his life with joy.

Vss. 18-22 - David was overwhelmed with what he had been told. He saw that what he was given was out of the grace of God. And he was grateful.

David was allowed to focus on what he had and not on what he didn't get.

My friend, we should certainly do the same.

1 Peter 2:9-10 - *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: [10] 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.*

Now, I don't know what God has said "no" to you about.

But I do know that He has a plan to use you in His way.

Why not ask God to show you what it is, and accept it, even if it was not what you planned on.

Maybe God will let you prepare or help someone who will fulfill the dreams that you have had, but God has said "no" to. David did this. 1 Chronicles 22:2-5

2 Samuel 9 PICTURE OF GOD'S GRACE (evangelism)

There is nothing more amazing than the grace of God that brings salvation. Ephesians 2:8-9

An Old Testament picture of New Testament grace is Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth. He was Saul's grandson. When Saul and Jonathan died, his nurse fled with him. He fell and became lame. 2 Samuel 4:4

HE WAS SEPARATED

As the Son of a former king, Mephibosheth's life was not worth much (Vs. 8).

He was separated from the new king and the kingdom. He remained in hiding, for fear that the new king would want to destroy anyone who had a claim to the throne.

Today every sinner is separated from God and deserves God's punishment.

Isaiah 59:2, 64:6, Ezekiel 18:4, Romans 6:23.

HE WAS SOUGHT - Vss. 1-5

David, for the sake of Jonathan, sought to show kindness to one of Jonathan's descendants.

David sought out Mephibosheth.

God seeks out sinners to show kindness to them.

He sent his Son to die for sinners. John 3:16, 10:11, Isaiah 53:4-6

He sends the Holy Spirit to convict sinners. John 16:8-11

He sends the church to share the Gospel. Mark 16:15

HE WAS SAVED - Vss. 6-13

Mephibosheth was saved from a miserable life and was given his inheritance.

He did nothing to earn it, it was granted to him freely. All he had to do was accept David's kindness.

We are saved from a miserable life and given an inheritance in Heaven when we accept God's free gift of salvation. The price for sin has been paid. All we must do is accept God's free gift. John 3:16, Eph 2:8-9

HE WAS GIVEN SONSHIP - Vss. 7, 13

David treated Mephibosheth as a son, allowing him to eat with the other sons at the King's table.

The moment a person is saved, he or she becomes a son of God. John 1:12

2 Samuel 11 IT'S SO EASY

David, who was a man after God's heart, sinned on many occasions. The most grievous of his sins was probably his affair with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband Uriah. David found out just how easy it is to sin and to displease God.

IT'S EASY TO BE LAZY - Vs. 1

Instead of going off to war with his soldiers, David stayed home. He was lax in his responsibilities.

One of the great problems we have as Christians is that we get lazy in our commitments to the Lord. If we do not continue to fight the world, the flesh, and the Devil, we become lazy. 1 Peter 5:8, Matthew 22:37-40, Ephesians 6:10-11

When we are lazy, we are more susceptible to giving in to temptation.

IT'S EASY TO LUST - Vs. 2

I think of lust as natural desire taken to the extreme. We have healthy natural desires, but when they control us, they lead to lust. 1 John 2:15-16, Matthew 5:27-28

IT'S EASY TO LET GO - Vss. 3-4

Lust in the heart is sin, but it also leads to the actual act of sin.

Instead of resisting sin, David let go of any control he had and committed adultery.

It's easy for us to give in to our lusts as well. When we do, it leads to trouble. James 1:13-15

IT'S EASY TO LOOK OUT FOR #1 - Vss. 8-27

David was looking to cover up his sin. As a result, he tried to make it look like Uriah had gotten his wife pregnant. Uriah never went down to his wife when he came home from the battle.

David then had Uriah murdered so that he could marry Bathsheba and make the whole thing look legitimate.

We are capable of doing some pretty low things to keep others from discovering our sins.

IT'S EASY TO LIVE A LIE

David pretended to be living right, when in reality he was living in sin.

Many Christians pretend to be godly when they are not.

It is important to note that in all of this God was displeased. Vs. 27

2 Samuel 11 THE WRONG PLACE AT THE WRONG TIME

You have probably heard the expression about being "in the right place at the right time". That happened to me in high school. A driver's education instructor, walking behind me in the hall, was trying to recruit a person for a driving class the only period I had free to take the course. I turned around and volunteered to take the course. I was in the right place at the right time.

Unfortunately, there are other times in our lives when we are in "the wrong place at the wrong time." Some have been falsely accused of wrong, simply because they were in the wrong place when something happened. There are occasions when we invite problems. because we voluntarily place ourselves in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Such was the case with King David.

HIS PRIORITIES WERE IN THE WRONG PLACE Vss. 1

David should have been out to war with his troops, instead of home relaxing.

HIS EYES WERE IN THE WRONG PLACE Vs. 2

When Bathsheba took her bath, David should have turned away, but instead he continued to watch. Psalm 101:3

HIS MOUTH WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE Vs. 3

He used his mouth to communicate a lustful demand that the woman be brought to him.

HIS BODY WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE Vss. 4-5

He committed adultery and Bathsheba became pregnant.

HIS MIND WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE Vss. 6-13

David tried to cover up his sin with Bathsheba, trying to get her husband to sleep with her, so he could be credited with the child.

God did not let that happen.

HIS HEART WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE Vss. 14-27

He planned the murder of Uriah under the guise of battle, and then took Uriah's wife as his wife. His heart was not right with God. (For the outcome of all of this, see 1 Samuel 12 and Psalm 51)

2 SAMUEL 11-12 SURVIVORS - DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

"Many couples are united in wedlock in a rosy fog of optimism. Blinded to the shortcomings, each sees only the other's good points. But as the excitement of the new marriage wears off, they drift to the opposite extreme and view these same traits as faults. Someone has called this "reverse reasoning," giving the following examples:

"She married him because he was 'strong and masculine'
She divorced him because he was a very 'dominating male.'
He married her because she was so 'fragile and petite'
He divorced her because she was so 'weak and helpless.'
She chose him because 'he knew how to provide a good living'
She left him because 'all he thought about was the business.'
He married her because she was 'steady and sensible'
He divorced her because she was 'boring and dull.'"

Okay, let's face it! Many marriages have had their troubles, and many marriages have ended in divorce. But there are also those who have made it through some rocky times in their current marriage, and have even had successful second marriages in spite of failed first marriages. What do you call people who have a successful marriage in spite of some difficult times? I call them survivors!

Long before the problems many marriages face today, there were marriages that had their tough moments in the days of the Bible. One such marriage with problems was that of David and Bathsheba. They ended up being survivors. This encourages me that even marriages in trouble have hope!

ROCKY (REGRETFUL) START - 2 Samuel 11

David was a great king, and at this point in his life, fairly mature. He was about 50 years old.

He was a man "after God's own heart".

It was David who slew Goliath.

It was David who ran from King Saul who wanted to kill him.

It was David who wrote the 23rd Psalm.

It was David who committed the sins listed in this chapter!

What does this teach us? There is not a Christian man or woman who is beyond the realm of temptation. No matter how godly a person, he or she must always realize that "Save by the grace of God, there go I."

David set himself up for the temptation he faced. First, he had multiplied wives and concubines (Deuteronomy 17:15-17). This made him used to having almost any woman he wanted. This would have fed on his lusts. When we disobey God's rules we will also run the risk of further temptation.

Another thing that David did that helped lead to temptation was that he wasn't doing his job. He had gotten lazy!

Vs. 1 - This laziness placed David in the wrong place at the wrong time. My friend, physical and spiritual laziness will lead us to temptation as well. Laziness is really a lack of self-control. Proverbs 25:28, Proverbs 4:23, 2 Peter 1:5-7 Many a Christian marriage has failed because a husband or a wife has gotten lazy either physically or Spiritually.

Vs. 2 - David and Bathsheba's rocky start was a result of David being home, and after an afternoon siesta, taking a walk on the roof of his house, a common thing in that day. Bathsheba was bathing perhaps on the roof of her own house. It was coolest there. The Bible places the blame of the sin upon David, but Bathsheba did not help, bathing where she could be seen. David, for his part, should have turned away instead of continuing to look upon and inquiring about the identity of this lady. Remember what Joseph did when a lady tried to seduce him? He ran! We must learn to take the "way of escape". 1 Corinthians 10:13 David did not take the way of escape.

Vs. 3-4 - David inquired as to the identity of Bathsheba, and found out that he was the wife of one of his best and most trusted warriors, Uriah. He committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Vs. 5 - The woman conceived and sent word to David. She was pregnant!

Vss. 6-13 - What does David do? Admit his sin? No, the sweet-psalm singer of Israel tried the cover-up. He sent for Uriah to come home, hoping that Uriah would sleep with his wife, and that it would be assumed that the baby was Uriah's. Uriah did come home. But he was nobler than the king himself. He would not allow himself the luxury of sleeping with his wife. David, of course, asked why. David even got Uriah drunk, but that didn't even send him home to his wife. The rest of the chapter tells us about the terribly wicked thing that David did. He sent a letter back with Uriah to Joab. Joab was told to put Uriah in the fiercest part of the battle and then retreat from him so that he would die. David was guilty of murder.

Vss. 26-27 - Notice this - our sins displease the Lord! David's did, and ours will too. Think of this, most of us do not like to have people upset with us. That's why so much sin is covered up. But, worse than having people displeased with us is having God displeased with us.

This marriage was off to a rocky start. At least the husband, and perhaps the wife was out of fellowship with God. Both had to live with their guilt. It is not likely that there would not be good relationships or fellowship between them.

REPENTANT ADMISSION - 1 Samuel 12:1-9,13

The best things to do with covered up sin are deal with it and bear the consequences.

David did not deal with his sin until he was confronted with it.

David was miserable however. Psalm 32:3-4

God had Nathan the prophet expose the sin. Nathan had done a great thing. He confronted David with his sin. Sometimes the best thing we can do to help a person is to confront them. They will not always respond as graciously as David did, but we still have the responsibility. Galatians 6:1

David's response is classic. 2 Sam 12:13, Psalm 51, Psalm 32:5 When a marriage has a rocky start the best thing to do is to confess. Confess to the offended party after confessing to God. It does not mean trouble will go away. Sometimes, like David, the trouble has just begun. However it is better to face the consequences with God's help than to face God's judgment.

REASONABLE CONSEQUENCES - 2 Samuel 12:10-12, 14-23

God promises discipline for sin. Hebrews 12:5-6

Vss. 10-12 - And God kept His promise. There was bloodshed in David's household, brother killing brother. There the rebellion of Absalom and the commitment of adultery of Absalom with some of David's wives. It was done publicly.

Vss. 13-14 - Because of David's confession, God did not make the punishment worse. He did not die. But, because, David gave the opportunity for the enemies of God to blaspheme, the child did die. Remember this. David was forgiven, but he still paid the consequences for his sins. A marriage in trouble can have the healing touch of God's forgiveness, but there are often consequences.

Vss. 15-23 - It is important to note that David prayed for the sick child. Perhaps God would change His mind. But when God said "no", David stopped fasting and praying, and worshiped and ate. David accepted the consequences with grace.

REMARKABLE BLESSING - 2 Samuel 12:24-25

David and Bathsheba were survivors. And although they experienced God's chastisement, they also experienced God's blessing.

Vss. 24-25 - It is important to note that David was a supportive husband. He comforted his wife. Something us men need to do, especially in times of tragedy. And then God blessed! Another child was born. The child born was Solomon. And it is interesting to note that God loved Solomon and called him, "Beloved of the Lord", or Jedidiah.

My friends, here is some big encouragement. When we fail God and are chastened, it does not mean the end of the world. God in his grace not only forgives us, even though we live with consequences, but he also will continue to bless us.

A marriage that got a rocky start can end up being a real blessing. But there needs to be open dealing with sin, before God and those offended.

2 Samuel 12:14-23 DEALING WITH GOD'S WILL

We must always remember that God's will is good, acceptable and perfect (Romans 12:2).

There are times, however, when we find God's will hard to deal with. We have a hard time dealing with God's will because we are human, because we are sinners, because are limited in our understanding, and because we do not always trust God the way we should.

David had sinned against God and was being judged by God for his sinful actions against Bath-sheba and Uriah (2 Samuel 11). He was confronted by the prophet Nathan concerning his sin (2 Samuel 12).

GOD'S WILL ANNOUNCED - Vs. 14

As a result of David's sin, the child would die.

GOD'S WILL APPEALED - Vss. 15-17

It was not wrong for David to intercede for the child or to desire that God would change His mind.

It is not wrong for us to pray and ask God for a positive answer to our concerns.

GOD'S WILL ACCEPTED - Vss. 18-23

David accepted the will of God. He was not angry with God. He realized that one day he would see his child again.

We must follow David's example. God's will is to be accepted, even if we wish He had done things differently. He knows best!

2 Samuel 13 SOAP OPERA

In America Millions of people watch afternoon television “soap operas” with provocative stories (Personally, I don’t watch soap operas.) What happened in David’s household had all the makings of an American soap opera. (This outline might be more suitable of a Sunday School Class than a sermon.)

A STRONG LUST – Vss. 1-2

Amnon, David’s son, had a sexual attraction to his half-sister Tamar. She was the sister of Absalom.

A SUBTLE PLOT – Vss. 3-5

Jonadab, a friend, suggested a way of getting to seduce Tamar through deception. He was to feign illness.

A SINFUL DECEPTION – Vss. 6-14

Amnon seduced Tamar against her will. His attraction to her was turned to hatred. He then rejected her.

A SUBDUED ANGER – Vss. 18-22

Absalom practiced and called for silence. Although David was also angry he evidently did nothing to punish Amnon. Absalom evidently quietly seethed in anger.

A SNEAKY REVENGE – Vss. 23-29

Absalom carried out a deceptive plot to kill his brother Amnon.

A STRAINED RELATIONSHIP – Vss. 30-39

Absalom fled. David and he were not on speaking terms.

2 Samuel 17 A FOILED PLAN

God will work in many ways to save his children. King David was in grave danger because Absalom rebelled against his father and took over the Kingdom. David was forced to flee. In order to protect himself against the new regime, David sent his friend Hushai back to Jerusalem to defeat the counsel of Ahab’s counselor, Ahithophel. 2 Samuel 15:32-27, 16:15-23

A SMART TACTICIAN – Vss. 1-4

Ahithophel’s plan to destroy just David would have worked.

A SMOOTH TALKER – Vss. 5-14

Hushai used more words than Ahithophel and caused Absalom as a mighty conqueror who could have a great military victory over his Father. A gathering of an army would give David a chance to escape and to regroup. He managed to convince Absalom that his plan was better than Ahithophel’s.

A SECRET TRANSMISSION – Vss. 15-21

Absalom’s plans were communicated secretly to David.

A SPEEDY TRIP – Vs. 22

David made a hasty retreat based on the information given.

A SAD TERMINATION – Vs. 23

Ahithophel went home and hung himself. I believe he knew that David would eventually win because his plan was not followed.

A SUPPLIED TROOP – Vss. 27-29

Sympathetic men provided for the needs of David’s family and followers.

2 Samuel 19:1-8 LEADER IN DISTRESS

The loss of a child at any age is a sad occurrence. David lost his son Absalom as a result of Absalom’s revolt against his father. Although Absalom was killed and his rebellious army defeated, David still longed for his son. His distress was so bad that it even affected those who had faithfully supported their king when he had to flee Jerusalem.

A SAD KING – Vss. 1-4

What should have been a day of rejoicing was turned into a day of sorrow.

A STRONG REBUKE – Vss. 5-7

Joab was justified in rebuking David. Although David’s sorrow was somewhat justified, the people who had saved David’s life and regained for him his throne needed to hear a good word from their king.

A STRENGTHENED PEOPLE – Vs. 8

David appeared and the people were encouraged.

2 Samuel 22:44-46 LIFE IN THE CHURCH

These verses about David’s life also give us a picture of some of the things that will happen in the local church.

SOME WILL STRIVE - Vs. 44a - THERE WILL BE THE FIGHTERS

SOME WILL SERVE AND SUBMIT - Vs. 44b-45 - THERE WILL BE THE FAITHFUL

SOME WILL SEPARATE - Vs. 46 - THERE WILL BE THE FORSAKERS

See Luke 9:23-24, 14:26-27

2 Samuel 24 THE CORRECTED KING

DAVID REFUSED TO LISTEN - Vss. 1-9

DAVID REPENTED OF HIS SIN - Vs. 10

DAVID RECEIVED DISCIPLINE - Vss. 11-17

DAVID RESPONDED WITH SACRIFICE - Vss. 18-25

1 Kings 1 A NEW KING

INCAPACITY OF DAVID - Vss. 1-4

David was reaching the end of his life and was not well.

INSURRECTION OF ADONIJAH - Vss. 5-10

Adonijah plotted to become king although the throne was promised to Solomon.

He also lined up some prominent men in Israel to join in this rebellion.

INTERVENTION OF NATHAN - Vss. 11-27

Nathan acted quickly to preserve the throne for Solomon. He and Bathsheba both talked with David.

INSTALLATION OF SOLOMON - Vss. 28-40

David proclaimed that Solomon was to be installed as king. He was.

INFORMATION FOR REBELS - Vss. 41-18

Those planning to install Adonijah as king received the word that Solomon had been crowned as king. They were afraid because they could receive retribution for their rebellion.

INGREDIENT FOR SAFETY - Vss. 49-53

Adonijah made an appeal for leniency and was told that if he behaved himself he would not be harmed.

1 Kings 2 CLEANING UP

When we move from one job to another we often end up dealing with unresolved issues left by our predecessors. Such was the case with King Solomon, who was left with some "clean up" chores by his father. David had appointed Solomon to be the new King of Israel in David's place.

REMINDERS FROM DAVID - Vss. 1-12

REMOVAL OF ADONIJAH - Vss. 13-25

His discussion with Bathsheba and his request to marry Abishag, one of David's wives, was indication that he still had aspirations to be king. (See 1 Kings 1.) His life was taken because he was guilty of treason.

RELEASE OF ABIATHAR - Vss. 26-27

Because of Abiathar's part in Adonijah's revolt, he was removed from office.

RETRIBUTION FOR JOAB - Vss. 28-35

Joab was guilty of murder. Although it took time, Joab rightfully had his life taken.

RESTRICTION OF SHEMEI - Vss. 36-46

In each of these cases, Solomon acted wisely. Justice was carried out. Unfinished business left over from his father's reign was resolved.

1 Kings 3 SOLOMON'S GREATEST MOMENT

Each of us will have moments of greatness. We will say the right thing, think the right way, or do the right thing. When we do what is pleasing to God, that is a great moment!

In my opinion Solomon's greatest moment came in the passage before us. Solomon was the wisest man who ever graced the pages of Scripture, with the exception of our Savior. Solomon also experienced great moments of failure (1 Kings 11).

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-4

PROPOSAL FROM GOD - Vs. 5

God invites Solomon to ask. Did you ever stop to think whose idea prayer was in the first place? It was God's idea! It wasn't man, but God who started prayer.

In Genesis 3:8 we see the Lord walking in the Garden in the cool of the day. This was God's practice. This way he would have had fellowship with Adam and Eve. Other verses which show that God wants us to pray are Job 22:27, Psalms 34:15, 102:17, Isaiah 55:6, Jeremiah 29:12, 33:3, Matthew 7:7, 18:19, 21:19, John 14:13-14, 15:7,16, 16:24, Philippians 4:6, 1 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 4:16, and 1 John 5:14-15.

There are seventeen references listed above, telling us to pray. And yet many times we do not.

Why do we fail to pray?

1. We are lazy.
2. We lack faith.
3. We don't want to trouble God with little things.
4. We are too proud to pray.
5. We haven't learned how to pray.
6. We don't want to pray.
7. We lack discipline.

God's proposal is that we pray!

PETITION TO GOD - Vss. 6-9

In verse 6 Solomon appears to be thanking God. Solomon recognizes the great things that God did for Solomon's father, David. We must remember that praise and thanksgiving are to be part of prayer. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6

In verses 7-8 we see that Solomon humbled himself before God. Solomon had a great father, and Solomon was in a prominent position. He was already rather wealthy. But Solomon realized his own limitations and the greatness of the task before him. We must remember that our approach to God needs to be a humble one. James 4:10

Solomon's request is found in verse 9. He didn't ask selfishly, but wisely. He asked for wisdom.

God would have us to ask unselfishly, and according to His perfect will. James 4:3, 1 John 5:14-15

PROMISE FROM GOD - Vss. 10-14

"And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing."

Solomon's request made God happy. Imagine how happy God must be when we ask for things that please Him! Some of the things that we can ask for that will please God include:

1. The salvation of souls
2. Unity in the church
3. Wisdom
4. The burdens of other believers
5. Completion of projects dear to His heart!

In verses 11-14 God answered Solomon. Solomon was told that God was pleased, and that God would not only give him the wisdom he asked for, but the wealth and honor that he didn't ask for.

God even promised Solomon long life, as long as he walked in obedience (Vs. 14).

1 Kings 4 WHAT A KINGDOM!

To this point, Israel's "Golden Age" was reached under King Solomon. During his rule, Israel, because of God's blessing, experienced great success.

THE STAFF - Vss. 1-19

A great kingdom requires good leadership, and Solomon's kingdom evidently had it.

Each one had a job to do and did it.

Special notice should be given to Nathan in verse 5, who was "the king's friend". Each Christian has the privilege of being the friend of our King, the Lord Jesus. John 15:13-14

THE SUBJECTS - Vss. 20-21

Judah and Israel lived in prosperity. Other peoples who lived in the area brought Solomon gifts and were in subjection to him.

THE SUPPLIES - Vss. 22-28

Here is a description of the prosperity of Solomon's household.

THE SOVEREIGN - Vss. 29-34

Solomon was the wisest king who ever lived. Here is an example of the wisdom and knowledge that he had.

1 Kings 5:1-12 WORKING TOGETHER

It is a wonderful thing when people can work together for the glory of God. King Hiram of Tyre was "ever a lover of David". When Solomon became king of Israel, Hiram sent representatives to greet him.

DAVID'S PROBLEM - Vs. 2-3

Solomon sent back to Hiram, reminding him that David had wanted to build a house for the Lord, but the Lord would not let him. God did promise that his son would build the house. 2 Samuel 7:1-17

SOLOMON'S PURPOSE - Vss. 4-5

Solomon's purpose was to build a temple for God.

SOLOMON'S PROPOSAL - Vs. 6

Solomon proposed that Hiram's people would cut cedar trees and that Solomon's people would assist. In return Solomon would give Hiram whatever fee he required.

SOLOMON'S AND HIRAM'S PARTNERSHIP - Vss. 7-12

Hiram provided timber to Solomon.

Solomon provided food to Hiram.

There was peace and a pact (league) between them.

1 Kings 11 etc. THE WORLD'S WISEST FOOL

I think that we have all heard of, or met, intelligent fools. Often, it is the intelligent fool who denies the existence of God, believes in evolution or believes that he can earn his way to Heaven.

Worse than an intelligent fool is a wise fool. Wisdom is the right use of intelligence. A person who uses his intelligence to learn facts and properly use them is indeed wise. But is possible to be the wisest man who

ever lived and foolishly turn you back on God. Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived (with the exception of Jesus) did.

Solomon has an important lesson to teach Christians. It is very easy for us to become spiritually wise by getting saved and growing in Christ. It is also easy to become foolish by not following through in our faithfulness to Christ.

PROVIDENTIAL AFFECTION - 2 Samuel 12:24-25

Solomon's father was King David. His mother was Bathsheba. 2 Samuel 11

David had committed adultery with Bathsheba, had her husband killed, and married her.

Nathan confronted David and he repented. 2 Samuel 12:1-13, Psalm 51

The child who was a result of David and Bathsheba's sin, died. 2 Samuel 12:14-23

David and Bathsheba had another child and God in His graciousness smiled on this child. His name was Solomon. 2 Samuel 12:24-25

Solomon received providential affection. All Christians have also received providential affection.

John 3:16, 1 John 4:10, Galatians 2:20, Ephesians 1:3-7

PRIVILEGES ASSIGNED

God appeared to Solomon twice and answered His prayers. 1 Kings 3:2-15, 9:2-9

God gave Solomon great wisdom, wealth, riches and honor. 1 Kings 3:12-15

Christians have been given great privileges.

1. Answered prayer - Matthew 7:7-11

2. The Lord's presence - Matthew 28:20b, Hebrews 13:5

3. Power of the Holy Spirit - Acts 1:8, Galatians 5:16,22-23

4. Everything needed for life and Godliness - 2 Peter 1:3

5. The promises of God - 2 Peter 1:4

6. God's unending love - Romans 8:35-39

7. Suffering for Christ - Philippians 1:29

PRIVILEGES ABANDONED

1 Kings 11:1-10 - Solomon turned his back on God.

Christians can also abandon their privileges by:

1. Neglecting to Pray

2. Grieving the Spirit - Ephesians 4:30-31

3. Quenching the Spirit - 1 Thessalonians 5:19

4. Failing to live Godly lives - 1 Peter 1:15-16

5. Following after idols - 1 John 5:21

PENALTY ASSIGNED

1 Kings 11:11-13 - Solomon's Kingdom split up.

1 Kings 11:14, 23, 26 - Solomon experienced increased opposition.

What happens when Christians abandon their privileges?

1. There is a lack of fellowship with God - Psalm 66:18

2. There is loving discipline from God - Hebrews 12:5-11

3. There is possible sickness and premature death - 1 Corinthians 11:26-31

4. There is loss of reward. 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

1 Kings 13 INCONSISTENT!

Those of us who serve the Lord need to be consistent in our ministry for him. It is possible to serve the Lord well, and then do things that make us lose reward. Paul was concerned about this in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27. The prophet in our story started well, but became inconsistent when he started listening to man instead of listening to God.

A MINISTRY DESCRIBED Vss. 1-10

This prophet, whose name we do not know, was sent by God to preach against King Jeroboam.

Please note:

Message Delivered - Vss. 1-3

Miracles Performed - Vss. 4-6

Mandate Stated - Vss. 7-10

The prophet was told by God not to stop to eat and not to go home the same way that he came.

A MINISTER DECEIVED Vss. 11-20

Another prophet told him a lie and the man believed it.

He should have followed what God had told him to do.

It is very easy for us to be deceived when we do not read and heed the Word of God.

A MINISTRY DESTROYED Vss. 21-32

The prophet's ministry ended because of God's discipline.

We do not know what great things he could have accomplished for the Lord, if he had only been obedient.

1 Kings 13 THE MAN OF GOD

Here is the story of an unnamed prophet of God who started well, but didn't finish well. This is a good reminder to all that total obedience is what God expects of us. May we 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."

HE WAS STRONG - Vss. 1-6

The man boldly proclaimed the message that God had given him to a hostile king.

HE WAS SEPARATED - Vss. 7-10

God had told the prophet not to eat or drink and to go home another way. He was to have no fellowship with those who were unbelievers. 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

HE WAS SWAYED - Vss. 11-19

Another prophet convinced him that he should go home with him and eat. He allowed the other prophet to sway him into disobeying God.

HE WAS SCOLDED - Vss. 20-22

The very prophet who deceived him was the one who gave him a message of condemnation.

HE WAS SILENCED - Vss. 23-34

Perhaps this prophet had a great career ahead of him, but he was silenced because of his own disobedience.

1 Kings 17:17-24 PROPHET UNDER PRESSURE

Elijah the prophet had made a proclamation to King Ahab that it would not rain. Vs. 1

God hid Elijah by Brook Cherith and provided for his needs there. Vss. 2-6

When the brook dried up, God provided for his needs through a poor widow. Vss. 7-16

HE WAS ACCUSED DURING TROUBLE – Vss. 17-18

A distraught mother got on Elijah's case.

HE ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY – Vs. 19

Elijah didn't argue or accuse back, he simply took responsibility for the problem.

HE ASKED FOR GOD'S HELP – Vss. 20-22

Elijah cried out to God, getting personally involved with the problem.

God gave life back to the child.

HE ANSWERED THE ACCUSATION – Vss. 23-34

Elijah presented the son back alive.

The widow acknowledged that Elijah was indeed God's prophet.

1 Kings 17 TESTED!

One thing we can count on as Christians is tests and trials. Romans 5:3-5, James 1:2-4, 1 Corinthians 10:13 All of God's saints have been tested, including the great Prophet Elijah. Consider the tests that he faced in just one chapter of the Bible!

TESTED BY A DECLARATION TO A HOSTILE CROWD - Vs. 1

Ahab and Jezebel were wicked people (See 1 Kings 16:29-33).

They were not true followers of the God of Israel. For Elijah to walk up to them and make a declaration that it wasn't going to rain until he said so, was quite a test of bravery and trust in God.

TESTED BY A DEPARTURE TO A DESOLATE PLACE - Vss. 2-7

Because of the wickedness of Ahab and Jezebel, Elijah had to hide. God sent him to a solitary place where a brook provided his drink and his food was delivered by the Ravens. This was a test of Elijah's willingness to accept what God would provide in the way of food without complaint.

TESTED BY DEPENDENCE ON A POOR WIDOW - Vss. 8-16

Elijah had to trust in the provision of God through a woman who was almost as poor as he was.

The woman had nothing but a little flour and a little oil, yet because she and Elijah were both obedient they had food during the whole draught.

TESTED BY DEATH OF THE WIDOW'S SON - Vss. 17-24

This was the biggest test of all, but Elijah passed the test! Through faith and prayer the dead boy was restored to life.

1 Kings 17:1-24 THE CARED-FOR SERVANT

Elijah was a servant of God who teaches us that God will meet the needs of those whom He calls. Elijah was called to go into the hostile court of Ahab and Jezebel and proclaim a draught in the name of the Lord.

GOD MET THE NEED FOR SAFETY Vss. 2-3

GOD MET THE NEED FOR SUPPLIES Vss. 4-16

GOD MET THE NEED FOR STANDING (Testimony) Vss. 17-24

Through no fault of his own, Elijah's testimony was at stake. God took care of the need through the supernatural.

1 Kings 17:1 A CHOICE SERVANT

This morning a number of choice servants of God got up early, picked up buses, and went out to bring children and adults to Sunday School.

This afternoon, there were choice servants of God conducting services in nursing homes. During this week there will be choice servants of God working in rescue missions, adult homes, youth groups, Good News Clubs, and a host of other ministries. There also will be choice servants of God doing construction, repairing buildings used for ministry, mowing lawns, nursing the sick, and running errands. All this will be done for the glory of God!

People make the mistake of thinking that the only choice servants of God are those who are in full time Christian service of some sort. This is a wrong assumption.

A CHOICE SERVANT OF GOD IS SIMPLY A BORN AGAIN CHRISTIAN WHO IS DOING THE WILL OF GOD.

If you are a born again Christian, you are a servant of God. 1 Peter 1:15-16, Titus 3:8.

One choice servant of God who can be a good model for us is the prophet Elijah. He was not perfect. 1 Kings 19 tells of his "burn out" in ministry. James 5:17a tells us "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are..." Elijah was very human.

Here are some things about Elijah that we can imitate.

ELIJAH WAS A MAN OF GOD

He appears in Israel during wicked times, when Ahab and Jezebel were ruling. See 1 Kings 16:29-33. He enters the royal court of Israel, showing that he is a man of God.

1. His Profession - "As the Lord God of Israel liveth..."

Though his idolatry and lack of faith in the living God, Ahab was acting like God was dead. Elijah proclaimed that God is alive!

In an age when people are acting like God is dead, we are to proclaim that He is very much alive!

2. His Position - "...before whom I stand..."

Elijah stood in relationship to God as a believer.

Elijah stood in fellowship with God. He had good communication.

As Christians we stand in relationship (John 1:12), and should stand in fellowship with God (Ephesians 6:18).

3. His Prayers - James 5:17

Elijah was known as a man of prayer.

According to this verse, the whole draught was a result of God answering Elijah's prayer. He was probably basing his prayer on Deuteronomy 11:16-17.

ELIJAH WAS A MAN OF GOD ON A MISSION FOR GOD

Someone had to tell King Ahab that the draught was coming. Elijah was sent into the hostile court with that message. We today might not think of ourselves on a mission for God, but every time we do His will, we are on a mission for Him. Teaching Sunday School, confronting a fellow believer, bearing the burdens of a fellow believer, doing good works, witnessing, and a host of other things are missions for God.

ELIJAH WAS A MAN OF GOD ON A MISSION FOR GOD WITH A MESSAGE FROM GOD.

When Elijah announced the draught, he was delivering a message from God. When we deliver messages of warning, comfort, salvation, teaching, or encouragement under the direction of God's Holy Spirit, we are speaking for God.

ELIJAH WAS A MAN OF GOD ON A MISSION FOR GOD WITH A MESSAGE FROM GOD WITH MIGHT THROUGH GOD.

Elijah went in God's power, not his own.

We should do the same. Philippians 4:13, Colossians 1:10-13

1 Kings 18:1-16 Obadiah, Layman Of Distinction

I'm not sure I like the term "layman", because it implies such a big distinction between those called "clergy". When we divide Christianity into classes, such as "clergy" and "laity", we are implying that the clergy are full time Christians, and the laymen are not. This just isn't so!

Let us define a layman as a full-time Christian who is not being supported by God's people financially.

In our text we meet a layman who worked in the court of a wicked king.

He managed to maintain his testimony and serve the Lord in the hardest of circumstances.

Background: 1 Kings 17

OBADIAH FEARED THE LORD GREATLY Vss. 1-3

OBADIAH PROTECTED GOD'S SERVANTS Vs. 4

OBADIAH RESPECTED GOD'S PROPHET Vss. 5-7 (Hebrews 13:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)

OBADIAH BELIEVED FROM HIS YOUTH Vs. 12

OBADIAH OBEYED GOD'S MAN Vss. 15-16 (Hebrews 13:17)

Note: The pastor is a leader, a servant, and an example, NOT DICTATOR! 1 Peter 5:1-4, 1 Timothy 4:12-16

1 Kings 18:1-16 OBA WHO?

There are many famous Bible characters including Daniel, Joseph, Nehemiah, Peter, Paul, John the Baptist, Mary and Martha, Ruth, Esther and David. However, there are also many other characters in the Bible that we've hardly heard of. One such character is Obadiah, a man who served wicked king Ahab and his wife Jezebel. Maybe we are so unfamiliar with this man, that when his name is mentioned we might ask, "Oba Who?" Nevertheless, Obadiah was a good man who has much to teach us.

OBADIAH HUMBLER HIMSELF BEFORE GOD - Vss. 3, 12

He greatly feared the Lord from his youth.

OBADIAH HELPED THOSE IN NEED - Vss. 4, 13

When wicked Jezebel persecuted God's prophets, he protected and fed them.

OBADIAH HEEDED GOD'S PROPHET - Vss. 5-16

Although Obadiah was afraid of getting himself in trouble, he did as Elijah told him.

1 KINGS 18:17-22 THE CONFRONTING SERVANT

One quality of a man or woman of God is it to "Tell it like it is." That means that sometimes the servant of God has to confront those who are doing wrong. See Ezekiel 3:17-21.

Elijah The Prophet was called upon to confront wicked King Ahab and the Children Of Israel after the 3 1/2 year drought. Obadiah, Ahab's servant was contacted, and a meeting was set up with Ahab.

RESPONSIBILITY - Vss. 17-20 - Ahab tried to blame Israel's troubles on Israel. But the prophet placed right where it belonged, which was on Ahab's shoulders.

REBUKE - Vs. 21a - Elijah rebukes the Children Of Israel, for trying to serve God and Baal (a false god) at the same time. They were "halting between two opinions."

RELUCTANCE - Vs. 21b - Instead of agreeing with Elijah, and repenting, the Children Of Israel remained silent. They were reluctant to admit their guilt.

REMNANT - Vs. 22 - God always has a remnant, a minority that remains faithful to Him. May we be in that remnant.

(In the rest of the chapter, Elijah proves that he is, the Lord's servant, and has victory over the prophets of Baal in a contest. His confrontation of the Children Of Israel was of God.)

1 Kings 18:30-46 ELIJAH, MAN OF PRAYER

Anyone who reads the life story of Elijah in the Bible must admit that Elijah was a great man of prayer. What is challenging, scary, and exciting is that God expects you and I to be effective prayer warriors like Elijah.

(See James 5:16-18, Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 7:7-11 John 14:13-14, John 16:24, & John 5:14-15.

In first Kings 18:30-46 we see Elijah praying and receiving two major answers to prayer. God answers Elijah with fire from Heaven, and with rain after 3 1/2 years of drought.

(You will want to give the background of this story and an explanation of the contest between Elijah and the Prophets of Baal. This information is found in 1 Kings 17-18.)

As Elijah receives these answers to prayer, we find him teaching us some principles about how to pray.

Consider that we should:

REPAIR PENITENTLY Vss. 30

The first thing Elijah did was to repair the altar of the Lord. Either through destruction by the enemy or neglect, the altar was in disrepair.

Today, we offer the sacrifice of prayer and praise to God. (Hebrews 13:15, Ephesians 6:18). The altar upon which we offer this sacrifice is our lives. If we are in Spiritual disrepair, we cannot effectively offer our prayers to God. (Psalm 66:18). We must repair our altars through confession of sin, and making things right with others. (1 John 1:9, Matthew 5:23-24)

REQUEST RESPONSIBLY Vss. 36-37

You have heard it said that "With privilege comes responsibility."

It is a privilege to pray. We need to pray responsibly. (James 4:2-3)

Notice that Elijah prays to the right God. He asks for God's Glory, so that it would be known who the true God was in Israel. Elijah also asks that it would be known that he was God's servant, and that he acted according to God's word. Finally, Elijah asks for revival. (Vs. 37) When we pray we are to pray for the right things with the right motives. (1 John 5:14-15)

RELAX CONFIDENTLY Vss. 31-35, 38-39

Elijah made the task more difficult by digging a trench and having the fire doused with water 3 times.

However, Elijah was still confident that God would answer his prayers. There are times when we are praying that things get worse before they get better. God is probably only allowing things to get harder so people will know that He indeed has answered prayer in a very difficult situation. The tougher the answer is, the more glory God receives when He does answer. In Vss. 38-39, God answers with fire from Heaven.

RESPOND EXPECTANTLY Vss. 41-46

Elijah sends Ahab to have a meal, because, according to Elijah, rain was on the way soon. Then Elijah went up and prayed. He constantly sent his servant to look for the answer to prayer. When a cloud the size of man's hand appeared, Elijah sent to Ahab, telling him to head for home before the rain stopped him. Elijah shows us that as we pray, we should look expectantly for answers. We should not be impatient, but we should show our faith by watching for God's answer to our prayers.

5. REPEAT FERVENTLY Vss. 42-43

Elijah continued to pray until he received His answer.

We should continue to pray until we receive our answers. (Luke 18:1-8)

1 Kings 18:41-46 ON OUR KNEES IN FAITH

The draught had lasted 3 1/2 years.

Elijah, the prophet who had predicted the draught had been in hiding. A great contest was held between the Prophet of God and the false prophets. Elijah had won. (See rest of chapter for details.) The onlookers had proclaimed, "The Lord He is the God; The Lord he is the God." (Vs. 39) Now it was time for Elijah to pray for rain. It was a prayer of faith. This is exactly the type of prayers which we should pray by faith.

THE PROCLAMATION OF FAITH Vs. 41

Based on what God had told Elijah, Elijah believed that there would be rain. All he needed was to believe it and pray for it. God's word contains many promises which will be ours as we believe them and claim them by faith. (1John 5:14-15)

THE PRAYER OF FAITH Vs. 42

THE PERSPECTIVE OF FAITH Vss. 43-44

Elijah prayed by faith and looked for the answer. We should also be on the outlook for God's answers to our confident prayers of faith.

THE POWER OF FAITH Vss. 45-46

The prayer of faith was answered miraculously. (James 5:16-17)

1 Kings 18:41-46 FAITH AT WORK

As I write this outline I am soaring in a jet plane about 30,000 feet in the air. To get from Suriname, South America to Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Dottie and I will take four flights. Today we will put faith to work trusting four pilots and copilots, four flight crews, three airplanes and many air traffic controllers.

Daily we are to put our faith in God to work. We should be filled with the Spirit by faith. We should study God's Word by faith. We should witness and stand for righteousness by faith. One of our primary works of faith should be in prayer. Elijah put his faith to work by praying. We should do the same.

THE OUTLOOK OF FAITH - Vs. 41

Elijah saw the answer coming even before there was a single sign of rain. He was confident that God would hear and answer his prayers.

THE OBSTINACY OF FAITH - Vss. 42-44

Elijah stubbornly believed that God would answer his prayer. He stubbornly waited, looking for God's answer. He stubbornly prayed until God answered. James 5:16-18, Luke 11:5-13

THE OUTCOME OF FAITH - Vss. 45-46

God answered Elijah's prayer of faith. Mark 11:22-26

In we learn to work in prayer by faith we will see tremendous results and will become virtually unstoppable.

1 Kings 19 BURNED OUT! or "THE CONQUERED SERVANT"

We run into pastors, pastors' wives, missionaries, and other Christians who have become so fatigued and disillusioned in ministry, that they become conquered by Satan. This can happen especially after great victories. Elijah had a great victory in Chapter 18 (You will probably want to give these events a brief review.). Elijah had a great defeat in chapter 19.

PROPHET ON THE RUN

1. He was defeated. Vss. 1-3
2. He was done. Vs. 4 - Handed in his resignation.
3. He was deceived. Vss. 9-10 He was jealous - Deceived into thinking the ministry was his. (The ministry is always to be God's. We are just caretakers..)

GOD TO THE RESCUE

1. God nourished him. Vss. 5-7
2. God heard him. Vss. 8-10
3. God encouraged him. Vss. 11-13, 18
4. God recommissioned him. Vss. 15-17

1 Kings 19:16, 19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-14 THE TORCH IS PASSED

When responsibility is transferred from one person to another, we often say, "The torch has been passed." Elijah is told to recruit Elisha as the next prophet. He passed the torch to a man who was different from himself. Elijah was known as a fiery personality. We might say that Elisha was steady. Consider:

ELISHA'S DESTINY - 1 Kings 19:16, 19 - To be the next prophet in Israel.

ELISHA'S DECISION - 1 Kings 19:20-21 - To accept the call of God.

ELISHA'S DISCIPLESHIP - 1 Kings 19:21 - He began as Elijah's servant. Elijah would have trained him.

ELISHA'S DETERMINATION - 2 Kings 2:1-7 - To stay with Elijah to the end.

ELISHA'S DESIRE - 2 Kings 2:8-9 - To have a double portion of Elijah's spirit

ELIJAH'S DEMONSTRATION - 2 Kings 2:13-14 - This miracle showed that he was the new prophet in Israel.

(Note - This could easily be made into two sermons)

1 Kings 19, 21 - 2 Kings 2 FINISHING WELL

Revelation 2:10 - *...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

Many Christians have been faithful to the Lord for many years, but then began to falter in their service for God as they got older. Elijah was a mighty man of God who served God well (1 Kings 17-18). He had a period of depression (1 Kings 19), but then went on faithfully serving God to the end. Elijah shows us three principles to follow if we want to finish well.

PREPARE FOR THE WORK

Although Elijah would soon be off the scene, the work of God would continue. It was Elijah's job to make sure that preparation was made so that the work would go on after Elijah was gone. We too, should make preparations for our work to continue after we are no longer able to do that work.

1 Kings 19:15-17 - Elijah is assigned three specific tasks. One of these tasks was to anoint Elisha as his successor.

1 Kings 19:19-21 - Elisha is called and accepts the call. Elijah did not die right away, nor did Elisha take over right away. Verse 21 tells us that Elisha ministered to or served Elijah.

Elisha became a prophet in training. 2 Kings 3:11 describes Elisha as one who had been Elijah's servant. In 2 Kings 2, another group is mentioned called the "Sons of the Prophets". These were others that were evidently also trained by Elisha.

Training others is a favorite theme in the Bible.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 tells us that children are to be trained.

Ephesians 4:11-12 tells us that Christians are to be trained.

2 Timothy 2:2 tells us that faithful men need to be trained.

We should prepare for the continuation of God's work by training others.

PROCLAIM THE WORD

As long as God gave him something to say, Elijah proclaimed God's message.

1 Kings 21 - He preached against the sin of Ahab towards Naboth.

2 Kings 1 - He preached against Ahaziah, the son of Ahab.

As long as we are able, we should faithfully proclaim the Word and witness for Christ. 2 Timothy 4:2

PRACTICE THE WALK

2 Kings 2 - Elijah walked with God until God took him to Heaven. He went where God directed him and told Elisha what God told him. We need to faithfully walk with God until God calls us into His presence.

ELISHA SERIES The Steady Prophet

1 Kings 19:16, 19, 2 Kings 2:1-14 STEADY IN PREPARATION

LIFE OF ELISHA, THE STEADY PROPHET - #1 of 9

SERIES INTRODUCTION:

There was a changing of the guard. The job of prophet was being passed from Elijah to Elisha.

There was a change in personalities. Elisha had a fiery personality. Elisha was "steady".

There was no changing on God's part. Times, leaders, and situations change. God does not change.

Malachi 3:6

INTRODUCTION TO THIS LESSON

When God has a job for someone to do, He does everything necessary to prepare that person.

ELISHA'S DESTINY - 1 Kings 19:16, 19 - To be the next prophet in Israel.

ELISHA'S DECISION - 1 Kings 19:20-21 - To accept the call of God.

ELISHA'S DISCIPLESHIP - 1 Kings 19:21 - He began as Elijah's servant. Elijah would have trained him.

ELISHA'S DETERMINATION - 2 Kings 2:1-7 - To stay with Elijah to the end.

ELISHA'S DESIRE - 2 Kings 2:8-9 - To have a double portion of Elijah's spirit

ELISHA'S DEMONSTRATION - 2 Kings 2:13-14 - This miracle showed that he was the new prophet in Israel.

2 Kings 2:15-25 THE STEADY MODEL Life of Elisha #2 of 9

Elisha, "The Steady Prophet" was a steady model to those around Him. No substitute for a good example
HE MODELED WISDOM - Vss. 15-18

Elisha was accepted as the new leader of the prophets. Vss. 13-15 Some wanted to send a search party. He did not think it wise. His wisdom was proved out when a search was made and nothing was found. Notice how mild a rebuke he gave. These men were grieving the loss of their leader, Elijah. He widely went easy on them. Proverbs 19:10 tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Elisha modeled this. 1 Timothy 4:12 shows the wise behavior of a Godly pastor.

HE MODELED CREATIVITY - Vss. 19-22 I think it is say to say that Elijah had spent some time Jericho and was familiar with the water difficulty. It was Elisha however who solved the problem. Elisha performed few miracles exactly like Elijah. He was original. He was creative. There is nothing wrong with being like someone or doing things the way someone else did. However, God has given us all unique abilities and ways of doing things. We should not be afraid of being creative as we strive to serve God.

HE MODELED AUTHORITY - Vss. 23-25 People have wondered how Elisha could be so mean to small children. These were not small children but youths, teens, and/or young adults. They made fun of God's servant, Elisha, and the home going of Elijah. ("Get up thou bald head.") They were being disrespectful and rebellious. Elisha had every right to rebuke them. He used his authority as a man of God. See 1 Corinthians 5, Galatians 6:1, Ezekiel 3:16-21

2 KINGS 4:1-7 THE STEADY FLOW Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #3 of 9

Introduce by talking about some successful people you know. I think that most of us would like to be successful. As Christians, we should desire to be successful in the eyes of God. To be a success in God's eyes, you must be a born again Christian. (John 3:1-16). Also, to be a success, you need to be successful, you must be faithful (1 Cor 4:2). Thirdly, to be a success, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18).

An illustration of success in God's eyes is found in our text. We often relegate such stories to children's church or Sunday School, but don't consider the value of the story for us adults. This story tells of a steady flow of oil that continued to flow until all was full. In order for us to be successful Christians, we must have the steady, continuous flow of God's Holy Spirit in our lives. As Christians, we will go through three stages if we experience the filling or controlling of the Holy Spirit. In this story I see pictures of the:

THE BANKRUPT CHRISTIAN - Vs. 1

Elisha was apparently the chief prophet in Israel at this time. There were schools of training for those who would aspire to be prophets. They were the Bible Schools of their day. Today we might call the students "preacher boys". One of the widows of one of the sons of the prophets came to Elijah. Her husband was dead. She was bankrupt, and creditors were coming to take her sons as slaves to pay the debt.

There are many Christians like this women in our story. They are bankrupt. They have tired in their own strength to do something for God. They have tried in their own effort to be successful. They have made their own plans to serve God and have met with nothing but disappointment. They have done battle with habitual sin in their lives and have ended up losing (Romans 7:18-21).

Please note that this woman was honest. She came to Elisha. She did not try to fool him. She simply told the truth. As Christians, we need to be equally honest. When we sense bankruptcy in our Spiritual lives, we must come and honestly humble ourselves before God (James 4:6-10)

THE RESOURCEFUL CHRISTIAN - Vs. 2

Elisha wants to know, "What do you have on hand?" He wants to know, "What are your resources?" What was available for God to multiply? You might recall that the Scripture tells how God multiplied a little meal and a little oil belonging to another widow (1 Kings 17:8-16). We also know that God the Son multiplied a little boy's lunch so that it fed a multitude (John 6:1-14).

This lady only had a little oil. It was a valuable commodity, but not enough to get her out of debt.

What do Christians have to help them when they sense that they are bankrupt?

They do not have merit.

They do not have strength within themselves.

They do not have ability.

BUT THEY DO HAVE OIL!

Oil is often symbolic for God's Holy Spirit.

We do have the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9, Zechariah 4:6, Acts 1:8,

Like the woman in the story we need to be resourceful. We must realize that we have all we need for success through the Holy Spirit.

THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN - Vss. 3-7

Vs. 3-4 - Elisha's advice was simple. It was for her to use her resources. She was to borrow empty pots, go home, shut the door, and start pouring.

The victorious Christian will do something similar. We do not need more of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit needs more of us. As we provide ourselves as an empty vessel, He will fill us.

An empty vessel is one that has confessed all known sin.

An empty vessel is one that contains nothing of self (Romans 12:1).

An empty vessel is one that has an open lid, ready, willing, and asking to be filled (1 John 5:14-15).

Vss. 5-6 - The woman did as she was told. When there was no longer an empty vessel, the oil stopped flowing. We must continually present to God an empty vessel, so he can fill it.

The results of Spirit filling are seen in Acts 1:8, Ephesians 3:16, 5:18-21 and Galatians 5:22-23.

Remember that the steady flow of the Holy Spirit, which gives power, victory, joy and fruitfulness, will stop flowing when we fail to provide an empty vessel. However, the flow of the Spirit will resume when there is again an empty vessel available to be filled.

2 Kings 4:10 STEADY MAINTENANCE Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #4 of 9

2 Kings 4:10 - *Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither.*

Introduce the message by asking the following questions:

- What are some of the things that you use regularly that require periodic maintenance?
- Why is maintenance so important
- Why is maintenance of your spiritual life so important?
- What are some of the things that you do to maintain your spiritual life?

In 2 Kings 4:10 we find four things that are necessary for the maintenance of physical and spiritual life.

BACKGROUND

Elisha evidently passed through the village of Shunem on a regular basis. A woman, evidently the wife of a wealthy land owner, fed Elisha whenever he traveled past her home. Vs. 8

The woman could tell that Elisha was a "holy man of God". Can people tell that we are holy men or women of God? Vs. 9

The lady suggested the building of a "prophet's chamber" for the entertaining of Elisha, complete with basic necessary furnishings.

THE BED SPEAKS OF REST IN CHRIST - Matthew 11:28-30, Psalm 37:7, Mark 6:31

THE TABLE SPEAKS OF FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST. Psalm 23:5, John 15:1-7

THE STOOL SPEAKS OF INSTRUCTION FROM CHRIST. Deuteronomy 33:3, Psalm 32:8, Luke 10:38-42

THE CANDLESTICK SPEAKS OF TESTIMONY FOR CHRIST. Matthew 5:14-16, Acts 1:8, Revelation 2:4-5

2 Kings 4:8-37 STEADY UNDER PRESSURE Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #5 of 9

There will be times in our lives that we will face pressure.

- The pressure of persecution - 2 Timothy 3:12
- The pressure of trials - James 1:2-4
- The pressure of sickness
- The pressure of some dying
- The pressure of family problems
- The pressure of church disputes
- The pressure of financial struggles
- And many more pressures

The prophet Elisha faced pressure. Through his reliance on God, he remained steady under pressure

CATASTROPHE - Vss. 8-23

A lady had taken care of Elisha's physical needs and Elisha promised the reward of a child. Vss. 8-16

The child was born. Vs. 17

The child died. The lady went to find Elisha. Vss. 18-23

Talk about pressure!

CHARACTER - Vs. 9

It was obvious that Elisha was a "holy man of God."

If we expect to bring to remain steady under pressure, we need to have a similar character.

CONCERN - Vss. 24-30

Elisha was genuinely concerned about the well being of this woman and her family. Vss. 25-26

He understood that the woman was hurting. Vss. 27-28

He sent Gehazi, his servant to help. Vs. 29

He went himself. He was willing to get involved. Vs. 30
 Many people want to withdraw when there is pressure. We need to follow Elisha's example and get involved.
 CRY - Vss. 31-33
 Gehazi was unsuccessful. Evidently there was no prayer on his part.
 Elisha got alone with God and the problem and cried out in prayer.
 Crying out to God is of ultimate importance when we are under pressure. Jeremiah 33:3, Mark 11:22-24
 CLOSENESS - Vs. 34
 After prayer, Elisha got involved with a dirty problem. He was dealing with a corpse. He got close anyway.
 Often God will require us to get close to unpleasant problems in order for them to be solved.
 CONTINUATION - Vs. 35
 Elisha stuck with the problem until it was totally solved.
 There will be times we will have to bear long with a problem until the pressure is relieved completely!
 CONCLUSION - Vss. 36-37
 The pressure was relieved!
 The boy came back to life!

2 Kings 5 STEADY REASONING Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #6 of 9

We as Christians are expected to demonstrate steady reasoning. That is we should have the ability, with God's help, to think things out clearly and logically.

2 Kings 5 presents us with a good example of the importance of steady reasoning. The way people reacted to the leprosy of Naaman and his appeal for healing give us some examples of good thinking and examples of bad thinking. Our outline shows us types of thinking that lead to steady or not so steady reasoning.

BACKGROUND - One of the enemies of Israel at this time was Syria. According to verse 1, the general of the Syrian army was a man named Naaman. The Lord, who controls governments, had given a great deliverance to Syria through Naaman. His name means "pleasant". Naaman was stricken with the dreaded disease of leprosy. Leviticus 13:3, 45-46

FAITHFUL THINKING - Naaman's Maid - Vss. 2-3

The Syrians had sent raiding parties into Israel. The little maid was taken captive and made a slave to Naaman's wife. Instead of being bitter, she was faithful to God and to those in need in her thinking.

She spoke of Elisha, the prophet, who she felt could heal Naaman.

FEARFUL THINKING - The King of Israel - Vss. 4-7

Naaman himself reported the words of the maid to the King of Syria.

He sent expensive gifts and a letter to the King of Israel, requesting that Naaman be healed.

When the King of Israel received the letter, he panicked, and was sure that the King of Syria was trying to pick a fight. Instead of relying on God, the King was overtaken with fear! This is a kind of thinking which we also need to avoid. Proverbs 29:25

FEARLESS THINKING - Elisha - Vss. 8

Elisha the Prophet was not afraid. His confidence was in God. He simply sent to the King of Israel asking him why he was so upset, and assured him that he, God's prophet would handle the matter. I'm sure the king gladly sent Naaman to Elisha. Isaiah 41:10

FAULTY THINKING - Naaman - Vss. 9-12

Elisha didn't even come out to meet Naaman when he arrived.

He simply sent a messenger to Naaman and told him to go wash in the river Jordan seven times.

Naaman got upset. He thought Elisha would heal in a more dramatic way. Vs. 11.

He was upset that he had to wash in the Jordan and not a river in his own country.

He was in a rage because things weren't going the way he planned. Sound familiar?

FACTUAL THINKING - Naaman's Servants - Vss. 13-14

Naaman's servants reasoned with him, and convinced him that the prophet was not asking for much. It was simple request. Naaman should do it.

Naaman did as he was told and was healed.

FINANCIAL THINKING - Gehazi - Vss. 15-26

A grateful Naaman offered gifts to Elisha. Elisha refused.

Gehazi, Elisha's servant, chose to deceive Naaman and take some of the gifts.

Gehazi was judged for his sin of greed. 1 Timothy 6:10

2 Kings 6 STEADY AGAINST THE FOE Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #7 of 9

As Christians, we will have enemies for the sake of Christ. 2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:19

How we deal with our enemies will be an indication of how closely we are walking with God.

Enemies tend to scare us, but God wants us to be fearless before them. Proverbs 3:5-6, 29:25

The prophet Elijah was fearless before his enemies. We can learn from his example.

HIS PROBLEM WAS CAUSED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS - Vss. 8-14

Elisha was sharing Syria's war plans with the King of Israel. Elisha's knowledge came from God.

When the King of Syria discovered that Elisha was doing this, he became Elisha's enemy.

He sent soldiers to apprehend him. Elisha got in trouble for doing what was right. We need to realize that when we do what is right, we will also make enemies. We must make sure however that we are doing what is right. 1 Pet 2:19-20, 3:16-17, 4:15-16

HIS PROTECTION CAME FROM GOD - Vss. 15-17

Elisha was not upset because he knew God was protecting him. He asked God to show his servant the great heavenly host that had them protected.

We must remember that God has promised to protect us and He is able to take care of us even through "impossible" circumstances. Isaiah 41:10, 1 John 4:4, Hebrews 2:13-14, Jeremiah 32:27

HIS PRAYERS CLIMAXED IN VICTORY - Vs. 18

Elisha's prayer that his enemies would become blind was answered. This prayer did not result in permanent difficulty for his enemies, but enabled him to be delivered from their power.

We must trust that God will answer our prayers. Luke 18:1, James 5:16-18

HIS PLAN CALLED FOR LOVE - Vss. 19-23

Elijah "blessed" his enemies feeding them and sending them home in peace.

Our Lord Jesus expects us to act in like fashion. Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:18-21

The end result of the kindness Elisha showed was a cessation of raids made on Israel's towns.

2 Kings 6:24-7:20 THE STEADY WITNESS Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #8 of 9

In this story I see the lepers as a picture of the born again Christians.

Eventually the lepers spread the good news that the famine was over and there was food, clothes, and money available. As Christians we are to spread the word of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. We are to be steady, consistent witnesses for Christ. After giving the background of the story in 2 Kings 6:24-7:2, point out that these lepers remind us Christians of:

THE PAST (The way we were.) Vss.3-5

Hurting Vs. 3 - We were hurting because of our sin.

Hungry Vs. 4 - We were Spiritually hungry for something better.

Honest Vss. 4-5 - No one gets saved until they honestly admit they are sinners and turn to Christ in faith.

THE PRESENT (The way we are.) Vs. 8

(Vs. 5-7 tell of the fate of the Syrian army.)

Rich - We have great riches in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

Satisfied - We have great satisfaction in what Christ has done for us.

Selfish - All too often we keep our joy in Christ to ourselves.

THE PROMOTION (The way we should be.) Vss. 9-20

These lepers were:

Convicted - Vs. 9 - We need to be convicted that we shouldn't keep silent about our salvation. (Ps 107:2)

Convincing - Vss. 10-11 - We need to be convincing others of the joys of salvation. (1 Peter 3:15)

Converting - Vss. 13-16 - As a result of the lepers' testimony, many were fed. As a result of our testimony, many will come to Christ.

2 Kings 13:14-20 STEADY TO THE END Life of Elisha, The Steady Prophet #9 of 9

Elisha was an old man who was on his deathbed.

However, Elisha was still steady, challenging Joash to a deeper faith.

POWER NEEDED - Vs. 14

Joash was probably lamenting the eminent death of Elisha, and realized that his power as a prophet in Israel would be missing. The King evidently realized that the loss of a godly man was equivalent to a loss of God's power. See 2 Kings 2:12. We have probably lamented the death of a godly man or woman who showed the power of God in their lives. We have probably wondered who would replace them.

POWER COMMUNICATED - Vss. 15-16

Elisha placed his hands on the king's hands, indicating that the power was coming from God. We must remember that power has been communicated to us through the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8

POWER PROMISED - Vs. 17

The king was to shoot an arrow in the direction of the enemy.

The arrow was symbolic of the victory that God would give over the enemy.

POWER NEGLECTED - Vs. 18

Elisha told the king to smite the ground with the arrows. Perhaps he was to shoot them into the ground. Instead of using up all his arrows, he showed his limited faith by only hitting the ground 3 times.

POWER LIMITED - Vs. 19

Elisha was unhappy with Joash's lack of faith. The king should have hit the ground more often and he would have had total victory! Each time the King hit the ground was symbolic of a battle won over the enemy. We are limited in our victories over Satan by our lack of faith. The more we use our faith, the more we will have the victory!

2 Kings 1 INTERRUPTION!

Life is filled with interruptions. In the course of a day we can be interrupted by phone calls, visitors, questions, problems and a host of other things. Sometimes our lives have major interruptions. A divorce, an illness or the sudden loss of a job or a loved one has interrupted many people. Some interruptions are good because they help us to grow our faith.

In 2 Kings 1, life in the royal court of Israel was interrupted by the illness of the king. In this passage we find: THE KING WHO MADE THE WRONG DECISION Vss. 1-8

King Ahaziah had an accident.

He needed some advice as to the seriousness of his injury.

His mistake was not in asking for the advice. His mistake was asking a false God, and not the Lord God of Israel.

Elijah was dispatched by God to bring the news that he would not recover.

THE CAPTAINS WHO MADE THE WRONG DEMAND Vss. 9-12

The king had figured out that it was Elijah who had made the proclamation concerning his health.

He decided to have the prophet brought to the court.

Twice the king sent out a captain and 50 soldiers.

Both times, the captains, in their arrogance, demanded that Elijah come down off the hill on which he sat.

Twice, Elijah called down fire from Heaven to destroy them. It is obvious the harm was planned against Elijah.

THE CAPTAIN WHO HAD THE RIGHT Demeanor Vss. 13-15

A third captain was sent to bring Elijah in.

This captain had a different attitude.

He actually went up to the top of the hill and humbly begged Elijah to spare him and his soldiers.

God told Elijah that it was safe to go see the king with this captain.

THE PROPHET WHO HAD THE RIGHT DECLARATION Vss. 16-18

Elijah delivered the same health message to the king in person.

He simply told the king what God had told him.

What Elijah had prophesied actually came to pass.

Those who speak for God today must know the Word of God so they can speak for Him accurately.

1 Kings 19:16, 19-21, 2 Kings 2:1-14 THE TORCH IS PASSED (2 possible sermons)

When responsibility is transferred from one person to another, we often say, "The torch has been passed."

Elijah is told to recruit Elisha as the next prophet. He passed the torch to a man who was different from himself. Elijah was known as a fiery personality. We might say that Elisha was steady. Consider:

ELISHA'S DESTINY - 1 Kings 19:16, 19 - To be the next prophet in Israel.

ELISHA'S DECISION - 1 Kings 19:20-21 - To accept the call of God.

ELISHA'S DISCIPLESHIP - 1 Kings 19:21 - He began as Elijah's servant. Elijah would have trained him.

ELISHA'S DETERMINATION - 2 Kings 2:1-7 - To stay with Elijah to the end.

ELISHA'S DESIRE - 2 Kings 2:8-9 - To have a double portion of Elijah's spirit

ELIJAH'S DEMONSTRATION - 2 Kings 2:13-14 - This miracle showed that he was the new prophet in Israel.

2 Kings 2:1-14 A GOOD DISCIPLE

Elisha was a disciple of the great prophet Elijah. He was designated as Elijah's successor but first worked as Elijah's servant. 1 Kings 19:15-21 When God was ready to take Elijah to heaven by a whirlwind, Elisha showed the qualities of a good disciple.

A DISCIPLE FOLLOWS - Vss. 1-8

Wherever Elijah went Elisha insisted on going too.

We should follow our Lord Jesus this diligently. Luke 9:23, John 12:26

A DISCIPLE IS FAITHFUL - Vss. 1-8

Even though Elijah and the Sons of the Prophets both seemed to try to dissuade Elisha from following, he was faithful. He was not going to be dissuaded. 1 Corinthians 4:2, Luke 14:26-27

A DISCIPLE HAS FORESIGHT - Vss. 9-12

When Elijah asked Elisha what he wanted, He desired a double portion of his spirit. Elisha had the foresight to ask for spiritual blessing. He was actually requesting the power of the Holy Spirit upon his life. May we have the same foresight to desire the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives!

Elijah told Elisha that if he saw Elijah go into Heaven, it would mean that his request had been granted.

Elisha saw it happen.

A DISCIPLE HAS FAITH - Vss. 13-14

Elisha picked up Elijah's mantle and performed the same miracle that Elijah had done earlier. He had the faith to believe that God's Spirit was upon him. We must remember as Christ's disciples to live our lives by faith. Hebrews 11:6

2 KINGS 4:1-7 THE STEADY FLOW

Introduce this sermon by talking about some successful people you know personally.

I think that most of us would like to be successful. As Christians, we should desire to be successful in the eyes of God. To be a success in God's eyes, you must be a born again Christian. (John 3:1-16). Also, to be a success, you need to be successful, you must be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2). Thirdly, to be a success, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

An illustration of success in God's eyes is found in our text. We often relegate such stories to children's church or Sunday School, but don't consider the value of the story for us adults.

This story tells of a steady flow of oil that continued to flow until all was full. In order for us to be successful Christians, we must have the steady, continuous flow of God's Holy Spirit in our lives. As Christians, we will go through three stages if we experience the filling or controlling of the Holy Spirit. In this story I see pictures of the:

THE BANKRUPT CHRISTIAN - Vs. 1

Elisha was apparently the chief prophet in Israel at this time. There were schools of training for those who would aspire to be prophets. They were the Bible Schools of their day. Today we might call the students "preacher boys".

One of the widows of one of the sons of the prophets came to Elijah. Her husband was dead. She was bankrupt, and creditors were coming to take her sons as slaves to pay the debt.

There are many Christians like this woman in our story. They are bankrupt.

They have tired in their own strength to do something for God. They have tried in their own effort to be successful. They have made their own plans to serve God and have met with nothing but disappointment. They have done battle with habitual sin in their lives and have ended up losing (Romans 7:18-21).

Please note that this woman was honest. She came to Elisha. She did not try to fool him. She simply told the truth. As Christians, we need to be equally honest. When we sense bankruptcy in our Spiritual lives, we must come and honestly humble ourselves before God (James 4:6-10)

THE RESOURCEFUL CHRISTIAN - Vs. 2

Elisha wants to know, "What do you have on hand?" He wants to know, "What are your resources?" What was available for God to multiply? You might recall that the Scripture tells how God multiplied a little meal and a little oil belonging to another widow (1 Kings 17:8-16). We also know that God the Son multiplied a little boy's lunch so that it fed a multitude (John 6:1-14).

This lady only had a little oil. It was a valuable commodity, but not enough to get her out of debt.

What do Christians have to help them when they sense that they are bankrupt?

They do not have merit.

They do not have strength within themselves.

They do not have ability.

BUT THEY DO HAVE OIL!

Oil is often symbolic for God's Holy Spirit.

We do have the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9, Zechariah 4:6, Acts 1:8,

Like the woman in the story we need to be resourceful. We must realize that we have all we need for success through the Holy Spirit.

THE VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN - Vss. 3-7

Vs. 3-4 - Elisha's advice was simple. It was for her to use her resources. She was to borrow empty pots, go home, shut the door, and start pouring.

The victorious Christian will do something similar. We do not need more of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit needs more of us. As we provide ourselves as an empty vessel, He will fill us.

An empty vessel is one that has confessed all known sin.

An empty vessel is one that contains nothing of self (Romans 12:1).

An empty vessel is one that has an open lid, ready, willing, and asking to be filled (1 John 5:14-15).

Vss. 5-6 - The woman did as she was told. When there was no longer an empty vessel, the oil stopped flowing. We must continually present to God an empty vessel, so he can fill it.

The results of Spirit filling are seen in Acts 1:8, Ephesians 3:16, 5:18-21 and Galatians 5:22-23.

Remember that the steady flow of the Holy Spirit, which gives power, victory, joy and fruitfulness, will stop flowing when we fail to provide an empty vessel. However, the flow of the Spirit will resume when there is again an empty vessel available to be filled.

2 Kings 4:1-7 SUPPLIED!

Here is a Bible story that most of us are familiar with. We know about the pot of oil that didn't stop flowing until every empty pot in the house was filled. This story is a great reminder of how God supplies us with the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

As we consider the filling of the Holy Spirit, we can ask ourselves some questions based on this story.

WHAT ARE THE RESTRICTIONS? - Vs. 1

The widow lady was restricted by a great debt that she could not pay. We are restricted by various problems. Some of our problems are personal, while other problems involve others.

WHAT ARE THE RESOURCES? - Vs. 2

Elijah wanted to know what the lady had available as resources to help the problem to be solved. Her comment was that she had a little oil. Sometimes oil is symbolic in the Scriptures for the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the resource that God has placed inside of us to help with our problems. 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9, John 14:16-18, John 16:12-14

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS? - Vss. 3-4

The woman was to borrow many empty pots and start pouring until there were no more pots left. She was to provide empty pots to be filled.

As Christians, we are to provide empty pots or vessels that can be filled with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18 We need to be empty of sin, confessing and forsaking it. Ephesians 4:30, 1 John 1:9

Just as the woman repeatedly provided empty pots, we must repeatedly cleanse our lives of all known sin.

WHAT ARE THE RESULTS? - Vss. 5-7

As long as there was an empty vessel it was filled with oil.

As long as we present a clean vessel, we will be filled with the Spirit.

The woman's needs were met. Our Spiritual needs will be met. Eph 5:18-21, Gal. 5:16, 22-23, Acts 1:8

2 Kings 4:9-37 HOW TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE

Most of us see situations we don't like. There is nothing we can do about some situations, but there are many situations that can be changed. We just have to know how to bring about the changes we want to see!

We can learn how to bring about change by studying this event from the life of Elisha.

CATASTROPHE - Vss. 8-23

A lady had taken care of Elisha's physical needs and Elisha promised the reward of a child. Vss. 8-16

The child was born. Vs. 17

The child died. The lady went to find Elisha. Vss. 18-23

There was need for a change!

CHARACTER - Vs. 9

It was obvious that Elisha was a "holy man of God."

If we expect to bring about change, we need to have a similar character.

CONCERN - Vss. 24-30

Elisha was genuinely concerned about the well being of this woman and her family. Vss. 25-26

He understood that the woman was hurting. Vss. 27-28

He sent Gehazi, his servant to help. Vs. 29

He went himself. He was willing to get involved. Vs. 30

CRY - Vss. 31-33

Gehazi was unsuccessful. Evidently there was no prayer on his part.

Elisha got alone with God and the problem and cried out in prayer.

CLOSENESS - Vs. 34

After prayer, Elisha got involved with a dirty problem. He was dealing with a corpse. He got close anyway.

Often God will require us to get close to unpleasant problems in order for them to be solved.

CONTINUATION - Vs. 35

Elisha stuck with the problem until it was totally solved.

CONCLUSION - Vss. 36-37

Change occurred!

The boy came back to life!

2 Kings 4:8-37 FOUND - A VIRTUOUS WOMAN!

Proverbs 31:10 - *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.*

Here is the story of a virtuous woman (Perhaps this is a good Sunday School lesson!)

HER PERCEPTION OF CHARACTER - Vss. 8-9

HER PROVISION FOR GOD'S PROPHET - Vs. 10

HER PROMISE OF BLESSING - Vss. 11-17

HER PROBLEM WITH HER SON - Vss. 18-20
HER PROCLAMATION OF FAITH - Vss. 21-30

To Her Husband - Vss. 21-23

To Gehazzi - Vss. 24-26

To Elijah - Vss. 27-30

HER PRACTICE (OF FAITH) REWARDED - Vss. 31-38

2 Kings 5:1-4 HOME MISSIONARY

Generally, when we think of missionaries, we think of those who go to foreign shores to share the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. When we think of home missionaries we think of people sharing the Gospel in the US.

I call the girl we know as Naaman's maid a home missionary. Even though she served in a foreign country, she served as God's messenger to the people around her. It is in this sense, that I feel each and every one of us who know Christ as our Savior should be a home missionary. Each of us comes in contact with a different set of people who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. It is our job to serve as God's messengers, sharing God's good news with those around us. Psalm 107:2, Colossians 4:5

Here are seven things that made Naaman's Maid a good home missionary.

1. SHE WAS INSIGNIFICANT

Vs. 2 - At this time Syria would send raiding parties into Israel and they would steal things and people. On one of these raids, a young girl was taken captive and made a slave.

This girl was insignificant as far as the world was concerned. She was probably one of several girls captured and brought back to be slaves. She had no freedom. She had no notoriety. Other than providing cheap labor for the Syrians, she was of little worth.

She was insignificant to the world, but she was not insignificant to God. God loved this girl. God knew who she was and had a very important job for her to do.

You are not insignificant to God. In fact God loved you so much that his Son died for your sins. When you trust the risen Son of God as the only way to forgiveness and everlasting life, He forgives your sin, gives you new life now, and promises you an eternity in Heaven. He also makes you one of his children. You are no longer insignificant. John 1:12, Luke 12:6-7 The exciting thing is that just as God used an insignificant maid thousands of years ago, He enjoys using insignificant people today. 1 Cor 1:16-29
God used an insignificant slave. He can use you!

2. SHE WAS RELOCATED BY GOD

Through no choice of her own, Naaman's Maid was taken away from her home, taken away from her family, taken away from her friends and all that was familiar. Did she want any of this to happen? Of course not! Does God approve of slavery? Of course not! But God works through bad situations to perform His good! Romans 8:28 What's the point for us today? God moves us. Sometimes He moves us to a new home or a new state or even a new country. God moves us. Sometimes he moves us from job to job. God moves us. Sometimes He moves people out of our lives, and sometimes He moves people into our lives. God moved Naaman's Maid, and as we'll see in a moment, this maid was used by God as a messenger from Him.

When God moves you into new situations...

When God moves new people into your lives...

When God makes changes, even those you didn't want, it is time to look for people that He wants you to be an influence in His behalf.

3. SHE WAS SERVED THOSE AROUND HER

The ended up being a slave girl to the wife of a very influential Syrian General named Naaman.

She was in a strange situation.

She was in a strange land.

She was working for strange people.

So what did she do? She did her job!

She served the people that God had put in her life.

Wherever God has placed you, serve!

Remember when a lowly servant girl opened her mouth to speak, people listened! If she had not been a reliable servant, chances are, people would not have listened.

If you serve those around you well, when you speak for the Lord Jesus, it is more likely that they will listen.

God has something special to say to those who serve. Colossians 3:23

Jesus told his followers in Matthew 5:14, *Ye are the light of the world...* In other words, if others are going to hear about the Lord Jesus, they are going to hear it from us. God has made us a light for them.

Jesus also said in Matthew 5:16 - *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

People must see our good works before they'll listen to our good words.

4. SHE CARED ABOUT THOSE AROUND HER

Vs. 1 - This slave girl worked in the home of Naaman, who was a noted Syrian General. He was a great man, a national hero. But Naaman was a sick man. He had the dreaded disease of leprosy!

Eventually the slave girl spoke up and mentioned a servant of God, named Elisha, who could heal the leprosy. Why would she have spoken? Because she cared about Naaman's well being.

My friend, before you will ever speak as a home missionary, you need to care about the spiritual condition of those around you.

Most of you can quote John 3:16

Have you ever considered John 3:17-18 and John 3:36?

If these verses are true, and they are, those around you without Christ are going to hell!

God said it! Do you believe it? Do you care?

Do you care that your brothers and/or sisters are going to hell?

Do you care that your children, your parents, your aunts, uncles, and cousins are going to hell if they don't know Christ as Savior?

Until you care, you will remain silent.

Can you imagine the person you didn't talk to about Christ confronting you after his own condemnation before the throne of judgment? What will he say to you? "WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME!"

5. SHE TOLD WHAT SHE KNEW

Vs. 3 - Naaman's Maid told Naaman's wife what she knew about Elisha the Prophet. Evidently she didn't know much, perhaps she didn't even know his name. But she knew that Elisha could help Naaman, and because she cared, she said something.

Let me ask you something. Can the Lord Jesus help that unsaved loved one or neighbor of yours? Yes He can! He can give them forgiveness and eternal life. He can give them a better life right now! 2 Cor 5:17

If Jesus can help that unsaved friend or loved one, tell them what you know!

If you know that Jesus has changed your life and made you ready for Heaven, tell them.

If you know that Jesus died for their sins, tell them.

If you know that Jesus rose from the dead, tell them.

If you know that Jesus is the only way to Heaven, tell them.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW, TELL THEM WHAT YOU DO KNOW!

6. SHE DID WHAT SHE COULD

This servant girl's place was not to talk to her mistress's husband. She couldn't do that properly. She was a slave. But she could talk to her mistress, and did.

God does not hold you responsible for what you can't do, only for what you can do with his help.

You might not have as many opportunities to share the Gospel as you like, but there are things you can do, even if witnessing opportunities are sparse.

Who can you invite to come with you to church next Sunday?

There's Sunday School.

There's Youth Group.

There's church services.

Invite people to join you!

Carry tracts with you to share.

And pray for opportunities to share your faith with others.

And pray for the souls of others.

7. GOD DID THE REST

Vs. 4 - Naaman's wife told Naaman. And it was probably Naaman who went in and reported to the Syrian King. The Syrian King sent Naaman to Israel, and eventually Naaman was healed.

The little maid didn't do much, but there were great results.

You might not be able to do much, but if you do what you can, God will save souls. 1 Cor 3:6

Do what you can, let God do the rest!

2 Kings 5 DIFFERENT KINDS OF FAITH

It is very easy to consider the story of Naaman as only a Children's Bible Story. However, in Naaman's story I see all different types of faith demonstrated. Some are the right kinds of faith, some are wrong.

1. THE FAITH OF NAAMAN'S MAID WAS SIMPLE - Vss. 1-3

She had faith in the prophet of God who could heal Naaman.

2. THE FAITH OF THE KING OF SYRIA WAS SECULAR - Vss. 4-6 - He would deal with the King of Israel.

He would send money for healing.

3. THE FAITH OF THE KING OF ISRAEL WAS SHATTERED. -

Vs. 7 - He thought that this was a trick designed to start a war!

4. THE FAITH OF ELIJAH WAS SECURE - Vs. 8 - He was simply trusting God.

5. THE FAITH OF NAAMAN WAS SHOCKED. - Vss. 9-12 - Elisha did not come out and meet Naaman.. This is not what Naaman expected, nor were Elisha's instructions. Naaman's pride was hurt.

6. THE FAITH OF NAAMAN'S SERVANTS WAS SENSIBLE - Vs. 13 - They realized that what the prophet was asking for was not unreasonable.

7. THE FAITH OF NAAMAN WAS SUBMISSIVE - Vss. 13-19 - His whole attitude changed.

8. THE FAITH OF GEHAZI WAS SELFISH - Vss. 20-27 - He used a miracle which he did not perform as a means of personal gain. He received Naaman's leprosy as a result.

2 Kings 6:8-23 SO, YOU WANT TO SERVE THE LORD!

I think most true Christians want to serve the Lord in some capacity. Elisha shows us how to do this.

1. SPEAK GOD'S TRUTH Vss. 8-10

Elisha simply told others what God had told Him.

Paul did the same thing. See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 11:23

2. EXPECT SATAN'S RETALIATION Vss. 11-15

3. RELY ON GOD'S PROTECTION Vss. 16-20

Note that Elisha's prayer for blindness was for the purpose of protection, not harming someone else. In fact the blindness was temporary.

4. ACT AS GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE Vss. 21-23

God did not want the enemy killed in this case, but blessed. Elisha acted as God's representative in practicing the "golden rule" of doing unto others as we would have them do to us. Rom12:19-21.

Note that the raids on Israel ceased after this event.

2 Kings 6:8-23 FEARLESS BEFORE THE FOE

As Christians, we will have enemies for the sake of Christ. 2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:19

How we deal with our enemies will be an indication of how closely we are walking with God.

Enemies tend to scare us, but God wants us to be fearless before them. Proverbs 3:5-6, 29:25

The prophet Elijah was fearless before his enemies. We can learn from his example.

HIS PROBLEM WAS CAUSED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS - Vss. 8-14

Elisha was sharing Syria's war plans with the King of Israel. Elisha's knowledge came from God.

When the King of Syria discovered that Elisha was doing this, he became Elisha's enemy.

He sent soldiers to apprehend him. Elisha got in trouble for doing what was right. We need to realize that when we do what is right, we will also make enemies. We must make sure however that we are doing what is right. 1 Peter 2:19-20, 3:16-17, 4:15-16

HIS PROTECTION CAME FROM GOD - Vss. 15-17

Elisha was not upset because he knew God was protecting him. He asked God to show his servant the great heavenly host that had them protected.

We must remember that God has promised to protect us and He is able to take care of us even through "impossible" circumstances. Isaiah 41:10, 1 John 4:4, Hebrews 2:13-14, Jeremiah 32:27

HIS PRAYERS CLIMAXED IN VICTORY - Vs. 18

Elisha's prayer that his enemies would become blind was answered. This prayer did not result in permanent difficulty for his enemies, but enabled him to be delivered from their power.

We must trust that God will answer our prayers. Luke 18:1, James 5:16-18

HIS PLAN CALLED FOR LOVE - Vss. 19-23

Elijah "blessed" his enemies feeding them and sending them home in peace.

Our Lord Jesus expects us to act in like fashion. Matthew 5:43-48, Romans 12:18-21

The end result of the kindness Elisha showed was a cessation of raids made on Israel's towns.

2 Kings 6:24-7:20 SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS

In this story I see the lepers as a picture of the born again Christians. Eventually the lepers spread the good news that the famine was over and there was food, clothes, and money available. As Christians we are to spread the word of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. After giving the background of the story in 2 Kings 6:24-7:2, point out that these lepers remind us Christians of:

THE PAST (The way we were.) Vss.3-5

Hurting Vs. 3 - We were hurting because of our sin.

Hungry Vs. 4 - We were Spiritually hungry for something better.

Honest Vss. 4-5 - No one gets saved until they honestly admit their sin and turn to Christ in faith.

THE PRESENT (The way we are.) Vs. 8 (Vs. 5-7 tell of the fate of the Syrian army.)

Rich - We have great riches in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

Satisfied - We have great satisfaction in what Christ has done for us.

Selfish - All too often we keep our joy in Christ to ourselves.

THE PROMOTION (The way we should be.) Vss. 9-20

These lepers were:

Convicted - Vs. 9 - We need to be convicted that we shouldn't keep silent about our salvation. (Ps.107:2)

Convincing - Vss. 10-11 - We need to be convincing others of the joys of salvation. (1 Peter 3:15)

Converting - Vss. 13-16 - As a result of the lepers' testimony, many were fed. As a result of our testimony, many will come to Christ.

2 Kings 13:4-19 FAITH CLINIC

Faith is important. Hebrews 11:6

Sometimes our faith is weak, and needs strengthening. Such was the condition of King Joash's faith. The clinic in faith that the dying prophet, Elisha, gave to this king can help us develop our faith.

POWER NEEDED - Vs. 14

Joash was probably lamenting the eminent death of Elisha, and realized that his power as a prophet in Israel would be missing. The King evidently realized that the loss of a godly man was equivalent to a loss of God's power. See 2 Kings 2:12. We have probably lamented the death of a godly man or woman who showed the power of God in their lives. We have probably wondered who would replace them.

POWER COMMUNICATED - Vss. 15-16

Elisha placed his hands on the king's hands, indicating that the power was coming from God. We must remember that power has been communicated to us through the Holy Spirit. Acts 1:8

POWER PROMISED - Vs. 17

The king was to shoot an arrow in the direction of the enemy.

The arrow was symbolic of the victory that God would give over the enemy.

POWER NEGLECTED - Vs. 18

Elisha told the king to smite the ground with the arrows. Perhaps he was to shoot them into the ground.

Instead of using up all his arrows, he showed his limited faith by only hitting the ground 3 times.

POWER LIMITED - Vs. 19

Elisha was unhappy with Joash's lack of faith. The king should have hit the ground more often and he would have had total victory! Each time the King hit the ground was symbolic of a battle won over the enemy. We are limited in our victories over Satan by our lack of faith. The more we use our faith, the more we will have the victory!

2 Kings 17:7-18 WHY ISRAEL FELL

At this point in Israel's history there were two nations, the northern nation of Israel and the southern nation of Judah. Both nations fell eventually, but Israel fell first. Here are three reasons Israel fell. If God judged Israel, He will also judge our nation if we are guilty of the same sins.

ISRAEL SERVED OTHER GODS - Vss. 7-12

ISRAEL SHUNNED THE PROPHETS - Vss. 13-14

ISRAEL SINNED AGAINST GOD - Vss. 15-18

2 Kings 19:14-19 PRAYING FOR A PROBLEM

PRELUDE - Vss. 1-18

ACKNOWLEDGE THE LORD - Vss. 14 -15

Psalms 100, Philippians 4:6-7

ACKNOWLEDGE THE DIFFICULTY - Vss. 16-18

ACKNOWLEDGE THE SOLUTION - Vs. 19

1 Peter 5:7

POSTLUDE - Vss. 20-37

2 Kings 22:2 THE MAN WHO STOOD FOR GOD

In the middle of Judah's apostasy there came a King, Josiah, who stood for God. May his tribe increase!

HIS DIRECTION - "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord..."

HIS DEVOTION - "...and walked in all the way of David his father..."

HIS DETERMINATION - "...and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left."

1 Chronicles 4:10 WANTING GOD'S BEST

JABEZ WANTED GOD'S BLESSING - *Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed*

JABEZ WANTED GOD'S INFLUENCE - *and enlarge my coast*

JABEZ WANTED GOD'S POWER - *and that thine hand might be with me*

JABEZ WANTED GOD'S PROTECTION - *and that thou wouldst keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me!*

1 Chronicles 10 THE END OF AN ERA

DEATH OF SAUL AND HIS SONS – Vss. 1-6

DEFEAT OF ISRAEL'S ARMIES – Vss. 7-10

DEDICATION OF THE MEN OF JABESH-GILEAD – Vss. 11-12

DECLARATION OF THE REASONS FOR SAUL'S DEATH – Vss. 13-14

1 Chronicles 17:1 etc. STANDING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

In the Bible many people were called upon to speak for God. In the Old Testament there were priests like Ezra, prophets like Moses, Ezekiel and Hosea, and kings such as David and Solomon.

In the New Testament there prophets like John the Baptist, Apostles such as Peter and Paul, pastors such as Timothy and Titus, and deacons such as Stephen. Of course, best of all, the Son the God spoke for His Father. Hebrews 1:1-4

The man who speaks for God will receive stringent judgment. James 3:1, Revelation 22:18-19

The man who speaks for God should be a man who is standing for righteousness because God is righteous. Psalm 145

1 Peter 1:15-16 is to be especially true for a preacher of righteousness.

After Samuel died the next prominent prophet was Nathan.

He was evidently a friend of David, a trusted advisor, and a spokesman for God in the King's court.

Nathan's concern was for the righteousness of God!

HE CARED ENOUGH TO CORRECT HIMSELF - 1 Chronicles 17:1-15

Nathan gave his blessing upon David building a temple for God. He actually told David that God was with him. Vss. 1-2

Nathan found out that this was not what God had planned. Vss. 3-14

Nathan corrected himself and gave David the accurate message from God. Vs. 15

If we are going to stand for righteousness, we must admit when we are wrong and correct mistakes.

HE CARED ENOUGH TO CONFRONT SIN - 2 Samuel 12:1-14

David's sins concerning Bathsheba and Uriah are described in 2 Samuel 11.

Nathan confronted David about his sin. This was a bold thing to do considering that David could have had Nathan executed. If we care about righteousness, we need to confront what is wrong. Galatians 6:1

HE CARED ENOUGH TO COMFORT - 2 Kings 12:24-25

Although Nathan was quick to confront David about sin, he was just quick to bring God's message of comfort.

The nickname given to Solomon means "Beloved of God". A man who stands for righteousness does not have a one-dimensional message. He is to be an encourager as well as a preacher against sin. Timothy was told to encourage as well as to reprove and to rebuke. 2 Timothy 4:2

HE CARED ENOUGH TO COOPERATE - 1 Kings 1

David was near death, and one of Solomon's brothers planned to take the throne away from Solomon.

Nathan cooperated with others so that this plan was foiled.

The church is a body with many members. We are to work together for the cause of righteousness.

2 Chronicles 1:1-12 THREE PRINCIPLES

1. GOD STRENGTHENS, WE SERVE. Vss. 1-6

2. GOD REQUIRES, WE REQUEST. Vss. 7-10

3. GOD REWARDS, WE RECEIVE. Vss. 11-12

2 Chronicles 7:1-3 WHAT A WORSHIP SERVICE!

Solomon had completed building the temple in Jerusalem.

There was a dedication service and prayer by Solomon. See 2 Chronicles 5-6

DISPLAY OF GOD'S POWER - Vs. 1

Fire came from Heaven and consumed the sacrifices.

DISPLAY OF GOD'S PRESENCE - Vss. 1b-2

The glory of the Lord filled the temple and it was so tremendous that the priests could not enter.

DISPLAY OF GOD'S PLEASURE - Vss. 1-2

For God to react the way He did, it is obvious that He was pleased.

DISPLAY OF GOD'S PRAISE - Vs. 3

The people responded with worship and praise.

2 Chronicles 7:14 A NATION AFTER GOD'S HEART

We can be proud of our beautiful forests, gorgeous mountains, enormous rivers, and fertile farmlands.
We can be proud of our democracy, our system of government, and our freedoms of speech and movement.
We can be proud to be a refuge for those in need. It is written on the base of our Statue of Liberty,
"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free, The refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

We can be proud of our Bill of Rights, and proud that it is on our money that it says, "In God we trust".

I, for one, am proud to sing "My Country 'Tis of Thee"!

But let's not fool ourselves. We are a nation that is in trouble!

We are a nation that permits babies to be murdered through abortion.

We are a nation that has to build more cells because our prisons are overcrowded.

We are a nation that forbids prayer in school, and forbids Christian groups to meet on some campuses.

We are a nation whose general morality has reached an all time low.

We tend to slap the face of God who made us a great nation!

There is no doubt that America is but a shadow of her previous greatness. Does this have anything to do with God? 2 Chronicles 7:13 tells us that the answer is "yes"! In appearing to Solomon God shows that He commands the things that happen to a nation. He controls the weather, the animal population and disease according to this verse.

2 Chronicles 36:14-17 shows God's judgment on Judah. The same thing happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

My friends, never say that it couldn't happen here!

Down through the centuries too many nations have fallen for us to be presumptuous.

Instead, we must ask, "Can we reverse the trend?" The answer, of course, is "yes"!

God shows us how to reverse the trend in 2 Chronicles 7:14

Let us answer 3 questions:

1. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

God says that His people are the responsible ones.

Originally, that would have meant that God was speaking to Israel. Today, however, the people of God are the Christians. Romans 10:12-13

Notice also that the people of God are those called by His name.

We are called "Christians", named after Jesus Christ, who is God in the flesh.

It is the Christian who needs to be responsible for a national turning back to God.

2. WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES?

We are to humble ourselves. James 4:6,10

We are to pray. I believe this is a prayer of confession. Psalm 32:5

We are to seek God's face.

We are to turn from our wicked ways.

3. HOW WILL GOD RESPOND?

He will hear from Heaven.

He will forgive our sin.

He will heal our land.

2 Chronicles 7:14 HELP FOR AMERICA

I probably don't have to tell you that America is a moral and spiritual mess! Just look at the deterioration in American television, radio and movies. Things are said and allowed on them that were considered inappropriate and lewd in the past.

Consider also the drastic increase of unmarried couples living together, and the lack of respect and discipline in the schools.

And what about all the perverted crimes against children and the astronomical number of abortions performed in a year?

So, what is the solution to this problem? Can we see any change? Is there a way of seeing America reverse itself and once again become a God-fearing nation? I believe the answer is "yes". But I also believe that for America to turn around, the change must begin here and in every church that truly preaches and practices the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

2 Chronicles 7:14 - *If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*

I want us to see three things from this verse;

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE RESPONSIBLE

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO REPENT

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE REWARDED

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE RESPONSIBLE

If my people, which are called by my name,

When these words were originally written, God's people were the Children of Israel. And although Israel is still special in God's eyes, and will someday serve God through the Lord Jesus Christ. There is another people today that are the people of God.

John 3:16 - *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.*

John 1:12-13 - *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: [13] Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

Not only are we God's people but, as the text says, we are called by God's name. Actually we are called by the name of God's Son. We are called Christians.

When things are morally and spiritually rotten, God's people are responsible.

If my people, which are called by my name,

You might be thinking, "How can you blame all of this on us Christians?"

I believe that the problem is, at least in part, our fault for a few reasons:

1. We have failed to live Godly lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16
2. We have failed to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" to those around us. Matthew 5:13, Matthew 5:14-16
3. We have failed to witness to others.
4. We have failed to really care about the conditions around us, and failing to care, we have,
5. Failed to pray!

So, like it or not, we are responsible for part of the problem, because we have not been part of the solution.

GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO REPENT

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves,

When a person repents, he or she has a change in heart and a change in direction. He is headed in the wrong direction and turns around to go in the right direction. The first part of repentance is humility.

Humility is a quality that God requires of those who would be saved. In order to have God's forgiveness we have to admit that we are sinners and can't save ourselves.

Humility is a quality that God requires of Christians.

I believe that we as Christians need to humble ourselves in two ways. First of all, we try too hard in our own strength. We fail to admit what Jesus told us in John 15:5. With out Him we can do nothing.

The sooner we realize that we are helpless without God, the better off we will be. What stops us? Our pride keeps us from humbling ourselves before God and admitting that we need His help.

Also our pride and our lusts keep us from admitting that we have sin in our lives that needs to be dealt with.

We don't like admitting our sin or allowing God to take the sin away from us.

Need an idea of what sort of things comprise sin? Proverbs 6:19-20, Revelation 21:7-8

Amos 3:3 - *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

Sin is anything that God does not agree with!

We can't walk with God unless we agree with Him!

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face,

The next step in repentance is seeking God's face through prayer.

We fail to live holy lives because we fail to pray.

Oh we pray when people are seriously ill.

But we don't pray seeking God's strength for Godly living.

And we don't pray seeking God's forgiveness for our sins.

And we don't pray bringing the need of our nation before the Lord.

There was once a man named Nehemiah who was concerned because the city of Jerusalem was defenseless. Before he did anything else he beseeched God in repentance and prayer.

Nehemiah 1:4-11 Nehemiah knew how to seek the face of God in prayer. How about you?

Psalms 66:18 - *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:*

Psalms 32:5 - *I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*

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.*

And with confession of sin comes turning from sin.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways;

Turning away from sin means I've truly repented of sin.

Turning from sin, requires personal submission to God and reliance of on Him. Romans 6:1-14

GOD'S PEOPLE WILL BE REWARDED

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Notice the word "then".

Don't expect God to hear, forgive or heal until you have humbly repented.

God promises to hear when we cry out to him in humble confession and forsaking of sin. When God hears, He is attentive and ready to act in our behalf.

God also promises to forgive our sin. We've already seen that.

But please realize that forgiveness means a removal of guilt. So many of us walk around feeling guilty about things that God wants us simply to confess and forsake.

Finally, God promises to heal our land.

What land?

America? Yes, as Christians pray for the healing of America individually and corporately, I believe we will experience healing. That's why we are encouraging you to gather together with other Christians on Wednesday Night at the Sloan Hill Church.

But God also promises to heal YOUR LAND.

Perhaps it's a behavioral problem that you have.

Perhaps it's a broken relationship.

Perhaps it's a financial need.

Perhaps it's a problem with your husband or wife, son or daughter, Mom or Dad.

Perhaps it's a need for friends or loved ones to be saved.

When we are right with God, we open the door for God to answer our prayers and to meet our needs.

Jeremiah 33:3, 1 John 5:14-15

Jeremiah 33:3 - *Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.*

2 Chronicles 7:14 COMPATIBLE WITH GOD - NEW YEARS

There was much concern expressed about the world's computers being compatible with the year 2000. In the New Year our biggest concern should be that we as Christians are compatible with God.

GOD'S PEOPLE

God's people for today are the ones who know Christ as Savior

FOLLOWING GOD'S PLAN

Humility

Prayer

Seek God's Face

Turn from Wicked Ways

RECEIVE GOD'S PROMISES

Of Hearing

Of Forgiveness

Of Healing

2 Chronicles 14 PATH TO VICTORY

King Asa shows us how to have victory in our lives, just as he had victory over his enemies in this chapter.

RIGHTEOUSNESS - Vs. 1

REMOVAL - Vss. 3-5 - Asa removed all idols and false gods in the land. He fulfilled Exodus 20:1-6.

REMINDER - Vs. 4 - He reminded those under his leadership to seek the Lord.

READINESS - Vss. 6-8 - He prepared himself for battle, just as we should prepare ourselves for spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18).

RELIANCE - Vss. 9-11 - When the enemy came, he relied on God.

RESULTS - Vss. 12-15 - God gave the victory.

2 Chronicles 14-16 KING ASA - BIOGRAPHY OF A DETERMINED MAN

It is good to be determined, as King Asa was, but we must be careful not to become stubborn like King Asa became.

YEARS OF STRENGTH - CHAPTER 14

Asa was determined to rely on the Lord His God for strength.

Reform - Vss. 2-5

Rest - Vss. 6-8

Reliance - Vss. 9-15

YEARS OF SENSITIVITY - CHAPTER 15

Asa was determined to follow God's directions and do as he was told.

Reminder - Vss. 1-7

Response - Vs. 8

YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Over the years Asa became more self-reliant. He made the mistake of trying to solve his own problems without God's help. When he was corrected, instead of repenting, he became stubborn.

Reaction - Vss. 1-6 - Asa reacted by seeking the help of the King of Syria.

Rebuke - Vss. 7-9 - Asa was rebuked for not relying on God.

Rejection - Vs. 10 - Asa stubbornly refused to hear God's prophet and threw him in jail.

Refusal - Vss. 11-12 - Asa stubbornly refused to seek the Lord's help when he had diseased feet.

When Asa sought to follow the Lord he was determined.

When Asa refused to follow the Lord he was stubborn.

Which are you?

2 Chronicles 15-16 DON'T ASSUME

Some time ago I heard the story of a fire, of which, a newspaper photographer needed to get close pictures. His newspaper agreed to line up a plane for him at a local airport. When he arrived at the airport, sure enough, a plane was there. He jumped in and yelled "take off"! The pilot did.

Once in the air, the photographer yelled to the pilot to make two or three low passes over the fire. The pilot asked "Why?". He answered, "Because I'm a photographer! Photographers take pictures. I'm going to take pictures of the fire!"

The pilot replied with alarm, "You mean you're not the flight instructor?!" Both men had made wrong assumptions. The photographer assumed that he was in the right plane. The pilot assumed the man was his flight instructor.

It is never good to make assumptions. The Bible warns against wrong assumptions in 1 Corinthians 10:12 and Hebrews 3:12.

King Asa, in our text, had been a Godly king (See 2 Chronicles 14).

However, he made the mistake of assuming he could do things that displeased God.

REVIVAL - 2 Chronicles 15

There was a turning back to God during Asa's ministry. We see three ingredients of Revival.

1. God Speaks Vss. 1-7

2. God's People Respond Vss. 8-14

3. God Blesses Vss. 15, 19

REVERSAL - 2 Chronicles 16:1-6

Instead of relying on God as he did in 2 Chronicles 14:9-12, Asa tried to rely on his allies. He assumed that his allies could help him and that he didn't need God.

REBUKE - 2 Chronicles 16:7-9

God's prophet tells Asa that he has done wrong.

REFUSAL - 2 Chronicles 16:10

Asa assumed he could do as he pleased, and in his own strength.

He persecuted God's man, and refused to listen.

RESULTS - 2 Chronicles 16:12

Evidently, Asa still assumed he could do things in his own power. He stubbornly refused to call on God.

2 Chronicles 17 Jehosaphat

Jehosaphat was an imperfect, yet Godly king who has much to teach us.

GODLY STEPS - THE WALK WITH GOD - Vss. 3-6

GODLY SHARING - THE WORD OF GOD - Vss. 7-9

GODLY SUNSHINE - THE WEALTH OF GOD - Vss. 10-19

2 Chronicles 17 TIPS FROM A GODLY MAN

From time to time I have given tributes to Godly men and women. Often, at funerals, I have been able to share good, honest words about Christians who have passed on. When I was pastor of another church I wrote a column fairly often for the local newspaper. In that column I wrote at least one tribute to my Dad. It's nice when people can say nice things about those we love. It's also nice when, at times, people say nice things about us.

We should not live to receive tributes. When we live Godly lives tributes will come.

One of the tributes found in God's word is given to King Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 17:3, "And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat..."

The Lord was with Jehoshaphat to guide, encourage, help, protect and preserve. I know that the Lord Jesus is never going to leave or forsake any Christian (Hebrews 13:5). But when I think of the Lord Jesus being with Jehoshaphat, or being with me, I think of Him doing everything He can to be on our side. The Lord will do everything He can to be on my side, when I do everything I can to be on His side. As I walk in such a way

as to please Him, He is free to do all in His power to be with me. (See Psalm 66:18, Ephesians 4:30 and 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22)

What a great tribute it will be when we pass from this scene if people can say of us "The Lord was with him." Jehoshaphat, by his example, gives us some tips for Godly living.

WALK AFTER A GODLY EXAMPLE - Vs.3 - He followed the example of David. We should follow the Godly examples of those in the Bible and those we know who are dedicated Christians.

WALK IN GOD'S COMMANDMENTS - Vs. 4b - Jehoshaphat followed the commandments of God. We should do the same.

SEEK GOD'S FACE - 4a, 6a - See Psalm 27:4,8.

ACT IN GOD'S BEHALF - Vs. 6b - Jehoshaphat removed places of false worship. There are actions we can take in God's behalf to promote Godliness.

SHARE GOD'S WORD - Vss. 7-9 - Jehoshaphat supported the teaching of God's Word. We do the same when we support our churches, support missionaries, and when we distribute God's Word and tracts to others.

ENJOY GOD'S BLESSINGS - Vss. 10-19 - God blessed Jehoshaphat. He will bless us too, as we seek to please Him. Many of our blessings will be Spiritual in nature.

2 Chronicles 18 TAKING A STAND

Micaiah was a prophet of God during the times of that wicked king, Ahab. Micaiah stood for what is right even when it meant going to jail.

THE HATED PROPHET - Vss. 1-7

Ahab hated Micaiah. Things have not changed. God's spokesmen are often hated today. John 15:18-25

THE HONEST PROPHET - Vss. 8-22

Micaiah would not be swayed from speaking the truth that God gave him to speak.

THE HUMILIATED PROPHET - Vss. 23-27

A false prophet slapped him. Ahab put him in prison. But Micaiah remained true.

THE HONORED PROPHET - Vss. 28-34

Micaiah had the greatest honor of all. His prophecy came true. It was evident who the man of God was!

Ezekiel 2:5

2 Chronicles 19 LISTEN! GOD IS SPEAKING!

Often God speaks through his prophets. Such is the case in this passage. He seems to have a word for everyone.

A WORD FOR THE KING - REBUKE Vss. 1-2

- REASSURANCE Vs. 3

A WORD FOR THE PEOPLE - RETURN Vs. 4

A WORD FOR CIVIL LEADERS - REMINDER Vss. 5-7

A WORD FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS - RESPONSIBILITY Vss. 8-11

2 CHRONICLES 20:1-25 SANCTIFIED PROBLEM SOLVING

We all have problems. Sometimes we use creative ways to solve them.

The best way to solve problems is to include God in the process, just as Jehoshaphat did.

INTRODUCTION - Vss. 1-4 - The problem is described.

PRAYER - Vss. 5-13 - Philippians 4:6-7

PROMISE - Vss 14-17 - We have the promises of God to rely on in His Word.

PRAISE - Vss. 18-21 - This reflects trust.

POWER - Vss. 22-25 - The power was all God's.

2 Chronicles 29:1-30 OUT OF THE DOLDRUMS

We all get the "blahs" sometime.

We don't feel like doing anything or associating with anybody.

It is possible for us to get the Spiritual "blahs" or to be have the Spiritual Doldrums.

Judah was in this state because of King Ahaz. 2 Chronicles 28:19-25

Hezekiah succeeded his father, Ahaz, to the throne. He got Judah out of the Spiritual doldrums. Based on what Hezekiah did, here's how we can get out of the Spiritual doldrums ourselves.

REOPEN THE TEMPLE Vs. 3

The temple today is our lives. 2 Corinthians 6:19-20

If we closed the temple through lack of love (Revelation 2:1-5) for the Lord, or sin, reopen it, and make sure that Jesus is on the throne.

REALIZE THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN Vss. 6-10

Proverbs 3:11-12
REMOVE WHAT IS OFFENSIVE TO GOD Vss. 5, 15-17
Proverbs 6:16-19, Colossians 3:5-9, 1 John 1:9
REPLACE THE OFFENSIVE WITH THE POSITIVE Vss. 18-19
The Word of God - Colossians 3:16
The Spirit of God - Ephesians 5:18-21
The Fruit of the Spirit - Galatians 5:22-23
REDEDICATE YOURSELF TO CHRIST Vss. 20-23
Romans 12:1
RETURN TO PRAISE Vss. 24-30
Praise is the last to come, and is a good sign you are out of the doldrums.

2 Chronicles 33:1-17 THE CONVERSION OF A WICKED KING

There are many wicked characters mentioned in the Bible.
One of the wickedest was a king of Judah named Manasseh.
There was a day, however, when God did business with Manasseh, and Manasseh was converted. This reminds me that the wickedest of men can come to Christ today and be saved.
A CORRUPT LIFE Vss. 1-10
A CONVICTED LIFE Vss. 11-13
A CHANGED LIFE Vss. 14-17

Ezra 1:1-11 GOD IN ACTION!

GOD MOVED A KING - Vss. 1-2
Cyrus was moved by God to call for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
GOD MOTIVATED A PEOPLE - Vss. 3, 5
There were those who were motivated to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple.
GOD MADE A PROVISION - Vss. 4, 6-11
The people who didn't go gave to the work. Cyrus himself made donations.
Think of this as a picture of God's plan for missions.
GOD MOVED A KING - JESUS
Jesus gave the Great Commission. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15
GOD MOTIVATES A PEOPLE - MISSIONARIES
Missionaries have responded to the King's call for workers.
GOD MAKES A PROVISION - SUPPORT
Those who do not go to the mission field can support the work of the missionaries that do.

Ezra 3 REVIVAL

For about seventy years the temple in Jerusalem laid in ruins. A group of people came out of exile back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (Ezra 1-2). In Chapter 3, the rebuilding of the temple is started.
I believe that this chapter shows us a procedure for revival.
REESTABLISH WORSHIP - Vss. 1-6
Before an effort was made to rebuild the temple, worship was reestablished. A good way to start revival is through sincere worship of God. Psalm 89:7 Sincere worship will lead to true repentance.
REBUILD THE FOUNDATION - Vss. 7-10a
The foundation needed to be rebuilt.
When we are revived we reaffirm that our life is built on Christ alone. 1 Corinthians 3:11
We repent and return to our "first love". Revelation 2:4-5
RESPOND APPROPRIATELY - Vss. 10b-13
1. The Response of Sorrow - Vss. 12-13
Some people were sorrowful because of the smaller size of the rebuilt temple.
We should sorrow over sin when God is reviving us. 2 Corinthians 7:10
2. The Response of Joy - Vss. 10b-11
There was joy when the foundation for the temple was relayed.
God was in the center of the praise and joy.
When we experience revival in our lives, we too will praise God and experience His joy. Psalm 85:6

Ezra 7:10 A NEW YEAR'S EXAMPLE

As we approach another New Year, it is always good to have an example follow. Consider Ezra the Scribe.
EZRA'S PURPOSE - "For Ezra had prepared his heart"
EZRA'S PURSUIT - "to seek the law of the LORD,"
EZRA'S PRACTICE - "... and to do it,"
EZRA'S PROCLAMATION - "... and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."

Ezra 7:10 A ROLE MODEL

George Headley Sr. and Jr. were both pastors, ministering mostly in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Both father and son modeled for me what it takes to be a pastor.

Ed and Janet Apgar are parents of children a little older than ours. When their boys were teens, Ed and Janet showed us how to deal with that age group through their example.

Role models are helpful. There are many role models in the Bible, and one of my favorites is Ezra. He is a great role model for pastors and laymen. Begin your message by sharing a little about Ezra.

Then stress that he was able to accomplish all that he did because he had a prepared heart. Ezra, as role model, teaches us to do three things:

SEEK GOD'S WORD - "...to seek the law of the Lord..."

SHOW GOD'S WORD - "...and to do it..."

SHARE GOD'S WORD - "...and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."

You don't have to be a preacher to study God's Word, live God's Word, and share what God has taught you.

Ezra 7:11-28 MISSION FOR THE KING

Ezra was a Godly man who was sent back to Jerusalem by the King of Persia. The King gave Ezra a letter of commission.

EZRA'S RETURN - Vss. 11-14

He was go back to the land of his ancestors to Jerusalem.

He was to inquire concerning spiritual well being of the people in Judah and Jerusalem.

EZRA'S RESOURCES - Vss. 15-24

Ezra was to take back contributions from the king and his counselors, and the contributions of those in Babylon willing to give. Vss. 15-16

Ezra was to buy what was necessary to perform worship in Jerusalem. Vss. 17-18

Ezra was to take vessels that were given for the service of the house of God in Jerusalem. Vs. 19

Ezra had access to the king's treasure house for whatever else was needed. Vss. 20-23

Ezra and the religious leaders were to be tax-free. Vs. 24

EZRA'S RESPONSIBILITIES - Vss. 25-26

Ezra was to appoint magistrates and judges.

Those who disobeyed were to be punished.

EZRA'S REJOICING - Vss. 27-28

Ezra rejoiced because he knew that God had spoken to the King's heart and had given Ezra favor in the eyes of the king and his counselors.

Ezra 8:15-35 INCREDIBLE JOURNEY

Ezra was leading a group of people back to the Promised Land. The king had approved his mission. Now it was time to travel.

RECRUITMENT OF WORKERS - Vss. 15-20

Levites were still needed to do the Lord's Work. A call for Levites was sent out and several responded.

REQUEST BEFORE GOD - Vss. 21-23

Ezra did not want to ask for a body guard from the King. Instead, he and his party entreated God for safety.

RESPONSIBILITY SHARED - Vss. 24-30

Several of the priests were given responsibility for the silver and gold being brought back. A record was kept of who had what.

ROUTE SUCCESSFUL - Vss. 31-32

The group arrived in Jerusalem safely.

REPORT MADE - Vss. 33-34, 36

The trip was successful and each person carrying treasure submitted it for weighing. Nothing was lost!

Also a report was made to the King's leadership.

REVERENCE SHOWN - Vs. 35

God was worshipped with sacrifices.

Ezra 9 DEALING WITH SIN

BE SHOCKED AT SIN - Vss. 1-4

When Ezra was told of the sins of the people he was shocked.

BE SHAMED BEFORE GOD - Vss. 5-7

Not only was Ezra shocked, but he was ashamed.

SEE GOD'S GRACE - Vss. 8-9

He recognized how gracious God had been.

STATE YOUR TRANSGRESSIONS - Vss. 10-15

Ezra was specific about the sins of the people.

Ezra 10:1-8 SIN CONFRONTED - Part 1

GODLY SORROW - Vss. 1a, 6

Ezra sincerely grieved over the sins of his people. 2 Corinthians 7:10

GODLY SUGGESTION - Vss. 2-3

Schechaniah suggested that a covenant be made with God to deal with the sin and correct it.

GODLY SUPPORTERS - Vss. 1b, 4-5

There were those who stood with Ezra in his grief over the sin. They also were willing to support Ezra as he dealt with the sin.

GODLY SUMMONS - Vss. 7-8

Everyone was called together to deal with the sin. It was a public sin. It needed public attention.

Ezra 10:9-19 SIN CONFRONTED - Part 2

ASSEMBLY GATHERED - Vs. 9

ACCUSATION LEVELED - Vss. 10-11

AGREEMENT REACHED - Vss. 12-15

ACTION TAKEN - Vss. 16-19

Nehemiah 1 Nehemiah, Patriot

When we consider the word "patriot", we think of those who have defended and helped the country we call our own. In the U.S., we think of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, Eisenhower, MacArthur etc.

There are many Jewish patriots in the Bible. One of the greatest was Nehemiah, a man who served as the king's cup-bearer in Persia.

NEHEMIAH'S CONCERN - For the welfare of his nation. Vss. 1-4

NEHEMIAH'S CRY -

Confessing Sin Vss. 5-7

Claiming God's Promises Vss. 8-10

NEHEMIAH'S CHOICE - Willing to get involved himself. Vs. 11

Nehemiah 1 THE SECRET

Most people whom we consider to be "successful" have had some principles by which they have governed their lives. Often, when a person accomplishes something another might ask, "What is the secret to your success?" A Biblical example to knowing the secret to someone's success is found in Ezra 7:10. You will note that Ezra prepared his heart to seek God's Word, obey God's Word, and teach God's Word.

The Bible also gives us insights into the secret of the success of Nehemiah. Nehemiah was born in captivity after the fall of Jerusalem. He ended up being the king's cupbearer, which was a very responsible position. Nehemiah ended up supervising the rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Without strong walls in those days, cities were always open to possible attack. He was also instrumental in revival among the Jewish people. Nehemiah 1 gives us some insights into the success of Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH HAD A HEART THAT WAS BURDENED Vss. 1-4

He received bad news concerning the "hometown".

He did not take the news lightly, but became burdened for the city.

He wept, mourned, fasted, and prayed.

The greater our burden, the more likely God will use us to accomplish His purposes.

NEHEMIAH HAD KNEES THAT WOULD BEND Vss. 4,6

Verse 4 tells us that Nehemiah prayed.

Verse 6 informs us that he prayed day and night.

Great things are accomplished for God through great men and women of prayer.

Luke 18:1-8, John 14:13-14,

NEHEMIAH HAD LIPS THAT WOULD CONFESS Vss. 6-7

Nehemiah realized that sin was the cause of problems. See Psalm 66:18

He confessed his own sins as well as his family's sins, and the sins of the nation.

See Psalm 32:5 and 1 John 1:9.

NEHEMIAH HAD A WILL THAT WAS SUBMISSIVE Vs. 9

Nehemiah was claiming the promises of God (Deuteronomy 30:1-3).

He is implying in this prayer that he is submitting his will to God's, being obedient to God's commandments.

God uses obedient servants (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

NEHEMIAH HAD FEET THAT WOULD GO Vs. 10-11

It is obvious in Verse 11 that Nehemiah was going to try to help rectify the problem in Jerusalem.

Nehemiah was willing to be part of the solution to the problem. He asks for mercy in the sight of the king.

When we pray for problems, we should be willing to be involved in the answer to our prayers, if God so wills.

Our feet must be willing to walk towards the problem and be used in the solution.

Nehemiah 1 NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

You will want to begin by giving the background for this prayer, as found in Vss. 1-4

Nehemiah's Prayer was a prayer of:

CONVICTION - Vs. 5

Nehemiah was convicted that God was the God of heaven, "the great and terrible God", who kept his promises and mercy to those who loved and obeyed him.

CONTINUATION - Vs. 6a

Nehemiah continued to pray until God gave the answers. Luke 18:1

CONFESSION - Vss. 6b-7

Nehemiah confessed his nation's sin, his family's sin, and his own sin.

CONFIDENCE - Vss. 8-9

Nehemiah was confident that God would keep the promises that He had made.

COMMITMENT - Vss. 10-11

Nehemiah was the Lord's servant. Nehemiah prayed that he would be used to solve the problem. He was in a good position for it. He was the king's cupbearer.

Nehemiah 2 PLANNING A BUILDING PROJECT

ASK FOR HELP Vss. 1-8

Nehemiah asked for man's help only after he had asked for God's help.

Notice that he asked in God's appointed way, at God's appointed time.

ASSESS THE NEED Vss. 9-16

ASSEMBLE THE WORKERS Vss. 17-20

Nehemiah 2 GETTING STARTED

It is always good to get off to a good start! Commercials on television challenge us to start the day with a good breakfast. If a project is being done at church, it is more likely to succeed if it is started well. I found that half of the battle in getting something done is to simply get started.

Nehemiah had a burden to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. He prayed and planned, and then waited for the right moment to get the work started. There are four steps we can take in getting started right. These are steps that Nehemiah took.

REQUEST - Vss. 1-8

Nehemiah got the permission to go to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls. Vss. 1-6

He had also planned well enough to request letters that would speed his travel and give him access to the needed lumber. Vss. 7-8

REVIEW - Vss. 9, 12-16

Before Nehemiah announced his plans, he reviewed the situation. He assessed things privately, so he knew exactly what was needed and had an idea of how to approach the project.

RECRUIT - Vss. 17-18

This was not a one-man project. Nehemiah recruited the needed personnel to get the job done.

REFUTE - Vss. 10-11, 19-20

When God works, so will Satan. There are times when the enemy will have to be answered. This is what Nehemiah did in Vss. 19-20.

Nehemiah 3 BUILDING THE WALLS

As Nehemiah and the Children of Israel rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, we see some principles that we should follow when we attempt to do things for God.

This is not a chapter that lends itself to verse by verse exposition, but these principles are repeated as we see the Israelites building for God.

MANY ASSUMED RESPONSIBILITY

Families took a piece of the project and worked on it.

MANY ACTED RESPONSIBLY

There was obviously hard work involved.

MANY ASSOCIATED REALISTICALLY

The teams of workers had to coordinate and cooperate with those who were building on either side of them in order for the walls and gates to fit together.

Nehemiah 4 HANDLING OPPOSITION

A man is running for the office of mayor in a town, and it looks like another man will run against him for the same office. That's opposition!

A union is working in the interest of some mistreated workers, and looks like all will go well until the company involved balks at the proceedings. That's opposition!

On the football field, there is only one thing that keeps my favorite team, the Philadelphia Eagles from being the Super Bowl champs. That's opposition! (They would have been 16-0 this past regular season, if the opposing teams never showed up!)

It seems that whenever we try to accomplish things for at home, school, or work, there is opposition. It is also true that when we try to accomplish things for God in our personal lives or in the church there is opposition.

Why is there so much opposition to what we want to accomplish for the Lord? The obvious answer is the work of Satan. He is God's enemy, and he is ours! 1 Peter 5:8, 2 Corinthians 11:14, Ephesians 6:12.

How do we handle opposition? Nehemiah 4 answers that question. Nehemiah and the people of Jerusalem were rebuilding the walls of the city. There were those who opposed the building project, and tried to destroy it.

WORK PRAYERFULLY - Vss. 1-6

Those opposed to God's work started talking. They mocked, ridiculed and criticized. They tried to discourage the building project with their words. Nehemiah and the people responded with work and prayer! The people continued to build, and Nehemiah continued to pray.

WATCH CONTINUALLY - Vss. 7-9

A conspiracy was planned against the work at Jerusalem. Nehemiah and the children of Israel set a watch for day and night, looking out for any possible attacks. They also continued to watch in prayer as well.

WAR ENCOURAGINGLY - Vss. 10-15

Evidently the workers became discouraged and were afraid. Vss. 10-12

Nehemiah encouraged them by making them ready to fight if they had to. Vss. 13-15

Most of us don't like to be at war, but when Satan is involved, war is inevitable, and we must be ready to fight. See Ephesians 6:10-18.

After Nehemiah's encouraging words, the people were ready to fight if they had to. Vss. 16-18

WARN IMMEDIATELY - Vss. 19-23

A warning system was set up, so when the enemy was spotted, there would be an immediate response. We need to be alert to the attacks of Satan, and be ready to warn others when they occur. When they do occur, we need to band together to fight the attack.

Nehemiah 5 PROBLEMS WITHIN

When things are going well in a church, Satan will often bring attacks from the outside. Perhaps a member will be falsely accused, or government will try to interfere. In many countries persecution will take place. When Satan fails to cause problems from outside the church, he will try to cause problems within the church. If Satan can cause unrest, unhappiness and strife within the church family, he will succeed in slowing down or halting the work of God.

When Nehemiah was leading the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, Satan tried to stop the work from the outside (Nehemiah 4). When that didn't work, he tried by causing problems within the group that was doing the building.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE POOR Vss. 1-5

Vs. 1 talks of two different groups of people working on the walls. There were the "haves" and the "have-nots". Notice that Nehemiah calls them "brethren". Even though they had different financial status, they were still bound together as fellow Jews. They were related through their ancestor Abraham. They were related in the sense of nationality. They were related in the mutual worship of their God. Today, we must remember that fellow Christians, no matter what their financial status, are our brothers and sisters. John 1:12 tells us that all believers are children of God. If all believers are children of God, then we are related in Christ!

The poor Jews had some specific problems:

1. There was a shortage of food. Vs. 2
2. There were those who mortgaged their property. Vs. 3
3. There were those who borrowed money. Vs. 4
4. Because of the money loaned, the rich Jews were taking over the lands of the poor Jews, and some of the poor Jews' children were being sold into slavery because of the debts. Vs. 5

THE CONFRONTATION OF THE OFFENDERS Vss. 6-11

Nehemiah confronted those who were sinning against their brethren.

He pointed out their sin in a great public assembly. Vss. 6-10

He demanded that they make things right! Vs. 11

THE CORRECTION OF THE PROBLEM Vss. 12-13

Those who were doing wrong were convicted and promised to fix the problem.

THE CONDUCT OF NEHEMIAH Vss. 14-19

Nehemiah practiced what he preached. As governor, he did not require the traditional payments. He did not needlessly add to the financial burden of the people, although he could have. The reason he acted this way was because of his fear for the Lord (Vs. 15).

Nehemiah 5 PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

There was a time when there was a problem with a teacher in a Sunday School Class. He needed to be replaced for the good of the class. I was a layman in the class and confronted the teacher. I only caused hard feelings. My pastor came to the rescue and managed to have the man resign and replace him with another teacher. My pastor certainly showed his ability to solve problems. By the way the teacher that was replaced is still a very good friend of mine.

Every one of us has the need to be able to solve problems. Although we can't truly solve problems without the Lord's help, He does provide with skills that we can use to see difficulties resolved.

As Nehemiah was leading in the rebuilding of the wall, a problem came up. Nehemiah used his problem solving skills in order to see the matter resolved. When problems come, we should imitate Nehemiah's problem solving skills.

1. KNOW THE PROBLEM - Vss. 1-5

Nehemiah listened thoroughly to the complaint before he made any decision.

2. HAVE A PROCEDURE - Vss. 6-13

He Considered - Vs. 7a - He thought before he talked or acted.

He Confronted - Vss. 7b-11

He got a Commitment - Vss. 12-13

3. SET THE PATTERN (EXAMPLE) - Vss. 14-19

Nehemiah did not take advantage of others although he could have. He set a positive example of how others should behave. He was not guilty of the same sin that he was confronting others about.

Nehemiah 6 DON'T QUIT!

Edison did not quit on the development of electric light bulb.

Bell did not quit on the development of the telephone.

Fulton did not quit on the development of the steamboat.

The Wright Brothers did not quit on development of the airplane.

Each of these was ultimately successful because they did not quit!

If Satan can get you to quit your work, he will!

He certainly worked hard to get Nehemiah away from completing the building of the wall around Jerusalem.

Notice three tools that Satan tried to use.

DISTRACTION Vss. 1-4

DISTORTION Vss. 5-9

DECEPTION Vss. 10-14

Conclusion: Nehemiah did not quit in spite of Satan's efforts.

The end result was a completed wall in 52 days time. Vs. 15

The enemies of Israel were discouraged. Vs. 16

But, the enemies of Israel did not quit. Vss. 17-19

Nehemiah 6 FAITHFUL UNTO COMPLETION

One of the great qualities of God is His faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23

One of the great qualities of Jesus' disciples is faithfulness. 1Corinthians 4:2, Revelation 2:10.

Nehemiah's enemies would make some final efforts to defeat the completion of the building project in Jerusalem. They did not want the walls rebuilt.

Nehemiah and those who worked with him were faithful until the job was done.

INVITATION EXTENDED Vss. 1-4

Sanbalat, Tobiah, Geshem and others tried to distract Nehemiah by trying to get him to leave the work and meet with them. Nehemiah realized that they meant to cause harm. His answer is classic and one we can give to those who would divert our attention from God's assigned tasks. He said, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." (Vs. 3)

SLANDER THREATENED Vss. 5-9

They were still trying to get Nehemiah to meet with them. They spoke of a rumor that would go to the king, and cause the king to think Nehemiah and Jerusalem were rebelling. They were trying to frighten the people, but Nehemiah relied on the Lord for strength.

FEAR ENCOURAGED Vss. 10-14

Shemaiah was hired to cause Nehemiah to hide himself in fear. Nehemiah stood firm, trusting God, and also perceived that God had not sent him. Still other prophets (probably false) tried to put Nehemiah in fear.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED Vss. 15-16

Because of the faithfulness of Nehemiah and others the walls were completed in record time. Nehemiah's enemies realized that God had helped him and the Israelites.

Nehemiah 8 THE IMPACT OF GOD'S WORD

God's Word is designed to have an impact on those who hear it, study it, believe it, and obey it. By way of introduction, take your readers to Psalm 19:7-9 where we find that God's Word impacts us by converting the soul, making wise the simple, rejoicing the heart, enlightening the eyes, and enduring forever. The building of the walls of Jerusalem had been completed. It was now a time of worship and celebration. At the center of all of this was the Word of God, which, as usual, had an impact on sincere listeners.

READING OF THE WORD - Vss. 1-8

The people desired to hear the Word of God. Vs. 1

Ezra read the Word to both men and women and those old enough to understand. Vss. 2-3

The people were attentive. Vs. 3

The people stood up in respect for the Word. Vs. 5

The people worshipped God before they listened to the Word. Vs. 6

Ezra was assisted by others who helped the people to understand what they were hearing. Vs. 7

Vs. 8 is a good description of expository preaching. "So they read in the book of the law distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading." There was reading, explanation and application

REACTION TO THE WORD - Vss. 9-12

The initial reaction to the reading of the Word of God is sorrow because the people were under conviction due to their sins. God's Word had done the convicting. Vs. 9

The people were encouraged not to mourn because it was a day of joy. They were also encouraged to do good by sending food to those who had none. Vss. 10-11

The people did as they were told, and rejoiced because they understood God's Word. Vs. 12

RESULTS FROM THE WORD - Vss. 13-18

The leaders came together to hear more of the Word of God. Vs. 13

They heard about the Feast of Tabernacles and celebrated it in obedience to God's Word. Vss. 14-17, Leviticus 23:34-36, 39-43

A solemn assembly was called together to deal with sin (described in Chapter 9).

Nehemiah 8 WHAT DO WE NEED TO HAVE CHURCH?

WE NEED PEOPLE - Vs. 1, Hebrews 10:25

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO WORSHIP - Vss. 5-6

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO ARE ATTENTIVE TO THE READING OF THE WORD - Vs. 3

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO HEAR THE WORD OF GOD EXPLAINED - Vs. 8

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO ARE CONVICTED - Vs. 9

WE NEED PEOPLE WHO ARE JOYFUL - Vs. 10-12

Nehemiah 9:1-29 OUR GREAT GOD

Introduce by quoting Psalm 48:1, Psalm 147:5, Psalm 145:3 and from the hymn "How Great Thou Art."

We serve a great God. In Nehemiah 9 the people of Israel are gathered in Jerusalem for a time of national and personal repentance before God. Here, as these people confess their sins and the sins of their nation, we see the greatness of God shown to us in many ways.

BACKGROUND - Vss. 1-5

Vs. 1 - There was fasting and the wearing of sackcloth and earth on the head. These indicate mourning.

Vs. 2 - There was separation. God's people got together to do business with God. This was not an evangelistic campaign. This was revival. God's people were getting right with God.

Vs. 3 - This was a time of examining God's word and confessing sin.

Vss. 4-5 - At the end of this came a season of prayer led by the Spiritual leaders, the Levites. Notice that they began with praise and worship. Next came a history of Israel that shows us how great our God is.

GOD IS GREAT IN CREATION - Vs. 6

GOD IS GREAT IN COVENANTS - Vss. 7-8

The word "covenant" has to do with an agreement. God's covenants are really God's promises to do something for us. Some covenants are conditional and some are unconditional. Here the covenant with Abraham is cited.

GOD IS GREAT IN CONFLICTS - Vss. 9-15

GOD IS GREAT WITH COMPASSION - Vss. 16-20

Israel sinned against God. God showed compassion by not forsaking them, guiding them, instructing them, feeding them and giving them water.

GOD IS GREAT IN COMPLETION - Vss. 21-25

God kept His promises. He preserved Israel in the wilderness for forty years. He gave victory over enemies, multiplied their children and enabled them to conquer the land. God completed the work He had started.

GOD IS GREAT IN CORRECTION - Vss. 26-29

Even though God shows compassion, He still exercises discipline. God will correct.

Nehemiah 10:28-39 COUNTING THE COST

Introduction - Luke 14:28-30

The people in Nehemiah's day considered what it would cost in order to please God.

1. THE COST OF SUBMISSION Vss. 28-29

They would "...walk in God's law..."

2. THE COST OF SEPARATION Vss. 28-30

They promised to separate themselves to walking in God's law and not marrying off their daughters to heathen husbands (2 Corinthians 6:14).

3. THE COST CONCERNING THE SABBATH Vs. 31

The Sabbath Day would not be a day of normal business. The implication is that the Sabbath would be set apart for God. Today we do not celebrate the Sabbath, but we do celebrate the Lord's Day (Sunday). Our main responsibility on the Lord's Day is to worship, learn and fellowship with God's People. Heb 10:24-25

4. THE COST OF SHARING Vss. 32-39

The people committed themselves to supporting God's work and God's workers. 1 Cor 16:1-2, 2 Cor 8-9

Nehemiah 10:28-39 A THREE-FOLD COMMITMENT

In our text we find Nehemiah and many of the children of Israel making a 3 part commitment before the Lord.

1. CONCERNING SEPARATION Vss. 28-30

They promised to separate themselves to walking in God's law and not marrying off their daughters to heathen husbands (2 Corinthians 6:14).

2. CONCERNING THE SABBATH Vs. 31

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The implication is that the Sabbath would be set apart for God.

3. CONCERNING SHARING Vss. 32-39

The people committed themselves to supporting God's work and God's workers.

Nehemiah 12:27-42 A JOYFUL ASSEMBLY

The walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt. Nehemiah 6:15

There was a dedication service held. The people had a joyful assembly!

THEY ASSEMBLED TO SING (with musical instruments) - Vss. 27-29

THEY ASSEMBLED TO SHOUT (thanksgiving) - Vss. 30-42

THEY ASSEMBLED TO SACRIFICE - Vs. 43

THEY ASSEMBLED TO SHARE - Vss. 44-47

Support was provided for those who shared in the leading of worship. This included the singers.

Nehemiah 13:1-9 CLEANING THE TEMPLE

Over the years, with short notice, I have requested that church deacons or elders accompany me on a hospital visit or to meet with someone to help handle a delicate situation. It was not unusual for me to hear men say something like this: "Sure Pastor! Just let me get cleaned up!" These words meant that the man wanted to quickly wash himself and change his clothes.

When a person gets word that a relative is coming to spend a few days, the cleaning begins. The room where the guest will stay is cleaned. The kitchen, dining room, family room and/or living room are vacuumed, dusted, and washed. Even the yard is placed in good order. Cleaning is very much a part of our lives. In these verses Nehemiah is challenged with the project of cleaning God's temple.

After the wall had been completed and dedicated, and after the Israelites had made commitments to the Lord, Nehemiah went back to his original occupation. He was again the cupbearer for the King of Persia. A few years later Nehemiah again returned to Palestine to be the Governor of Israel. When he returned, Nehemiah discovered that the temple needed cleaning.

To get the most out of our message, we must realize that there is a definite parallel for us. According to 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (Also see Romans 8:9). Our bodies and spirits belong to God because they were purchased with the blood of His Son. Therefore, we are to glorify God in body and spirit because they belong to God. We must realize that just as the temple in Nehemiah's day came to a point of need cleaning, our lives become polluted with sin and also end up needing cleaning.

UNHOLY ALLIANCE - Vss. 1-7

Vss. 1-3 - On the day that the walls of Jerusalem were dedicated, a decision was made by the Jews to separate themselves from those that did not belong as part of God's assembly. This included the Moabites and the Ammonites, who had not shown kindness to Israel (Deuteronomy 23:3-6).

Vss. 4-7 - In spite of this decision of separation, an alliance was formed between Eliashib, one of the priests and Tobiah, one of the key enemies of the Jews (Nehemiah 2:10, 4:1-8). While Nehemiah was out of town

(Vss. 6-7), Tobiah was allowed to move into a great chamber which had been used for storage of tithes and offerings. Tobiah was an Ammonite.

When we make alliances with unsaved people and with ungodly thoughts and actions in our human temples we are displeasing God. We need to take to heart the admonition of 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

UNHAPPY ATTITUDE - Vs. 8a

When Nehemiah discovered what had happened, he was unhappy. Whenever we discover an unholy alliance in our temples, we should be unhappy as well. Sin should grieve us (James 4:9).

UNHINDERED ACTION - Vss. 8b-9

Tobiah was evicted. The sin and compromise within our human temples should also receive action. See 2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1. We need to clean up our acts! See 1 John 1:9 and James 4:1-10.

Esther 1 -2 GOD PLANS AHEAD

You and I plan ahead for vacations, jobs that need to be done, schoolwork, and a host of other things. There would be a major move to wipe out the whole Jewish race. In these chapters we see God making advance plans to save His nation from extinction.

PRELIMINARY EVENTS LEADING TO PROTECTION -
Chapter 1

1. THE KING'S SHOW - Vss. 1-9

2. THE QUEEN'S SEPARATION - Vss. 10-12

3. THE NATION STUNNED - Vss. 13-18

4. MEMUCAN'S SOLUTION Vss. 19-22

PROMINENT LESSONS ABOUT PROTECTION - Chapter 2

1. MAN DOES NOT DO THINGS GOD'S WAY! - Vss. 1-4

2. GOD MAKES PLANS IN ADVANCE. - Vss. 5-7

3. GOD EXERCISES HIS WILL THROUGH MAN'S PLANS. - Vss. 8-20

4. GOD PUTS HIS SERVANTS IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME. - Vss. 21-23.

Esther 3-4 JEWS IN JEOPARDY

Long before Hitler tried to annihilate the Jews it was attempted by a man named Haman. However, God had chosen vessels, Mordecai and Esther in the right place to help defeat this wicked man.

I. WRETCHEDNESS AGAINST THE JEWS, Chapter 3

A DETERMINED POSITION Vss. 1-6

Because of Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman, Haman took the position of determining to eliminate all Jews in the Persian empire.

A DECEITFUL PRESENTATION Vss. 7-11

After casting the lot to determine the right time, Haman deceived the king into thinking that the Jews deserved to be destroyed.

A DEVILISH PROCLAMATION Vss. 12-15

All the Jews were to be destroyed in one day.

II. WILLINGNESS TO HELP THE JEWS Chapter 4

MORDECAI'S EXPLANATION Vss. 1-9

ESTHER'S EXCUSE Vss. 10-12

MORDECAI'S EXHORTATION Vss. 13-14

God would save the Jews. But Esther was placed where she was for just this time. She was to be willing take a chance to save her people.

ESTHER'S EXPECTATION Vss. 15-17

Esther expected to take the chance of appearing before the king without an invitation. She would go to intercede in behalf of her people. If the king extended his golden scepter, she would live.

If he did not extend the scepter, she would die.

Esther 5 COURAGE!

One of the qualities which is shown by both Mordecai and Esther is courage. In this passage, we see them making a stand for what is right, and for God. God's name is not mentioned in the Book of Esther, but it appears obvious that Esther, Mordecai, and the Jews were making a stand for, and being helped by Him.

COURAGE TO TAKE RISKS Vss. 1-3

Even as queen, Esther was not allowed into the king's presence unless she were summoned. To appear without being requested was to risk one's life. If the king did not extend his golden scepter, she would be executed. Esther took the risk because wicked Haman had passed a law that would have all Jews killed. The king did extend the scepter.

COURAGE TO FOLLOW GOD'S PLAN Vss. 4-8

We do not know what human reason caused Esther to have two banquets for the king and Haman before telling the king about Haman's wickedness. We do know that God had a reason. In chapter 5, Haman is

humbled and Mordecai is honored as a hero who saved the king's life. Esther obviously did things God's way and not her own.

COURAGE TO HONOR GOD Vss. 9-14

As usual Mordecai would not bow down to Haman.

He did what was right, in spite of possible consequences.

Haman's plan was to execute Mordecai.

Do we do what was right in spite of possible negative consequences?

Esther 6 GOD IN CONTROL

There are times when things seem very out of control. Everything appears to be going wrong! And yet, in war, in peace, in bad times, in good times, in sickness, and in health, God is still on the throne, and Jesus Christ is still Lord!

The Book of Esther, which never mentions God by name, is a great example of God's control in a bad situation. Wicked Haman was trying to eliminate the Jews, Mordecai in particular. Queen Esther and Mordecai were working against Haman's wicked decree to have all Jews killed (Esther 3). Part of Esther's plan to expose Haman before the king was a series of two banquets for just the king and Haman. Haman, however decided that it was time to have Mordecai hung from the gallows (Esther 5). In Esther 6 we see God in Control, in spite of Haman's terrible plan.

THE RIGHT TOUCH, Vss. 1-3

God touches the King so he can't sleep. He has his chronicles read before him. God touches the reading of the chronicles so that Mordecai's previous good deed of saving the king's life is read. The king discovers that no reward had been given Mordecai.

THE RIGHT TIMING, Vss. 4-6

Haman arrived early to the court to see the king about hanging Mordecai that very day. The king asks who is in the court, and summons Haman to ask him how to honor someone in a special way. Haman thinks the king wants to honor Haman..

THE RIGHT TESTIMONY, Vss. 7-11

Haman suggests a public display of honor, including wearing the king's clothes, riding the king's horse, and having one of the king's noblest princes lead the person through the city with words of praise.

The king liked what he heard and told Haman to do it for Mordecai. This display would help Mordecai's position when he later became prime minister, and worked to save the Jews.

THE RIGHT THOUGHTS, Vss. 12-14

Haman was warned by family and friends that he was in big trouble. They were correct. God was in control!

Esther 7-8 VICTORY!

HAMAN'S REMOVAL – Ezra 7:10

Explanation Of The Jews' Peril Vss. 1-4

Exposure Of Haman's Wickedness Vss. 5-6

Execution Of Haman Vss. 7-10

ISRAEL'S RESCUE – Ezra 8:1-17

Mordecai's Rise To Power Vss. 1-2, 15-17

Esther's Request For Help Vss. 3-6

The King's Resolution To The Problem Vss. 7-14

The Jews' Celebrations of Joy Vss. 15-17

Esther 9-10 GOD'S COMPLETED WORK

God always finishes His work. God finished creation. God finished the work to secure salvation on the cross.

God will finish all of His work in order to fulfill prophecy of end times. At the end of the book of Esther we find God completing His work. (You will want to review the story of Esther as you preach this message.)

CONFRONTATION 9:1-16

The Jews confront their enemies and win!

CELEBRATION 9:17-19

COMMEMORATION 9:20-32

The feast of Purim was established, and is still celebrated by the Jews today.

COMMENDATION 10:1-3

Mordecai is held in high esteem.

Job 1 WHAT A MAN!

LOVED BY GOD Vss. 1-5

LAMBASTED BY SATAN Vss. 6-12

LEVELED BY SATAN Vss. 12-19

LOYAL TO GOD Vss. 20-22

Job 1 TESTED!

JOB'S CHARACTER - Vss. 1-5

Job was a godly man whom God had richly blessed.

SATAN'S CONTENTION - Vss. 6-11

Satan contended that if God removed His hedge of protection around Job that Job would curse God.

GOD'S CONSENT - Vs. 12

God gave permission for Job to be tested, only Job himself could not be touched.

SATAN'S CRUSH - Vss. 13-19

Satan crushed and removed just about everything that Job had, with the exception of his wife.

JOB'S CONDUCT - Vss. 20-22

Job blessed God and did not sin, nor did he accuse God.

Job 2 OUR ENEMY

Here is a picture of just how Satan, our enemy operates. Job does teach us, however, that Satan's attacks can be neutralized.

SATAN IS LOADED WITH ACCUSATIONS. - Vss. 1-5

Just like Job 1:10-11, Satan accuses God of protecting Job. In this chapter, he maintains that if God were to permit suffering in Job's body, Job would curse God.

SATAN IS LIMITED BY GOD. - Vs. 6

God limits Satan in what he is allowed to do. In Job 1:12 Satan was not allowed to touch Job's health. In this verse He is not allowed to take Job's life. God will only allow Satan to go so far, and God is always in control. See 1 Cor. 10:13.

SATAN IS LOATHSOME IN HIS ATTACKS - Vss. 7-8

Added to the vicious attacks in Job 1:13-19, Satan attacks Job with "sore boils".

Satan will do all in his power to make us miserable. 1 Peter 5:8

SATAN IS LICKED (DEFEATED) BY FAITH - Vss. 9-10

As in Job 1:21-22, Job does not sin with his lips. His reply to his wife reflects Job's faith.

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:"

Psalms 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

Job 42 RETURN TO BLESSING

REPENTANCE OF JOB Vss. 1-6

REBUKE OF JOB'S FRIENDS Vss. 7-9

RESTORATION OF JOB Vss. 10-17

Psalms 1 THIS IS THE LIFE!

The expression "This is the life" is used when someone is talking about a life that is rich and fulfilling. The Christian has such a life when he takes the principles found in Psalm 1 to heart.

A FOCUSED LIFE - Vss. 1-2

People don't like hearing about negatives, but there are negatives that we must focus on avoiding.

We are not to "walk in counsel of the ungodly", "stand in the way of sinners" nor sit in "the seat of the scornful". Instead our "delight" is to be in "the law of the Lord", meditating in it "day and night"

A FRUITFUL LIFE - Vs. 3

The results of the focused life are the fruitful life. A tree planted by rivers of water brings forth fruit in his season. His leaf (testimony) does not wither and whatever he does is prosperous.

A FINISHED LIFE - Vss. 4-6

Standing in judgment - Vs. 5 There will be judgment (Romans 14:12). The ungodly will not stand in Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), but the godly will (1 Cor. 4:5)

Standing with the righteous - Vs. 5

Sinners will not stand in the congregation of the righteous, but saints will (Romans 5:1, 1 John 3:2).

The Lord knowing our way - Vs. 6 Our way is the way of goodness and mercy and dwelling in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23, 1 Thess 4:17).

Psalm 1 THE GODLY MAN

HIS DISCERNMENT - Vs. 1

He is happy (blessed) because he avoids the "counsel of the ungodly", "the way of sinners", and "the seat of the scornful."

HIS DELIGHT - Vs. 2

He delights in God's Word, continually meditating on it. Of course the right kind of meditation will lead to obedience. Joshua 1:8

HIS DISTINCTIVES - Vs. 3

He will be like a productive tree planted by a good water supply. He will be fruitful and have continually green leaves. I think the leaves refer to our testimonies.

HIS DESTINY - Vss. 4-6

He will stand in judgment. Vs. 5

He will stand in the congregation of the righteous. Vs. 5

The Lord knows his way, bringing him to Heaven. Vs. 6

Psalm 1 CONTRASTS

Psalm 1 contrasts the Godly man and the ungodly man.

THE GODLY MAN

1. HIS STAND AGAINST SIN Vs. 1

2. HIS SOURCE OF STRENGTH Vs. 2

3. HIS SUPPLY OF BLESSINGS Vs. 3

4. HIS SALVATION FOREVER Vs. 6

The Lord knows the way of the righteous man. He takes him to Heaven. Psalm 23:6

THE UNGODLY MAN

1. NO FRUIT - Vs. 4 - "The ungodly are not so..."

2. NO FAITH - Vs. 5

The ungodly do not stand in judgment because they are sinners who have never come to God by faith.

Hebrews 11:6, Ephesians 2:8-9

3. NO FUTURE - Vs. 6 - "But the way of the ungodly shall perish."

Psalm 1 LIVING

FAITHFUL LIVING - Vss. 1-2

FRUITFUL LIVING - Vs. 3

FATAL LIVING - Vss. 4-6

The ungodly have no hope.

Psalm 1:1-3 THE GODLY LIFE

WHAT TO AVOID - Vs. 1

Counsel of the ungodly

Way of sinners

Seat of the scornful

WHAT TO APPRECIATE - Vs. 2

The Word of God

WHAT TO ASSUME - Vs. 3

That we will be like a tree planted by rivers of water

That we will bear fruit in season (Galatians 5:22-23)

That we will have an "evergreen" testimony (leaves shall not wither)

That we will have Spiritual prosperity

Psalm 2 GOD IN CONTROL

As we look around us and see all the perversion, we might get discouraged. We must remember that God is in control, and He is victorious over all sin. In Psalm 2 we see four "voices". The first is rebellious man, and the other 3 are each member of the Trinity. In this passage we find:

THE REBELLION OF MAN Vss. 1-3

THE RESPONSE BY THE FATHER Vss. 4-6

THE RULE OF THE SON Vss. 7-9

Jesus will destroy the enemy and establish His millennial kingdom.

THE REMINDER FROM THE SPIRIT Vss. 10-12

Psalm 2 PERSONALIZING PSALM 2

Psalm 2 is definitely prophetic. First, here is an outline, which I shared with you some time ago:

THE REBELLION OF MAN Vss. 1-3

THE RESPONSE BY THE FATHER Vss. 4-6

THE RULE OF THE SON Vss. 7-9

Jesus will destroy the enemy and establish His millennial kingdom.

THE REMINDER FROM THE SPIRIT Vss. 10-12

We must remember that prophecy can help us grow spiritually when we apply its truths to our lives.

We can personalize Psalm 2 by asking ourselves the following questions:

AM I REBELLING AGAINST GOD? - Vss. 1-3

Is God leading me in one direction, and am I, like Jonah, heading in another direction? (See Jonah 1)

Am I fighting God concerning His perfect will for my life?

Am I doing things I know I shouldn't do, and not doing things I know I should do?

IS GOD REBUKING ME? - Vss. 4-6

Is the Lord disciplining me? (Hebrews 12:5-13)

Please remember that all the negative things that happen are not the Lord's rebukes.

He allows trials so we will mature (James 1:2-4, Romans 5:3-5).

When troubles hit, we must examine ourselves for any sin. If we find it, we are to confess and forsake it (1 John 1:9). If we have honestly examined our lives, and find nothing for which the Lord is disciplining us, we can assume that this is a trial that will mature us.

IS JESUS REIGNING IN MY HEART? - Vss. 5-9

One day Jesus will literally reign over all the earth.

Right now, as a Christian, He should be allowed to reign in my life.

Make sure that He is on the throne inside of you. (Romans 12:1, Ephesians 1:22)

AM I RESPONDING TO GOD'S ADVICE? - Vss. 10-12

Am I serving the Lord with fear (reverence)?

If I kiss the Son, I am submitting to His lordship. Have I done this?

Am I taking to heart the advice found in all the verses of this Psalm?

Psalm 2 GOD'S ANALYSIS OF MAN

MAN'S CONTINUING ATTITUDE - Vss. 1-3

GOD'S COMING ACTIONS - Vss. 4-9

THE SPIRIT'S COMPETENT ADVICE - Vss. 10-12

Psalm 2 THE WAY IT IS

THE VANITY OF THE HEATHEN – Vss. 1-3

THE VEXATION FROM GOD – Vss. 4-5

THE VICTORY OF THE SON – Vss. 6-9

THE VOICE OF WISE COUNCIL – Vss. 10-12

Psalm 3 GODLY MAN IN TROUBLE

HIS COMPLAINT Vss. 1-2

HIS CRY Vss. 4,7

HIS CONFIDENCE Vss. 3,5,6,8

Psalm 3 GOOD GOD FOR TROUBLING TIMES

We all face troubles (Job 5:7, James 1:2-4).

The Christian can be assured that God is there for him during his troubles.

GOD IS AWARE OF MY TROUBLES Vss. 1-3

GOD IS AVAILABLE DURING MY TROUBLES Vss. 4-6

GOD IS ABLE TO DELIVER ME FROM MY TROUBLES Vss. 7-8

Psalm 4 WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH

CRY TO GOD - Vss. 1,6

During troubling times, it is God to whom we Christians must cry.

CONFRONTATION OF SINNERS Vs. 2

A good question to ask those who rebel against God - "How long?"

COMMUNICATION OF ADVICE Vss. 3-5

God has set the Godly apart for Himself and hears his cry. Vs. 3

God wants us "to stand in awe and sin not", and to "commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." Vs. 4

God wants us to offer the right sacrifices and to trust the Lord. Vs. 5

CONFIDENCE IN GOD Vss. 7-8

Great joy comes when we trust Him. Vs. 7

Rest comes when we trust Him. Vs. 8

Psalm 4 TROUBLED TIMES

RELiance ON GOD - Vss. 1, 6

REBUKE OF THE UNGODLY - Vss. 2-5

REWARDS FOR THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 7-8

Psalm 4 A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Generally, I sleep well. Within a minute or two of my head hitting the pillow, I'm sleeping.

There are times, however, when I can't sleep. Something has happened in the church, the family, or my life that keeps me awake thinking, anxious, worried. I seem to be especially prone to lying awake if I have been falsely accused or attacked for no good reason. There's nothing like tension, stress, or worry to keep one awake at night and fitful when during the day. We all will face those things which will cause heartbreak that can lead to anxiety. How we handle these heartbreaks will dictate how we will be uptight in the day hours and how well we will sleep at night.

God wants you to get your rest! Psalm 127:7

Down through the years David faced situations that could cause him to lose sleep. Psalm 3 was written when David was running from his son, Absalom, who had usurped his father's throne. Yet, David was able to sleep. Psalm 3:1-5

Psalm 4 has a similar theme to Psalm 3. The Psalm might have been written on the same occasion, or on a different occasion. David was being slandered by his enemies. He was being falsely accused, persecuted verbally. Yet at the end of Psalm 4 David was able to say in Vs. 8, *I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.*

How was David able to sleep in the midst of trouble?

GOD WAS CONSULTED - Vs. 1

The first thing we should do when we have a problem is consult God. James 1:5

David consulted God, remembering that God had helped him in times past (*Thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress*). Some of you may not like history, but it is good remember God's past deliverance. David was seeking God's mercy and God's "ear" to hear his prayer.

ENEMIES WERE CONFRONTED - Vss. 2-5

Have you ever talked to someone who couldn't hear you? David appears to be confronting his enemies during his own time of meditation. By doing this he is helping himself to deal with the hurt and to make his own thinking clear. Also, what was true for his enemies was true for David as well.

Vs. 2 - An Appeal - David appeals to his enemies how long they were going to turn his glory into shame and how long they were going love vanity and seek after falsehood.

Vs. 3 - Assurance - David knew that God set apart Godly men for Himself. Because David was Godly, God would hear him.

Vs. 4-5 - Advice - David advised his enemies to stand in awe in the fear of God, and to meditate (commune with your own heart). The more a person fears God and thinks clearly, the more he will turn to God.

David also advised his enemies to offer the right sacrifices and to put their trust in the Lord.

DAVID WAS COMFORTED - Vss. 6-8

Vs. 6 - Many were being very negative, but David called on the Lord to smile on him.

Vs. 7 - David was joyful in the Lord even when times were bad.

Vs. 8 - David trusted the Lord, therefore he could sleep.

Psalm 6 MAN IN NEED

APPEAL FOR HELP Vss. 1-4

APPRAISAL OF MY CONDITION Vss. 5-7

AFFIRMATION OF MY FAITH 8-10

Psalm 6 THE HURTING CHRISTIAN

HIS CRY (TO GOD)

HIS CONFLICT - Vss. 5-7

HIS CONFIDENCE (AFTER PRAYING) - Vss. 8-10

Psalm 7 WHEN FALSELY ACCUSED

There will be times when people will say things about us which just aren't true.

We can learn how to handle these situations by following the example of David in Psalm 7.

The theme of Psalm 7 is a false accusation that was spoken against David.

In the heading, reference is made to the "words of Cush". We're not sure who he was, but here is David's reaction to his words of slander.

CRY TO GOD Vss. 1-9

Vs. 1 - When slandered, we need to first realize where help is coming from.

Our Lord God, the God of the universe, our creator, our Savior, our strength, is the one to whom we should come.

As we are facing slander, we must take the burden to the Lord and leave it at his feet.

Vss. 3-5 - David was not claiming to be free from all sin, but innocent of the specific charges being leveled against him.

Vss. 6-9 - David is asking for vindication.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD Vss. 10

It is so important, not just to say that we are trusting the Lord, but to actually trust Him. Pro 3:5-6, Isa 26:4

COUNSEL ABOUT THE WICKED Vss. 11-16

It is good to remember that the wicked answer to God.

CONCLUSION WITH PRAISE Vs. 17

David ends his appeal with a time of praise. May we remember to do the same!

Psalm 8 MIGHTY GOD

GLORY TO HIS NAME - Vss. 1,9

GLADNESS OF THE WEAK - Vs. 2

GREATNESS OF HIS POWER - Vss. 3-8

Psalm 9:1-4 LET'S JUST PRAISE THE LORD!

THE COMPLETENESS OF PRAISE - Vs. 1

"...with my whole heart..."

"...all thy marvelous works."

THE CONCERT OF PRAISE - Vs. 2

"I will be glad and rejoice in thee..."

"I will sing praise to thy name..."

THE CAUSES FOR PRAISE Vss. 3-4

"When my enemies are turned back, they shall fall and perish at thy presence." Vs. 3

"For thou hast maintained my right and my cause..." Vs. 4

Psalm 9:1-6 SECURITY

We like it when we feel secure. There is no better place to find security than in our God.

OUR GOD'S PRAISE - Vss. 1-2

OUR GOD'S PROTECTION - Vss. 3-6, 9-10

OUR GOD'S PERMANENCE - Vs. 7a

OUR GOD'S PREEMINENCE - Vss. 7b, 8

Psalm 9 IN AWE OF GOD

Name some things or events or people who have left you in awe.

Of course, more than anything else, we should be in awe of God.

Read the words to "How Great Thou Art".

In Psalm 9 David stands in awe of God.

THE EXCELLENCE OF GOD'S NAME - Vss. 1, 9

The word Lord is used twice in each of these verses.

The first word, "LORD", is the word for Jehovah. Jehovah is "the self-existent one". He is the great "I AM"!

See Exodus 3:13-15.

The second word, "Lord" is the word "Adoniai". Evidently this word means that God is our sovereign, or master.

The word "excellent" means "majestic".

The Lord's name is more majestic, more superior, more awesome than any other name on earth.

See Psalm 95:1-3

THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S PRAISE - Vs. 2

This verse was literally fulfilled in Matthew 21:15-16.

God's plan today is that the humble will be the ones who express God's praise. 1 Cor 1:26-31, 1 Peter 3:15

THE EXPLANATION OF GOD'S POWER - Vss. 3-8

In these verses the Psalmist explains why He is in awe of God.

Please note that man's dominion, mentioned in verse 6, was fulfilled in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 1:26-28
Man lost that dominion when he sinned.

Our Lord Jesus Christ will one day regain that dominion when He reigns on earth. Isaiah 11:4-8

Psalm 9:10 AN ENCOURAGING WORD

Psalm 9:10 - *And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.*

WE ARE FAMILY - *And they that know thy name* (His name is "Father". John 1:12, Romans 8:15-18)

WE MUST HAVE FAITH - *will put their trust in thee:* (Proverbs 3:5-6)

GOD IS FAITHFUL - *for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee.* (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Psalm 10 DECEIVED!

Psalm 10 is an appeal to God for help against the wicked. In the course of the Psalm we find out just how badly wicked people are deceived.

LIES THE WICKED TELL THEMSELVES

1. "The poor are insignificant." Vss. 2, 8-10

2. "What I want is what I'll get." Vss. 3, 7

3. "God is not important." Vs. 4

4. "I am indestructible" Vs. 6

5. "God has forgotten." Vs. 11

6. "God will not judge." Vs. 13

TRUTHS THE WICKED IGNORE

1. God sees. Vs. 14a

2. God holds man accountable. Vs. 14b

3. God helps the oppressed. Vs. 14d

4. God is permanently king. Vs. 16

5. God answers the prayers of the humble and poor. Vss. 14c, 17

6. God is the judge for the oppressed. Vs. 18

Psalm 11 HE'S HERE!

Usually we have about 100 present in our church on Sunday morning. I usually take mental note of who's present and who is not. There are times, however, when I think someone is absent, when in reality he or she has been present for the whole service. I just didn't see him!

Although we can not physically see the Lord, let us remember that He is present at all times (Psalm 139:7-10). We are reminded of three things in our text.

OUR HOPE Vss. 1, 7

God is the one in whom we can put our trust.

OUR HARASSMENT Vss. 2-3

Ungodly people will harass us. (1 Peter 4:12-19)

OUR HELP Vss. 4-6

God is present to help us through all our problems.

Psalm 11 POSSESSIONS

THE POSSESSIONS OF THE RIGHTEOUS

1. A source of trust - Vs. 1

2. A sure foundation - Vs. 3

3. A safe sanctuary - Vs. 4

4. A steady influence - Vs. 7

THE POSSESSIONS OF THE WICKED

1. Deceit - Vs. 2

2. Violence - Vs. 5

3. Judgment - Vs. 6

Psalm 11 FOR TIMES OF TRIAL

BIG ADVANTAGE - Vs. 1a Psalm 11:1 - *In the Lord put I my trust:*

BAD ADVICE - Vss. 1b-3 - *How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?*

BLESSED ASSISTANCE - Vss. 4-6 - *The Lord is in his holy temple,*

BOLD ASSURANCE - Vs. 7 - *For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.*

Psalm 11:7 Living Righteously

For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.

As you seek to live righteously for the Lord, I would suggest that you ask God to help you develop the following disciplines:

ATTEND - Be faithful in your participation in the services of the local church. This will not only help you learn God's Word, but give you the opportunity to encourage and be encouraged by your brothers and sisters in Christ. Hebrews 10:24-25

ABSORB - Be diligent to learn from God's Word, not only from the preaching and teaching that you hear, but also by reading the Word of God for yourself on a daily basis. 2 Timothy 2:15

APPLY - As you hear the Word preached and read it for yourself, apply it to your own life and obey it. James 1:22

ACQUIRE - Hide God's Word in your heart, so that you might live righteously. Psalm 119:11

ASK - Make prayer for yourself and others a vital part of your life. Ephesians 6:18, Mark 11:22-24

Psalm 12 SOUND THE ALARM!

When the an alarm sounds it is a warning. A burglar alarm warns of thieves. A fire alarm warns of fire. When in the hospital recently, if I moved the wrong way, an alarm sounded on the I.V., bringing a nurse to adjust it. Psalm 12 is alarm that should make Christians alert to danger.

A CONCERN - Vss. 1-2 - "Help Lord; for the godly man ceaseth..."

A CONCLUSION - Vss. 3-5 - "The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips..."

A COMFORT - Vss. 6-7 - "The words of the Lord are pure words..."

A CAUTION - Vs. 8 - "The wicked walk on every side, when the vilest men are exalted."

Psalm 12 GOD AT WORK

THE PERVERSITY OF MAN - Vss. 1-2, 8

THE PROMISE OF GOD - Vss. 3-5

God promises to cut off the wicked!

THE PROMINENCE OF GOD'S WORD - Vss. 6-7

Pure Words - Vs. 6

Preserved Words - Vs. 7

God will do what He promises to do to the wicked! Revelation 20:11-15

Psalm 12 IN TIMES OF TROUBLE

CRY TO GOD - Vss. 1-2

ACCEPT CONSOLATION FROM GOD - Vss. 3-5

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S WORD - Vss. 6-7

TAKE CAUTION FROM GOD - Vs. 8

Psalm 13 MAN IN A JAM!

The man in Psalm 13 is in trouble. There are three "looks" which he takes in this Psalm.

THE PUZZLED LOOK Vss. 1-2

THE UPWARD LOOK Vss. 3-4

THE FORWARD LOOK Vss. 5-6

Psalm 13 LIKE DAVID

Bible characters were real people, therefore we can relate to them.

In this Psalm it is easy for us to see how we can be like David.

LIKE DAVID I MAY FEEL FORGOTTEN - Vs. 1

LIKE DAVID I MAY FEEL FRUSTRATED - Vs. 2

LIKE DAVID I MAY FEEL LIKE A FAILURE - Vss. 3-4

LIKE DAVID, I MUST LIVE BY FAITH - Vss. 5-6

Faith in God's Mercy

Faith in God's Salvation

Faith in God's Bounty

Psalm 13 TROUBLE!

CONCERN OF DAVID - Vss. 1-2

CALL FOR HELP - Vss. 3-4

CONFIDENCE IN GOD - Vss. 5-6

Psalms 13 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR A TROUBLED HEART

ARE YOU DEJECTED? - Vs.1

ARE YOU DEFEATED? - Vs. 2

ARE YOU DEPRESSED? - Vss. 3-4

BE DEPENDENT! - Vs. 5

BE DETERMINED! - Vs. 6

Psalms 14 THE WICKED AND THE RIGHTEOUS

THE ATTITUDE OF THE WICKED - 1a

THE ACTIONS OF THE WICKED - Vss. 2b-4

THE ADVANTAGE OF THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 5-7

Psalms 14 WHEN EVIL ABOUND

ABANDONMENT OF THE WICKED - Vss. 1,4

The wicked act as if God does not exist. They have no fear of Him.

ASSESSMENT BY GOD - Vss. 2-3

God evaluates the wicked and is fully familiar with their sin.

ASSISTANCE FOR THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 5-7

God is there to help the righteous. Deliverance will come!

Psalms 15 A GODLY MAN

A GODLY MAN'S WALK

1. In trust. Vs. 1

2. Upright. Vs. 2

3. Without respect for the vile man. Vs. 4

4. Honors them that fear the Lord Vs. 4

A GODLY MAN'S WORKS

1. Righteous Vs. 2

2. Reliable in use of money. Vs. 5

3. He does no evil to his neighbor. Vs. 3

A GODLY MAN'S WORDS

1. His heart speaks the truth. Vs. 2

2. He does not backbite. Vs. 3

3. He does not argue. Vs. 3

Psalms 16:11 LIFE AT ITS BEST! (funeral also)

Early one morning I was called out to minister to a family whose 17 year old son apparently took his own life.

We would be quick to say that he didn't have life at its best!

There are people who go through life always striving to get ahead, and seemingly frustrated because they are going nowhere. They do not have life at its best.

There are others, who in spite of terrible trials and tribulations, seem to accomplish much in life, and usually seem to be satisfied. They have discovered life at its best! Such a life is described in Psalm 16:11.

THE PATH OF LIFE

There are many roads I can take to get from my home in Fultonville, NY to Albany, NY. The distance is about 35 miles, and any number of routes, direct and indirect, may be taken. When it comes to eternal life, there is only one path to take. That path to life is faith in The Lord Jesus Christ! John 14:6; 3:36, Acts 4:12

THE PRESENCE OF JOY

After salvation, a daily walk in the presence of the Lord Jesus will bring unending joy and productivity. John 15:1-7, John 12:26, John 16:24

THE PLEASURES FOR EVERMORE

After this life we continue to live and have a pleasures beyond human comprehension. 1John 3:1-3, Rev 21:1-4

Psalms 16:4-5 DETERMINATION

When it comes to serving the Lord we need determination. David shows his determination in our text.

REASON FOR SORROW - "Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god."

When people do not serve the Lord but follow other "gods" they are asking for trouble.

True peace only comes from commitment to Christ. Matthew 11:28-30, John 14:27

RESOLVE OF FAITHFULNESS - "their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips."

Even as Christians our hearts can sway to the worship of activities, things, and people. We must resolve not to act like the unsaved.

RESERVATION FOR THE LORD - "The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot." I have reserved the Lord as the portion of my inheritance and cup.

Psalms 17 ENCOURAGED

MY PRAYER IS TO GOD - Vss. 1-7

MY PROTECTION IS FROM GOD - Vss. 8-14

MY PRESENCE WILL BE WITH GOD - Vs. 15

Psalms 18:1-3 CONTENTMENT!

Follow the example of the psalmist found in these verses and you will know the meaning of true contentment.

MY COMMITMENT - Vs. 1 - "I will love thee, O LORD, my strength."

MY CONFIDENCE - Vs. 2 - "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

MY CONCERT (OF PRAISE) - Vs. 3 - "I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies."

Psalms 18:25-26 REAP WHAT YOU SOW!

This Old Testament passage verifies what Galatians 6:7 says in the NT.. A man reaps what he sows!

THERE IS MERCY FOR THE MERCIFUL.

THERE IS UPRIGHTNESS FOR THE UPRIGHT.

THERE IS PURITY FOR THE PURE.

THERE IS FROWARDNESS FOR THE FROWARD

God will always outwit the "crooked" (N.A.S.B.), or twisted man.

Psalms 19 GOD IS SPEAKING

GOD IS SPEAKING AS WE LOOK AT HIS CREATION – Vss. 1-6

GOD IS SPEAKING AS WE LEARN FROM HIS WORD – Vss. 7-11

GOD IS SPEAKING AS WE LIVE FOR HIS GLORY – Vss. 12-14

As we live for His glory, God speaks through us. Matthew 5:16

Psalms 19 GOD COMMUNICATES

THROUGH HIS WORKS Vss. 1-6

THROUGH HIS WORD Vss. 7-11

THROUGH HIS WORKERS Vss. 12-14

"Let the words of my mouth...be acceptable in thy sight..."

Psalms 19 THE PRESENCE OF GOD

GOD IS HERE! - Vss. 1-6

His presence is seen in nature.

GOD IS HEARD! - Vss. 7-10

He talks to us through His Word.

GOD IS HONORED! - Vss. 11-14

We honor God's presence by:

Heeding His Word - Vs. 11

Examining our lives for sin - Vss. 12-13

Making our words and thoughts pleasing to Him. - Vs. 14

Psalms 19:7-9 THE BENEFITS OF GOD'S WORD

GOD'S WORD CONVERTS THE SOUL - *The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul:*

GOD'S WORD COMMUNICATES WISDOM - *the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.*

GOD'S WORD CHEERS THE HEART - *The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart:*

GOD'S WORD CLEANSSES THE EYES - *the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.*

GOD'S WORD CONSISTS FOREVER - *The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever:*

GOD'S WORD CHAMPIONS RIGHTEOUSNESS - *the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether*

Psalm 20:1-4 WISHING YOU GOD'S BEST

Here is a way in which we can pray for others. As we pray in this way, we will be wishing for them the very best that God has for them.

MAY GOD HEAR YOU. Vs. 1a
MAY GOD HELP YOU Vss. 1b, 2
MAY GOD HONOR YOU Vss. 3-4

Psalm 20 A HEALTHY ATTITUDE

It is always good to have a healthy mental attitude. David shows a good attitude in this Psalm.

COMFORT FOR MY FRIENDS - Vss. 1-4

David wants the best for His friends.

COMMITMENT TO MY GOD - Vs. 5

David was committed to praise and trust his God.

CONFIDENCE IN GOD'S FAITHFULNESS - Vss. 6-9

David was confident that God would work in his behalf.

Psalm 20 GOD'S BEST

REQUESTING GOD'S BEST - Vss. 1-4

REJOICING IN GOD'S BEST - Vs. 5

RELYING ON GOD'S BEST - Vss. 6-9

Psalm 23 THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

I AM SUPPLIED - Vss. 1-3

I AM SAFE - Vss. 4-5

I AM SATISFIED - Vs. 6

Psalm 23 MY SHEPHERD

Jesus is the good shepherd who gave His life for the sheep. John 10:11

Those who trust Him as Savior are "the sheep of his pasture." In this great psalm we find:

THE PROMISE OF THE SHEPHERD Vs. 1

THE PROVISION BY THE SHEPHERD Vss. 2-3

THE PRESENCE OF THE SHEPHERD Vss. 4-5

THE PRESERVATION BY THE SHEPHERD Vs. 6

Psalm 23:3 etc. MY SOUL IN PSALMS

The term "my soul" appears 102 times in the Book of Psalms. It presents to us a wealth of Spiritual insight and encouragement. Here are just a few key thoughts about my soul as found in Psalms

MY SOUL RESTORED - Psalm 23:3

MY SOUL REQUESTING (in prayer) - Psalm 25:1, Psalm 143:8

MY SOUL REPORTING (testifying) - Psalm 34:2, Psalm 107:2

MY SOUL REJOICING - Psalm 35:9

MY SOUL RESPONDING (in hope) - Psalm 42:5

MY SOUL RELAXING (waiting) - Psalm 62:1,5, Psalm 130:5-6

MY SOUL REMEMBERING - Psalm 103:2

Psalm 23:5 OUR PROVISION IN CHRIST

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over."

Many times we are negative people. We center our thoughts around our problems.

We fret over what is wrong. We let the weight of burdens overcome us.

Instead we must learn to appreciate what we have, instead of what we lack.

In Christ we have so much. Just a part of what we have in Christ is listed in Psalm 23:5

THE FULLNESS WE HAVE IN CHRIST

"Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:"

The table of replenishment - 1 Kings 19:4-8 - Elijah needed rest and food. We need Spiritual rest and Spiritual food.

The table of restoration - John 21:15-17 - Peter needed to be restored. Often we need the same type of restoration after we sin.

The table of remembrance - 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

The table prepared for us in the presence of our enemies:

The world - 1 John 2:15-17

The flesh - Galatians 5:24-25, 6:7-8

The devil - 1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:12

THE FRESHNESS WHICH WE HAVE IN CHRIST

"...thou anointest my head with oil;"

Oil is often symbolic of the Holy Spirit.

God has baptized us with the Spirit of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13

As He fills us we will have the freshness of supernatural praise, thanksgiving and submission. Eph 5:18-21.

God will continue to anoint us as we are filled with the Spirit. This will produce freshness. Gal 5:16, Eph 5:18

THE FREEDOM WHICH WE HAVE IN CHRIST

"...my cup runneth over."

Just as a cup filled from a bubbling spring will overflow, so will our lives overflow as the Spirit of God produces fruit. Galatians 5:22-23

Psalms 24 A DAILY PRACTICE

There are certain things we do every day. Every day we get dressed, eat, brush our teeth etc. Time with God is of the utmost importance every day. May these verses challenge us to a daily practice.

ACKNOWLEDGE GOD'S POSSESSION Vss. 1-2

All that is belongs to God. As Christians we are His possession in a special way (John 1:12). We must acknowledge His ownership of us!

ASCEND INTO GOD'S PRESENCE Vss. 3-6

Each day we are to visit with God. We should seek His face.

We are reminded that we are to come into His presence with clean hands and a pure heart. Clean hands and a pure heart are the result of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:11 and regular confession of sin (1 John 1:8-10).

ACCLAIM GOD'S PREEMINENCE Vss. 7-10

Our times of prayer are to also be times of praise. We are to acclaim the worthiness of the "King of Glory", our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalms 24 RECOGNITION

It is good for us to recognize:

GOD'S OWNERSHIP - Vss. 1-2

MY OBLIGATION - Vss. 3-6

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE - Vss. 7-10

Psalms 25:1-7 WHAT I NEED

I NEED VICTORY - Vss. 1-2

I NEED CONFIDENCE - Vs. 3

I NEED GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTION - Vss. 4-5

I NEED FORGIVENESS - Vss. 6-7

THESE ARE ALL FOUND IN CHRIST!

Psalms 26 GOD'S SERVANT

THE TRUST OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vs. 1

THE TRANSPARENCY OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vs. 2

THE TRUTHFULNESS OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vss. 3-6

THE TESTIMONY OF GOD'S SERVANT - Vss. 7-12

Psalms 26 A SERVANT OF GOD

David shows some great qualities as a servant of God.

EXAMINATION - Vss. 1-3

David examines his life to make sure that it is right with God.

SEPARATION - Vss. 4-6

David has separated himself from those who do evil.

EXALTATION - Vss. 7-8

David loves to worship his God!

INTERVENTION - Vss. 9-10

David wants God to intervene in his life so that he will stay pure.

DETERMINATION - Vss. 11-12

David is determined to serve the Lord, but is aware that he needs God's redemption and mercy.

Psalm 27 A BALANCED LIFE

When we practice these principles in Psalm 27 we will have a balanced Christian life.

ABSENCE OF FEAR - Vss. 1-3

When the Lord is our light, our salvation, and our strength, we have nothing to fear.

ASPIRATION TOWARDS GOD - Vss. 4, 8

Seeking the face of God is to be a priority in our lives.

ASSURANCE OF PROTECTION - Vss. 5-6, 10

APPEAL FOR HELP - Vss. 9, 11-12

When in trouble ask for the Lord's help.

ACCEPTANCE OF WAITING - Vss. 13-14

Instead of being discouraged, we are willing to trust the Lord and wait on Him.

We accept the fact that waiting on the Lord is part of the Christian life.

Psalm 27 Psalm Of Trust

Psalm 27 has been a favorite of mine from college days. There was a time when my parents did not understand my new found faith in Christ. At one of these times my pastor shared this Psalm with me. It has been a help ever since!

MY CONFIDENCE Vss. 1-6

MY CRY Vss. 7-12

MY CALM Vss. 13-14

You might want to substitute the word "my" with the word "David's".

There's lots of gold in these verses. Enjoy digging for it!

Psalm 27:1-6 THE WAY

THE WAY OF PEACE - Vss. 1-3

Make the Lord your light, salvation and strength.

THE WAY OF PRIORITY - Vs. 4

Seek fellowship with the Lord first!

THE WAY OF PROTECTION - Vss. 5-6a

God protects those who seek Him.

THE WAY OF PRAISE - Vs. 6b

Because of God's work in our lives we offer "sacrifices of joy" and "sing praises unto the Lord."

Psalm 27:4-6 A PRAYER WORTH PRAYING

REQUEST - "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life..."

REASONS - "...to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple."

RESULTS - Vss. 5-6

1. He shall hide me in time of trouble. Vs. 5
2. He shall lift me above my enemies. Vs. 6a
3. I will rejoice Vs. 6b

Psalm 28 A BALANCED APPROACH TO PROBLEMS

GOD'S HELP REQUESTED Vss. 1-2

GOD'S ENEMIES REJECTED Vss. 3-5

GOD'S POWER RESPECTED Vss. 6-9

Psalm 29 GLORY!

INVITATION TO GIVE GOD GLORY Vss. 1-2

INDICATIONS OF GOD'S GLORY Vss. 3-10

1. The Thunderstorm Vss. 3-9a

2. The Temple Vs. 9b

3. The Throne Vs. 10

IMPARTATION OF GOD'S GLORY Vs. 11

1. Strength

2. Peace

Psalm 29 REMINDERS

The Book of Psalms is full of reminders. In this passage we are reminded of the:

PRAISE TO THE LORD - Vss. 1-2

We are to praise God by giving him glory, strength and by worshipping Him "in the beauty of holiness."

POWER OF THE LORD - Vss. 3-10

1. The Thunderstorm Vss. 3-9a
2. The Temple Vs. 9b
3. The Throne Vs. 10

PROMISES FROM THE LORD - Vs. 11

1. He will give strength.
2. He will give peace

Psalms 30 A PRAYER

COMMITMENT TO GOD – Vss. 1-3

CALL TO PRAISE – Vss. 4-5

CRY FOR HELP – Vss. 6-10

CHANGE OF ATTITUDE – Vss. 11-12

Psalms 30:4-6 PATH TO JOY

God has intended that we Christians would be a joyful people (Nehemiah 8:10, Philippians 4:4).

We will be joyful as we follow David's admonitions in these verses.

COMMAND PERFORMANCE - Vs. 4 - "Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."

COMFORTING PROMISES - Vs. 5

1. "For his anger endureth but a moment;"
2. "in his favour is life;"
3. "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

CONFIDENT PROCLAMATION – Vs. 6 - "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved."

Psalms 31:23-24 BE ADVISED!

LOVE THE LORD - *O love the Lord, all ye his saints:* Deut 6:4-5, Matt 22:37-40, 1 John 4:19

LIVE FOR THE LORD - *for the Lord preserveth the faithful,* 1 Cor 4:2, John 14:15

LET THE LORD - *and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.*

Let the Lord take vengeance, not you. Matthew 5:38-42, Romans 12:14-21

LEAN ON THE LORD - *Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.* Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 130:5-6, Psalm 125:1

Psalms 32 WHAT DOES GOD WANT?

We ask little children, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

We ask teens, "Where do you want to go to college?"

We ask young adults, "Where do you want to work and what kind of job do you want to do?"

We ask older adults, "Where and when do you want to retire?"

We also ask questions like, "Where do you want to go to church?" or, "How do you want to spend your time?"

We are constantly asking the questions, "What do you want?" & "What do I want?"

It seems to me that we focus too much on the "wants" of others and especially the "wants" of ourselves, without seriously considering the "wants" of God! We would do better to ask the question "What does God want of me, my family and my friends?" Our text gives us an idea of some of the things God wants.

GOD WANTS US TO BE CLEANSED - Vss. 1-2

God's purpose for every individual is that they would receive the initial cleansing that salvation brings (1 Tim 2:3-4). After that God wants us to keep short accounts with Him, allowing Him to continually cleanse us (1 John 1:7).

GOD WANTS US TO BE CONVICTED - Vss. 3-4

One of the jobs of the Holy Spirit is to convict of sin (John 16:8-11). God will convict us of our need to make things right with Him. We should be thankful when God does not allow us to rest until we deal with sin.

GOD WANTS US TO CONFESS - Vs. 5-6

When a Christian confesses his/her sin, God cleanses, and restores the fellowship that has been lacking between Him and the believer. Psalm 66:18, 1 John 1:9,

GOD WANTS US TO BE CONFIDENT - Vss. 7-8

God wants us to be confident in His protection. Vs. 7

God wants us to be confident in His guidance. Vs. 8

GOD WANTS US TO COOPERATE - Vss. 9-11

We cooperate by:

1. Not acting like a dumb animal. Vs. 9
2. Trusting the Lord. Vs. 10
3. Rejoicing in the Lord. Vs. 11

Psalms 32 COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

THE BLESSING OF FORGIVENESS - Vss. 1-6

THE BLESSING OF PROTECTION - Vs. 7

THE BLESSING OF GUIDANCE - Vss. 8-9

THE BLESSING OF TRUST - Vss. 10-11

Psalms 32 BLESSED!

BLESSED CLEANSING Vss. 1-2

BLESSED CONFESSION Vss. 3-6

BLESSED COMFORT Vss. 7-8

BLESSED CHALLENGE Vss. 9-11

Psalms 32 HOW BLESSED ARE THE BLESSED!

Are you born again?

Do you know Jesus as your Savior?

Then God has blessed you! Ephesians 1:3

In Psalm 32 there are five blessings for the born again Christian if he or she will accept them.

THE BLESSINGS OF FORGIVENESS – Vss. 1-2

THE BLESSINGS OF FORTHRIGHTNESS – Vss. 3-5

When we are honest with God, confessing our specific sins, God forgives us.

THE BLESSINGS OF (GOD'S) FAITHFULNESS – Vss. 7-8

God is faithful to protect us.

God is faithful to guide us.

THE BLESSING OF SHUNNING FOOLISHNESS – Vss. 9-10

"Mercy shall compass him about".

THE BLESSING OF (GOD'S) FAVOR – Vs. 11

The upright in heart are to be filled with joy and gladness.

Psalms 32:5 WHEN SAINTS SIN

There will be times when we will fail God.

Here is how those who know the Lord should deal with their sins.

RECOGNITION OF SIN - CITE IT! - "I acknowledged my sin unto thee..."

REJECTION OF SIN - CONFESS IT! - "...and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD;"

REMOVAL OF SIN - CLEANSED OF IT! - "...and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah."

Psalms 33:3-5 REASONS FOR A NEW SONG

We can sing a "new song" to the Lord because:

GOD'S WORD IS RIGHT - Vs. 4

GOD'S WORKS ARE TRUE - Vs. 4

GOD'S WAYS ARE RIGHTEOUS, WITH JUDGMENT, AND GOOD - Vs. 5

Psalms 34:1-9 ALL THIS AND MORE!

God has given us so much! Here is just a brief list of what God has given those who are saved!

All we have to do is accept it! And this is not an all-inclusive list. There is much more! God has given us:

PRAISE THAT'S CONTINUAL - Vs. 1

JOY THAT'S CONTAGIOUS - Vs. 2

WORSHIP THAT'S INCLUSIVE - Vs. 3 - See Psalm 119:63

TRUST THAT'S FEARLESS - Vs. 4

SIGHT THAT'S RADIANT - Vs. 5

PRAYER THAT'S EFFECTIVE - Vs. 6

PROTECTION THAT'S SUPERNATURAL - Vs. 7

HAPPINESS THAT'S EXPERIENTIAL - Vs. 8

FEAR THAT'S PROVIDENTIAL - Vs. 9

Psalms 34:1-8 AN INVITATION

We all get invitations. Some are to social events. Some are to purchase products. Some are to give our opinions. The best invitations we get are from God. In this text we find:

AN INVITATION TO PRAISE Vss. 1-3

AN INVITATION TO PRAYER Vss. 4-6

AN INVITATION TO PROVISION Vss. 7-10

Psalms 34:12-15 THE GOOD LIFE

The "good life" is described in Verse 12. How is this good life obtained?

A GODLY DELETION - Vs. 13

Keep the tongue and lips from evil and deceitful words.

A GODLY DIRECTION - Vs. 14

Depart from evil.

Do good.

Seek and pursue peace.

A GODLY DEVOTION - Vs. 15

The righteous are devoted to God.

God hears their cries for help.

Psalms 36 ENCOURAGED BY GOD

It is easy to become discouraged by wicked people.

However, God has good, encouraging words for us.

We do well to heed them!

THE DEPRAVITY OF THE WICKED - Vss. 1-4

THE DEPENDABILITY OF GOD - Vss. 5-9

He is merciful. Vs. 5

He is faithful. Vs. 5

He is righteous. Vs. 6

He is judge. Vs. 6

He loves. Vs. 7

He protects. Vs. 7

He satisfies. Vs. 8

He is life. Vs. 9

He is light. Vs. 9

THE DESIRE OF THE GODLY - Vss. 10-11

Continuation of God's blessing. Vs. 10

Preservation from evil Vs.11

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED - Vs. 12

Psalms 36 CONTRASTS

THE WICKEDNESS OF MAN - Vss. 1-4

THE WONDERS OF GOD - Vss. 5-9

THE WISH OF BELIEVERS - Vss. 10-12

For God's continued loving kindness - Vs. 10

For God's protection from the wicked - Vs. 11

Psalms 36:7-10 GOD IS!

GOD IS MY SAFETY - Vs. 7

GOD IS MY SATISFACTION - Vs.8

GOD IS MY SOURCE - Vss. 9-10

1. Of Life Vs. 9

2. Of Light Vs. 9

3. Of Lovingkindness Vs. 10

4. Of Righteousness (If you think of a fourth "L" let me know.) Vs. 10

Psalms 37:1-9 ACTIVE FAITH

FRET NOT, ENVY NOT Vss. 1-2

TRUST AND DO Vs. 3

DELIGHT AND RECEIVE Vs. 4

COMMIT AND TRUST Vss. 5-6

REST AND WAIT Vs. 7

CEASE AND FORSAKE Vs. 8

Psalms 37:16-37 THE BENEFITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior have been justified. To be justified means to be "declared righteous." Our righteousness is not based on our goodness, but on the work of Christ in our behalf.

Romans 5:1, 2 Corinthians 5:21

After being saved, we, as Christians, are to live righteous, Godly lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16, Romans 12:1-2, Luke 9:23. We are to act like the children of God! Sometimes Christians may wonder what the benefits are for living a righteous life. This passage gives us three benefits.

THE INCOME OF THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 16, 21, 25-26

THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 23, 30-31

THE INHERITANCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS - Vss. 18, 28-29, 34, 37

Psalms 37:1-9 TRUST HIM!

Life would be more joyful, if we would just learn to trust the Lord!

We should trust Him through all circumstances.

WE SHOULD TRUST HIM WHEN WE ARE OPPRESSED. Vss. 1-2, 8-9

WE SHOULD TRUST HIM AS WE WORK. Vs. 3

WE SHOULD TRUST HIM AS WE THINK. Vs. 4

WE SHOULD TRUST HIM AS WE PRAY. Vss. 5-6

WE SHOULD TRUST HIM AS WE WAIT. Vs. 7

Psalms 40:1-3 WHY WAIT?

Most of us do not like to wait for anything! We are very impatient people. But, time after time in the Bible, you will see God simply saying to us, "Wait!" (See Psalms 27:14, 130:5-6, Isaiah 40:31)

In our text David gives a personal testimony as to what happened when He waited for the Lord to work in his life. Here we are shown four reasons we should wait patiently for the Lord. David tells us:

I WAITED, AND THE LORD HEARD ME. Vs. 1

I WAITED, AND THE LORD DELIVERED ME. Vs. 2

I WAITED, AND THE LORD GAVE ME A SONG Vs. 3a

I WAITED, AND THE LORD MADE ME A TESTIMONY Vs. 3b

Many would hear how the Lord had delivered, and based on David's testimony, would praise Him.

Psalms 40:1-4 GOD'S IN CONTROL

In the course of the last 24 hours I've been told of some real concerns in our church family. Problems are nothing new! However, God is in control of our lives as Christians, as long as we trust Him.

DELAY - Vs. 1

God does not move as quickly as we would like Him to move. As a result, we must learn to "wait patiently for the Lord" and pray while we experience delay.

DELIVERANCE - Vs. 2

There will be deliverance to our problem given in His time.

DELIGHT - Vss. 3-4

There are definite results to answered prayer that bring delight.

1. a song - Vs. 3a

2. a testimony - Vs. 3b

3. a blessing - Vs. 4

Psalms 40:1-5 DELIVERANCE!

RELIANCE ON THE LORD - Vs. 1

RELEASE FROM THE LORD - Vs. 2

REJOICING IN THE LORD - Vss. 3-5

A New Song - Vs. 3a

A Vibrant Testimony - Vss. 3b, 5

A Happy Heart - Vs. 4

Psalms 41 THE LIFE OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S PRESERVATION – Vss. 1-3

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S PROBLEMS – Vss. 4-9

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S PROTECTION – Vss. 10-12

THE RIGHTEOUS MAN'S PRAISE – Vs. 13

Psalms 42 INGREDIENTS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

1. THIRST FOR GOD Vss. 1-2

2. TEARS OF SORROW Vss. 3-4

3. TRIALS THROUGH DAILY LIVING Vss. 6-7, 9-10

4. TRUST IN GOD Vss. 5,8,11

Psalm 43 MY NEEDS or NEEDY OLD ME

We will all depend on others today. We will depend on some to provide food, some to provide utilities, some to assist at work, some to help with needs at home. If we ever stopped to count the number of people that we depend on during one day, I think we would be surprised.

Of course, the one we need to depend on more than anyone else is God. Yet, many people never admit just how much they need God's help. Psalm 43 reminds me just how needy I am.

I NEED GOD'S HELP Vs. 1

I NEED GOD'S STRENGTH Vs. 2

See Isaiah 41:10.

I NEED GOD'S GUIDANCE Vs. 3

Light brightens the path so we can see what direction to take. Psalm 32:8

Truth is what I need in order to make a right decision.

I NEED GOD'S PRESENCE Vss. 3-4

Notice that the guidance the psalmist especially wants is into the presence of God.

All problems are diminished when I am in fellowship with my God.

I NEED GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENT. Vs. 5

As I hope in God, He will encourage me.

The conclusion of this Psalm is I NEED GOD!

Psalm 44:1-8 TRUSTING GOD

PAST CONQUESTS - Vss. 1-3

PERSONAL CONSECRATION - Vs. 4

PRESENT CONFIDENCE - Vss. 5-8

Psalm 46 DON'T WORRY ABOUT JERUSALEM!

Psalm 122:6 - *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.*

Right now the problems in the Middle East have many of us concerned, and we certainly need to be praying. However, as Psalm 48 points out, we have nothing to worry about. God will take care of Zion (Jerusalem).

GOD'S PRAISE - Vss. 1, 10-11

God is to be worshipped and adored in Zion.

GOD'S PLACE - Vss. 2-3

Zion is special because of being the "city of the great king". David comes to mind first of all, but one greater than David, the Lord Jesus Christ, will reign from Jerusalem. Zechariah 14:1-9

GOD'S PROTECTION - Vss. 4-7, 14

God will protect Zion and those who trust Him! (Those who trust God trust Jesus Christ as their Savior. John 5:24, John 3:36)

GOD'S PERMANENCE - Vs. 8, 12-13

Jerusalem will be established forever, for God will provide a New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:1-2

Psalm 46 THE PSALM OF MY WELL-BEING

CONFIDENCE OF FAITH Vss. 1-3

CITY OF THE FUTURE Vss. 4-5

CONFRONTATION WITH THE FOE Vss. 6-9

COMFORT FOR THE FAITHFUL Vss. 10-11

Psalm 46 THERE IS

THERE IS A REFUGE - Vss. 1-3

THERE IS A RIVER - Vss. 4-5

THERE IS RAGE - Vs. 6

THERE IS RETRIBUTION - Vss. 7-9

THERE IS REST - Vss. 10-11

Psalm 47 OUR WONDERFUL GOD

THE POWER OF GOD - Vss. 1-3

THE PLAN OF GOD - Vs. 4

THE PRAISE OF GOD - Vss. 5-7

THE PREEMINENCE OF GOD - Vss. 8-9

Psalms 51: A PSALM OF CONFESSION

David had sinned, having had an affair with Bathsheba, and arranging for her husband to be murdered. (See 2 Samuel 11-12) After being confronted by Nathan the Prophet, David wrote this Psalm of confession. It is a good pattern for us to follow.

APPEAL FOR GOD'S MERCY Vss. 1-2

ACKNOWLEDGE MY SIN Vss. 3-6

ASK FOR GOD'S CLEANSING Vss. 7-14

ABIDE IN GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS Vss. 15-19

Psalms 51:1-14 DEALING WITH SIN

BE HUMBLE - Vss. 1-2

BE HONEST - Vss. 3-6

BE HOPEFUL - Vss. 7-14

We can be hopeful because:

God will cleanse from sin. Vss. 7, 10

God will cheer us with renewed joy. Vss. 8, 12

God will create a new sense of His presence. Vss. 9, 11

God will cause us to be testimonies for Him. Vss. 13, 14

Psalms 52 THE WICKED AND THE RIGHTEOUS

THE WICKED ARE DECEITFUL - Vss. 1-4

THE WICKED ARE DOOMED - Vs. 5

THE RIGHTEOUS ARE DISCERNING - Vss. 6-7

THE RIGHTEOUS ARE DEVOTED - Vss. 8-9

Psalms 53:1-5 THE FOOL

How can we tell if someone, including ourselves, is a fool?

Psalm 53:1-5 gives us 3 characteristics of a fool.

A FOOL IS ATHEISTIC IN HEART Vs. 1a

He may talk about God with his lips, but in his heart he does not fear or really believe in God.

A FOOL IS ACTIVELY CORRUPT Vss. 1b-4

A FOOL IS ATTACKED BY FEAR Vs. 5

(Proverbs 29:25)

Psalms 54 GOD'S HELP

APPEAL FOR GOD'S HELP Vss. 1-3

ASSURANCE OF GOD'S HELP Vss. 4-5

ATTITUDE CAUSED BY GOD'S HELP Vss. 6-7

Psalms 55:16-17 THE PRAYER DECISION

As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall save me.

Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.

If we are going to be men and women of prayer, we must decide some very basic things. We find that:

PRAYER IS A PERSONAL DECISION - *As for me...*

PRAYER IS A PRACTICAL DECISION - *... I will call upon God;*

PRAYER IS A POWERFUL DECISION - *... and the LORD shall save me.*

PRAYER IS A PERSISTENT DECISION - *Evening, and morning, and at noon...*

Psalms 55:16,17, 22 IN TOUCH

Psalm 55:16-17 - *As for me, I will call upon God; and the Lord shall save me. Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.*

Psalm 55:22 - *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*

It is important that we be in touch with God in prayer. We need to remember just how much prayer can help and encourage us.

The context of Psalm 55 is that of David being in trouble.

David's problems are summarized in Vss. 1-5.

David is so troubled with his problem that he wishes he could just flee! Psalm 55:6

To make matters worse, David had been betrayed. Psalm 55:12-14

We can relate to David's misery. There have been times when we wished that we could escape our problems. There were other times when people we loved and trusted have harmed us or turned on us.

In the midst of David's problems, David kept in touch with God.

And Psalm 55:16, 17 and 22 encourage us to keep in touch with God especially when we come upon troubled times.

CALL - Vs. 16

David begins this verse with some very important words, *As for me.*

In the preceding verses David tells us about his troubles.

In this verse he begins to tell us what he's going to do about them.

Others had not lived righteously and would be punished.

Others had chosen to be deceptive and to stick a knife in David's back, so to speak.

Instead of choosing to behave himself in an inappropriate way, David is choosing to do what is right, so he says, *as for me I will call upon God...*

David is saying, "I chose to reach out to God when I hurt!"

This, of course, is a good choice and a Biblical one. Jer 33:3, Psalm 91:1-2, Psalm 46:1, Matt 11:28-30

Like David, your decision should be to call upon God. The results are always good. Phil 4:6-7, Jer 32:17,27, Heb 4:15-16

We should call upon God because He alone can save or rescue us. Psalm 98:1

CONTINUE - Vs. 17

The Jewish day began in the evening. That's why the Jewish Sabbath begins on Friday night, and also why evening is mentioned first here.

Although David may have had three set times for prayer in a day (the prophet Daniel did), I think referring to the three times of day means that David would be in a continual habit of prayer.

So often we pray about something and forget it. That's the wrong approach. We should be talking to God continually, and we should continually bring the same requests to God, until He answers them. 1 Thess 5:17, Luke 11:5-20, Luke 18:1-8

CAST - Vs. 22

Psalm 55:22 - *Cast thy burden upon the Lord...*

Imagine walking down a road carrying a heavy load.

A friend in a pick-up truck stops and offers you a ride.

You gladly accept.

The first thing you will do is throw that heavy load into bed of the truck.

You won't hold it on your lap, you'll let the truck carry the load.

In Vs 22, we are told to cast our care on God. Whatever the load we bear we are to give it to him. If we give it to him we need to let him have it continually and permanently.

We give it to him continually as we have already said, continuing to pray over it.

We give it to Him permanently. Although we talk to Him about it, we leave it in His hands to worry over. And of course, he will not worry. He'll act in His time.

This verse reminds me of a similar verse in the New Testament.

1 Peter 5:7 - *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

As we cast our burdens upon the Lord, we must realize that God cares about us and what happens to us.

CONFIDENCE - Vs. 22

Psalm 55:22 - *Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.*

If a baby is born very small, say 3 or 4 pounds, what will the hospital do? They will put that child in an incubator to sustain him until he is big enough to make it on his own.

If a person has a serious accident or a heart attack or stroke, and are not able to function on their own, they very often are placed on life support. They are sustained by machines.

As a Christian, I can be confident because the living God has promised to sustain me no matter what my problem. As I bring my problem to God He takes care of me. And the Lord sustains me even when He doesn't directly deliver me from the problem. 2 Corinthians 12:7-9 John 10:27-30

CALL - Vss. 16

CONTINUE - Vs. 17

CAST - Vs. 22

CONFIDENCE - Vs. 22

Psalm 57 DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES

David, like all of us, had times of great difficulty (James 1:2-4).

He got through the tough times by relying on God.

HIS APPEAL - Vs. 1-2, 5 - David need help. He went to God.

HIS ANTAGONISTS Vss. 4, 6 - There were many who opposed David.

HIS ASSURANCE - Vs. 3

HIS ATTITUDE (OF PRAISE IN SPITE OF CIRCUMSTANCES.) - Vss. 7-11

Psalms 57 CRYING TO GOD

A CRY FOR MERCY - Vs. 1
A CRY TO THE MIGHTY OR MOST HIGH - Vss. 4-7
A CRY FOR MAJESTY - Vss. 5-6, 11 - That God would be exalted.
A CRY OF MELODY - Vss. 7-10

Psalms 61 COMMUNICATION WITH GOD

REQUEST TO GOD - Vss. 1-2
RELIANCE ON GOD - Vss. 3-4
RESPONSE FROM GOD - Vss. 5-7
REJOICING IN GOD - Vs. 8

Psalms 61 TIME WITH GOD

DETERMINED REQUEST - Vss. 1-2
DELIGHTFUL RETREAT - Vss. 3-4
DIVINE REASSURANCE - Vss. 5-8

Psalms 62:5-6 A WAY TO PLEASE GOD

There are many ways to please God. The most important way we please God is to place faith in Christ for eternal life (Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16, 36). We please God when we pray (1 Thess 5:17), when we witness (1 Peter 3:15), when we obey Him (John 14:15), when we are filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18) and many other ways.

Another way to please God is to learn to wait on Him and for Him.

(Psalm 27:13-14, Psalm 130:5-6, Isaiah 40:31)

AN EXCLUSIVE WAIT - "My soul wait thou only upon God;"

AN EXPECTANT WAIT - "for my expectation is from Him."

AN EXCITING WAIT - "He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved."

Psalms 63:1-8 A PSALM OF FELLOWSHIP

DESIRE FOR GOD - Vss. 1-2
DEVOTION TO GOD - Vss. 3-4
DEPENDENCE ON GOD - Vss. 5-7
DIRECTION FROM GOD - Vs. 8

Psalms 63:6-8 A SATISFIED SOUL

REMEMBERS GOD Vs. 6
REJOICES IN GOD'S HELP Vs. 7
RESPONDS BY FOLLOWING GOD'S LEADING Vs. 8

Psalms 63 SOUL TALK

THE SEEKING SOUL - Vss. 1-4
THE SATISFIED SOUL - Vss. 5-7
THE SECURE SOUL - Vss. 8-11

Psalms 63:1-8 TRUE CONTENTMENT

MY CAUSE - Vss. 1-4
Seek the Presence of God - Vs. 1
See the Power of God - Vs. 2
Sing the Praise of God - Vss. 3-4
MY COMFORT - Vss. 5-7
The Soul Relaxes - Vs. 5
The Mind Remembers - Vss. 6-7a
The Man Rejoices - Vs. 7b
MY CONCERN - Vs. 8
My concern is that I will follow after the Lord hard!

Psalms 64 ON THE WINNING TEAM

MY NEED DECLARED Vss. 1-2
MY ENEMY DEFINED Vss. 3-6
MY VICTORY DESCRIBED Vss. 7-10

Psalms 64 GOD ON OUR SIDE

THE WAIL OF GOD'S PEOPLE - Vss. 1-2

THE WORK OF GOD'S ENEMIES - Vss. 3-6

THE WONDER OF GOD'S DELIVERANCE - Vss. 7-10

Psalms 65:4 WHAT A WONDERFUL LIFE!

What Christians don't realize sometimes how wonderful our life is..

WE ARE CHOSEN OF GOD - "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causest to approach unto thee..."

If we are born again Christians God has chosen us to be His children and to approach Him. See Hebrews 4:14-16 and John 14:13-14

WE HAVE CLOSENESS TO GOD - "...that he may dwell in thy courts:" - See John 15:1-7

WE HAVE COMFORT FROM GOD - "...we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

Psalms 70 THE SOURCE

THE SOURCE OF MY DELIVERANCE Vss. 1,5

THE SOURCE OF MY DISTURBANCE Vss. 2,3

THE SOURCE OF MY DELIGHT Vs. 4

1. Seeking God

2. Loving Salvation

Psalms 70 FACTS OF LIFE

For the Christian who is walking with God the following facts will be true:

1. MY GOD IS POWERFUL - Vs. 1

Why was the psalmist calling on God? He called on God because God had the power to deliver Him! Psalm 118:1-3, Psalm 46

2. MY ENEMIES ARE FORCEFUL - Vss. 2-3

3. MY FRIENDS ARE JOYFUL - Vs. 4

Those who love the Lord are my nearest and dearest friends (Psalm 119:63). These are the ones who find joy in Christ!

4. I AM RESOURCEFUL - Vs. 5

I have many needs, but I will call on God and hope in Him as my help.

Psalms 71:1-8 IN GOD WE TRUST

The words, "In God We Trust" appear on the money of the United States of America. For America, this is Independence Day weekend.

We are reminded by this Psalm, that indeed, our trust is to be in God.

RELiance ON GOD Vss. 1,5

RELEASE FROM GOD Vss. 2,4

REFUGE IN GOD Vss. 3,7

REJOICING TOWARDS GOD Vss. 6,8

Psalms 73 DEALING WITH INEQUITY

Life is not fair! Those who should be punished seem to be rewarded. Those who should be rewarded appear to be punished! This is not a new problem. Asaph dealt with the same problem in this Psalm.

THE PSALMIST'S COMPLAINT ABOUT INEQUITY - Vss. 1-16

Asaph admits that God is good to Israel, but he had almost slipped because of a wrong attitude. Vss. 1-2

Asaph had a problem with the prosperity of the wicked (Vss. 3-12) and the affliction of the righteous (Vss. 13-16).

THE PSALMIST'S CHANGE OF ATTITUDE - Vss. 17-20

When Asaph went to the "sanctuary of God" he finally received understanding.

We will understand things better when we bring them to God.

Asaph realized that the ungodly were in a precarious position, and would be judged by God.

This is still true today. Those without Christ in danger of eternal punishment (John 3:17-18, Rev 20:11-15)

THE PSALMIST'S CONVICTION OF SIN - Vss. 21-22

Asaph confessed just how foolish he was.

THE PSALMIST'S COMPANION FOR LIFE - Vss. 23-25

God is ever present with His children, and the outlook for the future is glorious!

THE PSALMIST'S CONFIDENCE IN GOD - Vss. 26-28

Psalm 73:24-26 SURVIVAL

MY FUTURE - Vs. 24 - *Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.*

MY FAITHFULNESS - *Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.*

MY FORTIFICATION - *My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.*

Psalm 77 STAGES

When trouble overwhelms us, it is good to come to this Psalm.

The psalmist goes through 3 stages that led him to victory during his trials.

REPORT BY A TROUBLED SOUL - Vss. 1-4

REFLECTIONS OF A THOUGHTFUL SOUL - Vss. 5-12

RELiance BY A TRUSTING SOUL - Vss. 13-20

Psalm 78:1-8 HELPING THE NEXT GENERATION

Each generation has a responsibility to help the next generation. Many of the technological advances of previous generations have helped this generation. It is the older generations that teach the younger generation at home and in school.

This passage talks about giving Spiritual help to the next generation.

REMEMBER THE TRUTH - Vss. 1-3

Those who know God through Christ must give ear to His Word and obey it.

They cannot help the next generation to live for God unless they know his word and heed it themselves.

REVEAL THE TRUTH - Vss. 4-6a

Spiritually speaking, it is the responsibility of older generations of Christians to help the next generation. We are to train them in the things of God. Proverbs 22:6, Psalm 92:13-14

RESULTS OF THE TRUTH - Vss. 6b-8

When the next generation is taught the things of God, some very positive things happen.

1. They will teach their children. Vs. 6b
2. They will set their hope in God. Vs. 7a
3. They will not forget God's works. Vs. 7b
4. They will keep God's commandments. Vs. 7c
5. They will be better than their fathers. Vs. 8

Psalm 78:1-8 PASS IT ON!

If a generation does not know God, it is the fault of the previous generation.

OPENNESS – Sharing the Word – Vss. 1-3

OBLIGATION – To the next generation – Vss. 4-6

OPPORTUNITY – For the next generation to put their trust in God and avoid the sins of their fathers – V. 7-8

Psalm 81 LESSONS FROM REBELLIOUS ISRAEL

Nations today can learn from the rebellion of Israel.

RETURN TO GOD Vss. 1-5

REFLECT ON GOD'S DELIVERANCE Vss. 6-7

REJECT FALSE GODS Vss. 8-9

REACH OUT IN PRAYER Vs. 10

RECOGNIZE THE CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE Vss. 11-16

Psalm 81:10 THE GREATEST MINISTRY OF ALL

"I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Since becoming a Christian, I have seen many great ministries performed by believers. Some of these people are well known, while others are not.

I have seen faithful ministers to prisoners, including my brother Art. I have seen missionaries who cover the globe witnessing for Christ.

I have heard great preachers in person and on radio, tape, or television.

I have heard great evangelists and talented Bible teachers.

I've known faithful pastors who have shepherded flocks of all sizes.

I have met great Sunday School teachers, elders, deacons, trustees, and other church leaders.

I have met many people whose specialty has been to do good works in the name of Christ.

There are many faithful servants of Christ who perform many important ministries. Some of these ministries you and I are not gifted enough to perform. There is, however, one ministry which I feel is the greatest ministry of all. Any Christian can perform this ministry. It is the ministry of prayer.

Through prayer I can support missionaries and their ministries around the world.
Through prayer I can pray for the salvation of the lost.
Through prayer I can intercede for believers in all places and walks of life.
Through prayer I can see change in my family, my church, my community, and on my job.
Through prayer I can see my needs met.

Our text is one of the great verses on prayer.

This text was a favorite of a great man of faith and prayer by the name of George Mueller.

Through prayer George Mueller built numerous buildings debt free.

Through prayer George Mueller fed, clothed, and housed thousands of orphans.

Through prayer George Mueller conducted literature and Sunday School ministries around the world.

Mueller did not ask man for money. He asked God!

I wish to challenge you to the greatest ministry of all!

GOD'S IDENTITY - "I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt..."

In order to be convinced that prayer is practical, powerful, or even necessary, we must realize who is making the promise found in this verse.

1. He is the Lord - The word Lord, when capitalized in the KJV, is a translation of the word Jehovah.

Jehovah is the eternal, self-existent one. Exodus 3:14. Because He exists, we are not wasting our breath when we speak. Because He is eternal, He will always exist and has already existed. This means that God is able to start working on answers even before we ask. Isaiah 65:24

2. He is our God - He was talking to Israel. But today those who know Christ as Savior know that the Lord is their God (John 1:12).

3. He is our deliverer - He brought Israel out of the bondage of Israel. He brought us Christians out of the bondage of sin. He is available to keep on delivering.

GOD'S INVITATION - "...open thy mouth wide..."

I have received many invitations to many functions, but this invitation is greatest of all.

The God who made me His child invites me to open my mouth wide and ask. Jeremiah 33:3, Matthew 7:7-11, Hebrews 4:14-16, James 1:5

I think of hungry baby birds when I think of mouths open wide. They keep their mouths wide open, in anxious anticipation of being fed. When we have our mouths open in prayer we are to be praying by faith in anxious anticipation of God's answer. James 1:6, Mark 11:24

GOD'S INPUT - "...I will fill it."

God promises to answer prayer that is offered according to His will. John 14:13-14, 1 John 5:14-15

TAKE ON THE GREATEST MINISTRY OF ALL! PRAY!

Psalm 81:10 MISSING GOD'S BEST

Israel missed the best that God had to offer. We must be careful that we do not make the same mistake.

BEHAVIOR REQUIRED - Vss. 9-10

We are to worship no false Gods.

We are to call out to God in prayer.

BELLIGERENT PRACTICED - Vss. 11-12

We must be careful not to disobey God.

Israel rebelled against God and ended up walking in her own counsels instead of the counsel of God.

BLESSINGS MISSED - Vss. 13-16

If Israel had only obeyed, God would have blessed in the ways listed here.

How much are we missing because we fail to obey God?

Psalm 84 GOD'S PRESENCE (OR HOUSE)

Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Because God indwells us, we should think of His presence as:

A PLACE OF PRIORITY - Vss. 1-2, 10

I should dwell on the fact that God indwells me, and should enjoy His presence.

A PLACE OF PROTECTION - Vs. 3

If the sparrows and swallows are safe in God's presence, how much more are we! Psalm 27:4-6

A PLACE OF PRAISE - Vss. 4, 12

God is to be worshipped by me. Psalm 104:33-34

A PLACE OF POWER - Vss. 5-7, 10

God's power is available in and through us. Acts 1:8, Ephesians 1:19-20

A PLACE OF PRAYER - Vs. 8

Psalm 81:10

Psalms 84:10-12 LOOKING GREAT IN THE NEW YEAR

For a great New Year,
MAKE GOD YOUR HOME Vs. 10
MAKE GOD YOUR HELP Vs. 11
MAKE GOD YOUR HAPPINESS Vs. 12
(The word "blessed" means happy.)

Psalms 84:1-7 TIME WITH GOD

EXPECTATION - Vs. 1-2 - SEEK GOD'S PRESENCE
EXAMPLE - Vs. 3 - SEE GOD'S PATTERN
EXALTATION - Vs. 4 - SHARE GOD'S PRAISE
EXPRESSION - Vs. 5-7 - SHOW GOD'S POWER

Psalms 85:6 PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

There is a lack of Spirituality among Christians, especially in the United States. God's people need to pray for revival, realizing the following things.

GOD'S POWER FOR REVIVAL

Only God can bring true revival, that's why we must ask God for it, and believe God for it. (Matthew 11:24)

GOD'S PLAN FOR REVIVAL

To revive means to give life! When revival is needed, it is because there is a definite lack of Spiritual life.

GOD'S PRIORITY IN REVIVAL

The prayer is "Revive us again." Only the Christian who has experienced the grace of God in his life can truly pray that prayer. God's priority is that Christians would get right with Him and experience a return to true Spiritual life. When Christians get right with God, then the unsaved will also come to Christ.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN REVIVAL - "That thy people may rejoice in thee."

God's people rejoice in sports, computers, business, fame, fortune, and a host of other things. Our God wants us to receive our joy from Him.

Psalms 89:1,7,15,18 WALKING WITH GOD

MY SONG - Vs. 1 - *I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.*

MY SANCTIFICATION - Vs. 7 - *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.*

MY SMILE (From God) - Vs. 15 - *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.*

MY SHIELD - Vs. 18a - *For the Lord is our defense;*

MY SOVEREIGN - Vs. 18b - *and the Holy One of Israel is our king.*

Psalms 89:7-18 WHY REVERENCE?

Psalms 89:7 - *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.*

Most commentators think that this verse is referring to a Heavenly scene with the Angels being the "holy ones" or saints mentioned here. And this is probably true.

But if God is to be revered by all those that are about Him that would also apply to those of us who know the Lord Jesus as our Savior. We are "about him" because we are the temple of God. 1 Corinthians 6:19
In Psalms 9:7-18 I found some of the reasons why Christians should reverence God.

WE SHOULD REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE HE IS STRONG – Vs. 8-10, 13

Vs. 8 – Nobody is stronger than God!

Psalms 89:9 - *Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.*

There are at least two times in the Bible when God stilled the raging sea.

When God parted the Red Sea so the Children of Israel could go across.

When Jesus stood up in the boat and calmed the Sea of Galilee.

And Jesus still calms the raging seas of our anxiety today, if we but let Him. He is strong enough to give us peace through any difficulty.

Vs. 10 – Rahab is a term used to refer to Egypt.

Hebert Lockyer says that "Rahab" means both "Strength" and "pride". Hebert Lockyer, *Psalms: A Devotional Commentary* (Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1993), pgs. 300-301

Egypt was both a strong and proud nation.

But God is stronger.

The same sea God calmed to protect Israel, was the same sea that was unleashed on Pharaoh and his army.

And just think. No enemy of God can stand against His strength. Even Satan is no match for God and is doomed to defeat!

Psalm 89:13 - *Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand.*

God is pictured with a mighty arm, strong hand, and a powerful right hand.

Our problem is we don't remember how strong God is when we worship. And we don't remember how strong God is when we face troubles. Jeremiah 32:17,

WE SHOULD REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE HE OWNS EVERYTHING – Vss. 11-12

Psalm 89:11 - *The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.*

How much should we worship God because He owns all the stars and the planets!

And how much more should we worship God because He owns the whole world.

God particularly owns the Christian. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Psalm 89:12 - *The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.*

Tabor and Hermon were mountains east and west of Israel. So, God was saying that everything, going east, west, north, south, was created by Him.

WE SHOULD REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE OF HIS CHARACTER – Vs. 14

Psalm 89:14 - *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.*

The word justice means "righteousness". God is righteous.

He can always be counted on to do what is right.

Because God is righteous, his judgments are accurate.

When the wicked are judged at the Great White Throne, they will be judged righteously. Rev 20:12

When you and I are judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ we will be judged righteously. 2 Cor 5:10, 1 Cor 4:5

I am so glad there is balance with God. Yes, there is righteous judgment.

But part of God's character is also mercy and truth, or we may use the words "love and faithfulness".

WE SHOULD REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE OF THE JOY HE BRINGS – Vss. 15-16

Psalm 89:15 - *Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.*

The Christians who know the joyful sound of worship are happy people.

The Christians who know the joyful sound of worship don't just worship with a congregation on Sunday.

They worship God continually. Psalm 89:16, Ephesians 5:18-20, Hebrews 13:15

Notice please that if you reverence God enough to worship God, God's smile will be upon you.

they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

WE SHOULD REVERENCE GOD BECAUSE OF HIS HELP – Vss. 17-18

Psalm 89:17 - *For thou art the glory of their strength: and in thy favour our horn shall be exalted.*

What true strength we have comes from God. Psalm 27:1

Our horn shall be exalted – Albert Barnes said, "The horn is a symbol of power... The meaning here is, that their power had been derived from God; or that all which contributed to their exaltation and honor in the world, had been derived from him." Barnes' Notes on the Old Testament

Psalm 89:18 - *For the Lord is our defence; and the Holy One of Israel is our king.*

What better defense can we ask for than to be protected by God?

Psalm 90:10, 12, 14 "ABOUT TIME" OR "ON TIME" – NEW YEAR

There is at least one thing you and I have in common. God has given us each the same amount of time

each day! We each have 24 hours. Each hour has 60 minutes. Each minute has 60 seconds.

One of the hardest things we need to do each day is to use God's gift of time wisely! Moses makes some interesting observations in Vss. 10, 12 and 14 of Psalm 90. He speaks about time.

RECOGNIZING THE TIME - Vs. 10

According to the Bible, the average life span is 70 years. Sometimes, especially in America today, a person may even receive a few more years. Nevertheless, no matter how long we live it is not long at all, and our time will be up.

REDEEMING THE TIME - Vs. 12

Moses recognized the need for proper use of time. Our time should be spent acknowledging the brevity of time and the need to use our time wisely. The most important thing we can do with our time is please God. See Ephesians 5:15-17.

REJOICING THROUGH TIME - Vs. 14

The sooner we find the mercy of God in Christ, and are satisfied with that mercy all our days, the happier we will be! The word mercy here refers to God's love! Let us always remember that nothing can separate us from that love! Romans 8:35-39.

Psalms 91:1 ON THE MOVE or MOVING ON

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

Life is full of changes. We move on physically, emotionally, and mentally.

According to this verse, we need to be on the move on spiritually as well. We need to move on!

MOVE IN! - "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High..."

You have a physical dwelling place, a home where you spend most of your time.

If you are a Christian, you are invited to move into the presence of God. You are to dwell in His presence.

You move into God's presence through:

Prayer - John 15:7

Praise - Hebrews 13:15-16

Scripture Reading - 2 Timothy 2:15

Memorization and Meditation on God's Word - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2, Psalm 119:97-100

Fellowship - Matthew 18:20, Hebrews 10:24-25

MOVE UP! - "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High..."

It is a secret place. Only those who know Christ find it. Only those who confess sin find it. (Psalm 119:18, Psalm 32:5) Only those who seek it, find it. (Psalm 27:8).

It is a step up to communion with our Great High Priest. Hebrews 4:14-16

It is a step up above sin, above the world, and above worry.

MOVE UNDER! - "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

The shadow is protection. There's more protection for the person who dwells in the secret place of the most high. As he stays focused on the Lord, He will have peace (Isaiah 26:3). As he gives his problems to the Lord, he will have peace (Philippians 4:6-7). We will be protected from anxiety and worry! We will relax in the truths of Psalm 121

Psalms 92 GOD AND THE SAINTS

GOD'S PRAISE FROM THE SAINTS Vss. 1-4

GOD'S POWER FOR THE SAINTS Vss. 5-11

GOD'S PERFORMANCE IN THE SAINTS Vss. 12-15

Psalms 92 REMEMBER!

REMEMBER TO WORSHIP GOD - Vss. 1-3

We are reminded just how good it is to worship God, giving thanks, and showing appreciation for his loving kindness and faithfulness.

REMEMBER GOD'S WORKS - Vss. 4-5

It is good to reflect on all the good and mighty things that God has done and that God is doing.

REMEMBER GOD'S WAR - Vss. 6-11

God is at war with wickedness and He will triumph!

REMEMBER YOU ARE GOD'S WORKER - Vss. 12-15

As a Christian, you are God's worker. You are expected to flourish and to bring forth fruit. This is accomplished as you abide in him. John 15:4-5

Psalms 93 GOD IN CONTROL

My wife, Dottie, has recently been elected president of the Willing Workers Missions Circle, the equivalent of The Ladies Aid in many churches. One of their functions is to provide funeral dinners for families in the church when a loved one passes away. This week we have need of a funeral dinner.

I discovered this need after Dottie had gone to work and the dinner needed to be organized. I called her vice president, Fran. Fran took the list of those who usually help and went to work. Neither Dottie nor I are worried about how things will turn out because Fran has things under control.

In a similar fashion, we Christians should not worry because God has everything under control.

CONFIDENCE - Vss. 1-2

The Lord reigns and is clothed with majesty.

He has strength.

The world can not be moved by anyone other than Him. He is in control.

He has been reigning and will reign for all eternity.

COMPARISON - Vss. 3-4

Our God is mightier than the waves of the flood or the sea.

Nothing can stop Him!

COMFORT - Vs. 5

God keeps his promises - "Thy testimonies are very sure..."

God will act in a holy (sinless) manner forever.

Psalm 93 THE LORD REIGNS

THE MAJESTY OF THAT REIGN - Vs. 1

THE MIGHT OF THAT REIGN - Vss. 2-4

THE MEANING OF THAT REIGN - Vs. 5

Sure Testimonies

Holiness

Psalm 94:9-14 GOD IS REAL!

The reality of a true and living God are seen in these verses.

God is real because,

HE HEARS

Vs.9 - "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?"

Jeremiah 33:3

HE SEES

Vs. 9 - "He that formed the eye, shall he not see?"

Proverbs 5:21, Proverbs 15:3

HE CORRECTS

Vs. 10 - "He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct?"

Vs. 12 - "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD,"

Proverbs 3:11-12

HE TEACHES

Vs. 10 - "He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?"

Psalms 132:8

HE KNOWS

Vs. 11 - The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.

Psalms 139:1-6

HE BLESSES

Vss. 12-14 - "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and teachest him out of thy law; That thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked. For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance."

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm 95 WORSHIP

A CALL TO WORSHIP Vss. 1-2

A CAUSE FOR WORSHIP Vss. 3-6

A CAUTION IN WORSHIP Vss. 7-11

(We are not to provoke God the way the children of Israel did.)

Psalm 95 PRAISE THE LORD

WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO PRAISE GOD - Vss. 1-2

WE HAVE REASONS TO PRAISE GOD - Vss. 3-7

WE HAVE A REMINDER OF THOSE WHO DIDN'T PRAISE GOD - Vss. 8-11

Psalm 96:1-2 MY SONG FOR JESUS

Following the advice of the Psalmist, as I worship the Lord Jesus my song to Him should be:

A FRESH SONG - New - I should be so growing in Christ that I have new reasons to praise Him every day.

A FULL SONG - Praising the Lord with my whole heart

A FREQUENT SONG - Continually blessing His name

A FAITHFUL SONG - Proclaiming His salvation

Psalm 96 THE MISSIONARY PSALM

CALL TO MISSIONS - Vss. 1-3

The glory and wonders of Christ need to be proclaimed to the "heathen". Matthew 28:19-20

Don't think of heathen people as people who live in a third world setting.

Think of heathen people as anyone in need of Christ.

REASONS FOR MISSIONS - Vss. 4-6

The Lord is great and should be greatly praised. Vs. 4

He needs to be feared above all Gods. He is feared when Jesus is claimed as Savior. Vs. 4

The Lord is the only true God, who also made the Heavens. Vs. 5

The Lord is preeminent. Vs. 6

MESSAGE OF MISSIONS - Vss. 7-10

To give the Lord the glory due his name means to accept His way of salvation. Acts 4:12

To worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness also requires us to trust Christ as Savior. 1 Peter 2:9-10

The heathen must realize that it is God who reigns. Revelation 1:8

He shall judge righteously. John 3:18, Revelation 20:11-15, 2 Corinthians 5:10

END OF MISSIONS - Vss. 11-13

The Lord will return to judge in righteousness.

Psalm 100 WORSHIP YOUR GOD

WORSHIP IS DIRECTED (unto the Lord) Vs. 1

WORSHIP IS ACTIVE Vss. 1-2

WORSHIP IS KNOWLEDGEABLE Vs. 3

WORSHIP IS THANKFUL Vs. 4

WORSHIP IS JUSTIFIED Vs. 5

Psalm 100 THE WAYS OF WORSHIP

WHAT TO DO - Vss. 1-2

Make a joyful noise

Serve the Lord with gladness

Come before His presence with singing

WHERE TO GO - Vs. 4

Into His presence with thanksgiving and praise

WHAT DO KNOW - Vss. 3, 5

(What we know helps us to worship.)

The Lord is God

He has made us

We are his people

We are his sheep

The Lord is good

His mercy is everlasting

His truth endures to all generations

Psalm 100 VERBS FOR WORSHIP

Worship is an activity. It requires action! This psalm provides us with action words, or verbs that tell us how to worship!

MAKE! - "A joyful noise unto the Lord." Vs. 1

SERVE! - "The Lord with gladness." Vs. 2

COME! - "Before His presence with singing." Vs. 2

ENTER! - "Into His gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise." Vs. 4

KNOW! - Vss. 3,5

The Lord is God.

He is our maker.

"We are His people."

We are the sheep of His pasture.

"The Lord is good."

"His mercy is everlasting."

"His truth endures to all generations."

Psalm 100:3, 5 SEVEN CERTAINTIES FOR THE SAINTS

We leave in a world of constant change and upheaval.

We cannot count on things being the same, because they won't stay the same. In this time of difficulty, it's nice to know that God never changes.

Psalm 100:3,5 lists seven of these unchangeable truths.

1. THE LORD IS GOD

2. THE LORD IS CREATOR

3. WE ARE THE LORD'S PEOPLE (If we are saved.)

4. WE ARE THE LORD'S SHEEP (Again, if we are saved.)

5. THE LORD IS GOOD

6. HIS MERCY IS EVERLASTING

7. HIS TRUTH ENDURES TO ALL GENERATIONS

Psalm 101 PRACTICAL HOLINESS

We are called upon to live holy lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16

This Psalm shows some practical ways to practice holiness.

MY SONG - Vs. 1

My song of praise is to be directed to the Lord and will include mention of His mercy and judgment.

MY STEPS - Vs. 2

I am to walk with a perfect heart. My house is a private place. If I can walk before God with a perfect heart in private, I can also walk before God with a perfect heart in public.

MY SIGHT - Vss. 3, 6

My eyes are to turn away from the sight of wickedness (Place this verse on top of your television and see if your viewing habits change!) Vs. 3

My eyes are also to be centered on the righteous. They are to be my friends. They will not lead me astray.

MY SEPARATION - Vss. 4,5,7,8

Separated from wicked people - Vs. 4, 8

Separated from slanderers and the proud - Vs. 5

Separated from the deceitful - Vs. 6

Psalm 101 BIBLICAL SEPARATION

2 Corinthians 6:17 - *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*

Separation is a popular theme among fundamentalists and evangelicals. But just what is Biblical Separation? I think we find the answer in Psalm 101.

BIBLICAL SEPARATION REQUIRES DEVOTION - Vs. 1

Our devotion is to be to God. A person can not be truly devoted to God unless he or she has trusted Christ as Savior (John 14:6).

BIBLICAL SEPARATION REQUIRES DECISION - Vs. 2-3

We must decide to behave wisely.

We must decide to walk with a perfect heart.

We must discern what wicked things to avoid.

BIBLICAL SEPARATION REQUIRES DISCERNMENT - Vss. 4-8

We must determine what people with whom we can have fellowship based on whether the person be wicked or righteous.

Psalm 103:1-14 – POSSIBLE FATHER'S DAY MESSAGE SEEING THE FATHER

Psalm 103 gives us a great picture of God as Heavenly Father:

THE FORGIVING FATHER Vs. 3

THE REDEEMING FATHER Vs. 4a

THE COMPASSIONATE FATHER Vs. 4b, 8

THE SATISFYING FATHER Vs. 5

THE RIGHTEOUS FATHER Vs. 6

THE UNDERSTANDING FATHER Vs. 14

Psalm 103:8-14 THANK GOD FOR HIS MERCY!

God loves to show His mercy to His children. Why not preach a Thanksgiving message on the mercy of God?

DECLARATION OF GOD'S MERCY, Vs. 8

DESCRIPTION OF GOD'S MERCY, Vss. 9-10

DIMENSIONS OF GOD'S MERCY Vss. 11-12

DESIGN OF GOD'S MERCY, Vss. 13-14

Psalm 104:33-34 PRAISE

Psalm 104:33-34 - *I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord.*

THE DIRECTION OF PRAISE - *I will sing unto the Lord... I will sing praise to my God*

THE DURATION OF PRAISE - *as long as I live... while I have my being*

THE DISCRETION OF PRAISE - *My meditation of him shall be sweet*

THE DECISION TO PRAISE - *I will be glad in the Lord.*

Psalms 105:1-5 BALANCE!

We face so many activities, issues, challenges and trials in this life.

These verses show us how to maintain our "spiritual balance."

REJOICE - Vs. 1a - *O give thanks unto the Lord;...*

Vs. 2a - Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him:

Vs. 3 - Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.

REQUEST - Vs. 1b - *...call upon his name;...*

Vs. 4 - Seek the Lord, and his strength: seek his face evermore.

REPORT - Vs. 1c - *"...make known his deeds among the people."*

Vs. 2b - "...talk ye of all his wondrous works."

REMEMBER - Vs. 5 - *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;*

Remember His works.

Remember His wonders.

Remember His Word (judgments)

Psalms 110 MY LORD

This Psalm speaks of my Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we see:

MY LORD'S POSITION - Vs. 1

It appears that the capital "LORD" in this verse refers to God the Father and that the word "Lord" refers to the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ is sitting at the right hand of the throne of God until it is time for Him to return to earth. Philippians 2:5-11

MY LORD'S POWER - Vss. 2, 5-7

He will rule over God's enemies. Vs. 2, Revelation 19:11-21

He will execute judgment over those who oppose Him. Vss. 5-6, Isaiah 11

MY LORD'S PEOPLE - Vs. 3

My Lord's people are willing to serve Him. Those who love the Lord because they are saved are those who do His will. John 14:15

MY LORD'S PRIESTHOOD - Vs. 4

Jesus is part of a special priesthood. The priests under the law were of the Levitical Order Aaron.

Jesus is of the Order of Melchizedek. It is a permanent priesthood. See Hebrews 7 and Genesis 14:18-20

Psalms 110 THE LORD IN CONTROL

THE LORD'S RESTRAINT - Vs. 1

The Lord Jesus is at God's right hand, waiting for the time to return to earth in victory.

THE LORD'S RULE - Vss. 2-3

THE LORD'S RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 4

Jesus is a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Hebrews 5:10, Hebrews 7

THE LORD'S RETRIBUTION - Vss. 5-7

Psalms 111 THE WORKS OF GOD

HIS WORKS ARE MAMMOTH - "The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein." - Vs. 2

HIS WORKS ARE MAJESTIC - "His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever." - Vs. 3

HIS WORKS ARE MEMORABLE - "He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion." - Vs. 4

HIS WORKS ARE MIGHTY - "He hath shewed his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen." - Vs. 6

HIS WORKS ARE MEANINGFUL - "The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure." - Vs. 7

Psalms 112:5-10 A GOOD MAN

A GOOD MAN IS GENEROUS - Vss. 5a, 9a

A GOOD MAN IS DISCRETE - Vs. 5b

A GOOD MAN IS REMEMBERED - Vs. 6

A GOOD MAN IS CONFIDENT - Vss. 7-8

A GOOD MAN IS VICTORIOUS - Vss. 9-10

Psalms 113 LET THERE BE PRAISE

PRAISE IS TO BE DIRECTED TO GOD - VS. 1
PRAISE IS TO BE PRACTICED BY GOD'S SERVANTS - VS. 1
PRAISE IS TO BE CONTINUOUS - VSS. 2-3
PRAISE IS JUSTIFIED - Vss. 4-9
1. By God's Position - Vss. 4-5
2. By God's Humility - Vs. 6
3. By God's Actions - Vss. 7-9

Psalms 113 LET'S JUST PRAISE THE LORD!

CALL TO PRAISE Vs. 1
CONTINUATION OF PRAISE Vss. 2-3
CERTAINTIES FOR PRAISE Vss. 4-9
God is superior. Vss. 4-5
God is special (humbling Himself), Vs. 6
God saves. Vss. 7-8
God supplies. Vs. 9

Psalms 113 TIME TO PRAISE THE LORD

PRAISE IS A RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 1
The servant of the Lord is to praise the Lord.
PRAISE IS TO BE REPEATED - Vss. 2-3
PRAISE IS REASONABLE - Vss. 4-9
Because of God's superiority - Vs. 4
Because of God's uniqueness - Vs. 5
Because of God's works among men - Vss. 6-9

Psalms 115 WHY WE SERVE GOD

THE PREEMINENCE OF GOD - Vss. 1-3
THE PROBLEM WITH IDOLS - Vss. 4-8
THE PRIORITY OF TRUST - Vss. 9-11
THE PROMISES OF GOD - Vss. 12-18

Psalms 116 HELPED BY GOD!

MY AFFECTION – Vss. 1-2
MY APPEAL – Vss. 3-4
GOD'S ATTRIBUTES – Vs. 5
GOD'S ASSISTANCE – Vss. 6-8

Psalms 116:1-6 DEPENDENT LIVING

Children are dependent upon their parents. As God's children, we should depend on Him. We run into trouble when we become independent.
DECISION MADE, Vss. 1-2
The decision is to love the Lord. The psalmist gives a specific reason for loving the Lord. His reason was that God had heard his prayer.
There are many more reasons for deciding to love the Lord. Some of the reasons we should love the Lord are because He loves us (1 John 4:10, 19), He died for us (2 Corinthians 5:21), He keeps us (John 10:27-30), He helps and protects us (Psalm 121), and He indwells us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
DISTRESS DESCRIBED, Vs. 3
DEPENDENCE EXPRESSED, Vs. 4
DECLARATIONS PROCLAIMED Vss. 5-6
1. The Lord is gracious.
2. The Lord is merciful.
3. The Lord preserves.
4. The Lord helps.

Psalms 116 PERSONAL TESTIMONY

You might want to begin your study or sermon (If you are in an informal setting.) with the following questions:
What is a personal testimony?
On what occasions are personal testimonies given? (Church, witnessing, encouraging other believers).
Have you ever been helped by another believer's testimony? Can you think of a particular instance?

Are personal testimonies Biblical? (Psalm 107:2, Hebrews 10:24-25, 1 Peter 3:15)

Thinking of personal testimonies, I want us to go to Psalm 116 and look at the personal testimony of a psalmist whose identity is hidden. We do know that this man faced great peril and was delivered by the Lord. This is a very personal Psalm, with the writer making reference to himself 37 times in 19 verses. Only in 3 verses, 5, 15, and 19 there is not at least one personal pronoun used.

The exciting thing is that we can relate to this man's testimony. As we study this passage we find that what was true of this man should be true for us as well. Because the Psalmist used the personal pronoun, let's you and I use the personal pronoun as well. In this passage let's consider:

MY DEVOTION - Vss. 1-2

Many Psalms begin with praise. This Psalm alludes to praise, but is actually a statement of the Psalmists devotion. - I LOVE THE LORD!

If someone were to ask us, "Do you love the Lord?" our natural inclination is to say "yes". In this statement of devotion it is something that the Psalmist should have thought about before making the statement. I imagine that he did. You and I should think about this statement, "I LOVE THE LORD!"

It's very easy to say I love the Lord and a lot more difficult to actually practice that love! Matthew 22:37-39

Next the Psalmist the Psalmist says, I love the Lord BECAUSE...

I think we can sum our Love up with 1 John 4:19, "We love him, because he first loved us."

The Psalmist's expression of love is because the Lord heard and answered his prayer. Read Vss. 1-2

The Psalmist was in grave trouble and the Lord came down and heard so to speak. How many times has God done the same for us? When we've been in great need and cried out, He has been there for us!

Notice something else here. The Psalmist says, "Because the Lord heard me this time, I will continue to pray."

That should be our attitude as well. Because the Lord has answered our prayers, we should continue to pray. He has shown Himself to be my God. I should treat Him as such and continue to call on Him.

MY DILEMMA - Vs. 3

A couple of thoughts here:

1. Before being saved we faced the prospects of a Spiritual death and eternal separation from God. This was a problem that no man could possibly solve for himself. Ephesians 2:1- And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2. We have all faced problems as Christians that were so great and so severe that although we may not have been literally close to death we may have felt like we were.

MY DEPENDENCE - Vs. 4

My dilemma concerning sin and death and eternal punishment was resolved when I called upon the Lord in faith, trusting Him as Savior. I became dependent on Christ for eternal life.

My dilemma concerning my daily problems, large and small is solved through dependence on God in prayer.

We say we believe the Bible, let's live like we do! (Philippians 4:6-7, Proverbs 3:5-6)

MY DELIVERANCE - Vss. 5-8

Vs. 5 - Here is a great verse! Why does God deliver?

He's gracious. Salvation is all of grace. God's answers our prayers for deliverance in his grace.

God is also righteous. God will do what is right for those who trust His Son for salvation. He will save them.

God will do what is right concerning his promises. He's promised to keep us, and He will. He's promised to answer our prayers and He will! Whatever God says He will do He will do!

God is also merciful, or compassionate. He has compassion on those who trust Him!

Vs. 6 - Remember, this is a personal testimony.

Here is a humble man here. He refers to himself as "simple", or "simple-hearted." The person with child-like faith is the person who is in good standing with God. Mark 10:15

Vs. 7 - The Psalmist is giving himself a little pep talk?

How would you paraphrase this verse into Modern English?

"Relax! God has more than taken care of the problem." Or "Chill out! God has handled it!"

Verse 8 - First think of this verse as pertains to salvation.

My soul has been delivered from eternal death.

I am going to a land where my God will wipe away all tears. (Tears are temporary.)

God will keep my feet from falling. He will get me securely to Heaven!

Now think of this verse concerning your problems.

The Psalmist may have faced a life and death situation, but didn't die. There are times when we could have suffered terrible injury or death, but God has protected us. We won't die until God is ready for us in Heaven.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't take care of ourselves, by the way.

MY DECISION - Vss. 9-14

The Psalmist makes several statements here that show that he has decided to walk in such a way that he will please God!

MY DELIGHT - Vss. 15-19

Vs. 15 - What a great promise here we have here.

What a great verse this is. It is a verse to delight in.

Vs. 16 - What a delight and a privilege to say "Lord, I'm your servant!" There is no greater privilege that to be a Servant of God.

Vss. 17-18 - The Psalmist repeats himself, and for him as God's servant, it was a delight for Him,

To give thanks

To pray

To keep his promises

And to do it publicly so everyone knew where he stood.

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

Psalm 117 GOD IN CONTROL

Psalm 117:1-2 - *O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. [2] For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord.*

GOD'S MASTERY - Vs. 1

He is Lord! He is superior.

GOD'S MERCY - Vs 2 - *merciful kindness*

GOD'S MESSAGE - Vs. 2 - *and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.*

GOD'S MANDATE - Vss. 1-2 - *Praise ye the Lord.*

Psalm 118:1-9 TO GOD BE THE GLORY

PRAISING PROCLAMATION - Vss. 1-4

PERSONAL TESTIMONY - Vss. 5-7

PRACTICAL ADVICE - Vss. 8-9

Psalm 118:6 CONFIDENT LIVING

COMFORT - "The Lord is on my side;"

CHOICE - "I will not fear;"

CONCLUSION - "What can man do unto me?"

Psalm 118:6 A DECLARATION OF CONFIDENCE

"The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me."

GREAT TRUTH - "The LORD is on my side;" See verses 14, 22-24.

He was on my side when He created me. Colossians 1:16

He was on my side when He came to earth as a man. Micah 5:2

He was on my side when He died for me. 2 Corinthians 5:21

He was on my side when He arose from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

He is on my side at the right hand of God as my advocate, interceding for me. Heb 4:14-16,

1 John 2:1-2

He is on my side because He is coming again for me. Acts 1:11

GREAT TRUST - "I will not fear;" See verses 8-9, 28-29.

GREAT TRIUMPH - "What can man do unto me?" See verses 7 and 12.

Also see Luke 12:4-7.

Psalm 118:21-29 JESUS IS HERE!

Look at these verses and see the work of Christ for our salvation! He's here!

THE STONE THAT WAS REJECTED - Vss. 21-23

Jesus was rejected by Israel.

However he is the head or cornerstone of salvation. Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, 1 Peter 2:6-8

THE SALVATION THAT JESUS SECURED - Vss. 25-27

THE SONG THAT JESUS GIVES - Vs. 24, 28-29

Psalm 119:1-2 GOD'S WAY TO HAPPINESS

As I write these notes we are approaching a New Year. These two verses can be used as a challenge as we face 1999. However, this message can be used any time as a challenge to Godly living.

We all want to be happy! The trouble is, most of us try to find our happiness in things, in what people think about us or in personal comfort. In Psalm 119:1-2 the word "blessed" means happy. Here God tells us His way for us to achieve true happiness.

BE SAVED - "Blessed are the undefiled in the way..."

We are all defiled by sin! (Romans 3:9-23)

Jesus died for our sin! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Believe on Him and be saved! (Romans 10:13, Acts 4:12, John 3:36)

When are saved we become undefiled in the way! God declares us righteous. (Romans 5:1)

BE SATURATED - "...who walk in the law of the LORD."

When we walk in something we are surrounded by it.

True happiness for the one who is saved comes from being surrounded by and saturated in the Word of God. (Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3, Psalm 119:15-16)

BE STEADFAST - "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies..."

We will be happy as we steadfastly obey God.

BE SEEKING - "...and that seek him with the whole heart."

We constantly seek other things and other people instead of seeking the Lord. (Psalm 27:8)

Psalm 119:1-2 THE WAY OF HAPPINESS

Most people think that happiness depends on "happenings".

When things are going well, folks are happy. When they don't go well, they are not happy. Psalm 119:1-2 shows us how to be truly happy (blessed).

It begins with being "undefiled in the way". The undefiled in the way are those who are saved. After salvation we are happy as we spell the word "SAD"

S - SATURATION - Walk in the law of the Lord.

A - APPLICATION - Keep His testimonies.

D - DETERMINATION - Seek Him with the whole heart.

Psalm 119:1-8 A HAPPY PERSON

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A HAPPY PERSON - Vss. 1-3

THE CONSCIENCE OF A HAPPY PERSON - Vss. 4-6

THE COMMITMENT OF A HAPPY PERSON - Vss. 7-8

The word blessed means happy.

Psalm 119:9-11 ADVICE WORTH FOLLOWING (This could be used as a message for graduates.)

We all need a good word of advice from time to time.

When people embark on new experiences such as after graduation or in preparation for a new job or a marriage, it seems like good advice is appropriate.

Here is some good advice worth following:

TAKE HEED - Vs. 9 - A person can "clean up his act" when he constantly heeds or obeys the Word of God. 1 Samuel 15:22-23

TAKE HOLD - Vs. 10 - A person should grab on to following God totally. His commitment to God should be whole hearted.

TAKE HELP - Vs. 11 - A person should hide God's Word in his heart so that he will be strengthened against the attacks of Satan. Follow our Lord's example of using Scripture when tempted. Luke 4:1-13

Psalm 119:11 USE THIS VERSE!

Talk to the average Christian, and you will find that he or she claims to have great respect and love for the Word of God. The best way to prove that we have great respect and love for God's Word is to obey it!

Psalm 119:11 is a great verse and often quoted. However, to best honor God we must make this verse real in our lives! We must use it!

THE SEED - "Thy word..." See Mark 4:14.

THE SOIL - "...my heart..." See Mark 4:15-20.

As I suggested in another outline, there are four kinds of hearts mentioned in Mark's Gospel.

A deceived heart - Vs. 15

A disturbed heart - Vss. 16-17

A distracted heart - Vss. 18-19

A discerning heart - Vs. 20

THE SECRET - "...have I hid..." - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3

THE SUCCESS - "...that I might not sin against thee."

See Matthew 4:1-11 - The Lord quoted Scripture to refute the devil.

We will sin less as we memorize, meditate upon, and obey God's Word.

Psalms 119:15-16 MAKING GOD'S WORD A PRIORITY

1. Reflect - "I will meditate in thy precepts..."
2. Respect - "...and have respect unto thy ways."
3. Rejoice - "I will delight myself in thy statutes..."
4. Remember - "...I will not forget thy word."

Psalms 119:25-32 PRAYER DURING TOUGH TIMES

The psalmist was having a tough time. It was so bad that his soul clung to the dust. This was his prayer, a prayer which we can use when we have similar problems.

1. GIVE ME LIFE - Vs. 25 - The word quicken has to do with life.
2. GIVE ME INSTRUCTION - Vs. 26
3. GIVE ME UNDERSTANDING - Vs. 27
4. GIVE ME STRENGTH - Vs. 28
5. GIVE ME INTEGRITY - Vss. 29-30
6. GIVE ME CONFIDENCE - Vss. 31-32

Psalms 119:33-35 A DISCIPLE'S PRAYER

TEACH ME THE WAY - Vs. 33 - "Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end."

GIVE ME THE WISDOM - "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart."

MAKE ME TO WALK - "Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight."

How willing are you to say "Make me" to God?

Psalms 119:41-48 THE WORD

LIFE (SALVATION) THROUGH THE WORD - Vs. 41

LIPS FOR THE WORD - Vss. 42, 43, 46

LIBERTY BY THE WORD - Vss. 44-45

LOVE OF THE WORD - Vss. 47-48

Psalms 119:49-56 GOD'S WORD

ENCOURAGED BY GOD'S WORD - Vss. 49-50

ENTRENCHED IN GOD'S WORD - Vss. 51-52

ENRAGED WHEN GOD'S WORD IS VIOLATED - Vs. 53

ESTABLISHED BY OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WORD - Vss. 54-56

Psalms 119:59-63 RECIPE FOR JOY

REFLECT - Vs. 59a - *I thought on my ways,*

Self-examination is key to being right with God. We must be honest about the condition of our hearts.

REPENT - Vss. 59b-60 - *... and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*

When we turn away from sin, we will confess it and receive forgiveness. 1 John 1:9

We will strive to be obedient to God's word.

REMEMBER - Vs. 61 - *The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have not forgotten thy law.*

In spite of the hardships that we face as we walk with God (Psalm 34:19, 1 Timothy 3:12).

REJOICE - Vs. 62 - *At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee because of thy righteous judgments.*

See Philippians 4:4 and Psalm 100.

RECRUIT - Vs. 63 - *I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.*

Recruit friends who are of like faith.

Psalms 119:57-63 A REFLECTIVE MEDITATION

MY PORTION - Vs. 57 - The Lord

When the Lord is our portion, we will strive to keep His words.

MY PRAYER - Vs. 58 - Wholehearted

A wholehearted prayer will seek God's mercy.

A wholehearted prayer will also claim the promises found in God's Word.

MY PONDERINGS - Vs. 59 - Concern my ways

As the psalmist considered the Word of God, he reflected on his behavior and changed it in order to keep God's testimonies.

MY PRIORITIES - Vss. 60-62 -

1. Obedience to God Vs. 60

2. The Word of God Vs. 61

3. Thanks to God Vs. 62

MY PARTNERS - Vs. 63 - Those that fear God and keep His precepts

Psalm 119:63 PARTNERSHIP

Psalm 119:63 - "I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."

Who can be my partner?

Who can I work closely with?

In our text the Psalmist is saying, "I am the companion of anyone who fears my God and obeys his word."

Let us think of the word "fear" as being "respect". The only one who can truly be my partner is the one who fears or respects the same things that I fear or respect.

As a Christian, there are at least four things that a partner of mine must respect.

RESPECT FOR GOD'S WAY

A partner of mine must agree with God's way for a person to enter Heaven through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John 3:14-18, John 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9

We can not be partners with those who are unbelievers. 2 Corinthians 6:14

RESPECT FOR GOD'S WORD

If I truly respect God, I must respect His Word.

My partner must also respect God's Word.

Psalm 119:89, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:21

RESPECT FOR GOD'S WORK

God's work is the Great Commission. A partner of mine needs to be interested in carrying out God's plan of evangelism and church growth. Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15

RESPECT FOR GOD'S WALK

God has a code of conduct for us. We need to walk in obedience to Him. We must keep His precepts. 1

Samuel 15:22-23, Micah 6:8, 1 Peter 1:15-16, Galatians 6:1

Psalm 119:97-104 GOD'S WORD AND ME

1. LOVING IT - Vss. 97, 103 - "Oh how love I thy law..."

2. LEARNING IT - Vss. 98-100, 104 - "Through thy precepts I get understanding..."

3. LIVING IT - Vss. 101-102 - "...that I might keep thy word."

Psalm 119:165 WHAT A PROMISE!

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

People are looking for peace today! The trouble is that they usually look in the wrong places. They look for peace through people or circumstances or money. They don't look to the Lord! Here is a promise for peace that God will keep if we meet His criteria.

GREAT COMPOSURE (or COMFORT or CONSOLATION)

God promises peace. Of course, peace is found in the Lord Jesus Christ! John 14:27; 16:33, Matt 11:28

In Isaiah 9:6 He is called "the Prince of Peace".

GREAT CONDITION

The condition for peace is that a person love God's Word.

One does not love God's Word unless less they know and obey God's Word. Psalm 119:97, Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3

When we obey God's Word we will:

1. Know Christ as Savior - Romans 5:1

2. Keep our eyes focused on Christ - Isaiah 26:3

3. Commit our needs to God in prayer - Philippians 4:6-7

GREAT CONFIDENCE

The one who loves God's Word will be a person of confidence. "Nothing shall offend them." Proverbs 29:25, Proverbs 3:6-6, Isaiah 40:31

Psalm 119:97-104 GOD'S WORD AND ME

1. LOVING IT - Vss. 97, 103 - "Oh how love I thy law..."

2. LEARNING IT - Vss. 98-100, 104 - "Through thy precepts I get understanding..."

3. LIVING IT - Vss. 101-102 - "...that I might keep thy word."

Psalm 119:97-104 GO DEEPER!

When people drill wells to find water they often go several hundred feet deep before they find any.

Sometimes they are required to go deeper before they find the needed water.

We as Christians have a tremendous source of blessing. It is the Bible. The Bible however runs far deeper than just surface reading. Most Christians stay too near the surface and never learn to go deeper into the

word. They drill only a few feet into the word, when, in reality there is much more available if one would just learn to go deeper.

Perhaps the greatest passage that discusses the Word of God is Psalm 119. It is the Psalm of "The Book." Almost every one of its 176 verses refers to the Bible in some way.

Psalm 119:97-104 seems to be inviting us to go deeper into the Word of God, so that we will not be just receiving surface blessing. As we go deeper, we will discover great blessings hidden below the surface.

THE WAY OF THE WORD Vs. 97

When we go the way of the Word, we love the Word of God and meditate in it.

When we love something or someone:

We can't get enough of that person or thing.

We can't talk enough about that person or thing.

We can't think enough about that person or thing.

When we love the Word of God:

We can't get enough of the Word of God.

We can't talk enough about the Word of God.

We can't think enough about the Word of God.

Remember that our love of the Word is really a reflection of how much we love the author of the Word. For thoughts on meditation see Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:2-3, Psalm 119:11, and Jeremiah 15:16.

THE WISDOM FROM THE WORD Vss. 98-100

The wisdom I receive from God's Word makes me:

Wiser than my enemies - Vs. 98

Wiser than my teachers - Vs. 99

Wiser than the ancients - Vs. 100

THE WALK IN THE WORD Vss. 101-104

Psalm 119:1 tells me to walk in the law of the Lord.

A walk in the law of the Lord is Selective - Vs. 101

A walk in the law of the Lord is Steady - Vs. 102

A walk in the law of the Lord is Sweet - Vs. 103

A walk in the law of the Lord is Solid - Vs. 104

Psalms 119:129,130,133 GOD'S WORD

THE WONDER OF GOD'S WORD - Vs. 129

Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them.

2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12

THE WORTH OF GOD'S WORD - Vs. 130

The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.

Psalm 119:98-100, 105,

THE WALK IN GOD'S WORD - Vs. 133

Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Psalm 119:1-2

Psalm 119:169-176 LET ME

LET ME SPEAK - Vss. 169-172

To God - Vss. 169-171

For God - Vs. 172

LET ME BE HELPED - Vss. 173-174

LET ME LIVE - Vss. 175-176

Psalm 120 IT'S NOT EASY!

Living a Godly life has never been easy. Psalm 34:19, John 15:18-25, 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 Peter 5:8

In Psalm 20 we see another indication of just how difficult it is to life in this sinful old world.

A HOPEFUL, HURTING CRY - Vs. 1

A HARMFUL TONGUE - Vss. 2-4

A HOSTILE PEOPLE - Vss. 5-6

Psalm 121 THE LORD'S KEEPING

We can be assured of the Lord's precious keeping of each Christian. In verses 1-2 we are reminded that our help in types of trouble come from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Vss. 3-8 tell us something about the Lord's keeping power.

THE LORD'S KEEPING IS CONSCIENTIOUS - Vss. 3-4

The Lord doesn't slumber or sleep.

THE LORD'S KEEPING IS COMFORTING - Vss. 5-6
The Lord keeps and protects.
THE LORD'S KEEPING IS COMPLETE - Vs. 7
He preserves us from all evil. He preserves our very souls.
THE LORD'S KEEPING IS CONTINUOUS - Vs. 8
The Lord takes care of us forevermore.

Psalm 121 KEPT BY GOD

My purpose this message is to encourage you.
Some of you are new believers in the Lord, and you need to know that you are kept by God.
Some of you are facing work problems, family problems, friend problems, school problems, and/or other kinds of problems. You need to know that you are kept by God.
Some of you don't feel like you have any particular serious problem. You still need to know that you are kept by God, because problems will come!
God has promised His presence and help to the Christian who has problems. Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 28:20, Psalm 103:13
Psalm 121 shows that we are kept by God! Christian please realize that:
1. NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD Vss. 1-2, 8, Psalm 139:7-10
2. NO MATTER WHAT THE OBSTACLE YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD. Vs. 3a
3. NO MATTER WHAT THE HOUR YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD. Vss. 3b-4
4. NO MATTER WHAT THE CONDITIONS YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD. Vss. 5-6
5. NO MATTER WHO THE ENEMY YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD. Vs. 7
6. NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES YOU ARE KEPT BY GOD. Vs. 8, Psalm 23:4,6

Psalm 121 MY KEEPER

HE WILL PROVIDE - Vss. 1-2
HE WILL PREVENT - Vss. 3-4
He's on 24-hour guard duty.
HE WILL PROTECT - Vss. 5-6
HE WILL PRESERVE - Vss. 7-8

Psalm 122:1 ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

"Johnny, it's time to get and go to church!"
"Ah, Maw, I don't want to go to church!"
"Johnny, there isn't much time. You've got to get up and go to church!"
"Ah Maw, they don't like me down there."
"Johnny, for the last time, get up and go to church!"
"Ah Maw, give me two good reasons why I have to go to church."
"Number one, you're 52 years old. Number two, you're the pastor!"
Even for us who attend church very regularly, we sometimes find our enthusiasm for church waning. We find our desire to go to church dropping off a bit.
We can tell our interest in church attendance is dropping when:
1. We find many excuses for not attending evening service.
2. We think that church on Wednesday night is the last place we want to be.
3. Our church attendance even on Sunday morning is becoming spotty.
Even for those of us who regularly attend church we sometimes need an "attitude adjustment".
We need to get more excited about church attendance.
A verse that helps me is Psalm 122:1 - "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."

Our problem is that we have lost our joy for attending church.

Why should we be glad to attend church services?

1. CHURCH IS THE PLACE OF GOD'S PRAISE

We should come to church to worship God!

Revelation 4 shows a heavenly scene. In this scene I feel the 24 elders represent the church. And in Heaven when the heavenly spirit beings give adoration and praise the elders fall down and worship. Rev 4:10-11
Hebrews 13:15 tells us to worship continually.

Colossians 3:16 and Psalm 34:3 indicate that worship is corporate as well as individual.

Psalm 111:1 reminds us that our worship is to be total. So often we don't get much out of worship because our lips are moving but our hearts are miles away. Matthew 15:8

2. CHURCH IS THE PLACE OF GOD'S PRESENCE - Matthew 18:20

We should be joyful about frequent church attendance because when we meet there the Lord Jesus Christ is in the midst of us. He's here, right here, right now!

He is here to answer prayer.
 He is here as the founder and head of the church.
 He is here as observer and judge.
 He is here to bless, to guide, to encourage, to strengthen.
 He is here to bestow power and peace.
 The size of the meeting does not matter. He is here!
3. CHURCH IS THE PLACE OF GOD'S PEOPLE
 John 10:27-28 - We are His sheep.
 John 1:12 - We are His people.
 The church is to be a place of friends.
 The church is to be a place of mutual support.
 The church is to be a place for brothers and sisters.
 The church is the place for the closest of relationships and fellowships. John 13:34-25
4. CHURCH IS THE PLACE OF GOD'S PEACE
 Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.
 He is in the midst of the church. John 14:27, John 16:33
 Some churches have no peace. It is our responsibility to resolve conflicts so there will be peace.
 If peace can not be found, perhaps a person is in the wrong church. Psalm 133:1, Ephesians 5:21, Romans 12:18, Matthew 5:9
5. CHURCH IS THE PLACE OF GOD'S POWER
 There Is Power In Prayer - Acts 4:31, Matthew 18:19, John 16:24
 There Is Power In Preaching - 1 Corinthians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
6. CHURCH IS THE PLACE FOR THE BELIEVER'S PARTICIPATION
 In Worship
 In Growth - 2 Peter 3:18
 In Giving - 1 Corinthians 16:2
 In Exhortation - Hebrews 10:24-25

Psalm 124 DELIVERED!

Many times we face trouble and trials (James 1:2-4, Romans 3:3-5, Philippians 1:29)
 This Psalm reminds us that our deliverance comes from the Lord.
 THE PROTECTOR - Vss. 1-2
 Our only help when we face trouble is the Lord who is on our side. Psalm 118:6
 THE PRESSURE - Vss. 3-5
 Our troubles are real and could easily drown us!
 THE PRAISE - Vss. 6-8
 We are to praise God for His deliverance.
 Our help is in His name!

Psalm 124 ON OUR SIDE

Because the Lord is on our side (Vss. 1-2):
 WE ARE NOT SWALLOWED – Vss. 3-5
 WE HAVE ESCAPED THE SNARE – Vss. 6-7
 WE ARE SAFE – Vs. 8

Psalm 125 GOD'S PEOPLE

THE PERMANENCE OF GOD'S PEOPLE - Vs. 1
 THE PROTECTION OF GOD'S PEOPLE - Vss. 2-3
 THE PETITION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE - Vs. 4
 THE PROMISE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE - Vs. 5
 God will judge the wicked.
 The righteous have the promise of peace.

Psalm 125 BE ENCOURAGED!

WE ARE SECURE! - Vs. 1
 WE ARE SURROUNDED - Vs. 2
 WE ARE SPECIAL - Vs. 3
 WE ARE SUPPLIED
 With God's Goodness - Vs. 4
 With God's Peace - Vs. 5

Psalm 126:6 LET'S GO SOUL WINNING!

Although this verse refers primarily to Israel, we can certainly apply it as a reminder to win souls!

GO! - "He that goeth forth..." Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15

SOW! - "...bearing precious seed..." Mark 4:14

WEEP - "...and weepeth..."

REAP - "...shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Psalm 126:5-6 EVANGELISM

Here is a beautiful description from the Old Testament of fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20, Mark 16:15)

A PRINCIPLE - Vs. 5 - *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.*

A PROCEDURE - Vs. 6a - *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed,*

A PROMISE - 6b - *...shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

Psalm 127 PEOPLE NEED THE LORD!

People need the Lord because:

THE LORD'S POWER IS ESSENTIAL. Vs. 1

THE LORD'S PROMISE IS ENCOURAGING. Vs. 2

THE LORD'S PROVISION IS ENJOYABLE. Vss. 3-5

Psalm 127 SUCCESS

IN THE HOME - Vs. 1a

The Lord must keep the house.

IN THE COMMUNITY - Vs. 1b

The Lord must keep the city.

IN THE INDIVIDUAL - Vs. 2

His "beloved" are at rest.

IN THE FUTURE - Vss. 3-5

Children will stand for the Lord.

Psalm 130 "OUT OF THE DEPTHS"

There are times when we all feel low either as a result of our sins or our circumstances. God hears us when we come to Him in these painful times.

MY CRY - Unto The Lord Vss. 1-2

MY CLEANSING - From The Lord Vss. 3-4

MY CONDUCT - Wait On The Lord Vss. 5-6

MY CONFIDENCE - Hope In The Lord Vss. 7-8

Psalm 130:5-6 THAT WORD

There is a word that most of us do not like.

Standing in line at a busy store we encounter that word.

Going to the doctor's office and sitting for hours until we see the doctor, we encounter that word.

When the doctor has to take some tests as we anticipate the results of the tests, we encounter that word.

When we have a conflict with a friend or loved one that is not resolved as quickly as we would like, we encounter that word.

When we pray and God answers in His time, we encounter that word.

"That word" is wait!

We don't like to wait, but it appears that it is one of God's favorite words. See Psalm 27:14, Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 25:3,5, Psalm 62:5, Proverbs 22:20, 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10, and Galatians 5:5

In Psalm 130:5-6 we see something about that word, wait.

THE WAIT THAT IS SINGULAR - "I wait on the Lord, my soul doth wait..." - We are to wait only on the Lord.

THE WAIT THAT IS SCRIPTURAL - "...and in his word do I hope."

THE WAIT THAT IS STEADFAST - "My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning." - When we wait for the morning, we are waiting for the sun to rise. When we wait for morning we wait for a sure thing. It always happens. We are to wait in confidence for God more than the person who is watching for the morning. Waiting on God is a surer thing than waiting for the sun to come up!

Psalm 133:1 etc. UNIFIED!

When we and/or our friends are facing trials we appreciate those who pray for us.

Before Jesus went to the cross, He prayed for every person who would be saved by Him.

John 17:20-21 - "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Please notice that Jesus prayed for the unity of those who would trust Him! This is a unity of every truly born again Christian. This unity is to be a testimony to those who do not know Christ as Savior.

Psalm 133:1 states the importance and beauty of this kind of Godly unity.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

Looking at other portions of Scripture, we can find some of the ways there should be unity among true believers

UNITY OF PERSONALITY - CHILDREN OF GOD - John 1:12

Very often we say "He's just like his father", or "She's just like her mother."

We tend to have personality traits similar to the personality traits found in our parents.

According to John 1:12, a person who is saved is a child of God.

The moment a person is saved the Holy Spirit does a work in his life and he is changed. John 3:1-8

2 Cor 5:17

As children of God, we should now all demonstrate some of the personality characteristics of our Heavenly Father.

God is forgiving. We are to forgive.

God cares about the Spiritual well being of others. We should care about the Spiritual well being of others.

God cares about the physical well being of others. We should care about the physical well being of others.

God is holy. We should strive for holiness in our own lives. 1 Peter 1:15-16

UNITY OF PURPOSE - AMOS 3:3

We can not walk together in unity unless we are in agreement. We must agree on the purpose of our lives.

I believe every one of us should have a three-fold purpose for living. If all Christians have these purposes, we will be unified!

1. To Love and Obey God - Matthew 22:37

2. To Love Each Other - Matthew 22:38, John 13:34-35

3. To Win Souls to Faith in Christ - Matthew 28:19-20, 1 Peter 3:15, Mark 15:16

UNITY OF POWER - THE HOLY SPIRIT - Ephesians 1:19-23, 3:16, 5:18, Acts 1:8

Paul prayed that the Ephesians would understand the power that is at work inside of them (Eph 1:19-23). He also prayed that the Holy Spirit would strengthen them within.

Later, he commanded us to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18). There will be unity as the Holy Spirit controls all who are saved!

UNITY OF PRAYER - Ephesians 6:18, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Acts 2:42, Acts 4:31

When the church unifies in prayer, God does wonderful things!

Psalm 135:4-14 GOD DOES AS HE PLEASURES

May we remember that God is God! He is almighty. He is all knowing. He is present everywhere. He is Holy. Because He is God, He has the right to do as He pleases.

WITH THE WEATHER - Vss. 5-7

WITH HIS ENEMIES - Vss. 8-11

WITH HIS PEOPLE - Vss. 4, 12-14

Psalm 135:6 etc. GOD IS PLEASED

GOD IS PLEASED WITH CREATION - Psalm 135:6, Genesis 1:31

GOD IS PLEASED WITH CIRCUMSTANCES - Psalm 115:3

He is in the Heavens. He does as He pleases.

GOD IS PLEASED WITH CHRIST

He expressed his pleasure with the Lord Jesus at His baptism and transfiguration. Matthew 3:17, 17:5

It pleased God to "bruise" him for our sins. Isaiah 53:10

It pleased God to allow all fullness to dwell in Christ. Colossians 1:19

GOD IS PLEASED TO COMMUNICATE SALVATION BY PREACHING - 1 Corinthians 1:21

GOD IS PLEASED WITH THE SACRIFICES OF HIS CHILDREN - Hebrews 13:15-16

Psalm 135:15-19 QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR GOD

I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:2-3

We all have a god or gods that we worship. Of course it is important that we worship the true and living God.

DID YOU MAKE HIM? Vs. 15

Did you create you own god or do you serve the God who is creator? Genesis 1

Many people today have gods that they worship that are not made of silver and gold, but they are gods nonetheless. Any thing that is more important to me than the true and living God is a god or an idol.

DOES HE SPEAK? Vs. 16a

There is only one god who truly speaks and that is the true and living God. 2 Peter 1:20-21, Jeremiah 33:3

DOES HE SEE? Vs. 16b

The true and living God sees everything. Psalm 139:7-12

DOES HE HEAR? Vs. 17a

The true and living God hears everything. Psalm 139:4

IS HE ALIVE? Vs. 17b

Our God is very much alive. Exodus 12:14

ARE YOU ALIVE? Vs. 18

If your God is not alive, then you are not alive spiritually! Ephesians 2:1, 8-9

Psalm 136 CELEBRATING THE MERCY OF GOD

Here is a psalm that appears difficult to outline however there is a definite pattern of thought.

The chorus after each thought is "...for his mercy endureth forever."

God's mercy is certainly the focal point of this Psalm.

THE MERCY OF THE GOD IN CONTROL - Vss. 1-4

He is the "LORD" (Jehovah).

He is "God of gods."

He is "Lord of lords."

THE MERCY OF THE GOD OF CREATION - Vss. 5-9

THE MERCY OF THE GOD IN COMBAT - Vss. 10-20

Egypt - Vss. 10-15

The Wilderness - Vs. 16 - Israel acted as a rebellious, and God had to deal with them.

Taking the Land - Vss. 17-20

Notice that God's combat was on behalf of his people (Psalm 34:7)

THE MERCY OF THE GOD OF COMPASSION - Vss. 21-26

God gave the land. Vss. 21-22

God remembered Israel in its "low estate" and redeemed her from her enemies. Vss. 23-24

God gives food to all. Vs. 25

Psalm 136 OUR GREAT GOD

HIS CHARACTER - Vss. 1-4

Note that he is good and that his mercy endures forever. Vs. 1

He is "God of gods." - Vs. 2

He is "Lord of Lords." - Vs. 3

He is the worker of wonders. - Vs. 4

HIS CREATION - Vss. 5-9

HIS CONQUESTS - Vss. 10-20

Of Egypt Vss. 10-15

Of the wilderness - Vs. 16

Of Sihon and Og - Vss. 17-20

HIS COMPASSION - Vss. 21-26

God took care of Israel. He takes care of us.

Psalm 138 RESTING COMFORTABLY

When someone is in the hospital because of an accident or sickness, his or her condition is often described as "resting comfortably". The person has been hurt but is now at rest. As Christians we should be resting comfortably. Not that we are asleep, but we are not alarmed or distressed or worried because our confidence is in our God. When we are "resting comfortably" our:

OUR SONG IS PRAISE TOWARDS GOD - Vss. 1-2

OUR STRENGTH IS FROM GOD - Vss. 3-5

OUR SUBMISSION IS TO GOD - Vs. 6

OUR SECURITY IS IN GOD - Vss. 7-8

Psalms 139 GOD KNOWS

GOD KNOWS HOW WE ARE - Vss. 1-6

GOD KNOWS WHERE WE ARE - Vss. 7-12

GOD KNOWS WHAT WE ARE - Vss. 13-18

GOD KNOWS WHAT WE SHOULD BE - Vss. 19-24

Psalms 139 GOD IS REAL

Sometimes people picture God as a fictitious character.

Other times, people say they believe in God, but act like He doesn't exist.

The Christian needs to realize that God is real!

When he realizes this, he will tend to act in a godly way.

GOD IS REAL - HE PERCEIVES WHAT IS HAPPENING. - PERCEPTION Vss. 1-6

One who can perceive has a special kind of knowledge. A perceptive person just knows things when others miss them. There is nobody more perceptive than God is, because he knows everything.

He knows my heart. Vs. 1

He knows my thoughts. Vs. 2

He knows my actions. Vs. 3

He knows my words. Vs. 4

He knows everything about me. Vss. 5-6

GOD IS REAL - HE IS PRESENT WHEREVER I GO. - PRESENCE Vss. 7-12

GOD IS REAL - HE IS POWERFUL. - POWERFUL Vss. 13-18

Power in creation. Vss. 13-16

Power towards His children. Vss. 17-18

GOD IS REAL - HE HAS A PLAN FOR MY LIFE. - PLAN Vss. 19-24

God hates sin and wants me to hate sin. Vss. 19-22

God wants us to allow Him to search, know, and correct us. Vss. 23-24

Psalms 142 WHEN OVERWHELMED!

It is easy to get overwhelmed with our problems. Here is a psalm which tells us about David's experience when he was overwhelmed.

COMPLAINT TO GOD Vss. 1-2

COMFORT FROM GOD Vss. 3a, 5

CONFLICT WITH MEN Vss. 3b, 4

CONFIDENCE IN GOD Vss. 6-7

Psalms 143:1-7 REASONS FOR PRAYER

The best reason for praying is because God says to. (Matthew 7:7-11, Ephesians 6:18, Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Thess 5:17.) However, David gives us several more reasons why we should be men and women of prayer.

1. GOD IS FAITHFUL - Vs. 1

2. GOD IS RIGHTEOUS - Vs. 1

3. GOD IS HOLY - Vs. 2

Compared to God, no man is justified, or righteous in His sight. God's holiness is perfect.

4. THE ENEMY IS GREAT - Vs. 3

5. I AM OVERWHELMED - Vs. 4

6. I REMEMBER GOD'S POWER (from past victories) - Vs. 5

Remembering what God has done for us in the past will give us assurance that He can and will work in our behalf now, and in the future.

7. I AM THIRSTY - Vs. 6

Psalms 143:7-12 PRAYER OF A MAN IN TROUBLE

David is a man in trouble. In the last 6 verses of this psalm he shows us how to pray when we are in trouble. Note that the words of the outline come right out of the text.

HEAR ME - Vs. 7

CAUSE ME - Vs. 8

To hear God's voice of lovingkindness in the morning will strengthen us for the whole day.

To know God's will for the day ("the way wherein I should walk".) is essential.

DELIVER ME - Vs. 9

TEACH ME - Vs. 10

QUICKEN ME - Vss. 11-12

To quicken here, would be to "revive".

Psalm 145 THE REAL MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

I feel that the real magnificent seven appears in this Psalm. Psalm 145 is a Psalm of praise which gives us at least seven magnificent reason to praise and worship God.

1. GOD'S POSITION - KING, Vss. 1-2
2. GOD'S POWER, Vss. 3-6
3. GOD'S PERSONALITY Vss. 7-9, 17
4. GOD'S PREEMINENCE Vss. 10-13
5. GOD'S PROVISION Vss. 14-16
6. GOD'S PRESENCE Vss. 18-19
7. GOD'S PRESERVATION Vss. 20-21

Psalm 146 KEY CONCEPTS

Psalms 146-150 are called the "Hallelujah Psalms", because they begin and end with the word "Hallelujah" in Hebrew. The word means "Praise The Lord". In Psalm 146, there are 2 key concepts, praise and trust, which appear time and time again throughout the Psalms. We need to master these, if we know Christ as Savior.

THE RESOLVE TO PRAISE Vss. 1-2

THE REMINDERS TO TRUST Vss. 3-5

THE REASONS FOR PRAISE AND TRUST Vss. 6-10

Psalm 146 HALLELUJAH!

I am a fan of the Psalms. The Psalms speak to me where I live. The Psalms help me to learn, to grow, and to know God better. There are many themes in the Psalms. We find Christ often. We find tributes to God's Word, to trust, to Godly living, and numerous other things. One of the greatest themes in the Psalms is that of praise, worship and adoration.

The last five Psalms (146-150) are known as the "Hallelujah Psalms". They are called this because they begin and end with the word "Hallelujah". In the King James Version of scriptures those words are translated "Praise ye the Lord". Because they begin and end with the Hebrew word "Hallelujah" they are called the "Hallelujah" psalms.

One of the purposes of a sermon is to give reminders. Although we many "know" something in our head, having been taught it many times, we often need reminders for our hearts. Our hearts need to be reminded to practice the truth that we have learned. Psalm 146, the first of the Hallelujah Psalms, reminds us to praise the Lord!

THE INVITATION TO PRAISE - Vs. 1

We've all received invitations to various events. This invitation is one of the greatest. It is to praise the Lord. This invitation calls me:

To turn my thoughts from myself to my Savior

To look from the daily grind to God

To stop whining and start worshipping

To turn my eyes away from creation on to the Creator See Revelation 4:11

THE ENDURANCE OF PRAISE - Vs. 2

There is nothing wrong with holy resolve. In Psalms we often find the writer saying, "I will". The psalmist knows what is right and says, "I will do it!" Modern Christians can certainly use more of this type of holy resolve. The psalmist says "While I live will I praise the Lord." That means my praise is to continue through this life. Psalm 5:3, Psalm 145:21, Psalm 100:4, Psalm 113:3

In this verse the psalmist also says, "I will sing praises to my God while I have my being." I will live this life for an unspecified period of time, but as a Christian, my being will continue in Heaven for all eternity.

Therefore this life is only "choir practice" for the eternal praise that I will give around the throne of God.

THE ENEMY OF PRAISE - Vss. 3-4

One of the enemies of praise is trust in man. When I trust man I am worshipping man and not God! I can tell that I am trusting man:

1. When I see an individual as a solution to my problems

2. When I talk more about man than I do about God

3. When I am more concerned about what man things than I am about what God thinks Pro.29:25, John 5:44

THE QUALIFICATION OF PRAISE - Vs. 5

The person who can praise is the man whose help is the God of Jacob, and whose hope is in the Lord

THE REASONS FOR PRAISE - Vss. 6-10

1. God is Creator - Vs. 6

2. God is the Truth - Vs. 6

3. God is Faithful - Vss. 7-9

4. God is King - Vs. 10

Psalm 146 CONFIDENCE!

MY SONG IS FOR THE LORD - Vss. 1-2

MY SECURITY IS IN THE LORD - Vss. 3-5

MY STRENGTH IS FROM THE LORD - Vss. 6-10

Psalm 147 LESSONS FROM PSALM 147

GOD'S PRAISE IS TO BE ON MY LIPS - Vs. 1

GOD'S POWER IS PRESENT TO HELP - Vss. 2-6

GOD'S PLEASURE IS IN THOSE WHO FEAR AND HOPE IN HIM - Vss. 10-11

GOD'S PEACE AND PROVIDENCE IS UPON HIS PEOPLE - Vs. 14

Psalm 149 THE PEOPLE OF GOD

The world is always bestowing honors and rewards. There are the Peabody Awards, The Emmy Awards, The Nobel Peace Prize, The Country Music Association Awards, The Academy Awards and the Dove Awards. In Sports there's The Heisman Trophy, The Lombardi Trophy, The Stanley Cup, Most Valuable Player, Rookie of the Year, and many other sports and non-sports awards. Each government and school plus many businesses are always giving out honors and awards as well.

But God has given the Christian honors greater than all of the honors and awards given out by man. God has given us very special honors that nobody deserves. In order to give us these honors, God sent His Son to die on the cross for our sins (Romans 5:6-9). In order to receive these honors, we only need to trust Christ as our Savior (John 3:16). We are awarded eternal life when we trust Christ, and we are given other special honors. One of the biggest honors we have is that we become His children (John 1:12-13). This means that we are honored by being the people of God (1 Peter 2:9, Psalm 100:3).

In Psalm 149 it is the People of God who are called upon to give praise. Of course, when the people of God are mentioned the Book of Psalms, the nation Israel is in view. This is a Psalm for Israel, but it is also a Psalm for us, who are in this age the people of God.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE A DEVOTED PEOPLE - Vss. 1-3

It is the people of God who are to be devoted to their God with praise, thanksgiving and adoration.

We are the ones who have the best reasons to praise God.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE A DELIVERED PEOPLE - Vss. 4-5

This Psalm was evidently written in celebration of a particular deliverance that the people of God had received. We as God's people are constantly being delivered from temptation, trials, and opposition. We as God's people are also constantly receiving answers to prayer. We are to rejoice in this deliverance.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE A DEPLOYED PEOPLE - Vss. 6-9

I'm thinking of deployment here in the sense of sending out troops to fight. Israel was often used as an instrument of God in judgment. God has deployed the Christian today in a different kind of battle. We are deployed to fight Satan's attacks. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, Ephesians 6:10-18 And when the Lord returns to earth to set up His Kingdom, we will be in His army. Jude 1:14-15

Psalm 150 PRAISE - A SUMMARY

The psalms are loaded with praise to our wonderful God. Psalm 150 seems to sum up what has been said about praise in the other Psalms.

PRAISE FOR HIS MAJESTY - Vs. 1

Psalm 93:1, Psalm 96:1, Psalm 113:3-4,

PRAISE FOR HIS MIGHTY ACTS - Vs. 2

Psalm 46, Psalm 104, Psalm 107, Psalm 136

PRAISE WITH MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS - Vss. 3-5

Psalm 33:1-3, Psalm 81:1-4, Psalm 92:1-3, Psalm 108:1-2,

PRAISE WITH THE MOUTH Vs. 6

Psalm 96:1-2, Psalm 98:1, Psalm 89:1, Psalm 104:33-34

Proverbs 1:1-6 WHY PROVERBS?

Why does God want us to pay attention to the Book of Proverbs? He tells us in the first six verses.

HE WANTS US TO TAKE ACTION Vss. 1-4

To know Vs. 2

To perceive Vs. 2

To receive Vs. 3

To give Vs. 4

HE WANTS US TO ATTAIN Vs. 5

A wise man will hear, increase learning and attain wise counsel.

HE WANTS US TO APPLY Vs. 6

Proverbs 1:7 etc. THE FEAR OF THE LORD

"The fear of the Lord" is a familiar phrase in Proverbs. Here are some things we should know about the fear of the Lord.

IT IS THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE AND WISDOM - 1:7, 9:10

IT RESULTS IN HATRED FOR EVIL - 8:13

IT PROLONGS LIFE - 10:27

IT PRODUCES CONFIDENCE - 14:26

IT ENCOURAGES GODLY LIVING - 16:6

IT LEADS TO ETERNAL LIFE - 19:23 (As we fear God and His judgment, we will turn to Christ for help.)

Proverbs 2:1-5 THE ROAD TO WISDOM

ACCEPT - Vs. 1

For a man to become wise, he must accept God's Word readily and actually keep them with him in his heart. Psalm 119:11

APPLY - Vs. 2

Not only are we to accept God's word, but we are to apply our ears unto wisdom and our hearts unto knowledge so that we actually do what God's Word teaches.

ASK - Vs. 3

Wise people ask questions. We are wisest when we ask God for knowledge and understanding.

ATTEMPT - Vs. 4

There is active effort needed in the search for knowledge and understanding.

ATTAIN - Vs. 5

When we practice verses 1-4, we are blessed with the results of Vs. 5. We will "understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."

Proverbs 2:1-5 KNOWING GOD

The goal of our lives should be Vs. 5. We should want to understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. To achieve this goal:

LET GOD'S WORD INTO YOUR HEART - Vs. 1, Psalm 119:11

LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD - Vs. 2a - incline your heart towards wisdom

LEARN GOD'S WORD - Vss. 2b, 3 - Apply the heart to understanding and cry out for knowledge.

LOOK FOR GOD'S WORD - Vs. 4 - Look for God's Word as you would for treasure.

Proverbs 2:1-9 BECOMING WISE

How does a man or woman become wise in the eyes of God?

These verses answer that question.

THE PATTERN TO FOLLOW Vss. 1-4

1. Receive and Hide Vs. 1

2. Incline and Apply Vs. 2

3. Cry and Lift Vs. 3

4. Seek and Search Vs. 4

THE POWER TO FATHOM Vss. 5-8

The Lord gives wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Vss. 5-7

The Lord preserves His saints. Vs. 8

THE PROMISE TO FORESEE Vs. 9

God promises understanding of righteousness, judgment equity, and every good path.

Proverbs 2:1-12 BECOMING A WISE MAN

MY SEARCH FOR WISDOM - Vss. 1-5

MY SUPPLY FROM GOD - Vss. 6-8

MY SUCCESS AS A WISE MAN - Vss. 9-12

Proverbs 2:10-22 WHEN WISDOM ENTERS

When wisdom enters our lives there is:

DISCRETION - Vss. 10-11

DELIVERANCE - Vss. 12-19

DELIGHT - Vss. 20-22

Proverbs 3:1-4 HOW TO GROW SPIRITUALLY

REMEMBER GOD'S LAW - Vs. 1a - *My son, forget not my law;*

RESPOND WITH OBEDIENCE - Vs. 1b - *but let thine heart keep my commandments:*

REFLECT ON MERCY AND TRUTH - Vs. 3 - *Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:*

RESULTS COME FROM GOD - Vss. 2, 4 - *For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

Proverbs 3:1-4 GOOD ADVICE

HAVE A GOOD MEMORY - Vs. 1

Remember God's law, and obey it from the heart.

If we don't obey from the heart, we will not truly obey in our heads or our actions.

HAVE GOOD METHODS - Vs. 3

Mercy and truth should constantly be a part of our lives, and should be written on the table of our hearts.

They are not just a nice option, but are to be a way of life.

HAVE GOOD MOTIVATION Vss. 2,4

The benefits listed in these verses are something to look forward to when we have good memory & methods.

Proverbs 3:1-10 IT'S WORTH IT!

THE VALUE OF OBEDIENCE - QUALITY OF LIFE - Vss. 1-2

THE VALUE OF INTEGRITY - FAVOR WITH GOD AND MAN - Vss. 3-4

THE VALUE OF TRUST - DIRECTION - Vss. 5-6

THE VALUE OF REVERENCE - HEALTH - Vss. 7-8

THE VALUE OF GIVING - BLESSING - Vss. 9-10

Proverbs 3:1-10 PRINCIPLES

THE PRINCIPLE OF OBEDIENCE (from the heart) - Vs. 1

The results: Length of days, long life, and peace. Vs. 2

THE PRINCIPLE OF INTEGRITY (mercy and truth) - Vs. 3

The results: Favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man. Vs. 4

THE PRINCIPLE OF TRUST - Vss. 5-6

The results: His guidance.

THE PRINCIPLE OF DISCERNMENT - Vs. 7

The results: Good health - Vs. 8

THE PRINCIPLE OF GIVING - Vs. 9

The results: Prosperity - Vss. 9-10

Proverbs 3:5-10 THE GOOD LIFE

Most people consider the "good life" a life of wealth and prosperity. The good life is actually living in such a way that God is pleased and blesses in return.

LEAN ON THE LORD - Vs. 5

LEARN FROM THE LORD - Vs. 6 - Acknowledge Him, and He will direct your path.

LIVE FOR THE LORD - Vss. 7-8

LEND TO THE LORD - Vss. 9-10 - In a sense giving to the Lord is a loan. He always rewards those who are faithful to Him. That reward may not appear in its fullness until the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Proverbs 3:5-10 HELPFUL HINTS FOR A HAPPY LIFE

TRUST GOD! Vs. 5

KNOW GOD! Vs. 6

FEAR GOD! Vss. 7-8

HONOR GOD! Vss. 9-10

Proverbs 3:11-12 DISCIPLINE

There are times when the discipline of God in our lives is necessary.

He does not discipline us to hurt us, but because he cares about us.

While not all trials are because we have sinned (Consider Job and James 1:2-4), there are times when the Father exercises discipline on his children.

THE CORRECTION OF GOD - "...the chastening of the Lord...his correction..."

THE CONSENT OF HIS CHILDREN - "...despise not...neither be weary..."

THE COMPASSION OF THE FATHER - "For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Compare Heb 12:5-11 and 1 Cor 11:27-32

Proverbs 3:20-24 GOD'S WORD IN OUR LIVES

The best commandment and law from father and mother is the Word of God. Vs. 20

The writer of Proverbs shows us how the Word of God is to impact our lives.

INFILTRATION OF GOD'S WORD Vss 20-21

To infiltrate is to penetrate. God's Word will penetrate our lives as we keep it, forsake it not, and bind God's Word continually on our hearts (memorization and meditation).

INSTRUCTION BY GOD'S WORD, Vs 22

ILLUMINATION FROM GOD'S WORD, Vs. 23

God's word illuminates our path because it is a lamp and a light.

Proverbs 3:30 etc. ANGER IN CHECK

It is not easy for us to keep our anger under control. We certainly need the power of God's Holy Spirit and the encouragement of God's Word. To help keep anger in check:

RELAX! - Proverbs 3:30 - *Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.*

REFRAIN! - Proverbs 19:11 - *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*

REMEMBER! - Proverbs 20:3 - *It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.*

Proverbs 4:20-22 THE BODY AT WORK

Figuratively speaking we see the body at work bringing about Godliness.

THE MIND ATTENDS - "My son, attend to my words;"

THE EAR INCLINES - "...incline thine ear unto my sayings."

THE EYES FOCUS - "Let them not depart from thine eyes;"

THE HEART KEEPS - "...keep them in the midst of thine heart."

THE FEET TRAVEL (to find God's Word) - "For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

Proverbs 4:23-27 Prescription For A Godly Life

PRESERVATION - Vs. 23 - "Keep thy heart with all diligence..."

ELIMINATION - Vs. 24 - "Put away from thee a forward mouth..."

DETERMINATION - Vss. 25, 27 - "Let thine eyes look right on..."

"Turn not to the right hand nor to the left..."

CONTEMPLATION - Vs. 26 - "Ponder the path of thy feet..."

Proverbs 4:23 etc. A KEPT HEART

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

A KEPT HEART IS A BELIEVING HEART – Romans 10:9-10

A KEPT HEART IS A SPEAKING HEART – Romans 10:9-10

A KEPT HEART IS A SPIRIT-FILLED HEART – Ephesians 5:18

A KEPT HEART IS A SINGING HEART – Ephesians 5:19-20, Colossians 3:16

A KEPT HEART IS A SANCTIFIED HEART – 1 Peter 1:15-16, 3:15

Proverbs 4:23-27 A REFLECTIVE LIFESTYLE

CONSCIENTIOUS HEART - Vs. 23

CONTROLLED MOUTH - Vs. 24

CONSECRATED EYES - Vs. 25

CONSIDERED PATHS - Vss. 26-27

Proverbs 5 SEXUAL PURITY IN MARRIAGE

BE ATTENTIVE - Vss. 1-2

Make sure that you are attentive to the teaching of the Word of God.

BE AWARE - Vss. 3-6, 20-23

Be aware of the adulterous woman - Vss. 3-6

Be aware that God is watching - Vss. 20-21

Be aware of the consequences - Vss. 22-23

BE AVOIDING - Vss. 7-14

Stay clear of all temptation to be unfaithful.

BE ADDICTED - Vss. 15-19

Be addicted to your wife and her love.

Proverbs 5:15-21 REMINDERS FOR THE MARRIED

THERE IS ONE JOINING - Marriage is Exclusive Vss. 15-17

THERE IS ONE JOY - Marriage is Ecstasy Vss. 18-19

THERE IS ONE JUDGE - Marriage is Evaluated (by God) Vss. 20-21

Proverbs 6:6-11 LEARN FROM THE ANT!

If a person tends to be lazy, he or she needs to follow the example of the ant. Vs. 6

NO LAW Vs. 7

NO LAZINESS Vss. 8-11 (physical or spiritual)

NO LACK Vs. 6

Proverbs 7:1-3 SOUND ADVICE

LIVE GOD'S WORD - Vss. 1-2a - "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live;"

LOVE GOD'S WORD - Vs. 2b. "Keep...my law as the apple of thine eye." (See Psalm 119:97)

LEARN GOD'S WORD - Vs. 3 - "Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart."

Proverbs 7 THE END OF PURITY

We have the story of a young man who lost his sexual purity. Solomon writes this story as an eyewitness.

WRONG PRIORITIES - Vss. 1-7

Vss. 6-7 - This young man was "void of understanding". He did not have the right priorities for remaining pure that are listed in Vss. 1-5. Practicing Vss. 1-5 would have kept this young man in the time of temptation.

WRONG PLACE - Vss. 8-9

The best way to not let temptation get the best of you is to avoid it.

This man was headed towards the wrong place at the wrong time of day. 1 Thessalonians 5:22

We must be careful to avoid the wrong places where temptation is present. Pornography in books and on screen should be especially avoided. Psalm 101:3

WRONG PERSON - Vss. 10-20

This was not the type of person that the young man should have been listening to. He should have followed the example of Joseph in Genesis 39:7-13 who ran from temptation.

WRONG PRACTICE - Vss. 21-27

The result of wrong priorities is being in the wrong place.

The result of being in the wrong place is meeting the wrong people.

The result of listening to wrong people is the wrong practice.

The young man's purity was gone!

Proverbs 8:1-11 WISDOM SPEAKS

THE VOICE OF WISDOM Vss. 1-7

THE VICTORY OF WISDOM Vss. 8-9

THE VALUE OF WISDOM Vss. 10-11

Proverbs 9:1-12 A MESSAGE FROM WISDOM

WISDOM'S INVITATION Vss. 1-5

WISDOM'S INSTRUCTIONS Vss. 6-10

WISDOM'S INCENTIVE Vss. 11-12

PROVERBS 9:1-12 WISDOM AT WORK

WISDOM'S WITNESS - Vss. 4-6

WISDOM'S WARNING - Vss. 7-9

WISDOM'S WAY - Vss. 10-12

Proverbs 10:1-7 THE RIGHTEOUS

I have chosen to stress the positive things that happen to the righteous in this outline. However, don't miss the contrast of what happens to the wicked.

THE POTENTIAL OF THE RIGHTEOUS Vss. 1,2,6,7

1. Happy Parents Vs. 1

2. Life Vs. 2

3. Blessings Vs. 6

4. Good Testimony Vs. 7

THE PROVISION FOR THE RIGHTEOUS Vs. 3

THE PRODUCTIVITY BY THE RIGHTEOUS Vss. 4-5

Proverbs 10:18-21 CHOOSING YOUR WORDS!

Each day we make many choices. We choose what we want to eat. We choose our friends. We choose our activities. We chose how we are going to behave. One of the big choices we make constantly is our choice of words. We choose what kind of words we are going to use.

God places value on our words, and our text tells us that our words reap results (Galatians 6:7)

REPULSIVE WORDS ARE FOOLISH Vs. 18

There are two types of repulsive words mentioned here.

There are lies which hide hatred.

There is slander.

The result of these word choices is that the person who uses these types of words is pronounced a "fool".

RESTRAINED WORDS ARE WISE Vs. 19

A person who continues to pour out words without thought will not lack for sin in his life. However the person who restrains, or holds back words, and chooses the ones he uses carefully, will be a wise man.

RIGHTEOUS WORDS ARE VALUABLE Vss. 20-21

The words of a just man are like silver.

The lips of a righteous man are encouraging to others. They "feed many".

Proverbs 10:19 etc. WATCH YOUR TONGUE

LIMIT YOUR WORDS

Proverbs 10:19 - "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise."

Proverbs 11:13 - "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

Proverbs 26:20 - "Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth."

Proverbs 27:1 - "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

LOWER YOUR WORDS (THE VOLUME)

Proverbs 15:1 - "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger."

LOCATE YOUR WORDS

Proverbs 25:11 - "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

Proverbs 25:12 - "As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear."

Proverbs 10:27-32 FOUR GREAT THINGS

THE FEAR OF THE LORD – Vs. 27

THE HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS – Vss. 28, 30

THE WAY OF THE LORD – Vs. 29

THE MOUTH OF THE JUST – Vss. 31-32

Proverbs 11:16 etc. THE GOOD WOMEN OF PROVERBS

THE GRACIOUS WOMAN - 11:16

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN - 12:4, 31:10

THE WISE WOMAN - 14:10

THE GOD-FEARING WOMAN - 31:30

Proverbs 12:1-8 CONTRASTS

There are many differences between a righteous man and a wicked man. These contrasts are made very clear in our text.

CONTRASTING WISDOM - Vss. 1, 5

A righteous man loves instruction.

A wicked man hates instruction. Vs. 1

A righteous man thinks right thoughts.

A wicked man thinks deceitful thoughts. Vs. 5

CONTRASTING WORKS - Vs. 3

A wicked man is not established or settled by wickedness.

The righteous are established in their righteousness.

CONTRASTING WORDS - Vs. 6

The wicked attack with their words.

The righteous deliver with their words.

CONTRASTING WORTH - Vss. 2,4,7,8

The righteous have the Lord's favor.

The wicked face condemnation. Vs. 2

The righteous woman is of value to her husband.
The wicked woman is a blight to her husband. Vs. 4
The wicked are defeated.
The righteous stand. Vs. 7
The wisdom of the righteous is commended.
The wisdom of the wicked is despised. Vs. 8

Proverbs 13:1-7 PRACTICAL WISDOM

A wise man's wisdom is very practical. It allows him to do what he should.
A WISE MAN HEARS RESPONSIBLY - Vs. 1
A WISE MAN SPEAKS RELIABLY - Vss. 2-3
A WISE MAN WORKS RIGOROUSLY - Vs. 4
A WISE MAN LIVES RIGHTEOUSLY - Vss. 5-7

Proverbs 14:26-27 THE FEAR OF THE LORD

"In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."
RELIANCE - "In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence:"
REFUGE - "...and his children shall have a place of refuge."
RESOURCE - "The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life..."
RETREAT - "...to depart from the snares of death."

Proverbs 15:1 etc. WORDS

Words are used every day by just about everyone. There are all kinds of words.
There are generous words. There are stingy words.
There are loving words. There are hateful words.
There are kind words. There are unkind words.
There are words spoken in anger. There are words spoken in peace.
There are loud words. There are quiet words.
And on we could go.
The words that Christians use are very important. Our words will either draw people to faith in Christ and a deep walk with God, or our words will drive people away.
I have heard Christians say some wonderful things that have had a positive effect on unbelievers. And I have heard Christians say some nasty things that have had a negative effect on unbelievers.
I have heard Christians say some nasty things to believers that have hurt Christ's church. I have heard Christians say some wonderful things that have strengthened Christ's church.
Consider some of the types of words Christians should use.
CALM WORDS - Proverbs 15:1
A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.
You have heard men or women explode in anger.
You have probably been the victim of a tirade of words that have left you reeling.
You have probably been incensed when someone has lashed out verbally at you, and might have responded with your own heavy artillery of harsh, angry words.
We can not control the temperature, harshness, or volume of the words of another. We can, however, try to control the temperature, harshness and volume of our own words.
Often, a soft answer will cause the person who is "hot under the collar" to cool down. A person who is yelling, just might realize how ridiculous he must sound in comparison to the one who is talking softly.
A soft answer, in dealing with people who have done wrong or offended us, will also help keep us from a lot of angry, violent reactions. People are less likely to become angry if they are talked to in a quiet way.
One of the secrets to giving a soft answer involves controlling our own anger. Proverbs gives us some good advice on that as well.
Proverbs 3:30 - *Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.*
Proverbs 19:11 - *The discretion of a man defereth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*
We must learn to ask God to control us through His Holy Spirit.
As the Holy Spirit controls us, our words will be under control as well as our anger. Galatians 5:22-23
CAUTIOUS WORDS - Proverbs 10:19, Proverbs 11:13
Proverbs 10:19 - *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*
Have you ever said something you were sorry for later?
We say things especially in anger, that we don't really mean, and yet the damage is done!
Have you noticed that the more a person talks, the more likely he or she is to say something they shouldn't say?

When we put no damper on our words, we are likely to say things that are either sinful or disturbing to someone else.

Psalm 141:3 is a good prayer for us to memorize and say every day. *Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*

Not only should we be cautious about the amount of our words, but we need to be cautious about the quality of our words.

Proverbs 11:13 - *A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.*

We should be cautious not to repeat things we know are not true.

We should be cautious not to repeat things we are not sure are true.

We should be cautious not to repeat things that are true, but are not worth repeating.

We do more to hurt the credibility of other Christians, often when we don't mean to, just by repeating things that need not be repeated.

Gossip is a terrible thing.

CORRECTIVE WORDS - Proverbs 11:14, Proverbs 25:12

Proverbs 11:14 - *Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*

Every Christian should have a mentor.

A mentor is a person that will help us grow in our Christian faith, and one we trust for good, solid counsel. A mentor is also a person not afraid to correct us when we need it.

You are probably familiar with two friends in the Bible. The older man was named Jonathan. He was the king's son. The younger man was David. They were fast friends, I'm sure David was able to learn and be encouraged by the words and actions of Jonathan. One time David was on the run, fleeing for his life from King Saul.

1 Samuel 23:16 - *And Jonathan Saul's son arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God.*

Who is your David? Who can you encourage this week? Who are you mentoring?

Proverbs 25:12 - *As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.*

My friends there are times when we all need to be corrected.

And when we are let us be thankful when people do it in a kind, constructive way.

I don't think any of us want to be known as people who can't be corrected. Such people do exist.

Proverbs 9:8 - *Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.*

There will also be times when we need to do the correcting. Just as a piece of gold jewelry is beautiful, so is the correction of a friend by a friend. It is beautiful when the one doing the correcting is wise and the one receiving the correction is open to constructive criticism.

Galatians 6:1 - *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*

We all need corrective words.

We all need to learn to share corrective words tactfully.

COMMENDABLE WORDS - Proverbs 25:11

Proverbs 25:11 - *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.*

Nobody is certain what "apples of gold in pictures of silver" refer to. Perhaps it refers to golden fruit on a silver serving tray. Or it might refer to ornamental golden jewelry in a silver setting. Whatever it refers to, we are being told that the right word spoken at the right time by the right person is a beautiful thing.

It is commendable.

There have been times when you've needed a word of encouragement and someone gave it. That was a word fitly spoken.

There have been times when you've need to know some information so your thinking wouldn't be clouded.

Someone gave that. That was a word fitly spoken.

There have been times when you've need correction and someone quietly and tactfully did that. That was a word fitly spoken.

There have been times when a preacher has given just the message you needed to hear. That was a word fitly spoken.

There was probably a time when you needed to hear the Gospel of Christ, and someone shared the Gospel with you. That was a word fitly spoken.

Thank God for the people who have fitly spoken in your life. These were commendable words.

Ask God to help you speak to commendable words to others.

Ask God to give you a chance this week to share the right words with the right people at the right time.

Proverbs 15:1-4 WORDS!

Words are important. Like fire, when our words are under control they are valuable. When our words are out of control, they are dangerous. Consider what Solomon has to say about words.

ADJUST THE VOLUME Vs. 1

ASSESS THE VALUE Vss. 2,4

ASSUME THE VIEW (Of the Lord. He sees and hears everything.) Vs. 3

Proverbs 15:1-4 SPEECH CLINIC

We live in an age when there is a clinic for just about every problem men and women have.

There are cancer clinics, cancer clinics, wound clinics, sleep clinics and a host of others.

In our text God holds a "speech clinic". He tells us about one of the smallest, yet most deadly body parts, the tongue (James 3:1-13). God tells us what we need to know about the tongue so that we will use speech that is pleasing to Him!

A TENDER TONGUE - Vs. 1

The best way to diffuse a volatile situation is with quiet comments. The best way to stir up a volatile situation is with "grievous" words.

A THOUGHTFUL TONGUE - Vs. 2

A wise man is one who thinks before he speaks. He uses knowledge correctly. A fool doesn't think, but keeps talking! He pours out foolishness.

A TESTED TONGUE - Vs. 3

No matter what we say, the Lord hears us! God is always listening and evaluating our words.

A TRUE TONGUE - Vs. 4

A wholesome tongue is full of life. A perverse tongue breaks the spirit.

Proverbs 15:15-17 LET'S EAT!

Most of us like food and like to eat.

In spiritual sense, there is eating going on as well.

Our text shows us three positive "meals" we will have when we do what is right.

THE CONTINUAL FEAST - Vs. 15 - Caused by a merry heart.

THE CONTENTED FEAST - Vs. 16 - Caused by fear of the Lord.

THE COMPASSIONATE FEAST - Vs. 17 - Caused by love.

Proverbs 16:12-15 LIVE LIKE A KING

These kingly qualities should be part of the character of the Christian.

RIGHTEOUS BEHAVIOR – Vs. 12

RIGHTEOUS LIPS – Vs. 13

RIGHTEOUS ANGER – Vs. 14

RIGHTEOUS COUNTENANCE – Vs. 15

Proverbs 16:20-24 BE WISE!

SWEEPING DISCERNMENT - Vss. 20a, 21a, 22

Every situation should be handled wisely.

SPIRITUAL DEPENDENCE - Vs. 20b

Every situation should be handled in dependence on God.

SWEET DECLARATION - Vss. 21, 23, 24

Our lips should always reflect the wisdom of a Godly heart.

Proverbs 16:27-30 UNHOLY THREESOME

THE UNGODLY MAN - Vs. 27

THE FROWARD MAN - Vs. 28

THE VIOLENT MAN - Vss. 29-30

Proverbs 19:8, 11, 21, 27 PRACTICAL ADVICE

The Book of Proverbs is full of all kinds of practical advice for daily living.

Here are three things that we should practice daily, if we want to live Godly lives.

DESIRE FOR WISDOM - Vs. 8

DEFERMENT OF ANGER - Vs. 11

DIRECTION FROM GOD - Vss. 21, 27

Proverbs 22:6 – etc. IN TRAINING

As another year approaches, we must be aware that a church that is going to amount to anything for Christ must be a church that is well trained in the things of God.

TRAIN THE CHILDREN - Proverbs 22:6 - "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

The best time to train people is when they are young. We should take diligent heed to win children to Christ and to train them early in the things of God.

TRAIN THE CHURCH - 2 Timothy 4:2 - "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine."

The church as a whole needs to be trained in the Word of God. 2 Timothy 3:16

TRAIN THE COMMITTED - 2 Timothy 2:2 - "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

Pastors tend to spend most of their time with problem people who show little interest in Spiritual maturity.

Paul instructed Timothy to invest his time and teaching talents in "faithful men". We should follow this instruction as well.

Proverbs 23:1-9 WATCH YOUR PRIORITIES!

CONCERNING FOOD - Vss. 1-3

CONCERNING FORTUNE - Vss. 4-5

CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP - Vss. 6-9

Proverbs 23:10-14 3 IMPORTANT MATTERS

A MATTER OF CONSCIENCE - Vss. 10-11

We should be honest in our dealings, especially with those who cannot protect themselves (The fatherless).

A MATTER OF CONCERN - Vs. 12

We should apply our hearts towards knowledge and our ears towards the words of knowledge.

A MATTER OF CORRECTION - Vss. 13-14

Loving correction of our children must have a high priority in our homes. Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Proverbs 23:26 GOOD ADVICE

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

CONVERSION - *My son*

The word conversion implies change.

In order for God to call you his son or his daughter, a change had to take place.

Naturally speaking we are all sinners. We have all failed God. Romans 3:10-12, Isaiah 64:6

And to make matters worse, God, who is just has pronounced in Ezekiel 18:4.

There was once a man, a very religious man, and he very well could have been the leading religious teacher in Jesus. This man once came to Jesus by night for advice. His name was Nicodemus. John 3:1-3

Jesus told Nicodemus, that unless he was born again, he could not see the Kingdom of God.

So, how does one go about being born again? John 1:12-13

According to John 1:12 Jesus must be received.

Also in John 1:12, we are told that to receive Jesus is to believe on Him.

When you decide to believe on Christ from your heart as your Savior, a wonderful change will take place

because you will be born of the Spirit of God. John 3:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:13

It is through the witness of the Holy Spirit in our lives that we are able to truly call God our Heavenly Father.

Romans 8:15-16

CONSECRATION - *give me thine heart*

When God says to His children, *give me your heart*, He is looking for a commitment. He is looking for our consecration to Him alone. He is looking for our exclusive love. Matthew 22:37, 1 John 4:19, Romans 12:1

CONDUCT - *and let thine eyes observe my ways.*

Our conduct should always be pleasing to God.

If our eyes observe the ways of God, it means that we will obey the Word of God.

How important is obedience?

King Saul was disqualified from being king because he failed to obey God.

Saul was told in 1 Samuel 15:22-23

How important is obedience?

When others rebelled against God's plan, Caleb was ready to go into The Promised Land.

The best way I know to be obedient is to learn God's Word and to do what it says.

Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:11

Proverbs 23:29-30 WHY I DO NOT DRINK

THE SADNESS CAUSED BY ALCOHOL - *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow?*

THE STRIFE CAUSED BY ALCOHOL - *who hath contentions?*

THE SILLINESS (STUPIDITY) CAUSED BY ALCOHOL - *who hath babbling?*

THE SORENESS CAUSED BY ALCOHOL - *who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?*

Proverbs 23:29-35 WOE TO THE DRUNKARD!

THE PERILS OF DRUNKENNESS - Vss. 29-30

THE PAIN OF DRUNKENNESS - Vss. 31-32

THE PERVERSENESS OF DRUNKENNESS - Vss. 33-35

Proverbs 24:1-12 OBSERVATIONS

Solomon makes some important observations that should be taken to heart by Christians.

THE FROWARD ARE NOT TO BE ENVIED - Vss. 1-2

THE FAITHFUL ARE TO PURSUE WISDOM - Vss. 3-6

THE FOOLISH HAVE NO TIME FOR WISDOM - Vss. 7-9

THE FAITHLESS LACK STRENGTH AND COURAGE - Vss. 10-12

Proverbs 24:30-34 FIELD TRIP

The author of Proverbs visited a field owned by a lazy man.

CHARACTER OF THE MAN - Vs. 30 - SLOTHFUL, VOID OF UNDERSTANDING

CONDITION OF HIS AFFAIRS - Vs. 31 - A MESS

CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER - Vss. 32-34 - LAZY PEOPLE DO NOT PROSPER

Proverbs 25:4-7 REFINEMENT

When something is refined, it is made pure or better.

We see some refining in these verses, and in each case something is removed.

REFINING OF SILVER - Vs. 4 - REMOVE THE DROSS

Dross is the waste material that makes silver impure.

The silver is melted, and the dross is skimmed off.

God will often refine our lives with correction and trials, so that we our lives will be pure. Psalm 66:10,

Proverbs 3:11-12, James 1:2-4, 12

REFINING OF A SOVEREIGN - Vs. 5 - REMOVE THE WICKED

Remove wicked men from a king, and righteousness shall prevail.

If we want to live a "royal life" for Christ, we must remove the wicked influences from our lives. Psalm 1:1

REFINING OF A SERVANT - Vs. 7 - REMOVE THE PRIDE

We are not to promote ourselves. We are to act as humble servants of Christ. Let others exalt us. Let's not exalt ourselves. Luke 22:24-27

Proverbs 25:11-13, 25 GOOD WORDS

There are all kinds of words, but the best kind of words are good words.

A FIT WORD Vs. 11

A right word at the right time is always appropriate.

A FORTUNATE WORD Vs. 12

A man is fortunate when he has a friend who will rebuke him in love.

A man is wise when he heeds the rebuke.

A FAITHFUL WORD Vs. 13, 25

A faithful servant delivers the message of his master.

The master is refreshed.

When we faithfully deliver the message of salvation to those who need it, we are delivering the faithful word.

As we deliver the "good news" from a far country (Heaven), many souls will be refreshed (Vs. 25).

Proverbs 26:1-11 DEALING WITH A FOOL

RECOGNITION FOR A FOOL? - Vss. 1,7

Should fools be recognized as those worth listening to? Of course not! Recognizing a fool as a proper authority can be hazardous.

REPRIMAND FOR A FOOL - Vss. 3,10

RESPONSE TO A FOOL - Vss. 4-5

RETRIBUTION FROM A FOOL - Vs. 6

Send a message with a fool and pay the price!

RIDICULOUSNESS OF A FOOL - Vss. 8-9, 11

Proverbs 27:1-2, 5-6, 8-10 GOOD ADVICE

In these verses we find good advice about:

LIPS Vss. 1-2

LOVE Vss. 5-6

LOYALTY Vss. 8-10

Proverbs 27:5-6,9,10,17 THAT'S FRIENDSHIP!

THE COUNCIL OF A FRIEND - Vss. 5-6, 9

A true friend gives good council, even when that council is in the form of a rebuke (wound).

THE CONSISTENCY OF A FRIEND - Vs. 10A

A true friend consistently maintains his own friendships and the friendships of his parents. See Pro 17:17.

THE COMFORT OF A FRIEND - Vs. 10B

A close friend is a greater comfort during a time of sorrow than a relative who has been distant. Romans 12:10,15; Galatians 6:2

THE COMPETENCE OF A FRIEND - Vs. 17

A good friend "sharpens the countenance". A good friend makes me a better person.

Jonathan's friendship with David made David a better man. 2 Samuel 1:25-26

Proverbs 30:1-14 BE WARNED!

A CURSING GENERATION - Vs. 11

A CORRUPT GENERATION - Vs. 12

A CONCEITED GENERATION - Vs. 13

A CONFRONTATIONAL GENERATION - Vs. 14

Proverbs 30:11-14 THERE IS A GENERATION

There is a generation:

THAT IS DISRESPECTFUL - Vs. 11

There is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.

THAT IS DISGRACEFUL - Vs. 12

There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.

THAT IS DECEIVED - Vs. 13 (They are deceived by their pride.)

There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.

THAT IS DESTRUCTIVE - Vs. 14

There is a generation, whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.

Proverbs 30:24-28 LEARNING FROM THE ANIMALS

These small animals have much to teach us.

I CAN BE PREPARED LIKE AN ANT - Vs. 25

Just as an ant is prepared for winter, I can be prepared for any situation, when I learn and heed the Word of God. Matthew 7:24-27

I CAN BE PROTECTED LIKE A CONY (ROCK BADGER) - Vs. 26

The cony hides in the rocks. I can hide in the Lord as my rock. Psalm 27:4-5, Psalm 18:2

I CAN PARTICIPATE LIKE A LOCUST - Vs. 27

The locust is often part of a swarm. Locusts operate as a team. I have a team of which I am a member. It is called the church, or the family of God. God has called me to participate on His team.

Hebrews 10:24-25, Ephesians 2:10

Although the locust has no king, we serve the King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Colossians 1:18

I CAN POSSESS LIKE A SPIDER - Vs. 28

A spider can possess a king's palace, but does not deserve to be there.

I possess Heaven if my faith is in Christ. And I don't deserve to be there! John 14:1-6

Proverbs 31:10-28 THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN

HER VALUE Vss. 10-12

HER VOCATION Vss. 13-24

(Could these activities be the summary of a life-time, not just one day?)

HER VOICE Vss. 25-26

HER VICTORY Vss. 27-28

Proverbs 31:10-31 WHAT A LADY

Note these things about the virtuous woman:

HER WORTH - Vss. 10-12

HER WORK - Vss. 13-24

HER WORDS - Vss. 25-26

HER WITNESSES - Vss. 27-31

Those who praise her include her husband and children.

#1 Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 UNDER THE SUN (Outline #1 of 11 in Ecclesiastes series.)

Note: These outlines might be most appropriate for a Sunday School Class or Bible Study. When I presented this series I made handout sheets for the class.

INTRODUCTION - 1 Corinthians 2:14-3:4

There are three kinds of people.

1. The natural man - 2:14 - unsaved and unable to grasp Spiritual truth.

2. The Spiritual man - 2:15-16 - Able to grasp Spiritual truth.

3. The Carnal man - 3:1-4 - Saved, but living in the flesh. Also has difficulty grasping Spiritual truth.

The Book of Ecclesiastes is a view of life that would be taken by the natural and carnal men. The key word in this book is "vanity". The key phrase is "under the sun". Solomon is giving a secular view of life apart from serious consideration of God and apart from Christ as Savior. Solomon shows us the attitudes that develop when God is left out of life.

THE AUTHOR - Vs. 1

The word "preacher" has also been translated "teacher". It is a title given to an official speaker who calls an assembly. Other than David, there is one king who stands out as a preacher and teacher. That is Solomon. Here he is called "son of David", and although that phrase could refer to a more distant relative, here it appears to refer to Solomon.

Ecclesiastes 1:16 and 2:4-9 also indicate to us that Solomon is the author.

Some facts about Solomon:

1. He is the Son of David. God called him Jedidiah, meaning "Beloved of Jehovah". 2 Samuel 12:25

2. Early in his life he had a great heart for God.

3. He had prayed for, and received great wisdom. He wrote the Book of Proverbs and the Song of Solomon. 2 Chronicles 1:7-12

4. He built the temple in Jerusalem.

5. He disobeyed God by multiplying horses and wives. Deuteronomy 17:14-17, 1 Kings 10:26, 11:3

6. Solomon's wives led him away from the Lord. 1 Kings 11:9-13

7. God disciplined Solomon. 1 Kings 11:9-13

Nowhere does it say that Solomon repented of his sin. However, it is possible that this book is showing us some of the lessons, which Solomon learned as he forsook God, and perhaps returned to Him.

THE THEME - "ALL IS VANITY" - Vss. 2-4

Other words for vanity would be "emptiness" and "futility".

Life without God has no content! Something that is vanity has no real value.

THE OPENING COMPLAINT - Vss. 4-11

1. Nothing changes under the sun. Vss. 4-7

2. Nothing satisfies under the sun. Vs. 8

3. Nothing is new under the sun. Vss. 9-10

4. Nothing is remembered under the sun. Vs. 11

Ecclesiastes 1:12-2:11 THE ELUSIVE MEANING OF LIFE (Outline # 2 of 11 in Ecclesiastes series)

People are looking in many different places for the true meaning of life.

Just like the people of Solomon's day, people are looking for a purpose for living.

Also like the people of Solomon's day, people are looking in the wrong places.

THE MEANING OF LIFE IS NOT FOUND IN HUMAN PHILOSOPHY (WHAT I THINK) 1:12-18

Solomon made a search of human wisdom "under the sun". He looked at wisdom that does not include God and found it to be "vexation of spirit" (Vs. 17). He also found it to cause grief (Vs. 18)

This is not a contradiction to Solomon's declarations of the value of wisdom in Proverbs.

In Ecclesiastes Solomon talks of human wisdom. In Proverbs Solomon talks of God's wisdom (Proverbs 1:7, 2:1-9, 4:5-7, 9:10)

THE MEANING OF LIFE IS NOT FOUND IN PLEASURE (WHAT I ENJOY) 2:1-3

Solomon tried to find the meaning of life in the pleasures of this world, and found that it was "vanity".

Although God is not opposed to our enjoying ourselves, overindulgence is always discouraged. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is "temperance" or self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

THE MEANING OF LIFE IS NOT FOUND IN PROJECTS (WHAT I DO) 2:4-6

Solomon involved himself with great building projects, such as the temple, his own palace, and the building of cities. These did not bring true satisfaction. The Bible encourages us to work (Colossians 3: 17, 23), but work is not to be our God.

THE MEANING OF LIFE IS NOT FOUND IN POSSESSIONS (WHAT I HAVE) 2:7-11

Solomon did not find true satisfaction and the meaning of true life in what he owned (Luke 12:15).

He was an extremely rich man (1 Kings 9:10-28).

THE MEANING OF LIFE IS FOUND IN A PERSON (WHO I KNOW) Colossians 1:13-20, John 14:6, Philippians 1:21, 3:4-11

We go to the New Testament to find the true meaning of life. It is found in the person of Christ!

When we know Christ as Savior and Lord we know the real meaning of life.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 TIME FOR EVERYTHING (Message # 3 of 11 on the Book of Ecclesiastes.)

Believe it or not, I do not have an outline for you on this passage!

But don't panic. The outline is right in the text!

God says there is a time and season for every purpose under Heaven!

I suggest you develop your sermon as a verse by verse, phrase by phrase commentary.

Simply talk about each phrase in the text.

As an example, consider the phrase "a time to be born and a time to die".

God is responsible for our births. He appointed the day, the time, the country and the family of our births.

Also God knows when we are going to die (Hebrews 9:27). We need to be sure that because of faith in

Christ our death is "precious" in his sight! Psalm 116:15

Enjoy developing this message!

Ecclesiastes 3:9-22 GOD AT WORK (#4 of 11 outlines on Ecclesiastes)

God is always at work. You may want to give several examples such as the creation, the weather, nature, intervention in people's lives, and salvation.

Solomon is generally giving us a secular view in this book. He is talking about things "under the sun". But in these verses, Solomon does show us that he is aware that God is at work.

GOD'S GIFTS - Vss. 9-13

1. Labor - Vss. 9-10

2. Beauty - Vs. 11

3. Eternity (meaning of the word "world") in our hearts - Vs. 11

4. Enjoyment - Vss. 12-13

GOD'S GREATNESS - Vs. 14

GOD'S GOVERNMENT (Justice) - Vss 15-22

1. God will judge - Vss. 15-17, Revelation 20:11-15, Romans 14:10-12, 2 Corinthians 5:10

2. Man is like the animals because he will die, be buried and turn to dust. Vss. 18-20

3. Man's spirit will go upward to God. God will decide his fate. - Vs. 21, Luke 16:19-31

Ecclesiastes 4:1-16 PEOPLE (Outline #5 in series on Ecclesiastes.)

In this chapter Solomon talks about different kinds of people in different circumstances. We can learn from the good and bad examples we find in Solomon's discussion of people.

PEOPLE AND POWER - Vss. 1-3

1. Oppressors - Vs. 1

2. Oppressed - Vs. 1

3. Opinion - Vss. 2-3 - Remember, Solomon is giving a secular view of life "under the sun".

PEOPLE AND PRODUCTIVITY - Vss. 4-8

1. The Jealous - Vs. 4

2. The Lazy - Vs. 5

3. The Balanced - Vs. 6

4. The Miser - Vss. 7-8

PEOPLE AND PRACTICALITY

"Two are better than one."

1. Their Reward - Vs. 9

2. Their Reliance - Vs. 10

3. Their Radiance (warmth) - Vs. 11

4. Their Resistance - Vs. 12

PEOPLE AND POLITICS - Vss. 13-16

1. The Foolish Leader - Vs. 13

2. The Faithful Leader - Vss. 14-15

3. The Fickle Public - Vs. 16

Ecclesiastes 5:1-10 RELATIONSHIPS (Outline #6 in series on Ecclesiastes.)

Man has various relationships. Ecclesiastes 5 talks about some of these.

BETWEEN MAN AND GOD - Vss. 1-7

1. Watch Your Works - Vs. 1

"Keep your foot" means "watch your step".

We should be careful of our behavior when we enter the house of God.

We should be quick to listen and resist offering "the sacrifice of fools".

Evidently the sacrifice of fools is to offer something to God when our heart and soul aren't in it.

2. Watch Your Words - Vss. 2-3

Solomon appears to be talking about prayer in these two verses. The secret of effective praying is in our heart preparation. We must humble ourselves before God and listen before we speak.

3. Keep Your Vows - Vss. 4-7

BETWEEN MAN AND GOVERNMENT - Vss. 8-9

Solomon is warning us not to be surprised at corruption in government.

Of course, we are to obey the government. Romans 13:1-7

BETWEEN MAN AND GOLD - Vss. 10-17

1. Riches Do Not Satisfy - Vs. 10

2. Riches Produce Sponges - Vs. 11a

A sponge is someone who wants to soak up your riches. The more we have, the more others want.

My Dad has a friend who once asked somebody to be the executor for his will. The first thing the would-be executor did was to ask for a 30 thousand dollar loan.

3. The Things Riches Buy Are Of Limited Value - Vs. 11b

4. Riches Can Cause Loss Of Sleep - Vs. 12

5. There Is No Guaranteed Security In Riches - Vss. 13-17

BETWEEN MAN AND GRATITUDE - Vss. 18-20

A person should work hard and enjoy the blessings that God has given him.

Ecclesiastes 7:1-10 BETTER LIVING (Lesson #7 in the Series on Ecclesiastes)

Sometimes it is good to want something better (Give examples.)

Sometimes it is not so good to want something better (Give examples.)

The key word in this passage is the word "better". Solomon shows us several things which, in his opinion, are better.

THE BETTER TREASURE - Vs. 1a

Reputation is the topic here. The better treasure is a good name. This is more valuable even than precious (and expensive) ointment. Proverbs 22:1, Colossians 4:5, 1 Timothy 3:7

THE BETTER DAY - Vs. 1b

Believe it or not, the second part of this verse is directly related to the first part.

In most cases the day of one's birth is a happy day for parents and grandparents as well as other relatives and friends. But because of the value of a good name the day of one's death can be more valuable than the day of one's birth.

If you and I come to the end of our lives having been born-again we are on our way to Heaven. And, if we have maintained a good testimony, we can be confident that we have pleased the Lord, and will receive rewards from Him. 2 Timothy 4:7-8

THE BETTER PLACE - Vs. 2

Solomon is saying that it is better to be in the funeral parlor than the banquet hall!

Death is something that is true for each individual. It is something we all have in common.

Hebrews 9:27 - "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

When there is death, people who are alive "lay it to heart". They start to reflect and think about their own frailty and the likeness of their own death. This can lead them to think about eternity and getting ready for it (Romans 6:23). Death makes people realize that they have little time to accomplish in this life. Psalm 90:10,12, Psalm 39:4

THE BETTER EMOTION - Vss. 3-4

There is nothing wrong with laughter. Proverbs 17:22, Philippians 4:4, Nehemiah 8:10 Ecclesiastes 3:1

However you will find more wise men at a funeral and more fools at a party!

THE BETTER SOUND - Vss. 5-6

The sound of a wise rebuke is better than the sound of a foolish song! Galatians 6:1

Vs. 6 - The crackling of thorns as they burn under a pot is very noisy. However, little heat is generated.

There is more noise than heat! So it is with the laughter of a fool, there is noise but no substance.

THE BETTER POSITION - Vs. 8a

The better position is that of a good finish. It's nice to start something but it is better to finish it, and finish it well. It is important that a Christian finishes well, and God's power makes it possible. Philippians 1:6, 4:13

THE BETTER ATTITUDE (SPIRIT) - Vss. 8a-9

It is better to have a patient attitude than a proud or angry attitude.

THE BETTER DAY - Vs. 10

Solomon is telling us that we should not mourn for the "good old days". I think it was Warren Wiersbe who said "The good old days are a combination of a bad memory and a good imagination."

Ecclesiastes 7:7-19 THINKING ABOUT WISDOM (Lesson #8 in the Series on Ecclesiastes)

Although Solomon is giving us a view of life "under the sun" and is convinced that "all is vanity", we still see glimpses of the wisdom that God had given Solomon.

POSITIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT WISDOM - VSS. 11-14

1. Wisdom is more valuable than money. Vss. 11-12

2. Wisdom realizes that God is sovereign. Vs. 13

3. Wisdom stays under control in all situations. Vs. 14

PERCEPTIVE THOUGHTS ABOUT WISDOM Vss. 15-22, 25-26

1. God does not reward the way we think He should. Vs. 15

2. One should not be self-righteous or self-absorbed in wisdom. Vs. 16

3. One should not use his sinful nature as an excuse, but should fear God. Vss. 17-18

4. Wisdom is more valuable than strength. Vss. 19-20

5. Don't try to hear every word spoken about you. Vss. 21-22

6. A seductive woman should be avoided. Vss. 25-26

PERPLEXING THOUGHTS ABOUT WISDOM - Vss. 23-24, 27-29

1. Not one of us is wise enough. - Vss. 23-24

2. The number of wise people is limited. - Vss. 27-28

3. Man ends up doing his own thing, going his own way. - Vs. 29

Ecclesiastes 8:1-5 THE KING AND I Lesson # 9 in the series on Ecclesiastes.

The king is mentioned in these verses. If we think of our God as King and do what these verses say, we will always have a good relationship with the true King!

BE WISE Vs. 1

BE OBEDIENT Vs. 2

BE LOYAL Vs. 3

BE RELIANT Vs. 4

BE DISCERNING Vs. 5

Ecclesiastes 9:1-18 SIMILARITIES (Lesson #10 in the series on Ecclesiastes)

No matter how wealthy a person may be, or how different from us, we still have many similarities.

Ecclesiastes 9 shows us things we have in common with others, no matter what our station in life.

COMMON DENOMINATOR - Vs. 1

The last part of this verse tells us that nobody knows what is going to happen next in his or her life. People can go from being in terrible straits to places of importance and comfort. Consider Joseph.

People can also go from places of prominence to places of embarrassment and humility.

We don't know what is coming next, so trust in Christ is of the utmost importance.

COMMON DESTINY (DEATH) - Vss. 2-6

Unless the Lord Jesus returns, all of us face the destiny of death.

Of course, there are two possible destinies after death, which are Heaven or hell. John 3:16-18

As you consider these verses, please bear in mind that Solomon is speaking about life "under the sun". He is not looking beyond this life.

COMMON DELIGHT - Vss. 7-9

Solomon is encouraging everyone to enjoy this life. However, the only one who can truly enjoy this life in the right way is the Christian. He is the one who is in right relationship with God.

COMMON DUTY - Vs. 10

The time for work is now! The grave will be too late. Ephesians 2:10, Colossians 3:17,23

COMMON DISTRACTION - Vss. 11-12

Every one of us deals with time and chance. We don't know what is going to happen next.

Fish don't plan to get caught in a net but some do.

Birds don't plan to be snared but some do.

Men don't plan to fall on hard times but some do.

Of course, what we call chance is not a surprise to God.

COMMON DISTINCTION - Vss. 13-18

Although all men have many things in common, it is wisdom that makes the difference.

The person with wisdom is far better off than the person without wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 10:1-20 PRACTICAL ADVICE (Lesson # 11 in the series on Ecclesiastes)

The Bible is a very practical book. It gives advice on countless topics and can be applied in some way to every situation. God designed the Bible to be practical. Psalm 19:7-9, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17
The passage before us contains practical advice from Solomon that we should consider.

PRACTICAL ADVICE CONCERNING REPUTATION - Vss. 1-3

Vs. 1 - Dead flies (The Fly in the ointment) can ruin Sweet perfume. Flies aren't large, but they can ruin the smell!

In the same way, just a little folly, a little foolishness, a little evil, can destroy the reputation of a person who is otherwise known for his wisdom and honor.

Vs. 2 - The majority of people were right-handed. I think that the right hand would have been considered the strong hand. The left hand was the weaker hand. The wise man's heart is strong.

The foolish man's heart is weak. We are not talking about the physical heart, but a man's spiritual heart.

Vs. 3 - A fool demonstrates his foolishness by his behavior. "His wisdom faileth him."

PRACTICAL ADVICE CONCERNING RULERS - Vss. 4-7, 16-17

Vs. 4 - It is possible to run from or resist authority. It is best to yield.

Vss. 5-7 - The wrong people are often honored or given responsibility when they do not deserve it. God has his reasons for this. Romans 13:1-2

Vss. 16-17 - A nation is cursed when it has immature leadership and blessed when it has mature leadership.

PRACTICAL ADVICE CONCERNING RESPONSIBILITY - Vss. 8-10, 18-19

Vss. 8-9 - Every job has its hazards, even preaching! :-) We are to be careful in our jobs and be aware of the dangers.

Vs. 10 - Don't work harder. Work smarter! .

Vs. 18 - We should not be lazy!

Vs. 19 - As it has been said, "Money talks!"

PRACTICAL ADVICE CONCERNING REMARKS (WORDS) - Vss. 11-14, 20

Vss. 11-14 - Words can be dangerous, and a fool reveals himself by the things that he says.

Vs. 20 - We must be careful of critical words, and be aware that people have a way of finding out what we have said.

Ecclesiastes 11-12 IN CONCLUSION! (#12 and last in a series on Ecclesiastes)

In these last two chapters, Solomon gives some concluding advice.

RESOURCES - 11:1-6

Solomon tells us that we must make proper investments.

We are reminded how important it is to invest in the things of the Lord.

REJOICING - 11:7-10

Youth is to be enjoyed.

REMINDERS

About Aging - Vss. 1-7

About Wisdom - Vss. 8-12

About Judgment - Vss. 13-14

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11 FUTILITY

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only answer for futility.

FUTILITY OF LABOR - Vss. 3-4, 8

Answer - 1 Corinthians 15:58 - Labor in the Lord is not in vain.

FUTILITY IN NATURE - Vss. 5-7

Answer - Revelation 21:1-2 - There will be a new heaven, a new earth, and a New Jerusalem

FUTILITY OF SAMENESS - Vss. 9-10

Answer - Hebrews 13:8 - Find hope in the unchangeable Christ

FUTILITY OF BEING FORGOTTEN - Vs. 11

Answer - 1 John 3:1-2 - We shall appear before Him. We shall be like Him!

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 PARTNERSHIP

When someone goes his own way and does his own thing he is often called a "Lone Ranger".

He is named after The Lone Ranger, a fictitious hero of radio, television and comic books.

The interesting thing about the "Lone" Ranger is that he did not stand alone.

He had his "faithful Indian companion, Tonto" as his partner.

Even the Lone Ranger had a partner!

This passage in Ecclesiastes reminds us that "two are better than one".

Christians need to have other Christians as their partners. We are not to stand alone.

Two are better than one because of the:

HOPE OF REWARD - Vs. 9

When two work together, there is more production. This past Sunday in our church the pulpit needed to be moved so folks could see the junior choir. I tried to move it myself. As soon as another man came up and helped me however, the job was done a lot quicker.

HELP IN TROUBLE - Vs. 10

When we have difficulty while working with a partner the partner can help us.

When we have difficulty while working alone, there's nobody to help.

HEAT OF FELLOWSHIP - Vs. 11

Without someone with whom to share there is a coldness of spirit.

When we have a partner with whom to share the things of God there is warmth or heat.

HARDNESS OF UNITY - Vs. 12

When an individual is attacked, he is more likely to be defeated.

When two people are attacked, it is more likely that they will not be defeated.

If three people are attacked, it's like trying to rip apart three cords closely bound together.

It is hard to do.

When three Christians stand together in the Lord, Satan will have a hard time defeating them.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 TEAMWORK

There have been some great teams in sports including the New York Yankees, Los Angeles Lakers, Dallas Cowboys, Montreal Canadians, and a host of other teams. There have been some great teams in comedy including Abbott and Costello, Laurel and Hardy, The Keystone Cops, and The Three Stooges. There were some great teams in the Bible including Abraham and Sarah, Jonathan and David, Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Silas, and Aquila and Priscilla. The greatest churches are not those with one gifted leader, but those in which many are involved working together as a team. Every church should be a team of loving Christians who work together in the name of Christ for the glory of God. (You might want to share some of the "one another" verses mentioned in Scripture such as "love one another".)

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 reminds us of the importance of teamwork.

TEAMWORK IS PROFITABLE - Vs. 9

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour."

TEAMWORK IS PROTECTIVE - Vs. 10

"For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up."

TEAMWORK IS PRODUCTIVE - Vs. 11

"Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?"

TEAMWORK IS PROMINENT OR POWERFUL - Vs. 12

"And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 8:1-5 THE KING AND I

The king is mentioned in these verses. If we think of our God as King and do what these verses say, we will always have a good relationship with the true King!

BE WISE Vs. 1

BE OBEDIENT Vs. 2

BE LOYAL Vs. 3

BE RELIANT Vs. 4

BE DISCERNING Vs. 5

Lamentations 3:22-23 etc. FAITHFUL GOD, FAITHFUL PEOPLE

"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"

WE HAVE A FAITHFUL GOD

His Mercies

His Compassions

His Faithfulness

WE ARE TO BE A FAITHFUL PEOPLE

Faithfulness Required - 1 Corinthians 4:2

Faithfulness Reviewed - 2 Timothy 4:7

Like Paul we should fight the good fight, finish the course and keep the faith.

Faithfulness Rewarded - 2 Timothy 4:8, Revelation 2:10

Isaiah 1:1-9 SOUND FAMILIAR?

As we study the prophets, we notice that many of the problems that Judah or Israel had were similar to the problems that we have in our country today. God's opening indictment of Judah is also an opening indictment against us! What God says about Judah should sound familiar, because it is true of us.

A TENDER GOD - Vs. 2

This is a courtroom scene! The heavens and earth are called into witness. God tenderly raised Israel, and Israel rebelled. God has tenderly raised us by giving us so many blessings, and we have rebelled. Think of all the blessings that God has given us personally and our country. Doesn't He deserve more devotion than He receives?

A TREACHEROUS PEOPLE - Vss. 3-8

They had forgotten - Vs. 3 - The ox and donkey know who take care of them. Israel forgot that God took care of them. We forget that it is God who cares for us.

They had forsaken - Vs. 4 - Israel left the Lord. Look around you. What evidences are there that we as a nation have also left the Lord?

They had fallen - Vss. 5-6 - They were under judgment, being disciplined, and still didn't respond. Look at all the things that have happened to this country, and yet people will not repent.

They had foreign influence - Vss. 7-8 - Israel was besieged by enemies and often conquered. Today in our churches foreign religion and false doctrine often conquer us.

A TINY REMNANT - Vs. 9

The Lord left Israel with a faithful remnant. Without that remnant they would have been destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. God always has a remnant of those who are faithful to Him. Let us make sure that we are a part of that remnant

Isaiah 1:1-18 MESSAGE FROM GOD (Possible Message for Revival Services)

REBELLION THAT WEAKENS THE NATION - Vss. 1-8

REMNANT THAT PREVENTS DESTRUCTION - Vs. 9

RELIGION THAT SICKENS GOD - Vss. 10-15

REPENTANCE THAT PLEASES GOD - Vss. 16-18

Isaiah 1:10-20 REVIVAL

WE NEED REVIVAL WHEN:

OUR ACTIONS REMIND GOD OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH - Vs. 10

For a list of the sins of Sodom see Ezekiel 16:49.

THERE ARE MANY SACRIFICES, BUT A GOD WHO IS FED UP - Vs. 11

THERE IS FREQUENT ATTENDANCE, BUT A GOD WHO IS INDIFFERENT - Vs. 12

THERE ARE MANY ATTEMPTS AT WORSHIP, BUT A GOD WHO IS GRIEVED - Vss. 13-14

THERE ARE MANY PRAYERS, BUT A GOD WHO WILL NOT HEAR - Vs. 15

WE HAVE REVIVAL WHEN:

WE HEED GOD'S CALL TO REPENTANCE

Confess (*Wash you, and make you clean*) - Vs. 16, 1 John 1:9

Forsake (*...Put away the evil of your doings...*) - Vs. 16

Learn (*...to do well...*) - Vs. 17

WE ACCEPT GOD'S INVITATION FOR CLEANSING - Vss. 18-20

THE WORK OF GOD - Vs. 18

THE RESPONSE OF MAN (*If ye be willing and obedient...*) - Vss. 19-20

Isaiah 1:16-20 VERBS FOR REVIVAL

Verbs are action words. For there to be a revival in a person, a church, or a nation, there needs to be action! If the many action words are followed in this passage there will be revival! Consider the:

VERBS OF PENANCE Vs. 16

wash and make clean

put away and cease

VERBS OF PERFORMANCE Vs. 17

learn, seek, relieve, judge, plead

VERBS OF PARTICIPATION Vs. 18

come, reason

VERBS OF PURPOSE Vss. 19-20

We will be "willing and obedient" or we will "refuse and rebel".

One set of verbs or the other reveals the purpose of my life!

Isaiah 1:16-17 THE REVIVAL PATH

America and other nations need to turn back to God. The ones leading the way should be the born again Christians. The term we use for turning back to God is revival. In this passage we discover the Revival Path.

REPENT - "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes;"

REFRAIN - "cease to do evil;"

REEVALUATE - "Learn to do well; seek judgment;"

RELIEVE - "relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."

Isaiah 2:1-4 IN THE FUTURE

THE LORD'S PLACE WILL BE ESTABLISHED – Vss. 1-2

THE LORD'S PEOPLE WILL BE EXCITED – Vss. 2-3

THE LORD'S POWER WILL BE EXERCISED – Vss. 3-4

THE LORD'S PEACE WILL BE EXTENDED – Vs. 4

Isaiah 4 THAT DAY!

A DAY OF PROPRIETY - Vs. 1

A DAY OF PRODUCTIVITY - Vs. 2

A DAY OF PURITY - Vss. 3-4

A DAY OF PROTECTION - Vss. 5-6

Isaiah 5:19-25 THIS GENERATION

This generation of people today is much like the generation of Jews described by God in Isaiah 5:19-25.

Now is a good time to sound the alarm of warning that our generation is much like a generation that was condemned by God.

THIS GENERATION IS:

COCKY IN ATTITUDE Vs. 19

CONFUSED ABOUT MORALITY Vs. 20

CONCEITED IN OPINION Vs. 21

CONSUMED WITH ALCOHOL (Drugs too!) Vs. 22

CORRUPT IN JUDGMENT Vs. 23

CARELESS IN RELIGION Vs. 24 (End of verse.)

CONDEMNED BY GOD Vs. 25

Isaiah 6:1-8 A FRESH LOOK

As Christians, there are times when we need to get a "fresh look" at God. We need to see him in a deeper way, and appreciate just who we are serving. I believe that Isaiah received that fresh look in our text.

A FRESH LOOK IN THE FACE OF TRAGEDY Vs. 1

It was in the year King Uzziah died. Sometimes someone has to be "out of the picture" for us to see God clearly.

A FRESH LOOK AT THE GLORY OF GOD Vss. 1-4

A FRESH LOOK AT SELF Vs. 5

A FRESH LOOK AT FORGIVENESS Vss. 6-7

A FRESH LOOK AT RESPONSIBILITY Vs. 8

Isaiah 6:1-8 AN AWAKENING

Although Isaiah was already a prophet of God, he received quite an awakening when he saw this vision of glory. We, too, need to awaken to the truths of this passage.

AWESOME GOD Vss. 1-4

AWFUL SIN - Vs. 5

AMAZING GRACE - Vss. 6-7

AVAILABLE SERVANT - Vs. 8

Isaiah 6:1-8 SEE!

SEE GOD'S GLORY - Vss. 1-4

SEE YOUR SIN - Vs. 5

SEE GOD'S CLEANSING - Vss. 6-7

SEE YOUR RESPONSIBILITY - Vs. 8

Isaiah 7:14 – etc. – CHRISTMAS THE BIRTH OF GOD

The birth of Jesus is actually the birth of God. John 1:14

THE BIRTH OF GOD WHO IS PRESENT (EMMANUEL, "GOD WITH US") – Isaiah 7:14

THE BIRTH OF GOD WHO IS POWERFUL – Isaiah 9:6

THE BIRTH OF GOD WHO IS PERPETUAL (ETERNAL) – Micah 5:2

Isaiah 7:14etc. – CHRISTMAS ISAIAH'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Isaiah is a great book of prophecy. One of Isaiah's favorite topics is the Lord Jesus Christ. Here are three prophecies concerning his coming, which will help us remember the true meaning of the Christmas season.

THE COMING OF JESUS - Isaiah 7:14-16

The promise is given of a virgin conceiving and bringing forth a son.

His name will be called "Immanuel", or "God with us."

See Micah 5:2.

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS - Isaiah 9:6

"Wonderful"

"Counselor"

"The Mighty God"

"The Everlasting Father ("Father of Eternity")"

"The Prince of Peace"

THE CONDUCT OF JESUS - Isaiah 61:1-3

You will note that there are parts of this passage that refer to Jesus' first coming to earth, and parts that refer to His second coming. Those things mentioned in verses 1-2a (ending with "To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.") refer to the first coming. The remainder of the passage deal with His second coming.

Isaiah 9:6 THE MESSIAH

Introduction - "For unto us a son is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called.."

HIS PERSONALITY - "Wonderful"

HIS PROFESSION (JOB) - "Counselor"

HIS POWER - "Mighty God"

HIS PERMANENCE - "Everlasting Father" (Means "Father of eternity")

HIS PREEMINENCE - "Prince of peace"

Isaiah 11:1-16 GOD'S PERFECT GOVERNMENT

Many of us are looking forward to the Millennial Reign of Christ, This passage gives a description of what Jesus' rule will be like during that 1,000 year period.

THE RULER - Vss. 1-2

THE REIGN - Vss. 3-5

THE RESULTS - Vss. 6-16

Isaiah 11 WHEN JESUS REIGNS

The reign of the Lord Jesus here on earth will be a glorious one. Here we see some important things about it.

THE SPIRIT OF HIS REIGN - Vss. 1-2

God's Holy Spirit will rest on the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice that He is the Spirit:

Of the Lord

Of wisdom

Of understanding

Of counsel

Of might

Of knowledge

Of the fear of the Lord.

THE STANDARD OF HIS REIGN - Vss. 3-5

The standard of his reign is righteousness.

There will be nothing unrighteous about the reign of Jesus. All His decisions will be just.

THE SAFETY OF HIS REIGN - Vss. 6-10

Animals will docile.

Children will be safe.

His rest shall be glorious. Vs. 10

THE STRENGTH OF HIS REIGN - Vss. 11-16

The scattered Jewish remnant will return to Israel.

The enemies of Israel will be defeated.

Isaiah 12:1-6 IN THAT DAY

Isaiah 12 is a Psalm.

It is a response to the description of the Millennial Kingdom described in Isaiah 11.

For Israel, "That day" refers to the millennial reign of Christ.

For us, "That day" can also refer to the day of salvation. If we are saved, these truths apply to us right now.

THE INWARD CONDITION - Vss. 1-3

1. Peace with God - Vs. 1 - God was angry because of sin. He was angry with Israel's sin and our sin (Isaiah 59:1-2). The anger with Israel will no longer exist during the Millennium. God's anger with us ended when we placed our faith in Christ. Romans 5:1

2. Peace of God - Vs. 2 - "God is my salvation." This is true on a permanent basis the moment a person trusts Christ as Savior. It is also true on a daily basis. We can trust the God who provided such great salvation to continue to keep, protect, strengthen, gladden, and defend us.

3. Power of God - Vs. 3 - There is strength in joy. In Christ we have continual joy! Nehemiah 8:10

Israel will have continual joy in the Millennium.

THE OUTWARD EXPRESSION - Vss. 4-6

1. SHARING - Vs. 4 - Others are invited to join in the praise of the Lord and to share what he has done for us with others. It is our job to share the Good News!

2. SINGING - Vs. 5 - We are to be a people of praise. Israel will continually praise God during the Millennium. We can sing right now! Ephesians 5:19

3. SHOUTING - Vs. 6 - We should be excited because of God's greatness. We are not suggesting that our enthusiasm should be out of control, but most of us could be more excited about the Lord than we are.

Isaiah 12:1-6 REASONS FOR REJOICING

Isaiah 12 is a Psalm.

It is a response to the description of the Millennial Kingdom described in Isaiah 11.

I believe that this passage shows the Christian some reasons why we can rejoice, as Philippians 4:4 instructs us.

PRAISE FOR GOD'S COMFORT - Vs. 1

PRAISE FOR GOD'S SALVATION - Vss. 2-3

PRAISE FOR GOD'S NAME - Vs. 4

PRAISE FOR GOD'S WORKS - Vs. 5

PRAISE FOR GOD'S GREATNESS - Vs. 6

Isaiah 14: 12-17 SATAN'S STORY

He's called Satan, Lucifer, the Devil, and other names.

Here is the story of personal war with God.

HIS FAVOR - "Lucifer, son of the morning..." Vs. 7, Ezekiel 28:11-15

He started as what was probably the highest position of a created being. His beauty was amazing. His job was probably guarding the holiness of God, until he fell.

HIS FAULT - Vss. 13-14

Satan's problem was his pride. He wanted to be above God. Notice how many times the words "I will" appear in these two verses.

HIS FALL - Vss. 12, 15-16

Satan is already defeated.

Ultimately, he will be cast into the "Lake of Fire". See Revelation 20:7-10

Isaiah 26:3-4 THE MESSAGE WE NEED

Introduction - Read Mark 4:35-41. Just as the disciples had a need for peace in the middle of a terrible storm, we need peace as we face so many troubling circumstances of life. We need to hear Jesus saying "Peace, be still" during our storms of life. Isaiah 26:3-4 gives us the message we need for troubled times.

THE KEEPER - "Thou", "In The Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

THE KEEPING - "PERFECT PEACE"

THE KEPT - "Whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusteth in thee."

"Trust ye in the Lord forever."

Isaiah 26:3-4 THAT'S PERFECT!

PERFECT PEACE - "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace..."

God is the one who gives us a peace which the world just can not give.

PERFECT PERSPECTIVE - "...whose mind is stayed on thee..."

We will have perfect peace and the perfect interpretation of our problems and our responsibilities as we stay focused on the Lord.

PERFECT PLACEMENT (of trust) - "...because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever,,"
As we seek the Lord's face, and focus on Him, we are also to trust Him.
PERFECT POWER - "... for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength: See Ephesians 1:18-23, and
Philippians 4:13

Isaiah 26:3 ETC. SONG FOR ALL SEASONS

IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

Words – Horatio Spafford

Music – P.P. Bliss

This hymn was written after two major traumas in Spafford's life. The first was the great Chicago Fire of October 1871, which ruined him financially (he had been a wealthy businessman). Shortly after, while crossing the Atlantic, all four of Spafford's daughters died in a collision with another ship. Spafford's wife Anna survived and sent him the now famous telegram, "Saved alone." Several weeks later, as Spafford's own ship passed near the spot where his daughters died, the Holy Spirit inspired these words. They speak to the eternal hope that all believers have, no matter what pain and grief befall them on earth.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Refrain:

It is well, with my soul,
It is well, with my soul,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.
Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!
And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

All of the above information came from: <http://www.cyberhymnal.org/htm/i/it/itiswell.htm>

This is a great hymn. It is a hymn which, I feel is a hymn for all seasons. As you rely on the Scriptural truths behind this hymn, you will find this to be a hymn that will help you get through each part of your lives. This hymn will also assist each of us in this room, as we make the truths of this hymn real in our own lives. As we consider this hymn for all seasons, we want to see,

THE PARTS OF LIFE

When peace like a river attendeth my way,

When trials lie sea-billows role

The opening words of this song remind us that life is a mixed bag.

There will be various parts of life. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

THE PROBLEM WITH SIN

Thou Satan should buffet, tho trials should come...

You have an enemy!

Your enemy is the Spirit being who rebelled against God, Satan, and his forces of evil. 1 Peter 5:8,

Ephesians 6:12, 2 Corinthians 11:14

Satan is, however, not your biggest problem, or your biggest enemy. Neither are the trials that will come to your life.

The biggest problem is the result of Satan's temptations, and the cause of trouble in the world.

The problem is sin. Sin is failure to please God. Sin is going my own way, and doing my own thing, disregarding God. Sin is disobedience against God. We have all sinned! Isaiah 64:6, Romans 3:10-18, 23
Ezekiel 18:4 says in part - The soul that sinneth it shall die;

Death is separation. Because of sin we are separated from God now.

In the future there is eternal separation which is referred to as "hell".

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.

THE PROVISION OF CHRIST

Please notice what the hymn writer says in the second stanza:

*Thouh Satan should buffet, tho trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed his own blood for my soul*

Here we see the love of God at work.

Here we are reminded of the work of the Lord Jesus.

Here we are told of the forgiveness that is available in Christ. 1 John 4:10, Isaiah 53:2-6

The price for your sin was paid in full on the cross.

What you couldn't do, atone for your own sins, Jesus did for you on the cross.

All that is required of you is faith in Christ!

My sin oh, the bliss of this glorious thought:

My sin not in part, but the whole is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,

Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord, oh my soul.

If you already know the Lord as your Savior, you also know that you continue to sin.

God is not pleased with you sin.

But, it is paid for on the cross.

It is covered by the blood of Christ.

This does not mean that you should take sin lightly.

Any sin against God is a sin against the Savior who gave his all for you.

That indeed is serious!

But there is still forgiveness.

There is forgiveness that means you will be in Heaven in spite of any new sin.

There is forgiveness which restores communication with God.

We must remember that sin grieves God, and hinders the fellowship, peace, and answered prayer that come from him. 1 John 1:8-10, Psalm 32:5

Please keep short accounts with God.

Confess your sins. Remember, the price has been paid. They've been nailed to the cross. Apply the cleansing blood to your account through confession.

THE PEACE OF SOUL

The chorus is what speaks of peace for the soul.

It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well, with my soul.

The only thing a person needs to do is to turn to Christ in faith and put trust in Him. Romans 5:1

To be justified is to be declared right with God.

When you turn to Christ and place your faith in Him at a specific moment in time, you become "born again" by the Spirit of God.

You become a member of God's family. John 1:12

As a member of God's family, you now have peace with God.

You are no longer God's enemy because of sin, but you are God's child!

So, indeed you can sing "It is well with my soul!"

Is it well with your soul? If not, turn to Christ in faith this morning.

But wait, there's more!

When Horatio Spafford wrote this song, It Is Well With My Soul, he was already a Christian. He already had peace with God.

But through the trials of financial reversals and dead children, Spafford was experiencing the peace of God.

Please turn to Isaiah 26:3 - *Thou wilt keep [him] in perfect peace, [whose] mind [is] stayed [on thee]: because he trusteth in thee.*

My Christian friend. part of life is sorrow.

My Christian friend, part of life is great distress.

My Christian friend, part of life is going to hurt.

The problems do not go away.

Many facts, like death, incurable illness, family problems, lost wages, and lost jobs, and misunderstandings do not always change.

But God has promised peace for the Christian through the difficulties.

What is the secret to a Christian's peace?

Keep your mind "steadfast" or focused on the Lord.

Bring the trials to Him!

Trust Him! Matthew 11:28-30, 1 Peter 5:7

THE PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

*And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.*

There is hope beyond this life.

You and I who know Christ are looking forward to a glorious day, when He is coming again!

John 14:1-3, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

And if you are looking forward to the Lord's coming, please remember that we are to live a certain way. Titus 2:11-13

Isaiah 33:14-16 WAYS TO PLEASE GOD

Sinners in verse 14 ask who can stand in God's judgment?

God gives the answer in verse 15. The people whose bodies cooperate in the following ways will have the blessings mentioned in verse 16. Note that living this way is only possible when a person knows Christ as Savior and lives in the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 5:17, Gal 2:20, Eph 5:18, Gal 5:22-23).

MY FEET - Walking righteously Proverbs 6:16-19

MY LIPS - Speaking uprightly Psalm 141:3, James 3:2-12

MY HANDS - Not holding bribes - Romans 12:17

MY EARS - Not listening to bloodshed - Psalm 1:1

MY EYES - Not seeing evil - Psalm 101:3

Isaiah 36 WHAT WILL THE ENEMY DO?

1 Peter 5:8 - *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

Satan, your enemy, will do everything he can to defeat you!

When Hezekiah was king of Judah the King of Assyria sent Rabshakeh, his servant, with a great army to fight against Jerusalem. The tactics and words of Rabshakeh show us what our enemy Satan will do to us.

HE WILL ENCROACH ON YOUR TERRITORY - Vss. 1-2

HE WILL MOCK YOUR ALLIES - Vss. 3-6

HE WILL BELITTLE YOUR STRENGTH - Vss. 7-9

HE WILL LIE TO YOU - Vs. 10

He is the "father of lies".

HE WILL INTIMIDATE YOU - Vss. 11-17

HE WILL Demean YOUR FAITH - Vss. 18-20

HE WILL DEPRESS YOU - Vss. 21-22

The good news is that in God we have victory! Isaiah 40:28, 41:10, 1 Corinthians 10:13

Isaiah 37 VICTORY OVER THE ENEMY

In Isaiah 36 Rabshakeh, servant to the King of Assyria was preparing to fight against Jerusalem, and had initiated a great attack through intimidation and propaganda. His tactics remind us of the tactics of Satan. King Hezekiah behaved himself wisely and God gave him the victory.

HE SOUGHT GOD'S HELP - Vss. 1-5

HE SECURED GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENT - Vss. 6-7, 21-33

HE SUBMITTED HIS CARES TO GOD - Vss. 8-20

HE SAW GOD'S DELIVERANCE - Vss. 36-38

The good news is that in God we have victory! Isaiah 40:28, 41:10, 1 Corinthians 10:13

ISAIAH 40:28-31 NEED TO KNOW!

There are things which we need to know. Some of them have to do with personal hygiene (Take showers or baths, use deodorant, brush your teeth etc.). Some have to do with education (How to read, write, do simple math.) Some have to do with getting along with others (How to explain things, listen, and be understanding.). When it comes to problems, Isaiah shows us three things which we need to know:

1. ABOUT GOD - HE IS AWESOME - Vss. 28, 29

2. ABOUT MYSELF - I AM ANEMIC (WEAK) - Vs. 30

3. ABOUT GOD'S ASSISTANCE - HE IS AVAILABLE - Vs. 31

ISAIAH 40:27-31 DON'T YOU KNOW? HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?

The people in this room and their families have many problems, some I am aware of, most I am not.
There is the current election crisis that makes many of us uneasy.
There are problems with cancer and possible cancer.
There are problems with heart disease.
There are problems associated with old age.
There are problems with sick and aging parents or spouses.
There are problems with finances.
There are misunderstandings between friends.
Some have failed to forgive others for things done years ago.
There are people who have no self-esteem or very low self-esteem.
There are many who suffer from guilt over things done in the past.
There are some who have cheated, who have lied, who have been unfaithful in some way.
It would not surprise me if somebody's marriage was in trouble or if one of your loved ones has a marriage in trouble.
It would not surprise me if somebody here has a drug or alcohol problem, or a family member has a drug or alcohol problem.
And you teenagers and college students face temptations, worries, and fears that us adults know nothing of.
And personally we often struggle over our inability to do what we should do and not do what we shouldn't do.
We can be overwhelmed by the needs we know of. Add even more hidden needs, and we can begin to think that things are impossible!
Many times we do not have these problems ourselves, but we know loved ones and friends that do. Many a parent is distraught over the actions of their children. Many a child is distraught over the actions of their parents!
It is very easy to get worried, concerned and frustrated over our own problems and the problems of others especially when they are people we love.
Sometimes we get totally distracted and overwhelmed with problems. It is possible to become sick with worry, fret and care!
In our text, the nation Israel was having trouble, and thought that God had forsaken them. Vs. 27
In the midst of all that you are facing, you may feel like God has forsaken or forgotten you. You feel alone.
You wonder when you are ever going to get some relief from the increasing difficulties in your life.
In verse 28 Isaiah begins to encourage Israel and us with the words "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard,"

We would say, "Don't you know? Haven't you heard?"

In the midst of all your worries and problems, **DON'T YOU KNOW? HAVEN'T YOU HEARD? GOD IS ALIVE!** - Vs. 28

1. God is eternal. Psalm 90:2
2. God is the Creator. Genesis 1:1
3. God does not grow faint or weary. Jeremiah 32:17, Luke 1:37, Luke 18:27
4. God's understanding is infinite.

I am glad that I have a God who understands more than I do!

That's why Jesus could say as God,

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

DON'T YOU KNOW? HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?

GOD ASSISTS - Vs. 29

God gives power to the faint. Those who are weak and weary within themselves, God helps.

To begin with, God does not give the mighty eternal life.

God gives the weak eternal life. Romans 3:10, Ephesians 2:8-9

After we are saved, God is still available to help the weak.

That's you and I. We still need help. We still need God's strength. Philippians 4:13

We have at least two problems when we face the difficulties of life. First, we do not realize how much power is available to us. Ephesians 1:15-23

Second, we do not ask God to pour out His power on us and our friends. Ephesians 3:14-16

DON'T YOU KNOW? HAVEN'T YOU HEARD?

GOD ASSURES - Vss. 30-31

Vs. 30 - There will be times so bad that the youths will be weak even the strong young men fall.

Vs. 31 - But here is God's assurance to us.

Those that wait upon the Lord will:

SOAR like the eagle - "...mount up with wings as eagles."
Have SPURTS of strength - "...run and not be weary."
Have STAMINA in for the long haul - "...walk and not faint."
So how do we wait on the Lord?

1. With Patience Proverbs 3:5-6
2. In Precept (God's word) Romans 15:4, Psalm 1:1-3
3. In Prayer - Matthew 7:7-8, Philippians 4:6-7

Isaiah 40:31 RENEWED STRENGTH

We all grow weary physically and Spiritually. There are times when we need to have our Spiritual strength renewed. That strength comes when we quietly wait on the Lord in studying His Word and praying. When our strength is renewed, we find that:

We can SOAR like the eagle - "...mount up with wings as eagles."

We can have STAMINA for the race - "...run and not be weary."

We can be STEADY in our walk - "...walk and not faint."

Isaiah 41:10 FEAR NOT!

Human beings are generally fearful. Often, we who are Christians are as bad or worse than the unsaved when it comes to fear. We fear failure, the future, criticism, people, witnessing, and a host of other things. This great verse in Isaiah reminds us to "Fear Not!" There are 2 "I Am's" and 3 "I will's" in this passage.

THE "I AM'S" OF COMPANIONSHIP

I am with thee.

I am thy God.

THE "I WILL'S" OF COMPASSION

I will strengthen thee.

I will help thee.

I will uphold thee.

Isaiah 41:10 ABOUT OUR GOD

At one time or another, most of us have been gripped with fear.

We have been afraid that things which happened in the past can hurt in the present.

We have been afraid of what people think.

We have been afraid of what people would do.

We have been afraid of the future.

We have been afraid of circumstances.

We have been afraid of ourselves.

We have been afraid of any number of things.

One of the forms fear takes is that of worry. When we are afraid of something, we worry over it. As we continually worry, we make life miserable for ourselves, and for those who have to listen to us worry!

The ironic thing about our fears is God doesn't want us to fear, as long as we fear Him!

Luke 12:4-5 - "And I say unto you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him"

We fear God when we trust Christ as our Savior from sin (Isaiah 53:5-6, Romans 5:1).

When we fear God, we need not fear anything or anybody.

God is originally speaking to Israel here, but I believe that this verse is applicable to all born again Christians.

Notice please that God tells us not to fear. This is a command. When we fear things God tells us not to fear, we are disobeying God!

What I like about the passage before us this morning is that this verse tells us why we shouldn't fear. And these reasons are centered on God! In telling us not to fear, Isaiah is telling us something about God. In fact there are five things which we learn about our God here which should help keep us from living in fear and worry. In this passage we learn:

OUR GOD IS PRESENT - "Fear thou not; for I am with thee:"

OUR GOD IS PERSONAL - "be not dismayed; for I am thy God:"

OUR GOD IS POWERFUL - "I will strengthen thee;"

OUR GOD IS PRACTICAL - "yea, I will help thee;"

OUR GOD IS PERMANENT - "yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Isaiah 41:8-13 THINGS TO REMEMBER

When you feel discouraged, it is important that we remember the following things.

REMEMBER YOU ARE SPECIAL - Vss. 8-9

Like the nation Israel, we are God's servants. Ephesians 2:10

Like Israel, we are chosen. Ephesians 1:4-6

REMEMBER YOU ARE STRENGTHENED - Vs. 10

REMEMBER YOU ARE SUPERIOR - Vss. 11-13

Our enemies will be defeated.

God will hold our right hand.

Any that war against us will not defeat us. Romans 8:35-39

The Lord is our helper and redeemer.

Isaiah 43:1-2 REASONS TO BE ENCOURAGED

These truths from God to Israel are also true for the Christian. There are four reasons for us to be encouraged given in these verses.

1. I AM GOD'S CREATION - Vs. 1a

2. GOD IS MY REDEMPTION - Vs. 1b - "...for I have redeemed thee..."

3. I AM GOD'S POSSESSION - Vs. 1c - "...thou art mine."

4. GOD IS MY PROTECTION - Vs. 2 ISAIAH 52

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 THE SUFFERING SERVANT

Here is a tremendous word of prophecy concerning "the suffering servant", the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE RENOWN OF HIS SUFFERINGS - 52:13-53:3

1. He shall be exalted. 52:13

2. Many will be astonished at His marred appearance. 52:14

3. He will startle many nations and kings will consider Him. 52:15

4. He became the world's greatest sufferer. 53:1-3

THE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS SUFFERINGS - 53:4-6

1. He bore our grief, sorrows, transgressions, and iniquities. 53:4-6

2. He died for our sins. 53:5

3. He took our place. 53:6

THE RESIGNATION TO HIS SUFFERINGS - 53:7-9

1. His submission 53:7

2. His silence 53:7

3. His sinlessness 53:9

THE REWARDS FOR HIS SUFFERINGS - 53:10-12

1. Resurrection 53:10

2. Righteousness (Justification) of many 53:11

3. Reign 53:12

Isaiah 55:1-5 YOU ARE INVITED!

THE GREAT INVITATION - Vs. 1

This great invitation to Israel is also a great invitation to every person to come and receive salvation. It is free because it has been paid for on the cross! John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:21

THE GREAT INQUIRY - Vs. 2

So many people work and try to earn their way into Heaven.

The price for your salvation has already been paid. We need not labor. We need only to believe! Eph 2:8-9

THE GREAT INCLINATION - Vss. 3-4

Everyone needs to incline their ears to the message of salvation, and accept it.

THE GREAT INCENTIVE - Vs. 3-5

Israel is promised the Millennial Kingdom. It is an everlasting covenant.

We also have an everlasting covenant of eternal life. And during the Millennium we will reign with Christ.

We are "joint heirs" with Christ. Romans 8:17, Revelation 20:6

Isaiah 55:1-5 WHAT AN INVITATION!

In the course of a year we get many invitations.

We are invited to join clubs and organizations.

We are invited out to dinner.

We are invited to parties and celebrations.

We are invited to participate in various projects through our efforts and financial support.

But better than these invitations is the invitation give to us in our text.

IT'S FREE! - Vss. 1

The gift of salvation is free. We must simply come in faith and enjoy! Ephesians 2:8-9

IT'S FOOLISH! - Vs. 2

Why work for what has already been paid for? Jesus paid for our sins in full. 1 Peter 1:18-19, Titus 3:9

IT'S FANTASTIC! - Vs. 3

The covenant or promise that God makes is an everlasting one. The promise we have is for everlasting life! John 3:16

IT'S THE FUTURE! - Vss. 4-5

One day Jesus will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Isaiah 11:1-16

ISAIAH 55:6-7 Recipe For Revival

Christians all over America need to come back to God.

This recipe for revival, if practiced, will certainly bring America back to God. And even if America does not come back God, individuals to whom we preach, can anyway!

WE ARE TO:

1. Seek The Lord While He May Be Found
2. Call Upon Him While He Is Near
3. Forsake Our Wicked Ways And Unrighteous Thoughts
4. Return Unto The Lord.

GOD WILL:

1. Have Mercy.
2. Abundantly Pardon

Isaiah 55:6-7 CONDITIONS FOR REVIVAL

When there is revival, the first results are among God's people.

THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. SEEK THE LORD - Vs. 6
2. FORSAKE WICKED WAYS - Vs. 7
3. FORSAKE UNRIGHTEOUS THOUGHTS - Vs. 7

GOD'S RESPONSE

1. HE WILL HAVE MERCY - Vs. 7
2. HE WILL ABUNDANTLY PARDON - Vs. 7

Isaiah 59 THE COMING VICTORY

THE POWER OF GOD - Vs. 1

THE PROBLEM OF SIN - Vss. 2-8

THE PRONOUNCEMENT OF JUDGMENT - Vss. 9-15

THE PROVISION OF A SAVIOR - Vss. 16-17

THE PROMISE OF A SOVEREIGN - Vss. 18-21

Isaiah 65:13-14 MY SERVANTS

Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry: behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty: behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed: [14] Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit.

MY SERVANTS SHALL EAT (THE WORD) - Jeremiah 16:15

MY SERVANTS SHALL DRINK (THE SPIRIT) - Ephesians 5:18-21

MY SERVANTS SHALL REJOICE - Philippians 4:4

MY SERVANTS SHALL SING - Psalm 100

Jeremiah 1:4-10 RECRUITED BY GOD

GOD'S CALL – Vss. 4-5

JEREMIAH'S CONCERN – Vs. 6

GOD'S COMMAND – Vss. 7-8

GOD'S COMFORT – Vss. 9-10

Jeremiah 1:5-10 SERVANT OF GOD!

GOD ENLISTS HIS SERVANTS Vs. 5

GOD EQUIPS HIS SERVANTS Vss. 6,7,9, 10

GOD ENCOURAGES HIS SERVANTS Vs. 8

Jeremiah 1:5-10 ABOUT GOD'S SERVANTS

GOD HAS A PLAN FOR HIS SERVANTS - Vs. 5

GOD'S SERVANTS OFTEN PROTEST GOD'S CALL - Vs. 6

GOD HAS A PRESCRIPTION FOR SERVANTS WHO PROTEST - Vss. 7-8

GOD GIVES POWER TO HIS SERVANTS - Vss. 9-10

Jeremiah 1:1-10 THE CALL OF JEREMIAH

JEREMIAH WAS A RECRUITED PROPHET - Vss. 1-5

JEREMIAH WAS A RELUCTANT PROPHET - Vs. 6

JEREMIAH WAS A REASSURED PROPHET - Vss. 7-10

Jeremiah 1:17-19 THE SERVANT

Jeremiah the prophet was a servant of God.

In these verses God tells Jeremiah and us how to be good servants.

THE RESPONSIBLE SERVANT, Vs. 17

The good servant is responsible to do what God tells him to do.

THE RESISTED SERVANT, Vs. 18

The servant of God can count on the opposition of the ungodly.

See John 15:18-25.

THE RESILIENT SERVANT, Vs. 19

The servant of God who obeys God will be victorious in his service in spite of opposition. See Rom 8:35-39

Jeremiah 6:16-17 LET'S DO WHAT ISRAEL DIDN'T DO! A POSSIBLE NEW YEARS MESSAGE

Israel was often a disobedient nation.

God sent prophets, such as Jeremiah to bring Israel back to Himself.

Israel would not listen.

Right now, God is calling us as Christians back to Himself.

To have revival, we need to do what Israel didn't do.

ASK - "...ask for the old paths, where is the good way..."

ACT - "...and walk therein...Hearken to the sound of the trumpet"

(God's preachers are the watchmen, sounding the trumpet.)

ACCOMPLISH - "...and ye shall find rest for your souls."

AVOID (ignoring God like Israel did.) - "But they said, we will not walk therein." "But they said, we will not hearken."

Jeremiah 6:16 A CALL FOR REVIVAL

Jeremiah 6:16

"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

Jeremiah was preaching to the Nation of Judah. They were obsessed with sin! In this little verse Jeremiah calls for revival, a turning from sin back to God. In our day we need to echo Jeremiah's call and to heed his advice.

STAND - We need to stop and stand before God in reverence. God must have our attention so he can speak to us. We are so busy with so many things that we don't stop so God can have our undivided attention.

SEE - We need to see that we are headed in wrong directions. We need to see that God wants us to change. We need to see that God has a better way than the way that we are traveling.

SAY - "Ask for the old paths." - God's Word provides the old paths of salvation by grace through faith in Christ and Godly living. Christians need to remind themselves from God's Word of these important principles.

SOJOURN - "And walk therein." - After discovering the old paths from God's Word we must walk in these paths. If you are unsaved, come to Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9, John 3:16). If you know Christ as Savior, repent of sin (Psalm 51) and strive to live a Godly life (1 Peter 1:15-16).

SAFETY - "And ye shall find rest for your souls." Rest for our souls is only found in Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:28-30, John 3:16-18, John 14:1-6, 27)

STUBBORNNESS - "But they said, We will not walk therein." The people of Jeremiah's day refused to heed the call of God. What will you do with God's call to revival?

Jeremiah 6:16 LOOKING FOR REVIVAL?

STAND AND SEE - "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see,"

Let's stop and examine our lives and our walk with the Lord. Are we pleasing Him?

SEEK AND STEP - "...and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein,"

The old paths and the good way are found in God's Word. We are to obey. Psalm 119:1-2

SERENITY OR STUBBORNNESS - "...and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein."

We find rest when we obey, misery when we are stubborn. The choice is ours.

Jeremiah 7:1-16 A STRONG APPEAL

Jeremiah gives a very strong appeal to Israel, desiring that they will turn from their wicked ways.

A CALL TO REPENTANCE - Vss. 1-7

A CRITICAL REBUKE - Vss. 8-11

A CERTAIN (SURE) RETRIBUTION - Vss. 12-16

Jeremiah 9:23-24 GOOD ADVICE

Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: [24] But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.

AVOID FALSE GLORY - Vs. 23

Don't glory in your wisdom. Don't glory in your might. Don't glory in your riches.

ATTAIN TRUE GLORY - Vs. 24 Glory in understanding the Gospel Glory in knowing Christ Glory in knowing

Jeremiah 15:16 BIBLE STUDY

DISCOVER GOD'S WORD - "Thy words were found..."

DIGEST GOD'S WORD - "...and I did eat them;"

DELIGHT IN GOD'S WORD - "...and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart:"

DECIDE TO BE GOD'S CHILD - "...for I am called by thy name O Lord God of hosts." (Without deciding to trust Christ as Savior and becoming a Christian, Bible study will be useless. See 1 Cor 2:14) Jer 17:5-10

BLESSED OR CURSED?

Each individual will either have the blessing or curse of God upon their lives. The deciding factor as to whether we will be blessed or cursed is based on our faith, or lack of faith.

GOD'S CURSE ON UNBELIEVERS Vss. 5-6

GOD'S BLESSING ON BELIEVERS Vss. 7-8

GOD'S EVALUATION OF ALL Vss. 9-10

Jeremiah 17:5-15 OBSERVATIONS

OBSERVE THE FOLLY OF MISDIRECTED TRUST - Vss. 5-6

OBSERVE THE FIDELITY OF A TRUSTING MAN - Vss. 7-8

OBSERVE THE FUTILITY OF THE HUMAN HEART - Vs. 9-10

OBSERVE THE FAITH OF A PRAYING MAN - Vs. 14

Jeremiah 29:1-14 ENCOURAGING WORDS

Jerusalem was conquered.

Many were taken into captivity into Babylon. Vss. 1-3

Jeremiah wrote an encouraging letter, which can encourage us today as we face difficulties.

GOD'S PLAN - Vss. 4-7 - BE A BLESSING WHERE YOU ARE!

The difficulty had come from God.

They were to settle in and seek the peace of the city where they were now dwelling. During our difficulties, we should seek the good of those around us, remembering that only what God allows will occur in our lives.

GOD'S PROMISE - Vss. 10, 12-14 - THERE'S A BETTER DAY COMING.

There was a better day coming from Israel, and there's a better day coming for us too. One day we'll be in the presence of the Lord Jesus.

See 1 John 3:1-3.

GOD'S PURPOSE - Vs. 11 - THE GOOD OF HIS CHILDREN

Jeremiah 31:31-34 IT'S NEW!

NEW COVENANT - Vss. 31-32

NEW COMMITMENTS - Vs. 33

NEW CONDITIONS - Vs. 34

Jeremiah 33:3 TIME TO PRAY

THE ACTION OF PRAYER - "Call"

1. Call Correctly, (Praise - Psalm 9:1-2, In Name of Christ – John 14:13-14)
2. Call Cleanly (Psalm 66:18, Psalm 32:5)
3. Call Clearly (Ask for Specifics - Matthew 7:7-11)
4. Call Confidently (1 John 5:14-15)
5. Call Continually (Matthew 7:7 means to keep on asking, seeking, knocking.)

THE DIRECTION OF PRAYER - "Call unto me (God)"

THE EXPECTATION OF PRAYER - "And I will answer thee..."

Jeremiah 33:3 CALL TO PRAYER

PROCEDURE OF PRAYER - "CALL"

PERSON OF PRAYER - "UNTO ME" (GOD IS SPEAKING)

PROMISE OF PRAYER - "I WILL ANSWER THEE, AND SHOW THEE GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS WHICH THOU KNOWEST NOT."

Jeremiah 35 MODEL OF OBEDIENCE

The Rechabites in this chapter show us some very good lessons about obedience which we should apply to our own lives.

OBEDIENCE IS TESTED Vss. 1-5

Just as the Rechabites had their obedience tested, we too will have our obedience to God tested.

OBEDIENCE SHOULD BE TENACIOUS Vss. 6-11

Will we be as obedient to God as these people were to the commandment of an ancestor? They were firm in their stand of obedience.

OBEDIENCE WILL BE A TESTIMONY Vss. 12-17

Their obedience was a testimony to Israel. Our obedience will be a testimony to saved and unsaved people.

OBEDIENCE WILL BE TRIUMPHANT Vss. 18-19

God will reward the Rechabites. God will award the obedient Christian at the Judgment Seat Of Christ. 1 Corinthians 4:1-5, 2 Corinthians 5:10

Ezekiel 2:1-3:4 CALLED!

To me, the greatest privilege in the world is to be called to preach God's Word!

Ezekiel's call to preach should be a challenge to anyone who hears God calling him into ministry!

RECRUITMENT OF EZEKIEL - 2:1-3

In Ezekiel 1, Ezekiel saw a great vision of the glory of God.

He was reminded as to whom he would be serving.

Isaiah also had a vision of God's glory in Isaiah 6:1-4.

Those called to preach must see God in His glory and must have experienced salvation for themselves. In these verses, God singles out Ezekiel as one who would be God's representative. There is no higher calling than the calling to preach! Romans 10:15

REBELLION OF ISRAEL - 2:3-4

All preachers like to see positive results from their preaching. However, the preacher does not always see positive results. Often, people will rebel against the message. Even though the preacher may not see the positive results, he can be assured of a positive outcome. Isaiah 55:10-11,

Ezekiel 3:17-21, 1 Timothy 4:11-16

REASSURANCE FROM GOD - 2:5

No matter what the response to the preaching of God's Word, the preacher who is doing God's will can be assured that those hearing will know that he is a messenger from God.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROPHET - 2:6-8

1. Be Fearless - Vs. 6
2. Be Faithful - Vss. 7-8

RECEPTION OF GOD'S WORD - 2:9-3:4

God's word must be received and digested before it can be shared with others!

Ezekiel 2:1-10 JOB DESCRIPTION

Ezekiel was called to be a witness to wayward Israel.

There is a job description here that describes what the prophet will often face, and how he is to act.

THE PEOPLE (Israel) Vss. 1-5

1. Reached by God through the prophet. Vss. 1-3
2. Rebellious Against God. Vss. 3-4
3. Responsible to God. Vs. 5

THE PROPHET Vss. 6-10

1. Is To Be Fearless. Vs. 6

2. Is To Be Faithful Vss. 7-8a

3. Will Be Fed (With God's Word). Vss. 8b-10

Ezekiel 3:15-21 PROPHET ON DUTY

Ezekiel was called by God to be a "watchman". His job was to watch and to speak the messages that God gave him.

HE WAS ACCESSIBLE. Vs. 15

He dwelt among the people. He "sat where they sat". He was there to be part of their lives, to encourage, to warn, to shepherd. We can not help people unless we dwell with them. Just as Jesus knows His sheep (John 10:27), we need to be the ones for whom we are responsible.

HE WAS TO BE ACTIVE. Vss. 16-22

He was a "watchman", looking out for the well being of the people.

He was to warn the wicked and the righteous alike, as God directed him.

HE WAS ACCOUNTABLE. Vss. 16-21

If Ezekiel warned those who needed warning, he was not accountable. Vss. 18, 20

If he did not warn those who needed warning he was accountable. Vss. 19, 21

Ezekiel 3:17-21 THANK GOD FOR WATCHMEN!

When I was in the United States Army, one job that I had occasionally was being on guard duty. I was a watchman for the army. Our weapons were a club each. What amused me were the instructions we were given about the nearby branch bank. The instructions told us that if the alarm went off at the bank we were to go over and take charge! I'm sure bank robbers would have been really scared of two guys carrying clubs instead of guns! :)

Although guard duty during basic training was probably only training, being a watchman or a guard is usually a very important job. In the Bible God gave prophets, apostles, evangelists and pastors the job of being His "watchmen". Even to this day God has appointed those who preach His Word as watchmen or guards. Because God loves us, he has given us these watchmen, and we should be thankful for them!

The passage before us today is a good description of the job of being one of God's watchmen.

RESPONSIBILITY AS A WATCHMAN - "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman..."

I thinking about the various duties of watchmen and how they apply to preachers of God's Word.

1. A watchman protects.

Just as a watchman is assigned to protect something or somebody, a preacher is assigned to protect the saints from false teaching, discouragement and sin. He is also sent to the unsaved as a protection against going to hell. Of course, a watchman can only warn. The decision to obey is up to the person hearing the message.

2. A watchman patrols.

The watchman will move about, being on the alert for trouble. The Godly pastor will move through his congregation looking for those things that need prayerful attention.

3. A watchman perceives.

A watchman is on the alert. A good watchman can perceive problems. A man of God can perceive Spiritual difficulty.

4. A watchman proclaims.

He isn't silent when he spots trouble. He takes action, warning the violator and notifying those who can help stop the violation. The preacher proclaims words of warning to those who have sinned against God. When necessary, he warns others of the potential danger of listening to someone who is sinning.

RECEPTION OF ORDERS - "...therefore, hear the word of my mouth..."

A good watchman has orders to follow. He is enforcing the rules of another. Preachers must get their message from God. They must get their message by being in the Word of God. Ezra 7:10, Jeremiah 15:16

REPORT TO THE PEOPLE - "...and give them warning from me."

Just as the watchman reports to those who are breaking the rules or who might break the rules, the preacher is responsible to proclaim the rules to those who have or might violate God's Word.

REWARDS FOR THE WATCHMEN - Vss. 18-21

A good watchman is rewarded with pay and compliments for doing his job.

A poor watchman is rewarded with loss of pay because he'll lose his job. He might also be rewarded with punishment for breaking laws himself.

The faithful preacher will not be held accountable if he has faithfully warned the righteous and the unrighteous. (Vss. 19, 21) He will also be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:10

The unfaithful preacher will be held accountable if he has not delivered God's message to the righteous and the unrighteous. Vss. 18, 20

Ezekiel 22:23-31 PROBLEMS!

The nation of Israel was under judgment. There had not been cleansing for sin. God was withholding the blessing of rain. Problems abounded.

THE PROBLEM WITH PROPHETS - Vss. 25, 28

THE PROBLEM WITH PRIESTS - Vs. 26

THE PROBLEM WITH PRINCES (LEADERS) - Vs. 27

THE PROBLEM WITH PEOPLE - Vs. 29

THE PROBLEMS WITH PRAYER - Vss. 30-31

Everybody was busy doing evil. Nobody was taking the time to pray! Nobody was "standing in the gap" or "making up the hedge".

Ezekiel 22:30 THE SEARCH

And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.

GOD'S RESEARCH – He was looking for a man.

GOD'S REQUIREMENT – The man would be a man of prayer, "making up the hedge" and "standing in the gap".

GOD'S REMORSE – He found none.

Ezekiel 28:13-19 FALLEN ANGEL

SATAN WAS PRETTY – Vs. 13

SATAN WAS POWERFUL – Vs. 14

SATAN WAS PERFECT – Vs. 15

SATAN WAS PERVERTED (WITH PRIDE) – Vss. 15-18

SATAN WAS, IS, AND WILL BE PUNISHED – Vss. 16, 18-19

Ezekiel 33:23-33 IS THIS OUR CHURCH?

The people attend – Vs. 30

The people listen – Vs. 31

The people sound good – Vs. 31

The people have a faulty heart – Vs. 31

The people enjoy – Vs. 32

The people do not obey – Vs. 32

The people will be judged as the preacher predicted. Vss. 33, 23-29

Ezekiel 34:1-6 A GOOD SHEPHERD

The "shepherds of Israel" are a great negative example to those of us who are responsible for ministry to God's people. By doing the exact opposite, we will be good shepherds in service to the greatest shepherd of all.

A GOOD SHEPHERD FEEDS THE FLOCK - Vss. 1-3, 1 Peter 5:2-3

A GOOD SHEPHERD HEALS THE SICK - Vs. 4 - I'm thinking of the Spiritually sick. Galatians 6:1-2

A GOOD SHEPHERD SEEKS THE LOST - Vss. 4-6, 2 Timothy 4:5, Acts 1:8

Daniel 1:1-21 TAKING A STAND

TROUBLE Vss. 1-3

TRAINING Vss. 4-7

TENACITY Vs.. 8-10

TEST (Includes Trust) Vss. 11-14

TRIUMPH Vss. 15-21

Daniel 1 STARTING OVER

CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE - Vss. 1-4

Daniel and his friends had lived in Judah, but were now in a new situation. They had been taken captive, and chosen to become government officials in service to the King of Babylon.

We can be well assured that there will be changing circumstances in our lives as well.

CHALLENGES ABOUND - Vss. 4-7

When circumstances change, we discover new challenges. Daniel and his friends faced the following challenges.

A new language - Vs. 4 (end of verse)

New education - Vs. 4 (end of verse)

New diet - Vs. 5

New names - Vss. 6-7 - Instead of being named after the God of Israel, the new names reflected the Babylonian gods.
It seems that the Babylonians were doing everything they could to make these young men forget their old ways and their own religion.

CONVICTIONS DICTATE - Vss. 8-14

There is a difference between conviction and preference.

For instance, I have met parents who had a preference of Christian School for their children. They would prefer that their children receive a Christian education. Most people, who simply prefer Christian School, will find it relatively easy to place their children in a public school. Parents who are convicted that Christian Education is the will of God for their child will settle for nothing less if at all possible.

If Daniel and his friends only had a preference for the right kind of food, they would not have made the stand that they made. Their conviction dictated their behavior. It says in verse 8 that Daniel purposed in his heart. That's conviction!

Daniel and his friends did not want to defile themselves with the king's food, that was obviously not a kosher diet. Daniel made a quiet request and then proposed a test of ten days of eating just vegetables.

Our convictions will dictate our behavior, especially when we find ourselves in new circumstances.

CONSEQUENCES BLESS - Vss. 15-21

We often think of the bad consequences that come from going what is wrong. But remember that there are good consequences for doing what is right (Galatians 6:7-8).

In this case, the obedience of Daniel and his friends resulted in:

Fairer and fuller countenance - Vs. 15

Removal of the objectionable food - Vs. 16

Superior knowledge and skill - Vss. 17-20

Long life (Daniel) - Vs. 21

Daniel 1 STANDING FIRM

THE KING'S PLAN FOR INDOCTRINATION – Vss. 1-6

DANIEL'S PURPOSE OF HEART – Vs. 7

DANIEL'S PROPOSAL OF A TEST – Vss. 8-14

GOD'S PROVISION OF HEALTH AND INTELLIGENCE – Vss. 15-17

THE KING'S PLEASURE WITH THE RESULTS – Vss. 18-21

Daniel 2:1-28 LEANING ON GOD

Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego were in a tough position. They would have been executed, if God did not help them. In a real way, they learned to lean on God (Proverbs 3:5-6)

DREAM OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR - Vss. 1-3

He had a troubling dream.

DEMAND FOR INFORMATION - Vss. 4-13

Nebuchadnezzar not only wanted to know the interpretation of the dream, but the dream itself. The wise men of Babylon were unable to do this, and were sentenced to die.

DEPENDENCE ON GOD - Vss. 14-18

Daniel got a delay in the execution date in order to pray. He and his friends depended on God to reveal the dream and the interpretation.

DESCRIPTION FROM GOD - Vss. 19-23

God revealed the dream and its interpretation to Daniel. Daniel showed his appreciation.

DECLARATION FROM DANIEL - Vss. 24-28

Daniel declared to the king that his wise men could not reveal the dream and its interpretation. He also declared that there was a God in Heaven who would reveal the secrets of the dream.

(In the rest of this chapter Daniel revealed the dream and its interpretation.)

Daniel 3 A GODLY STAND

Introduction - Many people have taken a step for God. Give some examples of people you know who have stood for God at work, home, school, etc. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego made their stand for God when their king wanted them to worship an idol.

REASON FOR A GODLY STAND Vss. 1-7

REPORT AGAINST A GODLY STAND Vss. 8-12

REBUKE CAUSED BY A GODLY STAND Vss. 13-15

RESOLVE OF A GODLY STAND Vss. 16-18

RAGE PROVOKED BY A GODLY STAND Vss. 19-23

RESULTS OF A GODLY STAND Vss. 24-30

Daniel 3 CONFRONTATION FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE

Christians should not like conflict. However there are times when conflict is necessary. When we are asked to that which is wrong, we must resist and stand for what is right.

A SINFUL PROCLAMATION - Vss. 1-11

The king was requiring that an image of his making be worshipped. It is wrong to require anyone to worship anything or anybody except the one true God.

A STEADY STAND - Vss. 12-18

These young men stood for what was right and would not back down.

A SUPERNATURAL INTERVENTION - Vss. 19-27

Although the punishment was severe, God's intervention was miraculous.

A STRIKING PRONOUNCEMENT - Vss. 28-30

The king announced that no one was allowed to speak against the one who proved to be the one true God. Instead of being an enemy of God, the king was at least impressed by Him.

Daniel 4:28-37 A CONVERTED KING

Nebuchadnezzar was one of the greatest kings that ever lived. Because of his pride, God disciplined him (See beginning of this chapter.)

Nebuchadnezzar:

REVELED IN HIS OWN GLORY Vss. 28-30

REMOVED FROM POWER, MAN, AND REASON Vss.31-33

RECOGNIZED GOD'S AUTHORITY AND POWER Vss. 34-35

RETURNED TO SENSES AND KINGDOM Vss. 36-37

Daniel 5 THE PARTY'S OVER

We use the expression "The Party's Over" to say that whatever a person has enjoyed doing has been completed. Reality has set in, and a person must face whatever consequences are facing him.

Belshazzar, a wicked king, was literally having a party.

God was announcing that the party was over for Belshazzar.

The enemy armies were outside the city. The Kingdom of Babylon was about to fall to the Medes and Persians.

CORRUPTION OF THE KING Vss. 1-4

The king was committing blasphemy by drinking out of containers dedicated to God (Jerusalem temple), and praising his gods of wood and stone.

CONFUSION IN THE COURT Vss. 5-16

The mysterious fingers appear on the wall. Everyone is in a panic. Nobody could read the writing. The queen mother suggests that Daniel be called in.

CONSULTATION WITH THE PROPHET Vss. 17-24

Daniel reminds Belshazzar of Nebuchadnezzar's rebellion against God, his judgment, restoration and repentance (See Daniel 4). Although Belshazzar knew these things, he rebelled against the Lord of heaven.

CONDEMNATION BY GOD Vss.25-31

God finished Belshazzar's kingdom that night.

Daniel 5 THE FALL OF A KING

GOD REJECTED - Vss. 1-4

There was a drinking party. King Belshazzar called for the sacred vessels taken out of the Temple in Jerusalem. While desecrating the sacred vessels the people also praised their false Gods. The true God was obviously being rejected.

THE PROPHET REMEMBERED - Vss. 5-12

This was a time of fear and confusion. The fingers of a man's hand appear and write on the wall.

This was also a time when others couldn't help. The Queen Mother remembered Daniel after all the wise men of Babylon could not tell the king the meaning of the writing on the wall. Isn't it interesting how often people turn to God only after all other possible sources of help have been depleted?

THE KING REBUKED - Vss. 13-31

Compliment - Vss. 13-16 - The king had heard of Daniel and his ability. He offered great reward if Daniel would interpret the writing on the wall.

Comparison - Vss. 17-23 - Daniel tells the story of Nebuchadnezzar who had been disciplined by God and repented, humbling himself before God. (See Daniel 4.) By contrast, Belshazzar rebelled against God and hadn't repented.

Condemnation - Vss. 24-31 - The handwriting on the wall was interpreted. Belshazzar is judged and found wanting. His kingdom was taken from him.

Daniel 6 GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEE

The prophet Daniel worked for the government for many years.

If all those who worked for the government or for business had these qualities, the world would be a better place in which to live.

DANIEL WAS A MAN OF CHARACTER - Vss. 1-3

He had an "excellent spirit".

DANIEL WAS A MAN OF CONSISTENCY - Vss. 4-9

He was faithful. There was no accusation possible against the man, unless he was accused about his God. His enemies plotted to undermine him by putting him in a position of possible compromise concerning his God

DANIEL WAS A MAN OF CONVICTION - Vss. 10-15

Daniel continued to worship his God in spite of the threat of persecution.

He continued to do what was right!

DANIEL WAS A MAN OF CONSCIENCE - Vss. 16-22

After being falsely accused and spending the night in the lion's den, Daniel still had a clean conscience. He could honestly say, "Oh King I have done no hurt."

DANIEL WAS A MAN OF COURAGE - Vs. 23

He had believed in his God and stood firm for Him.

Daniel 6 OUT OF LIONS' JAWS

DANIEL, THE VIGILANT Vss. 1-4

DANIEL, THE VICTIM Vss. 5-17

DANIEL, THE VICTOR Vss. 18-28

Hosea 3:14-23 GREAT DAY COMING!

There is a great day coming when Israel will be restored to God under the rule of the Messiah, The Lord Jesus Christ. (Isaiah 11). On that great day we will see:

ISRAEL BEFRIENDED BY GOD Vss. 14-18

ISRAEL BETROTHED TO GOD Vss. 19-22

ISRAEL BELONGING TO GOD Vs. 23

HOSEA 14 RECIPE FOR REVIVAL

RETURN Vs. 1

REPENTANCE Vss. 2-3

RENEWAL Vss. 4-8

REMINDER Vs. 9

Hosea 14 WELCOME BACK!

INVITATION TO ISRAEL - Vs. 1

Israel had fallen because of sin. She was invited to return to God.

When we have failed God we are invited to return to Him.

INSPECTION BY ISRAEL - Vs. 2-3

Israel was to examine herself and to confess sin and to renew her faith in God.

We also need to examine ourselves and to confess our sin.

INTERVENTION FOR ISRAEL - Vss. 4-8

When there is repentance God intervenes to bless!

INSTRUCTION FOR ALL - Vs. 9

God's ways are right.

Righteous people walk in the ways of God.

Joel 2:1-32 A CALL BACK TO GOD

APPROACHING JUDGMENT – Vss. 1-11

APPEAL FOR REPENTANCE – Vss. 12-14

ACTIONS OF REPENTANCE – Vss. 15-18

ASSURANCE OF HELP – Vss. 19-32

Amos 3:3 A WEDDING MEDITATION

(Note - these notes are written as if I were talking to the married couple.)

This is a special day for you, and I have chosen a special Bible verse to share with you. The verse is

Amos 3:3 - *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*

You are beginning a walk today that is designed to take a lifetime.

The walk you are beginning today is as man and wife.

All other girlfriends and boyfriends are to be permanently out of the picture, as you begin walking together. Today as you stand before me and this audience, you are agreed in your mutual love for each other. And that's the way it should be.

As you know, many of walks that began in this church and many other churches ended up not lasting a lifetime. Why is that?

It is because somewhere along the way the couple stopped being in agreement.

There are at least four things you need to always agree on if you are going to walk together in agreement.

FAITH - Throughout your walk together you need to continue to have faith in each other. You must have faith in the abilities of your partner. You must have faith in your calling as a married couple. You must have faith in each other so that you always tell the truth, and unless there is real good reason, to always believe that your partner is always telling you the truth.

FERVENCY - I think of fervency as intense love. And over the first few weeks or months of marriage, you will not lack fervency. However, as time goes on, many couples stop feeling fervent towards each other. The intense feeling of love dies. To maintain fervency, make sure that you work on loving each other every day, not just in attitude but in practice. Seek to demonstrate your love to each other daily, and seek to express your love verbally and by your kind deeds.

FORGIVENESS - One of the things that will help fervency is forgiveness. Keep short accounts with each other.

Ephesians 4:26-27 - *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: [27] Neither give place to the devil.*

Too many marriages are defeated by a lack of forgiveness. Don't hold grudges, but seek forgiveness from the other, and extend forgiveness to the other. When you are wrong, admit and ask for forgiveness. When the other is wrong, be ready to forgive.

And try to resolve differences as soon as possible.

FAITHFULNESS - Make sure that you remain faithful to the partner that God has given you. She's your girl. He's your guy.

There is to be no other for you either in the fantasies of your mind or in the reality of daily living.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

Brandon and April, if your marriage is going to be a success, not only must you walk in agreement with each other, but with the Lord Jesus Christ. The same four words apply.

FAITH - The only way to eternal life is by acknowledging that you are a sinner and that you need a Savior. The Lord Jesus died for you on the cross. It is faith in Him that brings faith and eternal life. I know that both of you have placed your faith in Christ. But there might be someone else here, who has never acknowledged their sin and turned to Christ for forgiveness. There will be no walk with Jesus through all eternity unless you trust Him now as your Savior.

FERVENCY - Just as you must work on intense love between each other, you must also work on intense love with the Lord Jesus. Spend time in the word of God, and in prayer, and in church to work on increasing that fervency for Christ.

FORGIVENESS - Just as you must keep short accounts with each other, you must keep short accounts with Jesus. When you sin against Him, confess it and forsake it. He is faithful to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

FAITHFULNESS - To be faithful to the Lord Jesus, you must strive to please Him everyday in all that you do. He needs to be the one that you please above all others.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

To walk in agreement with each other and with the Lord Jesus, practice

FAITH

FERVENCY

FORGIVENESS

FAITHFULNESS

AMOS 4:6-13 WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

Israel would not return to the Lord in spite of:

FAMINE - Vs. 6

DRAUGHT - Vss. 7-8

PESTILENCE - Vss. 9-10

DEATH - Vs. 11

What will it take for our country to repent? Israel had to face God. So will we! Vss. 12-13

Amos 5:21-27 A CALL TO REPENTANCE

In this passage, God's people were being called to repentance. They needed to get things right with God. In our day there are times when God's people also need to hear this call to repentance.

HATRED STATED -Vss. 21-23 - God hated their religious celebrations because of their sin.

HONESTY REQUIRED - Vs. 24 - God called individuals to be honest in their dealings with others.

HYPOCRISY DESCRIBED - Vss. 25-26

HARM PROMISED -Vs. 27 - God judges sin. Hebrews 12:5-11

Amos 7:10-17 WHEN GOD'S WORD IS NOT APPRECIATED

Not everyone appreciates the preaching of God's Word. Many times, the people for whom the message is intended, reject it!

THE PROPHET'S WORDS REPORTED Vss. 10-11

THE PROPHET'S REJECTION Vss. 12-13

THE PROPHET'S RESPONSE Vss. 14-17

Amos 9:11-15 HOPE FOR ISRAEL

There will be a day when Jesus will come and establish His kingdom here on earth. Zechariah 14:1-9, Revelation 20:1-4, Isaiah 11 It is during this millennial reign of Christ that Israel will be restored.

PRAISE RESTORED - Vs. 11

Praise and worship will return with the rebuilding of the temple.

PROPERTY RESTORED - Vs. 12

PROSPERITY RESTORED - Vs. 13

PEOPLE RESTORED - Vs. 14

And these things will be PERMANENTLY RESTORED! - Vs. 15

Jonah 1 RUNNING FROM GOD

There are many people who has been called of God to do something and have obeyed. There are many people who have been called of God to do something, and ran from Him, instead of doing His will.

Jonah was one who ran.

REQUIREMENT OF GOD Vss. 1-2

Jonah the prophet was called by God to go and preach against Ninevah.

REBELLION OF JONAH Vs. 3

He ran instead of obeying.

RESULTS OF DISOBEDIENCE Vss. 4-17

When we run from God, as Jonah did:

1. It affects others. - Vss. 4-5 - The passengers, the cargo, and the ship itself were all affected by God's judgment of Jonah's sin.

2. It affects our testimony. - Vss. 6-10 - Jonah, the prophet of God, had to identify himself, and admit his own sin.

3. It affects ourselves. Vs. 5, 11-16

Spiritually Jonah was out of fellowship with God. He slept when he should have been praying. Psalm 66:18

Physically Jonah experienced God's judgment. That's how he ended up in the belly of the great fish. 1

Corinthians 11:26-32, 1 John 5:16

Jonah 1 ARE YOU A REBELLIOUS CHRISTIAN?

ARE YOU RUNNING FROM GOD? - Vss. 1-3

ARE YOU CAUSING GRIEF FOR OTHERS? - Vss. 4-10, 13

HAVE YOU HARDENED YOUR HEART? - Vs. 5

Jonah was asleep when he should have been praying.

ARE YOU PAYING THE CONSEQUENCES? - Vss. 11-12, 14-17, Proverbs 3:11-12

Jonah 2 RUNNING BACK TO GOD

In chapter 1 of this book, Jonah tried to run from God.

After being swallowed by a great fish, Jonah runs back to God.

He repents.

This passage shows us how we should repent, that is, return to God after we have run away from His directions and will for our lives.

Repentance is:

RUNNING BACK TO PRAYER Vss. 1-3, 7

Jonah's prayer life had been in trouble (Psalm 66:18) because he ran from God. Now, Jonah cries out in prayer, returning to his God.

RUNNING BACK TO FAITH Vss. 4-6, 9

Jonah reaffirmed his faith in God, and was confident that God would deliver Him. In Vs. 9 he says, "Salvation is of the Lord."

RUNNING BACK TO CONFESSION Vs. 8

Although the text does not specifically say so, I believe we can assume that Jonah confessed his sin to God (Psalm 32:5, 1 John 1:9). He acknowledges that those who do wrong have forsaken their own mercy (which is from God.).

RUNNING BACK TO PRAISE Vs. 9

"But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving;"

RUNNING BACK TO COMMITMENT Vs. 9

"I will pay that I have vowed."

We don't know what the vow was, but we do know that Jonah was now committed to obeying God, and going to Ninevah to preach.

The end result - God set Jonah free from his prison. Vs. 10

Jonah 3 RUNNING FOR GOD

Jonah was the "Prophet on the run"! After running from God in Chapter 1, and back to God in Chapter 2, he now runs for God.

CHANGED SERVANT - Vss. 1-3

Jonah's attitude and willingness to obey had changed.

He was now ready to do as God had instructed.

CLEAR SERMON - Vs. 4

His message short, simple, and powerful. Ninevah would be destroyed in 40 days.

CONVICTED SINNERS - Vss. 5-9

Everyone from the king down repented.

CORRECTED SITUATION - Vs. 10

Ninevah repented, God spared the city.

Jonah 4 RUNNING AGAINST GOD

Jonah was the prophet on the run.

In chapter 1 he ran away from God.

In chapter 2 he ran back to God.

In chapter 3 he ran for God.

In chapter 4 he ran against God.

JONAH'S FIGHT

God was not fighting Jonah, but Jonah was fighting God. God did not destroy Ninevah, and that's what Jonah wanted. Because Ninevah repented, God did not destroy the city at that time.

1. His Displeasure Vs. 1

2. His Complaint Vs. 2

3. His Request Vs. 3 Jonah makes a rash request to die, because he is not getting his way.

4. His Watch Vs. 5 Jonah is watching to see if God will change his mind and destroy Ninevah. God had already said that He wouldn't

GOD'S RESPONSE

1. His Question. Vs. 4

God asks Jonah if he is doing the right thing by getting angry.

The right answer, of course, is "no".

2. His Object Lesson Vss. 5-9

God provides Jonah a fast growing gourd that protects him from the heat. God sends a worm to destroy the gourd, and Jonah is angry and ready again to die.

3. His Explanation Vss. 10-11

God explains that Jonah cared about the gourd that was there for a day and gone for a day. Jonah had done no labor to receive the blessing of the gourd.

God then says "Why shouldn't I have compassion on Ninevah, which has many people and much cattle?"

Micah 5:2 etc. BETHLEHEM

A CITY OF DESTINY - Micah 5:2

A CITY OF DELIGHT - Luke 2:11

A CITY OF DEATH - Matthew 2:8, 11-18

It was a city of death because of the unbelief of Herod. If Herod had believed, he would not have tried to kill Jesus. Today, there is still death when a person does not believe in Christ. John 3:16-18

Micah 6:8 DO RIGHT!

God showed man in the Old Testament what was good through the Law.

God has shown us in the New Testament what is good through His Son.

After a person comes to Christ as Savior, the words of Micah provide a simple pattern for Christian living.

WHAT TO DO? - JUSTLY - ACTION

WHAT TO LOVE? - MERCY - AFFECTION

HOW TO WALK? - HUMBLY WITH THY GOD - ASSOCIATION

Habakkuk 1:1-2:1 FAITH TESTED (First of a three part series on Habakkuk)

The prophet Habakkuk had his faith tested in his little book.

COMPLAINT - Vss. 1-4

Habakkuk had a "burden". He was carrying a heavy load. Vs. 1

Habakkuk complained to God. He wanted to know "how long" would he have to pray before God would do something about the problem of violence. He basically wanted to know why God had not answered his prayers. Vs. 2

Habakkuk describes more clearly the sins that he was concerned about in verse 3.

Habakkuk complains about the perversion of justice in verse 4.

By the way, Habakkuk did the right thing to go to God with his complaints. He is the one who ultimately gives the answers. 1 Peter 5:7

CONSOLATION - Vss. 5-11

Vs. 5 - God graciously answers Habakkuk and tells him that He is going to do something Habakkuk won't believe.

Vss. 6-11 - God tells Habakkuk that He will judge Judah by the work of the Chaldeans. He is referring to the conquering of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon (2 Chronicles 36:14-21).

CONFUSION - Vss. 12-17

Habakkuk accepted God's answer in verse 12.

However, Habakkuk became very confused.

He did not understand how God could judge Judah using people more unjust than they were.

CONFIDENCE - 2:1

Yes, Habakkuk was confused, but he decided to wait on God for an answer to his confusion. This was a wise move.

Habakkuk teaches us to come to God when we don't understand and to wait confidently on Him for answers.

Habakkuk 2 FAITH TRUSTING (#2 in a series on the Book of Habakkuk)

In chapter 1 of Habakkuk, the prophet has his faith severely tested.

He gave his complaint to God concerning the sin of his people. Vss. 1-4

He received the consolation that they would be judged by the Chaldeans (Babylonians) Vss. 5-11.

He shows confusion wondering how God could use people more unrighteous than the Jews as tools of judgment. Vss. 12-21

He shows confidence, waiting for God to give Him an answer. 2:2

In this chapter we find Habakkuk trusting God for an answer. And Habakkuk is not disappointed.

PARTICULARS ABOUT THE PROPHET - Vss. 1

In his trust we find Habakkuk:

Watching - Vs. 1

Writing - Vs. 2

Waiting - Vs. 3

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE JUST - Vs. 4

"The just shall live by his faith."

WARNINGS FOR THE WICKED - Vss. 5-19

Woe to the Dishonest - Vss. 6-8

Woe to the Covetous - Vss. 9-11

Woe to the Oppressor - Vss. 12-14

Woe to the Sharer of Strong Drink - Vss. 15-17

Woe to the Idolater - Vss. 18-19

REMINDER FOR THE RIGHTEOUS - Vs. 20

The Lord is in His holy temple. He is in control! All we need to do is keep silence before Him, and allow Him to work and to speak to us.

Habakkuk 3:17-19 FAITH TRIUMPHANT (Sermon #3 in series on Habakkuk.)

As Christians, there will be times when we face tragedy in our lives.

There will be tragedy of trials. Romans 5:3, James 1:2-4

There will be the tragedy of persecution. Philippians 1:29, John 15:18-25

The prophet Habakkuk was facing the tragedy of God's judgment of Judah for her sins. (See Habakkuk 1).

The way Habakkuk responds to coming tragedy, is the way we should respond when tragedy strikes us.

REALITY OF TRAGEDY - Vs. 17

Habakkuk accepted the fact that tragedy would happen. The fig trees wouldn't bloom. The olives and field crops would be nonexistent. The flocks and herds would be gone. We must remember that the Lord never exempted us from the tragedies of life, and we must accept them as part of God's plan for our lives.

REJOICING IN TRAGEDY - Vs. 18

Habakkuk is saying, "No matter what happens, I am going to rejoice in the Lord." Some reasons why I can rejoice in tragedy:

1. God is the God of my salvation. He is my deliverer in this life, and the one who has saved me so I have no fear of hell, but anxious anticipation of Heaven.

2. God doesn't change. Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8

3. God says to rejoice in all situations. Psalm 118:24, 1 Thessalonians 5:16, Philippians 4:4.

RESOURCES THROUGH TRAGEDY - Vs. 19

1. "The Lord is my strength." (Deuteronomy 33:27, Philippians 4:13)

2. "He will make my feet like hind's feet." - Hind's feet are the feet of the deer, which are strong and agile. The feet of the deer carry him away from danger. God has promised to deliver us from the dangers of temptation. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

3. "He will make me to walk upon mine high places." - In other words, the Lord allows us to walk above the problem, so they won't drag us down. (Psalm 118:6, Isaiah 40:28-31)

Zephaniah 3:2 KNOWING IT'S TIME

"She obeyed not the voice; she received not correction; she trusted not in the LORD; she drew not near to her God."

Pity the housewife who does not know when it's time to take the cake out of the oven.

Pity the workaholic when he does not know it's time to rest.

Pity the little boy who does not know when it's time to change his socks.

Pity the Christian when he does not know it's time for revival.

The citizens of Jerusalem did not know when it was time for revival. They did not know when it was time to turn back to God.

We know it's time for revival when:

1. When we are disobedient - "She obeyed not the voice;"

2. When we are stubborn - "...she received not correction;"

3. When we are unbelieving - "...she trusted not in the LORD;"

4. When we are reluctant - "...she drew not near to her God."

Haggai 1:1-15 JUST DO IT! (#1 in a series of 3 on Haggai)

Sometimes the best way to get a task done is to stop making excuses, and to "just do it" as a certain sneaker company suggests. Work on a rebuilt temple had been stopped (see Ezra 4). God wanted the temple completed.

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the remnant in Judah to get back to the building program.

GOD'S WORK DELAYED Vss. 1-4

GOD'S WORKERS DISCIPLINED Vss. 5-11

GOD'S WORK DEPLOYED Vss. 12-15

Haggai 2:1-9 ENCOURAGING WORDS (Second of three of a series on Haggai)

In 1933 the church I now pastor experienced a terrible tragedy. The church building burned! Imagine how the people of a small country church must have felt when their church home was destroyed. And this happened in the middle of the Great Depression. Although I wasn't around at that time, I'm sure the people needed some encouraging words.

There are so many people today who need encouraging words. There is so much sickness, so many accidents, so much sorrow, so many hard feelings, and so much sin.

Such was the case also in the days of Haggai. He was a prophet in Jerusalem during the days of the return from the 70-year captivity. The people had been stopped from building the temple. They stopped when they didn't have to. They got busy building their paneled houses, and procrastinated by saying that it wasn't time to build the Lord's house (See Haggai 1.)

Haggai was one of two prophets who encouraged the building program. The other was Zechariah. Haggai told the people to get busy, or today he might have said "Just do it!" In Haggai 1:12-15 we are told that the leaders and people listened and returned to building the temple.

Haggai rebuked his listeners in chapter 1. He gives them encouraging words in 2:1-9.

THE PROBLEM OF SIZE - Vss. 1-3

Vs. 2- Haggai's message was directed to the civic leaders, religious leaders and the people themselves.

Vs. 3 - He addresses the fact that many of the older men were discouraging the people, because they were remembering what the previous temple looked like. It was much larger. When we compare ourselves to others or to the past, it is easy to become discouraged.

THE PRESCRIPTION OF SERVICE - Vss. 4-5

Haggai's antidote for the discouragement is a prescription of service that contains four thoughts.

1. "Be strong" - Vs. 4

2. "Work" - Vs. 4

3. "I am with you" - Vss. 4-5

4. "Fear not" - Vs. 5

THE PROSPECT OF SUCCESS - Vss. 6-9

A shaking will take place. I believe that this will be when Christ establishes His kingdom. Vss. 6-7

He promised to fill His house with glory.

I believe He's talking about the Millennial temple.

The glory of the Millennial temple will be greater than the glory of what was the current temple. Vss. 8-9

Haggai 2:10-19 THE DIVINE QUIZ (#3 of 3 in series on Haggai)

Ever since the early days of television there have been quiz shows. Recently there has been a resurgence in these shows with the success of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" These programs test the wit and intelligence of contestants.

Many of us enjoy quiz shows, but shows are not the only places we encounter quizzes. A "quiz" in school is a mini test. And when you want information at home you may "quiz" your wife, husband, or children. Even the boss at work may "quiz" you about the status of a certain project.

In Haggai 2:10-19 we have what I have labeled "The Divine Quiz". Here is quiz in which God is asking the questions. He does it for a reason. He does it knowing the right answers, so that He might explain and apply what is being said in way of an answer.

REVIEW

Haggai was one of the twelve Minor Prophets.

He wrote during the time of Judah's return to the land after the 70-year captivity.

A group came back with the express purpose of building the temple. The altar was rebuilt and the important sacrifices were reinstated.

The foundation for a new temple was laid and then the work stopped.

Through the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah work once again began on the temple.

INQUIRY - Vss. 10-14

In verses 10-11 God simply instructs Haggai to ask certain questions of the priests for an interpretation of the Law. In verse 12 the question was given. If a man is carrying a piece of "holy flesh", meat sacrificed on the altar, and accidentally touches bread, food wine, or oil with his garment, will this make the thing touched holy?

The answer given by the priests was "no". Leviticus 24:4 explains that a man who is unclean is not to eat of the holy sacrifice. If that holy sacrifice can not make a man clean, it can not make anything else clean either.

The application for us today is very simple. A person will not be clean enough to go to heaven because he hangs around Christians. Being born into a Christian family does not make you a Christian. Going to a Christian church does not make you a Christian. The church and family will influence you to become a Christian, but do not save you. As valuable as the Christian Family and Church are, every person must decide for himself to become a Christian.

The same principle is true of living a Godly Christian life. Hanging around Godly Christians will influence you in a positive way, but hanging around them does not make you Godly. It is obeying God and living as He wants you to live that makes you Godly.

The second question Haggai asked had to do with people touching a dead body. A dead body was considered unclean or unholy. Scripture teaches that if a person or priest touch a dead body he is ruled "unclean". The things he touches are also unclean according to Scriptures and the priests of Haggai's day.

Vs. 13

EXPLANATION - Vss. 14-17

Disobedience reaps judgment.

Haggai relates directly to the people.

The people had been in the process of service and sacrifice and yet were unclean.

Vs. 14 - God explains that their disobedience concerning the rebuilding of the temple meant that God could not be pleased with their service to God or their sacrifices. Because they were unclean in one area, they were unclean in all areas. No matter how much service or sacrifice we perform, if there is known sin in our lives God is not pleased. 1 Peter 1:15-16, 1 Corinthians 5:6, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Vss. 15-16 - God is explaining and asking them to think about what they reaped when they were not doing the Lord's will. Because they were unclean through disobedience, the results of their labors amounted to very little. God was judging them. Deuteronomy 8:5-6, Galatians 6:7

ENCOURAGEMENT - Vss. 18-19

Although God had withheld his blessing because of disobedience, now that they were being obedient God would now bless them. When we repent and do what God wants us to do, we will reap the blessings of God.

Zechariah 3 AN ENCOURAGING MESSAGE

SATAN IS CONFRONTED - Vss. 1-2

JOSHUA IS CLEANSED - Vss. 3-5

JOSHUA IS CHARGED - Vss. 6-7

MESSIAH IS COMING - Vss. 8-10

Zechariah 4:6 BY HIS SPIRIT

Bring an egg with you. Hold it up.

This is an egg.

Although we will not crack it open to show you, this egg has three parts.

There is the yoke, which is egg.

There is the white, which is egg.

There is the shell, which is egg.

There is one egg, and yet three parts to the egg. All three parts are egg.

I share this egg illustration with you because it reminds me of the Trinity.

There is but one God.

But, God the Father is God.

God the Son is God.

God the Spirit is God.

If it were our purpose today, we could take you to Scripture passages showing you that each member of the Trinity is called God and has the attributes and personality of God.

If there is any member of the Trinity who doesn't get enough credit for being a person, or for being God, it is the Holy Spirit. We are reminded of a very important truth in Zechariah 4:6:

"...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

This text reminds me that:

I NEED THE SPIRIT OF GOD AT WORK IN MY LIFE TODAY:

FOR CONVICTION

Before salvation we are "dead in trespasses and sins". Ephesians 2:1

It is the convicting work of the Holy Spirit that makes a person to desire salvation. John 16:8-11

FOR CONVERSION

When a person comes to Christ by faith for salvation the Spirit of God brings about change. An old acrostic, not original with me, reminds us of four things the Spirit does when we are saved:

R - Regeneration - John 3:1-7, 1 John 1:12-13

I - Indwelling - 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

B - Baptism - 1 Corinthians 12:13

S - Sealing - Ephesians 4:30

FOR COMMUNICATION

The Holy Spirit is the great communicator. He communicates assurance to us that we are God's children.

Romans 8:16

The Holy Spirit communicates to God for us. Romans 8:26-27

FOR CONTROL

Ephesians 5:18 - I must allow God's Holy Spirit to control my life. Galatians 5:16

FOR CONTRIBUTION

As the Holy Spirit controls us, He will contribute:

Special graces - Ephesians 5:19-21

Fruit - Galatians 5:22-23

Souls saved - Acts 1:8

Power, love and a sound mind - 2 Timothy 1:7

Malachi 3:8-11 GIVING WITH INTEGRITY

We have all met people who have lacked integrity. Some lack moral integrity. Others lack integrity in their business dealings. There are even some pastors who lack integrity because they do not practice what they preach. The Jews of Malachi's day lacked integrity in the area of giving to God's work. Many today lack integrity in this same area. Remember, a lack of integrity is also a lack of honesty.

GOD'S ACCUSATION - Vs. 8

The Jews had robbed God because they had failed to give as God had prescribed.

GOD'S ACTION - Vs. 9

God had cursed the nation because of their failure to give.

GOD'S ADVICE - Vs. 10a

The one who is not giving properly should start to give with integrity. (1 Corinthians 9:6-7).

GOD'S ASSURANCE - Vs. 10b

God will give great blessing when we give properly.

Malachi 3:8-12 STOP THIEF!

Israel was robbing God by not giving Him his tithes and offerings.

When we fail to cheerfully give to the Lord's work, we too, are robbing God.

CHARGE OF ROBBERY Vss. 8-9

CALL TO REPENTANCE Vs. 10

CERTAINTY OF REWARD Vss. 11-12

Malachi 3:8-11 A REMINDER FROM GOD

God reminds us here of the importance of giving to His work.

CHARGE OF ROBBERY Vss. 8-9

CALL TO REPENTANCE - Vs. 10a

CERTAINTY OF RETRIBUTION (OR REWARD) Vss. 10b-11

Malachi 3:16-17 GOD'S JEWELS

When we want to pay someone a compliment we might say, "That person is a real jewel!"

We mean the person is precious or valuable to us because of positive qualities the person possesses.

God has his "jewels", as verse 17 states. They are those who are precious to God because they have responded properly to Him. According to verse 16, God's jewels:

FEAR HIM - This would include fearing Him enough to trust Christ as Savior. See Luke 12:4-7 and Eph2:8-9

FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS - The people in this verse talked often to each other, indicating their agreement about the things of God. They would have encouraged each other.

We are to fellowship with each other as Christians. See Acts 2:42, Hebrews 3:12-13, and Heb 10:24-25.

FOCUS ON HIM - These people "...thought upon his name." See John 15:1-7, Psalm 1:2-3 and Isaiah 26:3.

It is interesting to note that permanent record is made in Heaven "...for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

Malachi 3:16-4:6 SUNSHINE

The passage before us deals primarily with prophecy concerning future events in the life of Israel, and the one who will bring this to pass. He will rule, reign and be all that Israel would ever want. He is the Lord Jesus, THE SON OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. He is the future sunshine for Israel, and the sunshine for Christians now.

A FAITHFUL REMNANT - 3:16-17

God always has a remnant of faithful people who will follow Him no matter what.

A FEARFUL RESULT - 4:1

The Day of the Lord is coming!

A FUTURE REIGN - 4:2-3

See Isaiah 11.

A FINAL REMINDER - 4:4

Those waiting for Jesus to come are to remain obedient.

A FORTHCOMING RESTORER - 4:5-6

Adapted from <http://www.sermonseeds.org/>

Pastor Jack Peters (for public use)

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