

GRACE

Changes Everything

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO...

**"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."
EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

WELCOME TO



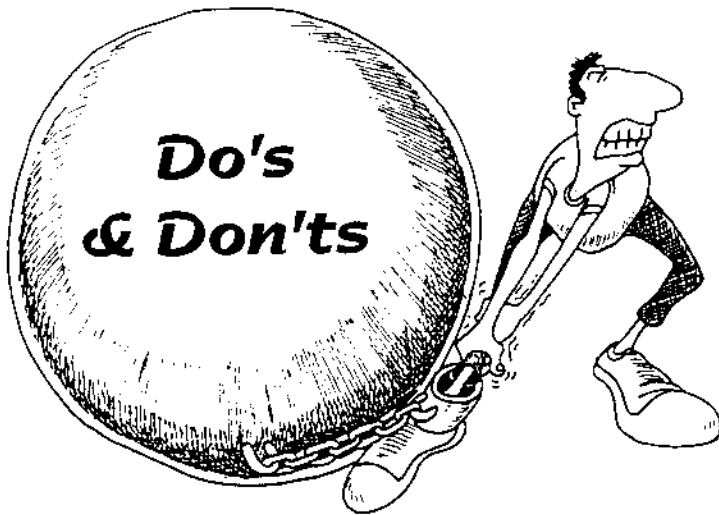
Have you ever thought about the fact that God loves YOU?

This is probably the most important thing that you could know:



**GOD WANTS YOU TO HAVE
A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH HIMSELF!**

*Your part is simply to trust and believe
in the deep care and compassion that
GOD WANTS TO FREELY GIVE TO YOU!*



How great it is to experience the freedom and joy of a loving relationship with God!

Yet, how sad it is that there are many people that try to relate to God by "do's and don'ts".

They think that they need to do something for the Lord instead of understanding what God has done for them!


**DO YOU THINK YOU CAN BE GOOD ENOUGH,
IF YOU JUST TRY HARD,
TO HAVE A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?**

WE CAN TRY
TO LIVE BY THE LAW (Do's & Don'ts)
IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD,

BUT...

GOD'S LOVE IS THE ONLY WAY
TO EXPERIENCE
WHAT WE HAVE BEEN CREATED FOR!

The Bible tells us...

L  K up Matthew 22:36-40 and read it.

Love, not the Law, or a set of rules is the key to our relationship with God and with one another.

We should relate to God, not because we are trying to be good enough for Him, but because of His love for us and our love for Him.

L  K up Romans 8:31 and read it.



**GOD WANTS US
TO ENJOY THE PEACE
OF HIS UNCONDITIONAL LOVE,
NOT THE FEAR THAT ALWAYS COMES
WITH TRYING TO BE
GOOD ENOUGH FOR GOD.**

ONCE WE DISCOVER THE WONDER OF GOD'S GRACE,
WE FIND THAT WE DON'T NEED TO FOLLOW LOTS OF RULES.

We can come to God
because we love Him and He loves us
and we won't want to do ANYTHING
that would hurt our relationship with Him!



WHEN WE KNOW THE JOY OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,
WE WON'T WANT ANY BARRIERS OR BLOCKS TO COME BETWEEN US!

Thou Shalt

not



As we experience God's love
more and more in our lives,
we will find ourselves
longing to please Him
simply because we love Him!



AND THAT IS
THE GREATEST JOY IN LIFE-
TO HAVE A
REAL LOVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.
TO KNOW
THAT HE IS FOR US,
THAT HE LOVES US,
IS THE GREATEST SECURITY
ANY PERSON WILL EVER KNOW.

One of the most important things we can learn
is to relate with God,
not because of our works or our goodness,
but because of God's love for us
through Jesus Christ!



THIS WEEK WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT
WHY GOD'S GRACE CHANGES EVERYTHING!

MONDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY!

FORGIVEN!

A DEAD-END RIGHTEOUSNESS:

ONE VERY COMMON WAY
OF TRYING TO BECOME RIGHTEOUS
(Doing the right things)
IS TO DEFINE
WHAT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS AND ISN'T,
TO SET UP
WHAT YOU SAY IS RIGHT OR WRONG.



THERE'S ONLY ONE PROBLEM:
NO ONE EVER LIVES UP
TO THEIR OWN STANDARD!

SO WE MAKE UP
ALL KINDS OF EXCUSES WHY WE FAILED!

THE MOST COMMON EXCUSE IS
THAT OUR FAILURE ISN'T REALLY OUR FAULT.


NONE OF US LIKES TO ACCEPT THE BLAME
FOR WHAT WE'VE DONE.

This attitude goes all the way back to Adam. He blamed his failure on Eve! Then Eve blamed the serpent!


L  K up GENESIS 3:12-13 and read it.

Proverbs Declares...

L  K up PROVERBS 30:12 and read it.

L  K up and read what the Bible says in 1 JOHN 1:8,10
WRITE IT DOWN: _____



L  K up and read ROMANS 3:19,23
WRITE IT DOWN: _____

L  **K** up and read ISAIAH 64:6

*IF... our relationship with God depends upon our being righteous and good,
THEN...we will never make it!*

WE HAVE FAILED. WE HAVE COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD.

THEN WHAT'S THE STANDARD?

**THOSE WHO BELIEVE
THAT THEY CAN BE MADE
ACCEPTABLE TO GOD WITHOUT JESUS
NEED TO DEAL WITH SOME CRUCIAL QUESTIONS.**

**IF THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN MAKE IT TO HEAVEN
BY ACHIEVING A CERTAIN LEVEL OF GOODNESS,
WHAT STANDARD DO THEY HAVE TO LIVE UP TO?**




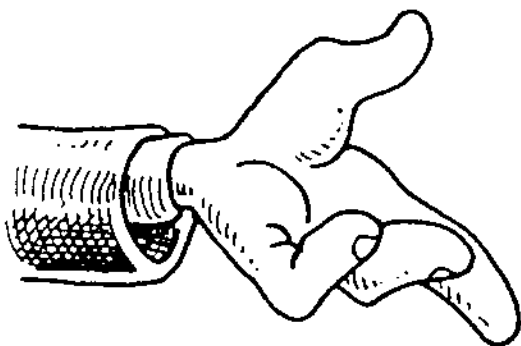
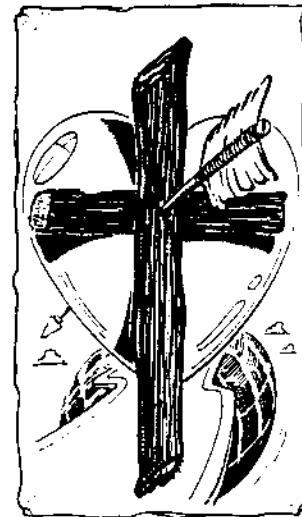
WHAT WILL GOD REQUIRE OF THEM?

**SO MANY SAY,
"I FEEL THAT I AM BASICALLY
A KIND AND GOOD PERSON
AND I AM WILLING TO STAND BEFORE GOD
ON MY OWN MERIT."**

**But these people fail to take into account that
GOD'S STANDARDS
ARE DIFFERENT THAN OURS.**

**Jesus showed us God's requirement
for those who would
strive for heaven on their own power
when He said...**

L  **K** up and read MATTHEW 5:48



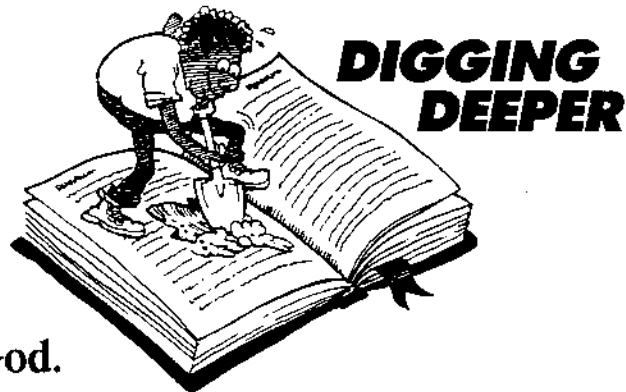
DO YOU THINK YOU MEET GOD'S STANDARD?

YES **NO** **MAYBE**

**WHAT IS GOD'S STANDARD FOR THE PERSON
THAT WANTS TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD?**

TRYING VERY HARD
 BEING SINCERE
 ABSOLUTE PERFECTION

Those who believe
they can earn eternal life
by their good works
have a wrong understanding
of the holiness of God
and what it means to be right with God.




IF WE ARE GOING TO SET UP
A STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUS CONDUCT,
WE NEED TO USE THE ONE ESTABLISHED
BY JESUS CHRIST.

JESUS IS THE ONLY PERSON
WHOSE LIFE PROMPTED GOD TO SAY...

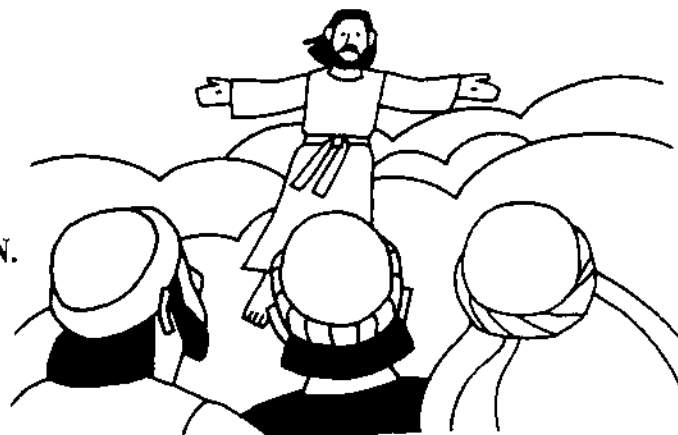
L  K up and read MATTHEW 3:17 to see what *God says!*

To enjoy fellowship with God,
we MUST be as righteous as Jesus.

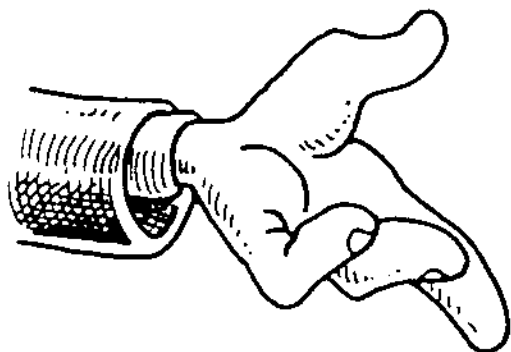
L  K up and read JOHN 16:8,10

JESUS' ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN
WAS GOD'S WITNESS TO THE WORLD ABOUT HIS SON.

IT IS AS IF HE WERE SAYING,
"THIS IS THE RIGHTEOUSNESS
THAT I WILL ACCEPT IN HEAVEN."



JESUS' LIFE IS THE ONLY STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.
IF I WANT TO BE ACCEPTED BY GOD,
I MUST BE AS RIGHTEOUS AS JESUS CHRIST.





SO, IF WE WANT TO STAND BEFORE GOD
ON THE BASIS OF OUR OWN GOOD WORKS,
WE MUST LIVE A LIFE THAT MEASURES UP TO
THE GOODNESS WE SEE IN JESUS.


Then what is God's standard?

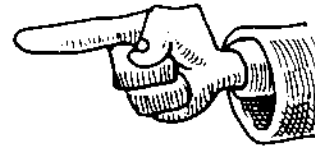
- TO LIVE A GOOD LIFE
- TO BE KIND WHEN YOU CAN
- NEVER TELL A LIE
- TO LIVE AS JESUS LIVED

DOES ANYONE HERE LIVE AS JESUS LIVED? YES NO
Let's look at what Jesus Himself says about how we are to live:

L  **K up and read MATTHEW 5:22**

L  **K up and read LUKE 6:27-30**

L  **K up and write down LUKE 6:35** _____




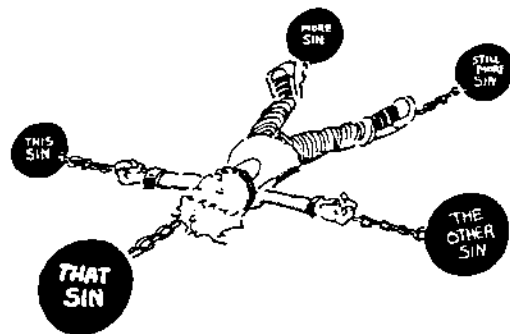
HOW CAN ANYONE BE THAT RIGHTEOUS?

**DOES THAT MEAN, THEN,
THAT I MUST FOREVER BE ALIENATED FROM GOD?**

**IS THERE NO WAY
I CAN EVER ENJOY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD?**

**IF THERE IS ANY HOPE
FOR US TO BE FORGIVEN BY GOD,
THERE MUST BE
ANOTHER BASIS FOR IT
OTHER THAN OUR WORKS.**

L  **K up and read ROMANS 3:20**



**IF WE ARE EVER
TO ENJOY FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,
IT WILL HAVE TO BE ON SOME BASIS
OTHER THAN OUR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

**THE RULES THAT GOD HAS ESTABLISHED
FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS
ARE FAR TOO STRINGENT FOR US TO ABIDE BY.**

WE CAN'T DO IT!



*Our only hope
is that another form of righteousness has been provided for us,
a righteousness based on a totally different principle than our own works.*

**THANK GOD, THERE IS SUCH A PRINCIPLE.
IT'S CALLED GRACE!**

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY!


WHAT IS GRACE?



IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,
*GRACE MEANS "GOD'S UNMERITED FAVOR."
*GRACE IS GOD GIVING TO ME
SOMETHING THAT I CANNOT EARN ON MY OWN.
*GRACE IS BEING ACCEPTED BY GOD
EVEN THOUGH I DO NOT DESERVE IT,
EVEN THOUGH I AM NOT WORTHY OF IT.

The Bible teaches...

I RECEIVE GRACE ON THE BASIS OF
MY BELIEF AND TRUST IN GOD.

L  **K** up HEBREWS 11:6
and see what it says.

WE ARE FORGIVEN BY A HOLY GOD
SIMPLY BY BELIEVING IN JESUS CHRIST
AND HIS DEATH ON OUR BEHALF.

WHEN WE PLACE OUR TRUST IN HIM,
WE ARE FORGIVEN!



IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US
TO BE FORGIVEN BY OBEYING ANY LAW
OR RELIGIOUS SYSTEM.

IT WAS NECESSARY THAT CHRIST
GO TO THE CROSS
SO THAT HE MIGHT ESTABLISH THE BASIS
WHEREBY I CAN APPROACH GOD.

How is it possible for me to be forgiven by God?

- GOING TO CHURCH
- TRYING TO BE A GOOD PERSON
- ACCEPTING CHRIST'S DEATH ON THE CROSS IN MY PLACE

Is it possible that people can be saved by any other way than Jesus
death?

- YES
- NO

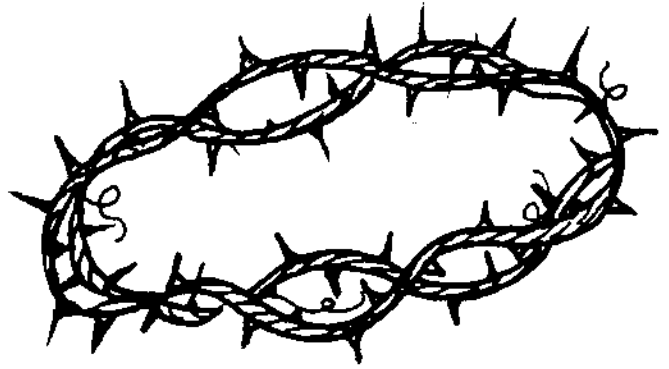
L  **K** up LUKE 22:42 and read it.

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

**JESUS DID NOT WANT TO GO TO THE CROSS,
TO GO THROUGH THAT HORRIBLE DEATH.**

**BUT THERE WAS NO OTHER WAY FOR PEOPLE TO BE SAVED.
SO, BECAUSE HE LOVED US, HE WAS WILLING TO DIE
FOR US!**

**GOD HAS CHARGED US WITH BEING SINNERS-
FOR REBELLING AGAINST HIS LAW AND HIS WILL.
HE HAS CHARGED US WITH UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.**



How can we be cleared of those charges?



**WE CAN'T SAY THAT WE ARE INNOCENT,
FOR WE ARE GUILTY!**

ALL OF US HAVE SINNED!

**NOR CAN WE SAY
THAT WE HAD A RIGHT TO DO WHAT WE DID
BECAUSE WE HAD NO SUCH RIGHT!**

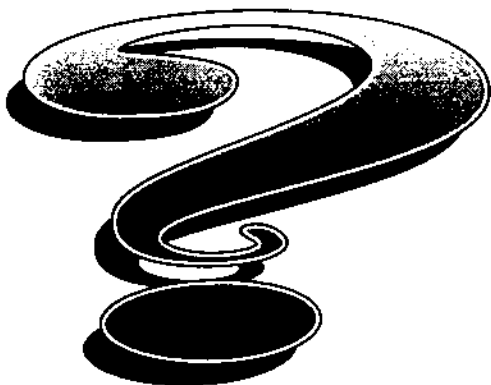
OUR ACTIONS WERE WRONG.

**WE DIDN'T HAVE A RIGHT TO SIN,
WE DID IT ANYWAY.
AND THUS, WE STAND GUILTY.**

***Why is it then, that many people say that they can come to God
because of all the good things they do?***

**THERE ARE MANY OF US WHO LOOK AT
OUR SIN, GUILT, AND UNRIGHTEOUSNESS
WITH SORROW AND THE DESIRE TO CHANGE.
WE WANT TO CHANGE.
BUT TRYING TO CHANGE CAN'T WIN OUR FORGIVENESS.**

**EVEN OUR BEST EFFORTS
CANNOT TAKE AWAY THE GUILT
OF WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY DONE.**



**WE CAN NEVER BE JUSTIFIED BY GOOD WORKS.
WHAT DOES JUSTIFIED MEAN? _____**

**EVEN A WHOLE LIFE OF GOOD WORKS
CANNOT ATONE FOR A SINGLE SIN!
WHAT DOES ATONE MEAN? _____**

God's basis of forgiveness
is the sacrifice of His only begotten Son.

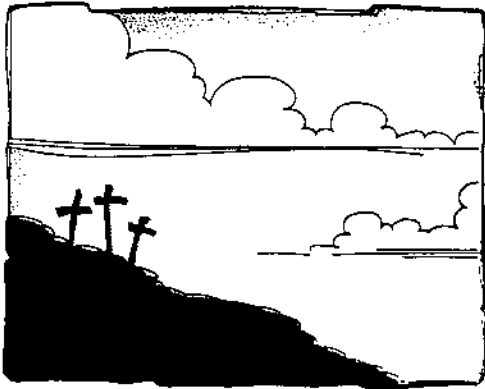
ALL OF OUR GUILT-
ALL OUR PAST AND FUTURE WRONG DOINGS-
HAVE BEEN LAID TO THE CHARGE OF JESUS CHRIST,
THE INNOCENT LAMB,
THE PERFECT ONE WHO KNEW NO SIN.

HE DIED FOR US!

HE BORE OUR GUILT;
HE SUFFERED AND DIED FOR OUR SIN.

L  **K** up 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 and read it.

WRITE IT DOWN: _____




JESUS BECAME SIN FOR US THAT
WE MIGHT BE PARDONED THROUGH HIM.

IN OTHER WORDS,
HE SWITCHED PLACES WITH US!

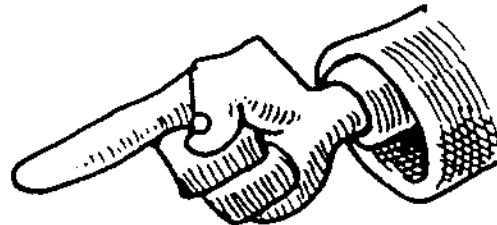
WHAT DOES PARDONED MEAN? _____

HE HAS TAKEN OUR SIN AND FORGIVEN US
THROUGH OUR SIMPLE FAITH AND TRUST IN HIM.


WHEN GOD LAID ON JESUS THE SIN OF US ALL,
CHRIST RECEIVED OUR DESERVED PUNISHMENT,
WHICH THE BIBLE DECLARES IS DEATH.

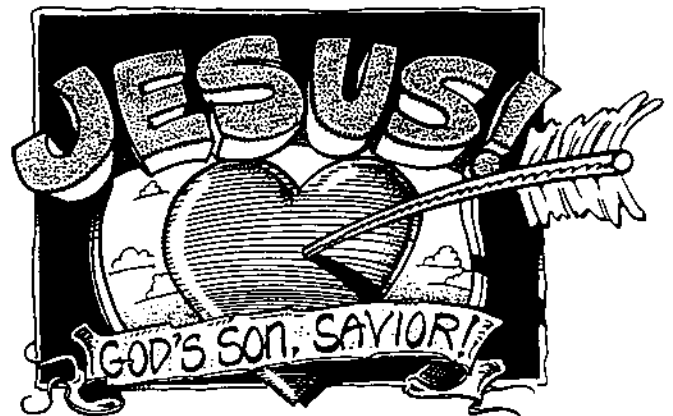
L  **K** up and read ROMANS 6:23

WRITE IT DOWN: _____




GOD HAS DECLARED
THAT IF WE WILL BELIEVE
IN JESUS CHRIST AS OUR LORD AND SAVIOR,
WE WILL BE FORGIVEN
OF EVERY WRONG THING WE HAVE EVER DONE.

L  **K** up and read 1 JOHN 1:7

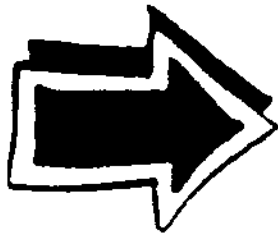


**FAITH IS OUR ONLY HOPE.
OUR GOOD DEEDS OR EFFORTS OR WORKS
CAN NEVER EARN US FORGIVENESS FROM GOD.**

L  **K up and read ROMANS 4:5**

**GOD GIVES US THIS FORGIVENESS
BECAUSE OF OUR FAITH IN THE FINISHED WORK
THAT JESUS CHRIST HAS DONE FOR US.**

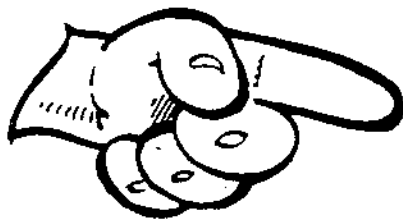
THE CHOICE IS YOURS!



**THE GOOD NEWS IS,
GOD HAS MADE A WAY FOR ME
TO BE ACCEPTABLE BEFORE HIM.**

**GOD, WHO IS ABSOLUTELY HOLY AND PURE
AND SO RIGHTEOUS THAT
NO SIN CAN DWELL IN HIS PRESENCE,
HAS MADE A WAY FOR PEOPLE LIKE US
TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM.**

**WHEN WE BELIEVE IN THIS SACRIFICE
THAT JESUS CHRIST MADE FOR US-
EVEN THOUGH WE DIDN'T DESERVE IT-
THE FATHER GRANTS US PERFECT FORGIVENESS.**



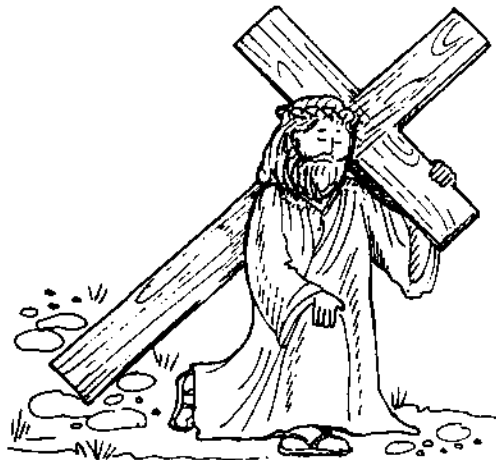
**WHEN WE RELATE TO THE FATHER
BY FAITH THROUGH HIS SON,
WE HAVE A SOLID RELATIONSHIP.**

WE ARE NOW SONS OF GOD.

**BECAUSE HE IS OUR FATHER,
WE DON'T HAVE TO WONDER
IF WE ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO COME TO HIM.
WE DO NOT COME ON THE BASIS OF OUR WORTHINESS,
BUT ON THE BASIS OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.**

FAITH

**THERE IS NO WAY THAT I, BY MY GOOD WORKS,
WOULD EVER MAKE IT TO HEAVEN.
I AM CONDEMNED BECAUSE OF MY SIN.
I HAVE NO CHANCE OF BEING RECEIVED BY GOD
APART FROM HIS MERCY.**



**THAT'S THE GOSPEL OF GRACE.
EACH ONE OF US CAN COME TO GOD,
EVEN THOUGH WE ARE FAR FROM PERFECT.**

**WE CAN STILL HAVE A
BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.**

RELATIONSHIP


That is what the gospel of grace is all about. God looks at us as though we had never committed a single trespass against Him.

NOW I HAVE TROUBLE LOOKING AT MYSELF LIKE THAT. I LOOK AT MYSELF IN THE MIRROR AND SAY, " _____, YOU ARE A SINNER. YOU DO SO MANY WRONG THINGS!"

your name



THAT IS WHY THE GOSPEL OF GRACE IS THE BEST NEWS YOU WILL EVER HEAR. GOD FORGIVES US BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN HIS SON, WHOM HE SENT TO DIE FOR OUR SINS. ALL OUR SINS HAVE BEEN BLOTTED OUT!

L  K up and read ROMANS 4:7-8
WRITE IT DOWN: _____

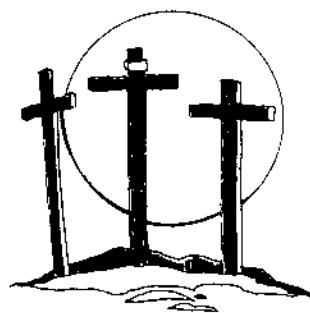


AND YET, GOD LOOKS AT ME AND SAYS, "FORGIVEN!"

HE LOVES ME AND ACCEPTS ME AS I AM BECAUSE I AM IN JESUS CHRIST. EVEN AS HE HAS ACCEPTED HIS OWN SON, SO NOW HE ACCEPTS ME.

WE READ IN THE BIBLE, IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS, THAT THE BELOVED ONE IS CHRIST; AND YOU, BEING IN CHRIST, ARE ACCEPTED BY GOD JUST AS CHRIST IS ACCEPTED.

EPHESIANS 1:6



As sons of God, we have every right to come to our Father to ask Him for anything that we might need. We have every right to trust the wisdom of our Father to either grant or deny the request, according to His knowledge of what is best for us. We can commit ourselves to our heavenly Father, who loves us so very much. He will give us only what is best.

What a joy it is to know that God desires to bestow upon us the richness and the fullness of His love- not because we deserve it, but because He loves us.

This is the gospel of grace in Jesus Christ!

**DO YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS IN YOUR PLACE?
HAVE YOU ACCEPTED HIM AS YOUR LORD AND SAVIOR? WOULD YOU LIKE TO?**

MONDAY EVE BONUS PAGE!

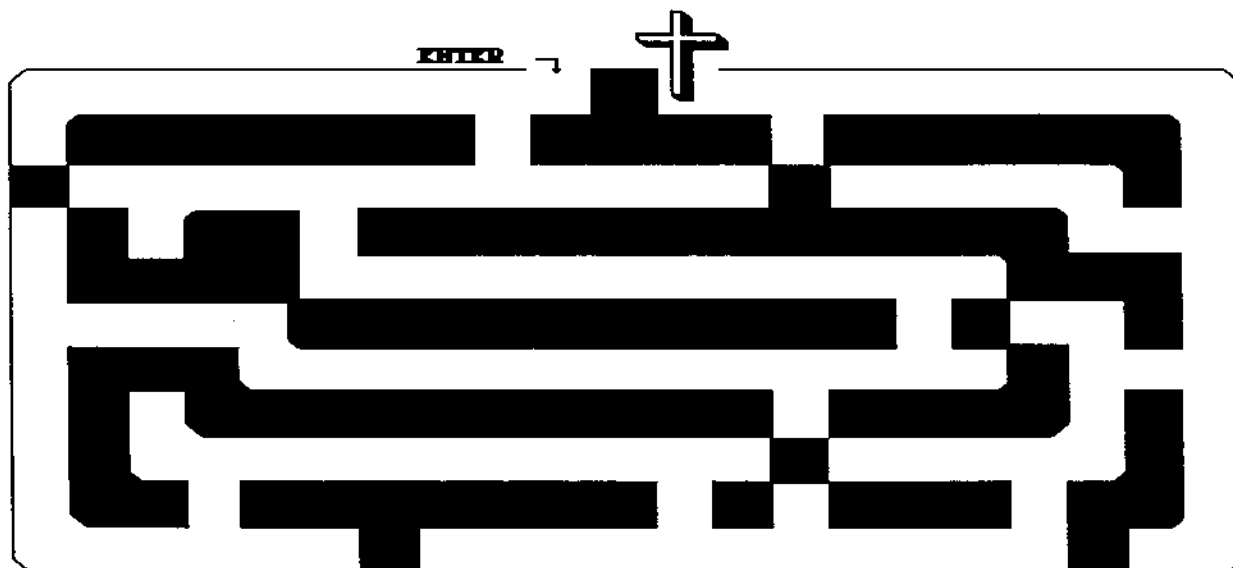
-2 CORINTHIANS 5:21-

T W Z L M Z H Q Z C F D X J D B U U K H
W S U S H M Z F U C J J S E W D F O R Z
F P S J L I I H A Q T T E A Y R N M O Y
A P D F D H V P N I E O V H P C O I I N
M W J F R F V J M W J F M W T H I M S J
W Q T H G I M T G Z Z Q O L Z G F D T T
F E Q O E H B B F K Z R A Z W E L L E P
H T I P U N Q I H K K I Z X B R H S J L
K A K E W G Y A A Q C L S O H W L V K J
N U T O J X E M W J T S E P M G M R K C
C U D O N G L X X B I B H J W N S C P V
U S S E N S U O E T H G I R U E Z M Z T
Q H Y C S R N T P B O T M H F D F L Y W
D E H F Z Q S Y E R T F X G I A P B Y H
C R U K K I V L S B A A S E X M G X O P
N J Q B N I Q I G K N Y R O F G K A J J
B E C O M E K T D G R Y N U G Z B C F H
W S S Y B N H O E O P O V I Y J U W A Q
T T S N E A T V P D I F O N P P K J H O
I A I W T P A Q Z E Q V J W Y N C U A A

FIND ALL OF THE WORDS OF THE VERSE BELOW IN THE WORDSEARCH ABOVE

*"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us,
that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."*

A MAZE OF GRACE




TUESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY!

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IN CHRIST

BELIEVING IN CHRIST

MY ACTIONS SHOW ME
THAT I AM NOT AS GOOD AS I WANT TO BE,
NEVERTHELESS,
I AM RIGHTEOUS BEFORE GOD
AND HE LOOKS AT ME AS PERFECTLY RIGHTEOUS
BECAUSE OF MY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

L  **K** up & write down ROMANS 10:9-10 _____

Forgiveness is only half the story
of the gospel of grace!

THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE
GOD HAS FORGIVEN US IN CHRIST.
WHERE THEY HAVE TROUBLE
IS THE SECOND HALF OF THE GOOD NEWS:

*THAT JUST BY BELIEVING IN JESUS CHRIST,
GOD ACCOUNTS US RIGHTEOUS!*



*THESE ARE THE TWO PARTS OF
THE GOSPEL OF GRACE:*

FIRST,
ALL YOUR SINS HAVE BEEN
TAKEN CARE OF, WASHED, AND FORGIVEN
BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

SECOND,
GOD LOOKS AT YOU AS RIGHTEOUS
BECAUSE OF YOUR BELIEVING IN JESUS CHRIST.



WHY IS THAT SUCH GOOD NEWS?
BECAUSE I NEVER NEED TO FEAR AND SAY,
"OH, I DARE NOT GO TO GOD BECAUSE
I JUST TOLD A LIE.
I JUST LOST MY TEMPER.
I JUST DECEIVED THAT PERSON.
OH, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO ASK GOD TO HELP ME
BECAUSE I FAILED IN THAT TASK."



IF MY RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES BY MY WORKS,
THEN SATAN CAN BAR THE DOOR TO GOD
PRACTICALLY ALL OF THE TIME
BECAUSE I AM NEVER DOING
AS MUCH AS I FEEL I SHOULD.

I AM NEVER AS GOOD
AS I KNOW I OUGHT TO BE.

I HAVEN'T LIVED UP TO MY OWN STANDARDS
OF WHAT I FEEL IS RIGHT.

BECAUSE I HAVE FAILED TO ACHIEVE
THOSE IDEAL STANDARDS,
SATAN WILL USE MY FAILURE
TO KEEP ME FROM COMING TO GOD!



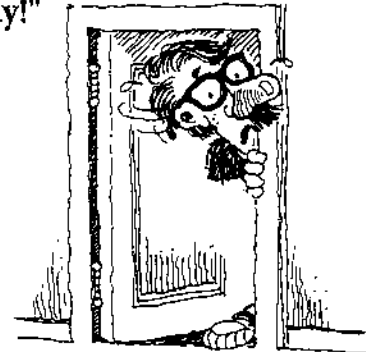
THAT DUDE IS RUDE!

HE WILL SAY THINGS LIKE:

"You have no right to ask God to help you when you have just failed Him again. You know your action is displeasing to God, yet you did it anyhow. Now your in trouble and you want God to help you. You think He is going to listen to you? No way!"

SATAN CAN ALWAYS BAR THE DOOR TO GOD IF
HE CAN CAUSE ME TO LOOK
WITHIN MYSELF AND AT MYSELF.

BUT IF I AM LOOKING TO JESUS CHRIST
AND I REALIZE THAT I AM ACCOUNTED RIGHTEOUS
BECAUSE OF MY FAITH IN CHRIST,
SATAN CAN NEVER BAR THE DOORS!

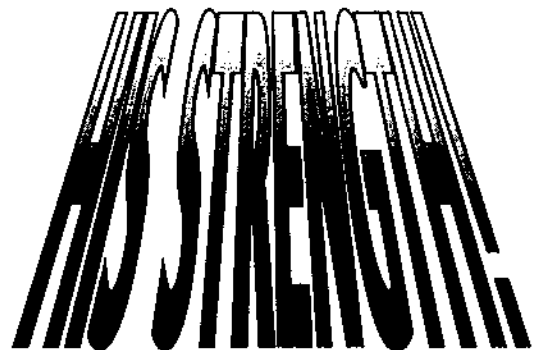


*I HAVE NO HOPE IN MY OWN SELF
AND IN MY OWN GOODNESS.*

BUT I HAVE GREAT HOPE IN THE WORK
THAT JESUS CHRIST DID FOR ME
AND IN THE WORK THAT GOD IS DOING IN ME
BY THE POWER OF HIS HOLY SPIRIT
AS HE IS CONFORMING ME
INTO THE IMAGE OF CHRIST!

LOOKING TO JESUS

THOSE THINGS THAT I CANNOT DO FOR MYSELF,
HE IS DOING FOR ME.
THOSE AREAS WHERE I WAS SO WEAK,
HE HAS MADE ME STRONG.
I HAVE RECOGNIZED MY WEAKNESS
AND HAVE CAST MYSELF HOPELESSLY UPON HIM.
IN THOSE AREAS WHERE I WAS ONCE
WEAK AND CONSTANTLY STUMBLING,
NOW I STAND STRONG BECAUSE
HIS STRENGTH HAS MADE ME PERFECT IN MY WEAKNESS.



L K up & write down 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

I AM NOT YET ALL THAT GOD WANTS ME TO BE.

FAR FROM IT!

BUT THANK GOD, I AM NOT WHAT I WAS!

GOD LOOKS UPON ME

AND ACCOUNTS ME RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY.

THAT IS WHY I NEVER WANT TO BE CAUGHT ANYWHERE
EXCEPT IN CHRIST JESUS.

WE MUST NEVER SEE OURSELVES APART FROM HIM.

WHAT THINGS DO I THINK I CAN DO TO MAKE GOD ACCEPT ME? BE HONEST



IF GOD HAS IMPUTED
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST TO US
BECAUSE WE HAVE BELIEVED,
THEN IT IS FOOLISH FOR US
TO TRY TO IMPROVE ON THAT RIGHTEOUSNESS
BY DOING WORKS.
WE CAN'T IMPROVE ON GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.
THERE IS NO WAY WE CAN IMPROVE
ON THE RIGHT STANDING
THAT HE HAS IMPUTED TO US.

WE ARE RIGHTEOUS!
THAT IS GOD'S ACCOUNTING OF OUR LIFE
BECAUSE WE BELIEVE AND TRUST
IN THE WORK OF JESUS CHRIST.

None of us will stand in heaven
comparing good works with one another
because there will only be One
who will receive glory
before the throne of God.

THERE WILL ONLY BE ONE SHINING STAR.
Jesus and Jesus alone
will receive the glory for our salvation.

**IF IT WERE NOT FOR HIM,
NONE OF US WOULD BE THERE!**





Look up and read GALATIANS 6:14 to find out what Paul said.

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

NO MATTER HOW MANY
GOOD DEEDS WE'VE DONE FOR HIM,
NO MATTER HOW MANY
PEOPLE WE LEAD TO HIM,
OUR ONLY GLORY IS IN JESUS CHRIST,
WHO DIED FOR US.



FAITH

OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT A QUESTION OF
GOOD WORKS,
TRYING HARD,
OR IN KEEPING CERTAIN RULES.
OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS - BOTH HERE AND NOW
AND FOR ALL ETERNITY -
IS A RESULT OF OUR SIMPLE FAITH
IN GOD'S SON, JESUS.

IF I AM SEEKING TO RELATE TO GOD
ON THE BASIS OF
MY OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS
OR MY OWN WORKS,
OR IF I EXPECT TO BE BLESSED BECAUSE
I HAVE BEEN ON GOOD BEHAVIOR THIS WEEK
OR I HAVE READ SO MANY CHAPTERS
OR PRAYED SO MUCH,
THEN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE TENUOUS.



SOMETIMES I WILL FEEL
THAT MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS GOOD
AND AT OTHER TIMES I WILL FEEL IT IS BAD.
WHY?

BECAUSE I AM TRYING TO RELATE TO HIM
ON THE BASIS OF MY RIGHTEOUSNESS!



WITHOUT GRACE,
MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
IS NEVER AN ESTABLISHED REALITY
AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ENJOY PEACE.

IF MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
WERE DEPENDENT ON
HOW I FELT
OR HOW I WAS LIVING
OR ON MY OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS,
I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO RELATE TO GOD
MOST OF THE TIME!

WHEN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
IS DEPENDENT UPON GOD'S GRACE TOWARDS ME,
HOWEVER, THE DOOR OF BLESSING IS NEVER CLOSED.
GOD'S BLESSINGS ARE GIVEN
ON THE BASIS OF HIS GRACE,
HIS UNDESERVED FAVOR.

I NEVER DESERVE OR EARN A BLESSING.

THE BLESSINGS THAT COME INTO MY LIFE
ARE ALWAYS DEPENDENT UPON
GOD'S UNDESERVED FAVOR TO ME.

GOD LOVES ME SO MUCH,
HE BLESSES ME ANYWAY.

GOD IS SO GOOD!

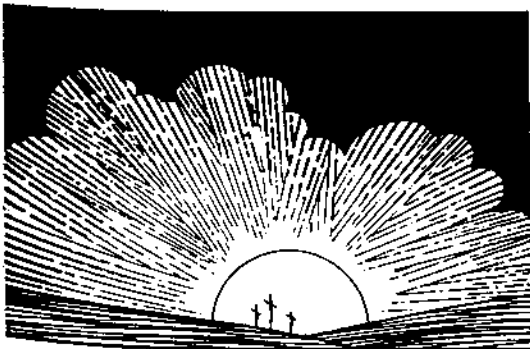
BLESSINGS!

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT SOMEONE
WHO PLACES HIS FAITH IN JESUS
HAS BEEN "JUSTIFIED".

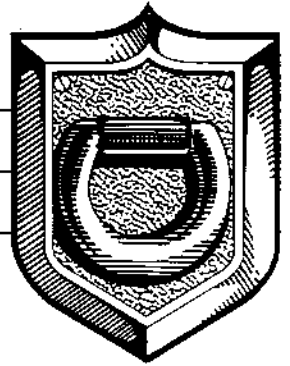
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

IT MEANS THAT GOD HAS GRANTED US
A STANDING BEFORE HIM
JUST AS IF WE HAD NEVER SINNED.

This was no small feat for God to accomplish!
For if we have all sinned and missed the mark,
how can God look at us as if we had never sinned
and still be just?



Knock
and it shall
be opened
unto you



BECAUSE I RELATE TO GOD
ON THE BASIS OF GRACE
(NOT THE GOOD OR BAD THINGS I DO),
I AM NEVER, EVER,
CUT OFF FROM HIS BLESSINGS!

I discover that the lack of God's blessings on my life
has nothing to do with my outward performance,
but rather stems from my lack of faith
in God's grace.

JUSTIFIED

IF HE SEES OUR LIVES
AS THEY TRULY ARE AND MUST ACT
ACCORDING TO HIS ATTRIBUTE OF JUSTICE,
HOW CAN HE TREAT US
AS THOUGH WE ARE PERFECT?

This is where the power of the gospel comes in.
God made the sinless Jesus to be sin for us.
The Scriptures declare that God
laid on the innocent Christ the iniquities of us all.
Jesus literally took my place
and took the punishment that was due me
as a guilty sinner.

THIS IS THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF GRACE!

WE CAN HAVE A STANDING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS BEFORE GOD
FAR SUPERIOR TO ANYTHING WE COULD ACHIEVE UNDER THE LAW!
FOR NO MATTER HOW HARD WE TRY TO BE GOOD,
WE ALWAYS FALL SHORT!

THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH COMES THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST,
HOWEVER, IS IMPUTED TO US AND IS COMPLETE.
THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE ADDED TO IT.

IN CHRIST,
I HAVE ABSOLUTELY PERFECT RIGHTEOUS STANDING BEFORE GOD.
IN HIS EYES, I AM PERFECT!



THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT I AM PERFECT.
IT MEANS THAT
JESUS CHRIST IS PERFECT
AND I HAVE RIGHTEOUSNESS CREDITED TO MY ACCOUNT
BECAUSE OF MY FAITH IN HIM!

HOW GOOD IT IS TO KNOW THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO GRACE!


WRITE DOWN THE LETTERS IN THE BOXES AS YOU COME TO THEM ON THE LINES BELOW

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TUESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY!

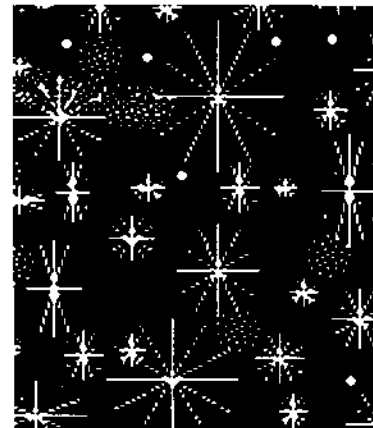
A Key Question

WHEN DID GOD PROCLAIM ABRAHAM RIGHTEOUS?

L  K up & find out when in GENESIS 15

THE SAME IS TRUE FOR YOU AND ME.

AT THE MOMENT WE BELIEVE AND TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST,
GOD IMPUTES TO OUR ACCOUNT RIGHTEOUSNESS -
NOT ON THE BASIS OF WHAT WE HAVE DONE
OR WHAT WE ARE GOING TO DO,
BUT SIMPLY ON THE BASIS OF OUR BELIEF IN JESUS CHRIST.

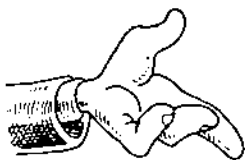


ONE DAY JESUS WAS ASKED,

"What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?"

L  K up the answer to this in JOHN 6:29 and write it down: _____

But What is Real Faith?



OUR ACTIONS MUST BE IN HARMONY
WITH WHAT WE BELIEVE.
BELIEF ISN'T MERELY WHAT WE SAY;
BELIEF IS DEMONSTRATED BY WHAT WE DO.

L K up & read what JAMES 2:26 says about faith!



SHARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SOMEONE
THAT SAYS THEY HAVE FAITH IN SOMETHING,
BUT REALLY DOESN'T HAVE FAITH IN IT.

IF YOU WERE TOLD THAT RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE SITTING AT THIS TIME, AS YOU READ THIS PART OF THE BIBLE STUDY, IN ONE MINUTE, EVERYONE AROUND YOU WILL SINK DEEP INTO THE GROUND,

WHAT WOULD YOUR ACTIONS BE IF YOU BELIEVED YOU WOULD SINK?

- STAY WHERE YOU ARE AND WAIT
- TALK ABOUT IT AWHILE
- GO TO SLEEP
- TELL EVERYONE AROUND YOU
- GET UP AND RUN FROM THE AREA



TO SAY YOU BELIEVE SOMETHING
AND YET FAIL TO LIVE OUT THAT BELIEF
PROVES THAT YOU DON'T HAVE REAL FAITH.

YOU MAY WANT TO TALK ABOUT
THE STORY OF ABRAHAM AND ISAAC. *GENESIS 22*
ABRAHAM'S BELIEF WAS DEMONSTRATED BY HIS ACTIONS.
HAD HE SAT THERE AND ARGUED WITH GOD,
HE WOULD NOT HAVE TRULY BELIEVED.

IMAGINE IF HE HAD SAID,
*"GOD, I CAN'T OFFER ISAAC. WHAT DO YOU MEAN LORD?
HE IS MY SON! YOU HAVE PROMISED THAT THROUGH HIM
THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD WILL BE BLESSED!"*



A lot of people think that merely saying something
makes it a belief. But belief isn't merely what
you say; belief takes action.
It is demonstrated by what you do.

ABRAHAM WAS NOT RIGHTEOUS BECAUSE
OF WHAT HE DID, HE WAS RIGHTEOUS
BECAUSE OF WHAT HE BELIEVED.
WHAT HE DID WAS IN HARMONY
WITH WHAT HE BELIEVED.
GOD TOOK THE BELIEF AND IMPUTED
RIGHTEOUSNESS TO ABRAHAM FOR HIS BELIEF.

NOW THIS DOES NOT MEAN
THAT OUR ACTIONS
ARE ALWAYS GOING TO BE PERFECT.
I FIND AT TIMES
THAT I AM BATTLING MY FLESH
SO THAT I DO NOT DO THE THINGS
I REALLY WANT TO DO.
SOMETIMES MY ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS
ARE OPPOSED TO MY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST!



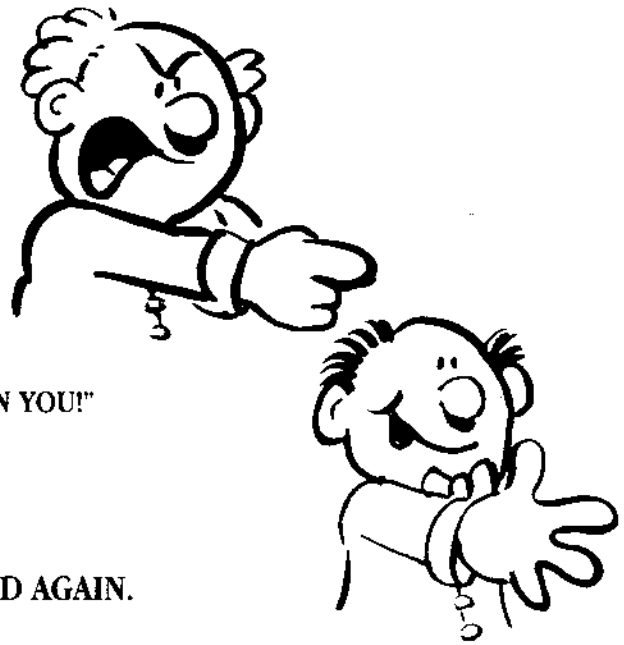
Look up & write down ROMANS 7:18-19



**BUT I CAN'T LIVE IN THAT CONDITION!
I MAY STUMBLE AND FALL, AS DOES EVERYONE,
BUT I DO NOT JUST LIE THERE.**

**THE SPIRIT WON'T LET ME LIE THERE!
HE PROMPTS ME AND
HELPS ME TO STAND UP AGAIN!**

WHEN I STUMBLE OR FALL,
GOD DOESN'T GET OUT THE ERASER
AND BLOT OUT MY NAME FROM THE BOOK OF LIFE.
WHEN A PARENT,
TRYING TO TEACH THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO WALK,
SEES THEM STUMBLING,
THAT DOESN'T PROMPT THEM TO SHOUT,
"GET OUT OF HERE YOU BRAT!
YOU ARE NOT MY CHILD, FALLING LIKE THAT! I DISOWN YOU!"



NO, THEY PICK UP THEIR CHILD AND SAY,
"YOU'RE ALRIGHT. TRY IT AGAIN.
COME TO DADDY NOW. COME ON! COME ON!"
YOU ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TRY AGAIN AND AGAIN.

***IF YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST - YOU ARE GOD'S CHILD. AND IF YOU
DON'T BELIEVE, YOU CAN COME TO JESUS RIGHT NOW! DO YOU WANT TO?***



HE IS TRYING TO HELP YOU DEVELOP
A WALK WITH HIM.
IT IS COMFORTING TO KNOW THAT
WHEN WE STUMBLE AND FALL,
HE DOESN'T KICK US OUT.
HE DOESN'T DISOWN US.
HE DOESN'T SAY,
"YOU ARE NOT MY CHILD ANYMORE
BECAUSE YOU HAVE STUMBLED!"
INSTEAD, HE PICKS US UP AND DUSTS US OFF.
HE SAYS, "ALRIGHT NOW, TRY AGAIN."

ANYONE WHO IS BORN OF GOD
CANNOT LIVE IN SIN.
WE CANNOT BE PRACTICING A LIFE OF SIN!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO PRACTICE SIN? _____

IF WE ARE, WE ARE PROVING
THAT WE DO NOT BELIEVE WHAT WE SAY WE DO.

ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD AND HIS ACTIONS FOLLOWED HIS BELIEF.

OF COURSE THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT ONCE ABRAHAM COMMITTED HIS LIFE TO GOD IN
FAITH THAT HE NEVER WAVERED IN BELIEF AGAIN. FAR FROM IT!

And yet, it was not his actions by which God determined his righteousness; his righteousness was determined by his believing. It is the same with us. Our faith must lead to a life of obedience and right actions, but it is not those right actions or our obedience that earn us a right standing before God. The righteousness of Jesus Christ is imparted to us by faith.

THE GOSPEL OF GRACE- GOD'S LOVE FOR SINNERS WHO PLACE THEIR COMPLETE TRUST IN HIM.
WHAT ARE YOU PUTTING YOUR COMPLETE TRUST IN?

One Step at a Time

**RELATIONSHIP FIRST -
IF WE TRY TO WALK
WITHOUT FIRST ESTABLISHING
THE PROPER RELATIONSHIP,
WE WON'T MAKE IT.
WALKING REQUIRES THAT
WE FIRST ACQUIRE BALANCE.**

**THIS IS TRUE EVEN IN THE PHYSICAL REALM.
BEFORE CHILDREN TAKE THEIR FIRST STEPS,
THEY MUST LEARN
HOW TO KEEP THEIR BALANCE WHILE SITTING.
NEXT THEY MASTER THE ART OF STANDING.
THEN THEY LEARN TO WOBBLE A LITTLE.
AND ONLY AFTER THAT
DO THEY DEVELOP THE ABILITY TO WALK.**




Walking Our Talk



**THERE ARE MANY WHO CLAIM
TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,
WHO KNOW ALL THE RIGHT WORDS TO SAY,
BUT WHO SIMPLY AREN'T WALKING WITH GOD
IN ANY PRACTICAL WAY.
IT IS CRUCIAL THAT WE LEARN TO
"WALK OUR TALK."**

**THE QUESTION IS...
HOW DO WE MANAGE THIS?
HOW DO WE AVOID
BEING CARRIED AWAY BY THE PULL OF THE WORLD?**

L  K up GALATIANS 5:16 and see how this question is answered.

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

**TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT MEANS
THAT WE ALLOW THE HOLY SPIRIT
TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER OUR LIVES.**



***IT IS HELPFUL TO REMEMBER THAT GOD HAS DESIGNED THE HUMAN MIND TO WORK
MUCH AS A COMPUTER DOES. A COMPUTER CAN ONLY PRODUCE THAT WHICH HAS BEEN
PROGRAMMED INTO IT. IN LIKE MANNER, OUR MINDS ARE BEING PROGRAMMED DAILY. IF
OUR INPUT COMES FROM THE FLESH, OUR LIVES WILL BE CHARACTERIZED BY THE FLESH.
IF WE BEGIN TO PROGRAM OUR MINDS WITH THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT, OUR LIVES WILL
BEGIN TO REFLECT THE PRIORITIES OF THE SPIRIT.***

THE SIMPLE YET PROFOUND ANSWER IS THIS...

DON'T FIGHT THE FLESH,

STRENGTHEN THE SPIRIT!

DON'T FIGHT AGAINST THE DARKNESS,

TURN ON THE LIGHT!

TO DO THIS, WE MUST FIRST RECOGNIZE THAT

WE HAVE BOTH A SPIRITUAL AND

A FLESHLY SIDE TO OUR NATURE.

IF WE ARE TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT,

WE MUST FEED THE SPIRITUAL MAN.


WE ALL KNOW WHAT IT MEANS

TO FEED THE PHYSICAL SIDE OF OUR NATURE.

IF I MISS FEEDING MY BODY,

IT IS NOT SUBTLE ABOUT REMINDING ME OF ITS NEEDS.



L  **K up and read JOB 23:12**

WRITE IT DOWN: _____


Becoming strong in spirit requires that we must regularly consume the Bread of Life, the Word of God.

Taking in the Word

SOWING



IF I WANT MY SPIRITUAL MAN TO BE STRONG, IT ONLY STANDS TO REASON THAT I MUST SOW TO MY SPIRIT. I CAN'T BE SOWING TO THE FLESH AND HOPE THAT I AM SOMEHOW GOING TO PRODUCE A SPIRITUAL CROP. IN ORDER TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT, I MUST BEGIN TO FEED THE SPIRIT. THAT MEANS I MUST MAKE IT A POINT TO GET MORE AND MORE INTO THE WORD OF GOD.

L  **K up & write down GALATIANS 6:8** _____

IT IS IMPORTANT TO SEE GOD'S WORD AS THE ESSENTIAL THAT IT IS. JESUS CLAIMED THAT HIS WORDS WERE SPIRIT AND LIFE; SO A REGULAR, SYSTEMATIC TIME IN GOD'S WORD IS ESSENTIAL IF WE ARE TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT.

Communing With God

A HIGH PRIORITY ON PRAYER IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR EXPERIENCING THE JOYS OF WALKING IN THE SPIRIT.

OUR LIVES CAN BE REMARKABLY TRANSFORMED WHEN WE COME TO REALIZE THAT GOD IS WITH US CONTINUALLY. THE INSTRUCTION TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT SIMPLY MEANS THAT WE ARE TO DELIBERATELY MAKE GOD OUR CONSTANT TRAVELING COMPANION AS WE MOVE THROUGH THE DAY.



WHEN WE WALK IN THE SPIRIT, LIVING IN CONSTANT AWARENESS OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD, WE NO LONGER NEED OTHERS TO NAG AND PREACH AT US ABOUT LIVING UP TO CHRISTIAN STANDARDS. OUR LIVES WILL BE REVOLUTIONIZED AS WE KEEP THE NEARNESS AND LOVE OF GOD IN THE FRONT OF OUR MINDS.



Who's in the Lead?

Walking in the Spirit moves us from one spiritual place to another.

WE MOVE FROM ONE LEVEL OF MATURITY TO THE NEXT AS WE LISTEN TO THE SPIRIT AND WALK IN THE DIRECTION HE INSTRUCTS US TO MOVE - YET THIS IS WHERE WE SOMETIMES RUN INTO TROUBLE. WHEN A THOUGHT OR AN INCLINATION COMES TO OUR CONSCIENCE, HOW CAN WE DISCERN WHETHER THE NOTION IS FROM GOD?



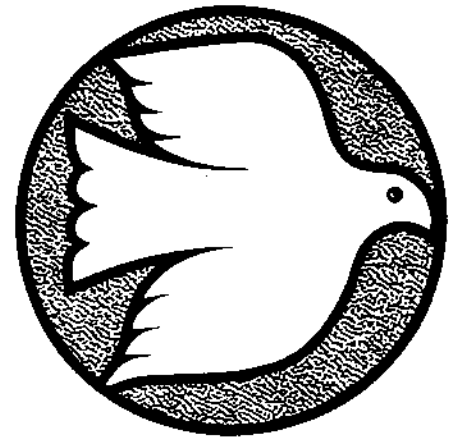
L  **K** up & and read JEREMIAH 31:33 and 2 CORINTHIANS 3:3



GOD WILL PLANT AN IDEA WITHIN OUR SPIRIT, AND OUR SPIRIT WILL COMMUNICATE IT TO OUR MINDS.

THIS IS USUALLY PERCEIVED AS AN IDEA, A THOUGHT, OR AS A SUDDEN MOMENT OF INSPIRATION. GOD WILL GIVE US A DESIRE AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATING HIS WILL FOR OUR LIVES.

UNFORTUNATELY, WE ALSO HAVE DESIRES THAT COME FROM A FALLEN NATURE. OUR FLESH HAS A WAY OF INJECTING VERY STRONG THOUGHTS AND INCLINATIONS INTO OUR MINDS. AT TIMES IT IS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN WHETHER A NOTION HAS COME FROM GOD OR FROM MY FLESH. AND YET, GOD HASN'T LEFT US IN A CONFUSING FOG.



HE HAS SENT HIS HOLY SPIRIT TO DWELL WITHIN OUR HEARTS, NOT ONLY TO GUIDE US IN PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT ALSO TO LEAD US INTO AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE REVEALED TRUTH OF HIS WORD. HE WILL NEVER LEAD US CONTRARY TO ANYTHING HE HAS ALREADY DECLARED IN THE SCRIPTURES.

Understanding the Word

L **K** up & read 1 CORINTHIANS 2:14. What does it say about the natural man?



ON THE OTHER HAND, THE SPIRITUAL MAN UNDERSTANDS ALL THINGS, THOUGH HE IS NOT UNDERSTOOD BY OTHERS. BECAUSE WE HAVE BECOME RIGHTLY RELATED TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST, HIS HOLY SPIRIT CAN NOW UNFOLD TRUTH TO OUR HEARTS. THE WORD OF GOD BECOMES ALIVE AND UNDERSTANDABLE TO US.

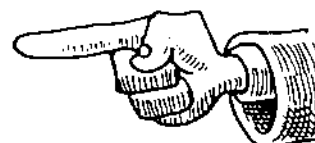
Press On

Between the flesh, this fallen world system, and Satan himself, we face real hindrances to spiritual growth. But the counsel of Scripture is to press on for the prize of the high calling of God which is in Christ Jesus.



L **K** up & and read what Jesus says in LUKE 13:24 and write it down:

THE GREEK WORD TRANSLATED "STRIVE" IS *agonizomai* FROM WHICH WE GET OUR ENGLISH WORD AGONIZE. MAKE NO MISTAKE; IT ISN'T EASY OR NATURAL TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT!



It can't be overemphasized that this is a choice each of us must make daily. When we choose to walk in the Spirit we will enjoy a wonderful depth and consistency in our fellowship with God.

LOOK up & read 1 JOHN 1:7



WHAT'S ESPECIALLY EXCITING ABOUT FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IS THAT THE MORE WE EXPERIENCE IT, THE MORE WE DESIRE IT!

THE MORE WE ARE PERSONALLY TOUCHED BY THE PEACE AND FULFILLMENT OF INTIMATE COMMUNION WITH THE FATHER, THE HARDER IT IS TO LIVE WITHOUT IT. WHEN WE FIND OURSELVES OUT OF FELLOWSHIP, AN INNER EMPTINESS CALLS US BACK TO PRAYER AND THE WORD.

As we walk in the Spirit, we begin to enjoy the tremendous benefits of a close relationship with God.

BUT IN ORDER TO EXPERIENCE THIS BLESSING, WE MUST CHOOSE TO WALK IN THE SPIRIT. WE MUST COME TO GOD AND ASK HIM TO PLANT A GREATER DESIRE FOR PRAYER, FOR TIME IN THE WORD, AND FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS IN OUR HEARTS. WE MUST PRAY FOR THE GRACE TO SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. IT IS THEN THAT WE WILL KNOW

TREMENDOUS VICTORY

OVER EVEN OUR MOST BESETTING SINS, AND IT IS THEN THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD IS ABLE TO USE US IN THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY WAYS.



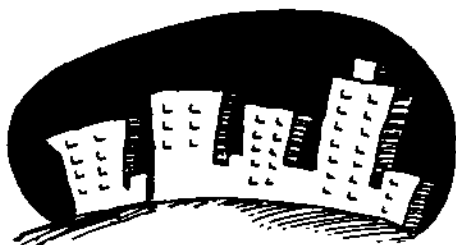
WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY!



A Garden Not a Factory

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "WORKS" AND "FRUIT"? "WORKS" SUGGESTS A FACTORY COMPLETE WITH PRESSURES, HARD SWEATING WORK, DEADLINES, AND THE CONSTANT NEED TO PRODUCE.

BUT "FRUIT" PICTURES A PEACEFUL, TRANQUIL GARDEN, A PLACE WHERE WE ARE INCLINED TO STAY AND DRINK IN THE BEAUTY WHILE WE ENJOY EACH OTHER'S COMPANY.



It's important to realize that God doesn't come to His factory looking for products. He comes to His garden to enjoy its fruit.

L  **K** up & write down GALATIANS 3:2-3 _____

NOTICE THAT THE APOSTLE IS COMPARING TWO THINGS:

- *the Spirit, which is related to faith;*
- *works, which are related to the flesh.*

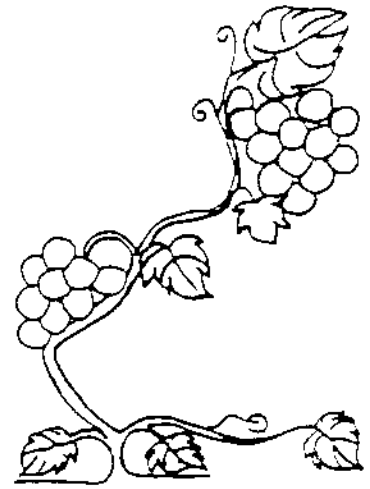
If you are involved in works, then you are relying on the flesh. But if you are walking by faith with Jesus Christ, the Spirit is producing fruit in your life. Fruit isn't something you are generating because you think you have to; fruit is the natural result of relationship!


LOOK AT THE FRUIT HANGING ON A PEACH TREE. THE PEACHES AREN'T OUT THERE STRUGGLING AND WORKING DAY BY DAY TRYING TO GET RIPE; ALL THEY HAVE TO DO IS HANG IN THERE! RIPENING IS THE NATURAL PRODUCT OF RELATIONSHIP. AS LONG AS THEY ARE ABIDING, THEY ARE GOING TO BRING FORTH SWEET FRUIT.



TALK ABOUT "ABIDING" WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ABIDE?

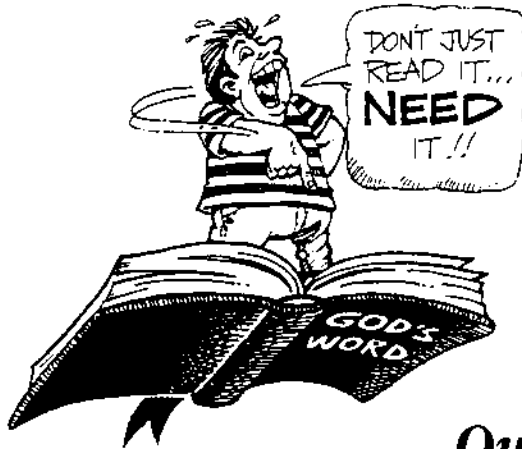
THIS IS TRUE OF OUR OWN EXPERIENCE AS WELL.
IF WE ARE TRULY ABIDING IN CHRIST -
WHICH IS A POSITION OF FAITH -
THEN FRUIT WILL COME FORTH FROM THE RELATIONSHIP.
IF THERE IS NO FRUIT IN MY LIFE,
THEN THE RELATIONSHIP MUST BE QUESTIONED
AND EVEN CHALLENGED.



L  **K** up & read what Paul tells us in 2 CORINTHIANS 13:5

Sometimes people will say they are Christians
but not act (live) like it.
Sometimes we can even fool ourselves.
So how do we know the truth?

L  **K** up & read MATTHEW 7:20 and see what Jesus says.
WRITE IT DOWN: _____



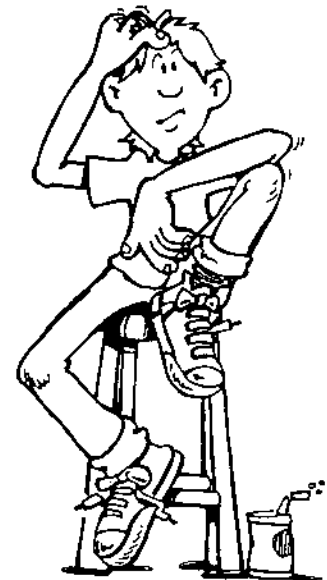
WE ARE CALLED TO EXAMINE OUR LIVES
IN ORDER TO DETERMINE
WHAT KIND OF FRUIT WE'RE BEARING.
IF THE FRUIT IS BAD,
THEN THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG
WITH OUR RELATIONSHIP,
WHICH MEANS
THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH OUR FAITH.
A VITAL RELATIONSHIP OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST
WILL BRING FORTH FRUIT - WITHOUT FAIL.

Our Big Mistake

ONE OF OUR BIGGEST PROBLEMS IS
THAT WE TEND TO BE MORE INTERESTED
IN WHAT WE DO THAN IN WHAT WE ARE,
WHILE GOD IS MORE INTERESTED
IN WHAT WE ARE THAN IN WHAT WE DO.

HE LOOKS FOR FRUIT; WE TRY TO PRODUCE WORKS.


YES, WE ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE FRUIT IN OUR LIFE,
BUT SOMETIMES WHEN WE SEE OTHER PEOPLE'S FRUIT,
WE THINK THAT IS WHAT WE ARE TO DO.





WHEN IT IS NATURAL FOR US
TO DO SOMETHING FOR GOD,
IT IS IN THE REALM OF FRUIT;
WHEN IT'S PRESSURED,
IT IS IN THE REALM OF WORKS.
GOD ALWAYS EQUIPS US TO DO WHATEVER
HE HAS CALLED US TO DO,
AND IT WILL BE NATURAL FOR US TO DO IT.

God wants you to do what He has naturally endowed you to do. The fruit of the Christian life blossoms from you naturally as you abide in Jesus Christ through your faith in Him.

L  **K** up & read what Jesus says in John 15:8

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

GOD WANTS YOU

**TO BE EXTREMELY FRUITFUL FOR HIM.
THAT FRUIT CAN COME FORTH
ONLY AS YOU ABIDE IN CHRIST-
AND THAT IS A POSITION OF FAITH!**



No Such Thing as Fleshly Faith

**WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO
THAT GOD HAS NOT CALLED YOU TO DO?**

**GOD NEVER RECOGNIZES OR REWARDS
THE WORKS OF OUR FLESH.
ON THE OTHER HAND,
HE JEALOUSLY DESIRES
THAT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
BE INCREASINGLY CHARACTERISTIC OF OUR LIVES.**



L  **K** up & read JOHN 15:4 and write it down: _____

Jesus placed the emphasis not upon what we do, but upon what we are. What comes forth from our lives is the result of our relationship with Him. We can't have a true, right relationship with the Lord without bringing forth fruit. If there is no fruit - for "by their fruits ye shall know them" - then we had better reexamine our relationship!

Renegade Fruit Inspectors

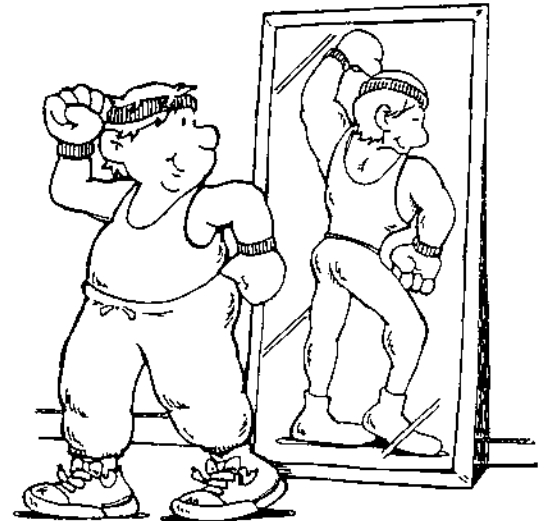


GOD DID A MARVELOUS WORK IN YOUR LIFE
BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT.
WHEN YOU WERE STILL A SINNER,
GOD LOVED YOU.
AND WHEN BY FAITH YOU CALLED OUT TO HIM,
(Have you called out to Jesus yet? If not,
now would be a good time - do you want to?)
HE JUSTIFIED YOU OF EVERY WRONG THING
YOU HAD EVER DONE.
GOD WIPED YOUR SLATE CLEAN!
HE OBLITERATED THE PAST SO THOROUGHLY
THAT HE MADE IT
AS THOUGH IT NEVER EXISTED!
THAT IS WHAT THE TERM "JUSTIFIED" MEANS.

THE MOMENT YOU RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST BY FAITH-
BEFORE YOU DO ONE THING-
GOD TAKES ALL OF THE NEGATIVE MARKS AGAINST YOU

AND WIPES THEM OUT!

BECAUSE OF YOUR SIMPLE BELIEF
IN JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR SAVIOR AND LORD,
GOD JUSTIFIES YOU OF ALL YOUR PAST.
BECAUSE OF YOUR BELIEF,
GOD IMPUTES TO YOUR ACCOUNT
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS.
YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM BEGINS WITH BELIEVING.



This is all very basic,
but somehow we often forget it.
Sometimes believers criticize other
believers or find fault. They say,
"Do you know what they are doing?
They call themselves Christians,
yet they are doing this and that."

NOW WHAT ARE SUCH BELIEVERS DOING?
THEY HAVE SET THEMSELVES UP AS JUDGES!
THEY HAVE BECOME RENEGADE FRUIT INSPECTORS!

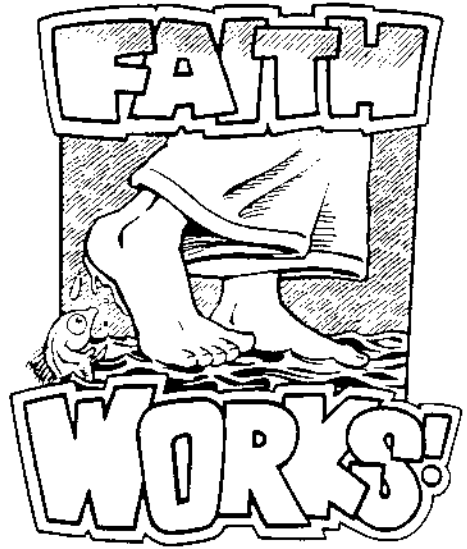
What's beautiful is that we don't have to please everybody. All we have to do is please God. And what do we have to do to please Him? Just believe in Him and trust in Him. We don't please God by all of our works and feverish activities. We please God when we believe in Him and trust in Him. **THAT IS THE GOSPEL OF GRACE.**

It's My Pleasure

FAITH PLEASURES THE LORD AND
FAITH PRODUCES RELATIONSHIP.
THE RELATIONSHIP PRODUCES THE FRUIT.

WHEN THE LOVE OF GOD FILLS YOUR HEART,
ALL YOU WANT TO DO IS TALK ABOUT HIM,
HIS WORD, HIS GOODNESS, HIS LOVE.

YOU DO IT BECAUSE YOU WANT TO DO IT,
BECAUSE IT IS YOUR NATURE TO DO IT,
BECAUSE GOD HAS PUT IT IN YOUR HEART TO DO IT.



L  **K** up and read 2 CORINTHIANS 5:14 - What does Paul say?

WRITE IT DOWN: _____



**GOD DOES NOT RUN FACTORIES;
HE GROWS GARDENS.**

**HE IS NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR WORKS;
HE DESIRES TO ENJOY YOUR FRUIT;
HE CALLS YOU TO RELY UPON HIS SPIRIT.**

**AS PAUL REMINDS US,
HAVING BEGUN IN THE SPIRIT,
WE CANNOT BE MADE PERFECT IN OUR FLESH.**

(see Galatians 3:3)

**WE CANNOT ADD WORKS TO OUR FAITH
AND IMPROVE THE RELATIONSHIP,
EVEN THOUGH MANY PEOPLE
TRY TO DO EXACTLY THAT!**

We're All Invited

**THE WORKS OF GOD
ARE NOT BROUGHT ABOUT
BECAUSE OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
THEY ARE BROUGHT ABOUT
BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH.
AND THAT MEANS
THAT ANY OF US CAN DO THEM.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE
SOME SPECIALLY ANOINTED KIND OF INSTRUMENT.**

**GRACE
THRU
FAITH**

**JAMES SAYS THAT ELIJAH
 WAS A MAN OF PASSIONS JUST LIKE US.
 (see James 5:17)
 HE BECAME DISCOURAGED, HE GOT UPSET,
 HE GOT ANGRY, HE BLEW IT!
 YET HE PRAYED
 AND IT DIDN'T RAIN FOR THREE YEARS!
 ELIJAH WAS NOT SOME SUPERHOLY KIND OF PROPHET.
 HE WAS A PERSON EXACTLY LIKE US,
 WITH THE SAME KIND OF FEELINGS WE HAVE -
 THE SAME KIND OF DISCOURAGEMENTS.
 YET GOD LISTENED TO HIM BECAUSE OF HIS FAITH.**



That same potential is yours. All it takes is believing the Lord and trusting in Him.



**SINCE YOU HAVE BEGUN IN THE SPIRIT,
 YOU MUST CONTINUE IN THE SPIRIT.
 HAVING BEGUN IN FAITH,
 YOU MUST CONTINUE IN FAITH.
 DON'T DEGENERATE INTO WORKS;
 DON'T LET YOUR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE
 BECOME A BORE.
 DON'T BECOME A FACTORY WORKER,
 BUT LET YOUR LIFE BE AS A GARDEN
 WHERE GOD CAN COME TO ENJOY THE FRUIT
 YOU ARE PRODUCING AS YOU ABIDE IN
 CHRIST BY FAITH.**

*******John 15:4-5*******

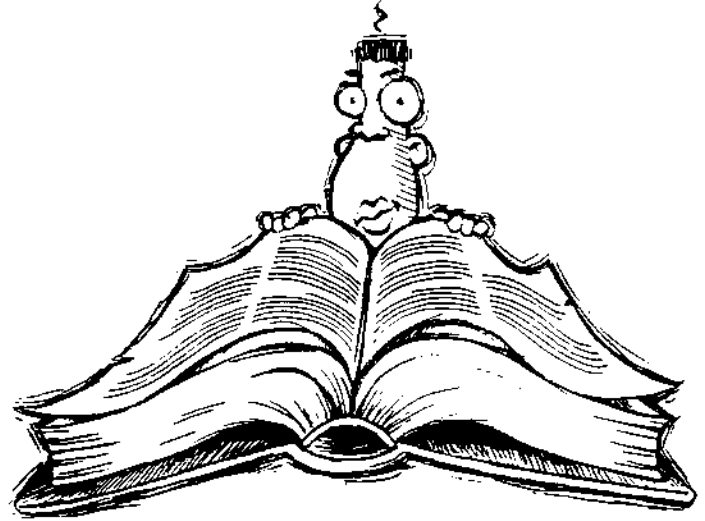
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C	S	E	H	C	N	A	R	B	T	I	U	R	F	Z	BRANCHES	VINE
H	I	E	M	W	Z	K	J	R	S	E	D	I	B	A	FRUIT	WITHOUT
W	I	T	H	O	U	T	B	B	E	V	I	N	E	K	ME	YOU
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WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY!

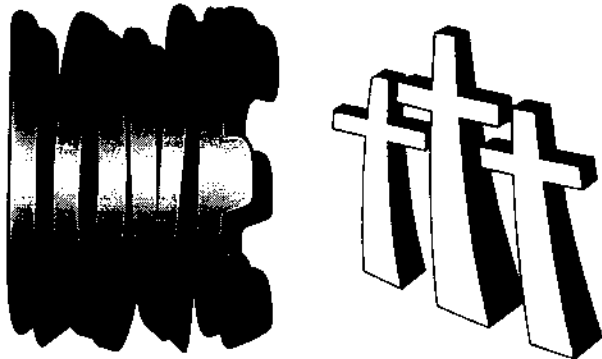
Blessings For the Taking

ONCE WE BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD,
WE SEE THAT IT ISN'T OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS
OR ABILITY TO REACH
SOME HIGH LEVEL OF HOLINESS
THAT MAKES US WORTHY OF GOD'S BLESSING.
GOD BLESSES US WHEN WE
SIMPLY TRUST IN HIM FOR HIS BLESSINGS.

THE LONGER WE LIVE,
THE MORE WE REALIZE HOW UNDESERVING
AND UNWORTHY WE ARE OF GOD'S TOUCH.
HE WANTS TO BLESS US NOT BECAUSE
WE ARE GOOD AND HOLY AND PURE,
BUT BECAUSE THAT IS HIS NATURE.



HE ENJOYS BLESSING HIS CHILDREN!



GOD ALWAYS LOVES US!

HIS LOVE FOR US DOESN'T CHANGE
FROM DAY TO DAY.


HE DOESN'T LOVE US MORE TODAY
THAN HE LOVED US YESTERDAY.

GOD'S LOVE ISN'T LIKE THAT.

GOD'S LOVE FOR US IS CONSTANT;

IT NEVER VARIES!

HIS LOVE FOR US IS NOT PREDICATED UPON US;
IT IS PREDICATED ON HIM
AND ON HIS NATURE OF LOVE.

L  **K** up 1 CORINTHIANS 13 and read it to see how God loves us.

GOD IS LOVE.

He loves you and He keeps loving you
even when you are a rank sinner.

even when you were rebelling against Him,
shaking your fist in His face and saying,
"I hate you, God!" He loved you then.


And He loves you now.

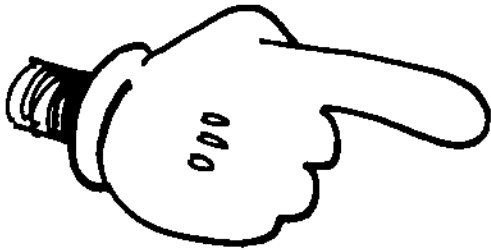


**BECAUSE GOD LOVES US,
HE WANTS TO BLESS US.
HIS BLESSINGS ARE NOT DEPENDENT UPON
OUR GOODNESS, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,
OR OUR FAITHFULNESS.**

**THE BLESSINGS OF GOD DEPEND
SOLELY UPON HIS DESIRE TO BLESS US.
OUR PART IS SIMPLY TO
RECEIVE AND BELIEVE HIM FOR HIS BLESSINGS.**

BLESSINGS!

L  **K up GALATIANS 3:2 & read what Paul says about receiving the Spirit. WRITE IT DOWN:** _____



**DID YOU BECOME SO RIGHTEOUS
THAT GOD FINALLY DECIDED,
"WELL, HE IS RIGHTEOUS ENOUGH NOW,
SO I GUESS I WILL HAVE TO FILL HIM?"
NO!**

**WE ARE NO MORE RIGHTEOUS NOW THAN
THE FIRST DAY WE BELIEVED.**

**YOU CAN'T IMAGINE THE BLESSING AND POWER
THAT GOD IS EAGER TO IMPART TO YOU
IF YOU WILL JUST BELIEVE AND TRUST HIM FOR IT.
WE ARE SO OFTEN LIKE THE FOOLISH GALATIANS.
WHY WOULD WE BE SO FOOLISH
AS TO RETURN TO A LEGAL RELATIONSHIP
WHEN WE CAN RELATE TO GOD
IN A LOVE RELATIONSHIP?**

DON'T BE A FOOL

**AND DEMAND
WHAT YOU THINK YOU DESERVE,
BECAUSE YOU DESERVE DEATH.
ALL OF US DO, FOR ALL OF US SIN.
GOD WANTS TO BLESS YOU NOW
BECAUSE HE LOVES YOU.
GOD WANTS TO BLESS YOUR LIFE,
AND THE AVENUE TO THAT BLESSING
IS YOUR FAITH.**

"Wrap yourself
with TRUTH."
see verse 14

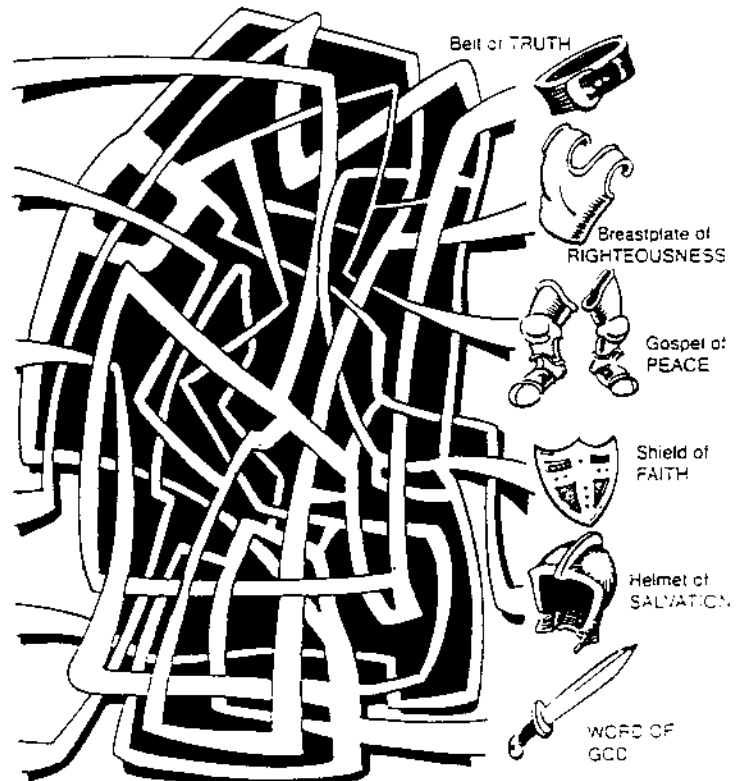
"Put on the
breastplate of
RIGHTEOUSNESS."
verse 14

"Shod your feet
with ... the gospel
of PEACE."
verse 15

"Take up the
shield of FAITH."
See verse 16

"Take the helmet
of SALVATION."
verse 17

"Take ... the sword
of the Spirit, which
is the WORD OF
GOD."

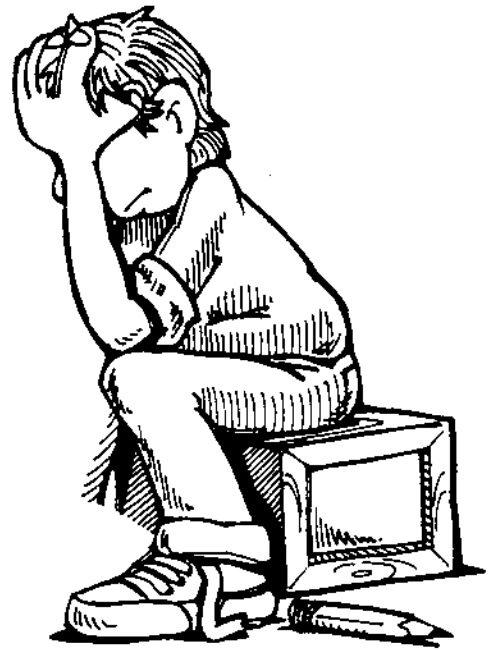


You Can't Mean Me!

Some people may believe that God can't possibly bless them because they have failed Him too much or because they are too weak or because they have done something terribly wrong.

EVEN YOU MAY WONDER,
"HOW CAN GOD BLESS ME WHEN I

_____?"
Write in your problem



**THE PROBLEM IS THAT PEOPLE ARE
LOOKING FOR A BLESSING ON THE BASIS OF
THEIR OWN PERFORMANCE.
THEY ARE TRAPPED
IN THE KIND OF THINKING THAT SAYS,
"WHEN I BECOME SO GOOD AND SO PERFECT,
THEN HE CAN BLESS ME."
BUT THAT IS SO MISGUIDED!**

**WE MUST GET IT INTO OUR HEADS THAT
GOD WANTS TO FILL OUR LIVES
WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT
THE MOMENT WE SAY,
"LORD, I REALLY DESIRE TO HAVE THIS POWER
AND I ASK YOU TO FILL ME."**

**IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT AT PRECISELY THIS POINT,
SPIRITUAL WARFARE ERUPTS.
WHEN YOU PRAY FOR GOD'S FILLING,
INSTANTLY SATAN WILL BEGIN TO THROW
ALL KINDS OF LIES AND ACCUSATIONS INTO YOUR MIND.**

HE WILL DISTRACT YOU.

HE WILL MAKE YOU FEEL GUILTY OR UNWORTHY.

**"WHAT ARE YOU DOING,
ASKING GOD FOR THAT?" HE'LL SNEER.
"YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT! LOOK AT WHAT YOU ARE.
LOOK AT WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.
HOW COULD GOD POSSIBLY FILL YOU WITH HIS HOLY SPIRIT?"**



WHAT A TRAGEDY!

I KNOW I DON'T DESERVE THE BLESSINGS OF GOD,
BUT GOD DOESN'T BLESS ME BECAUSE I DESERVE IT.
GOD BLESSES ME ON THE BASIS OF
HIS LOVE TOWARD ME
AND OF HIS GRACE TOWARD ME IN CHRIST JESUS.

THAT IS THE BASIS OF THE BLESSING -
NOT MY GOODNESS, NOT MY RIGHTEOUSNESS,
AND NOT MY PERFECTION.
IF WE COULD JUST GET THIS
THROUGH OUR TENDER SKULLS,
WE'D START BEING BLESSED
LIKE WE CAN'T IMAGINE!



MORE BLESSINGS?


The blessings are there.
God wants to bless you.
All you have to do is simply
believe Him to bless you,
though you know full well
you don't deserve it.
THE BLESSINGS...
don't come because of your works,
they come because of your belief -
because you trust and believe
God will bless you.

GOD WANTS TO BLESS HIS PEOPLE TODAY.

L  K up & and read 2 CHRONICLES 16:9

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

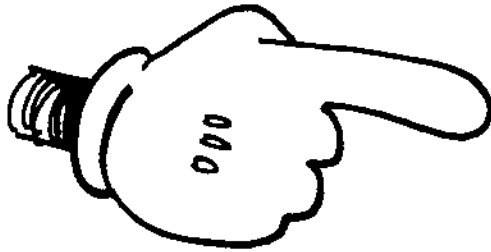
JUST TURN YOUR HEART TOWARD GOD, BELIEVE IN HIS WORD,
AND TRUST THAT HE WILL DO AS HE PROMISES.
SAY, "LORD, BLESS ME NOW." AND RECEIVE IT.

L  K up & and read JEREMIAH 29:11-13

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

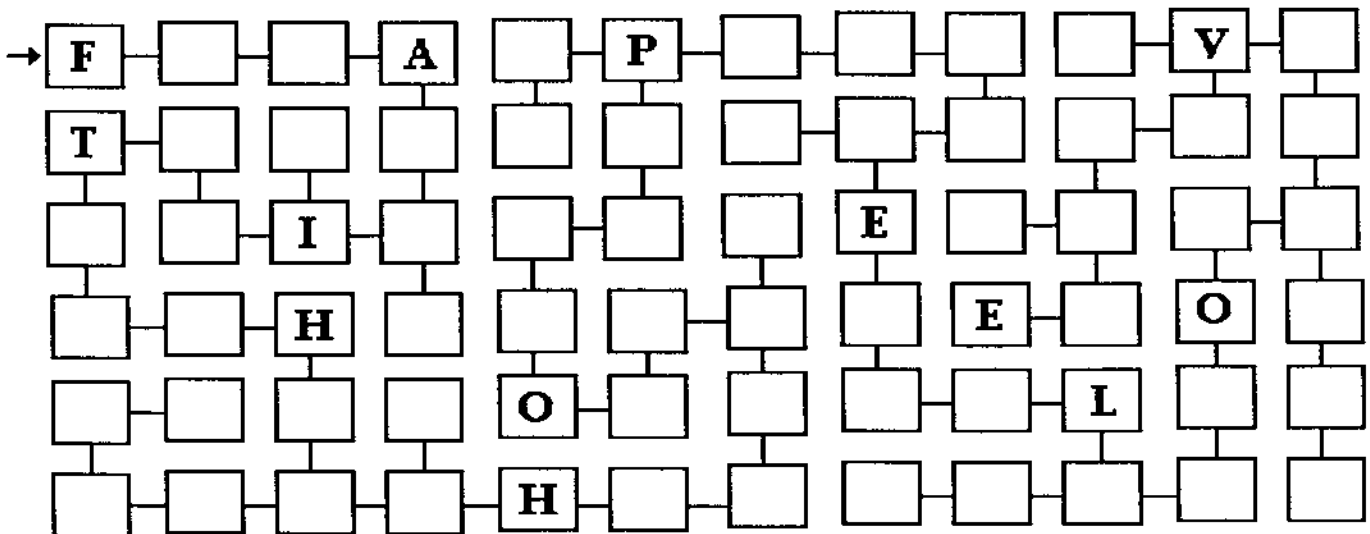
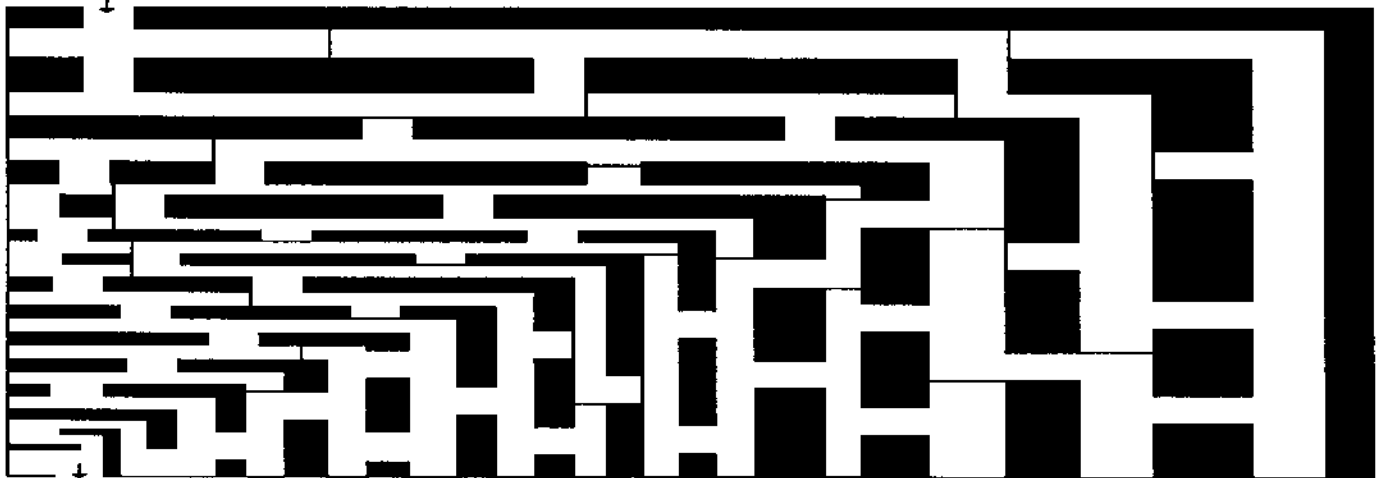
**IT IS SO HARD FOR US
TO REPUDIATE THE IDEA
OF DESERVING A BLESSING.**

**SIMPLY TO BELIEVE
AND EXPECT GOD TO BLESS US -
THOUGH WE HAVE BEEN FAILURES
AND DON'T DESERVE IT -
IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR US.**



**BUT WHEN WE FINALLY
GET OVER THAT BARRIER
AND COME TO EXPECT GOD TO BLESS US
SIMPLY BECAUSE
HE HAS PROMISED TO BLESS US,
THERE IS NOTHING
THAT CAN STOP HIS BLESSINGS
FROM TOUCHING OUR LIVES!**

AMAZING BLESSINGS



U P N D R Q Q Z A V G G R Z U C R A K Z I S I V K V O S L K
 D M W Y E Y Z K N X E N C Y D H Y X F V J N P Y I W O R K S
 W N T H U E U K H S U G M N S U Y V K F J C G Y J I P L R G
 R R I U W L A Q T V W Z L J J E D Q S R Y Z C R E F F C R X
 K X W Q J N N J I M D J B T H C J D M E T X J T F R D Y E Q
 H D P S N V M B A A W P X P Q N I V O K C R N E S N H D V L
 D C P S S Q G B F Z Y N A L O Q P S A K H A H N O T D T U J
 P U W I Z T F R R S P U C J E L T M T Y G P R U A Y F L V V
 T G Q L D L U O H S Z O W C W K V C M R F J E G G M W V P U
 B D T S K A H B P H W F J V E D R Z Z G Y P D S Q Z Y P I X
 H T A J B Q A K I M B L U T B D F L J I Q Q B S F U S T R E
 R A U F Z F W E Q X M L K W K O E U S K D X Y F H I K J F A
 U S U F F H X F D S W M O H S K J T M U C Q K J W K T I V F
 I T H O H P P J J V U S I P U Y O M X A M F K S U N E P Q I
 W O E P N J E T Q O F Z T J H Q O O P V P G J G I M F K X M
 V T R E G T S E R J I F E H P K U U C X O A M R K C Y D I I
 B W S N A I S E H P E P J Q E L G E R O E M V A E D R A P O
 M F J O X B G J I J X G K O V W F M D S A M W S Y N N Y O Q
 C A S O G I D Z L E G K K A A K K X T U E A Z F B Y L S R H
 B M T C R A E Z S G Y B P W R I D N X V Y L F N T J M G A U
 H F A F Q M P K I A P U Z V L J B O X Z U O V T I D A M V N
 P H Z K I X Z F T W Y K Y M W S K B G A H K I E O V X X K H
 D K S B P T T C F L B C Y F J U K U E U A C Z Q S C T T R P
 E N D Y H Y C T A Z D U O S U E A L D O G Y T C W U O L W U
 B T H R O U G H Y X A S J B O A T P I E E U M D A A N A Y Y
 C C J N Z L C I Y N A M F O E V W M K F C D G Y E U K B B N
 P U Q M I I Q O Y V R D A A P D L C X P N Y G R P T V H G M
 O Q I H V O I O E P C L H S T Q A C P T A G R Q Q E E P P H
 G D K L V V N D O J G S A T C E P V P O I T H T T K F U F B
 U C T D B E W T F H R V H W S N P Z U N Z I U B F O G V Q Y

FIND THE UNDERLINED WORDS:

*"For by grace you have been
 saved through faith, and not of yourselves
 it is the gift of God, not of works,
 lest anyone should boast."*

Ephesians 2:8-9



THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY!

The Struggle Begins

THE FLESH

**IS A TERRIBLY STRONG ENEMY.
SOME CHRISTIANS FIGHT
A LOSING BATTLE WITH THEIR FLESH
THEIR ENTIRE WALK WITH THE LORD.
THEY FEEL LIKE THE ISRAELITES,
WHO PERISHED IN THE WILDERNESS
WITHOUT EVER ENTERING INTO GOD'S REST.**

**WHY DO SUCH BELIEVERS NEVER ENJOY GOD'S VICTORY?
IT'S SIMPLE: THEY SPEND ALL THEIR EFFORT AND ENERGY
TRYING TO LIVE A GODLY LIFE IN THEIR OWN STRENGTH.**

**INSTEAD OF TURNING THEIR LIVES
AND STRUGGLES OVER TO GOD,
THEY KEEP SEARCHING
FOR SOME NEW TECHNIQUE, SOME NEW METHOD,
SOME NEW PROGRAM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
AND NONE OF THEM EVER WORK!**



**AS LONG AS ANY OF US TRY
TO DELIVER OURSELVES FROM
"THE BODY OF THIS DEATH"
BY DESPERATELY SEARCHING
FOR ANOTHER PROGRAM OR A FORMULA
TO GUIDE OUR EFFORTS, WE WILL FAIL.**

**OUR HELP DOESN'T COME UNTIL
WE REALIZE THE ANSWER IS FAR BEYOND
OUR OWN RESOURCES. AMAZINGLY,
CRYING OUT TO GOD IN WEAKNESS
IS THE SECRET TO OUR DELIVERANCE.**

Not Another Self-Improvement Program

**BUT THE SAD FACT IS
THAT AS LONG AS WE THINK
WE CAN CHANGE OUR OWN LIVES
BY OUR OWN POWER, WE NEVER WILL.**

**ONE OF THE GREATEST BARRIERS
TO GROWTH IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
IS THE NOTION THAT WE CAN LIVE A LIFE
THAT PLEASURES GOD BY OUR OWN EFFORTS.**





ONLY WHEN WE ADMIT OUR POWERLESSNESS,
WE FIND HOPE.

WHEN WE FINALLY TURN TO THE GRACE OF GOD,
THE LORD INTERVENES AND BEGINS TO DO A
WORK THAT WE COULD NOT DO FOR OURSELVES.

IT IS NOT UNTIL WE FIND OURSELVES
DRIVEN BY DESPERATION
TO A CRY OF HELPLESSNESS AND HOPELESSNESS
THAT WE BEGIN TO ENJOY

REAL VICTORY IN CHRIST!

WE ARE IN A FIGHT!

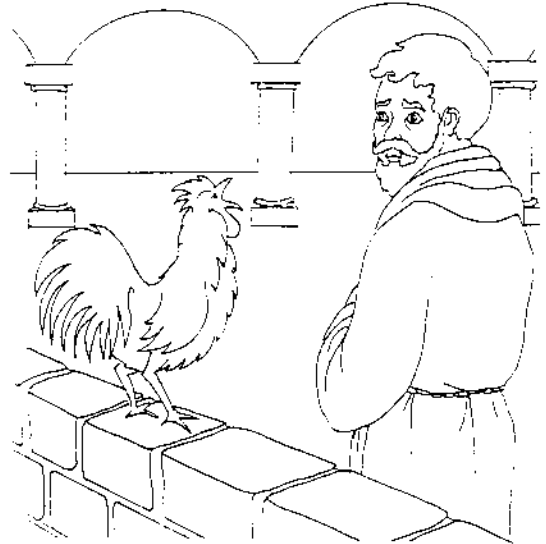
WHO CAN DENY
THERE IS A FEROCIOUS BATTLE
GOING ON INSIDE EACH OF US?



LOOK up GALATIANS 5:17 and read what the apostle Paul tells us.

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

PETER KNEW ALL ABOUT THIS STRUGGLE.
AT ONE TIME
THE BURLY FISHERMAN BOASTED TO JESUS
THAT EVEN IF ALL THE OTHER DISCIPLES FLED,
HE WOULD NOT.
YET BEFORE THE NIGHT WAS OUT
HE DENIED HIS LORD THREE TIMES.
JESUS HAD BEEN RIGHT ALL ALONG:
**THE SPIRIT IS WILLING,
BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK.**



LOOK up & read MARK 14:26-31, 66-72

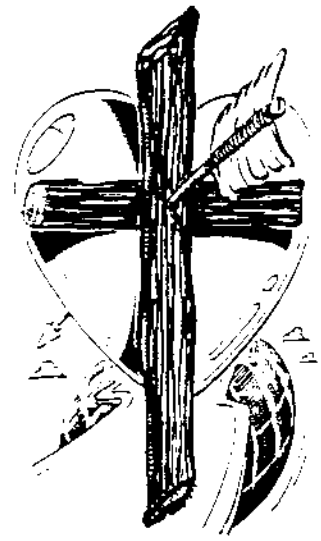
We cannot know God's victory until we realize a war for control is constantly being waged within our members between the Holy Spirit and our flesh. Our flesh is not yet dead. Although we began to taste and enjoy the benefits of the Spirit when we committed our lives to Christ and although the fleshly nature was taken off the throne of our lives, the battle is not yet over. Before our conversion the flesh enjoyed dominating and controlling our lives, and until our bodies are in heaven, it will never give up its struggle to bring us back under its power.

The Master's Battle Plan

AT THIS POINT THE QUESTION ARISES,
SO, THEN, WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THE FLESH?
GOD HAS MADE A PROVISION FOR THE FLESH.

HE CALLS IT **"THE CROSS."**

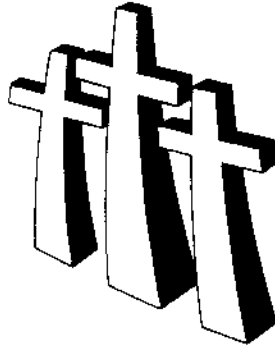
DON'T TRY TO REDEEM THE FLESH OR DRESS IT UP.
IT MUST BE CRUCIFIED!



L  **K** up and read ROMANS 6:6 WRITE IT DOWN: _____

What should we do with our flesh?

- TRY TO CHANGE IT
- FEED IT
- MAKE IT LOOK BETTER
- FORGET ABOUT IT
- CRUCIFY IT



WHENEVER WE ENCOUNTER AN AREA
OF THE FLESH THAT STILL CONTROLS US,
WE NEED TO HONESTLY ACKNOWLEDGE
THAT THE BATTLE OF
THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT REMAINS IN US.
WE NEED THEN TO BRING THE SPECIFIC
AREA OF WEAKNESS TO THE CROSS
AND RECKON IT CRUCIFIED.

YET THAT'S ONLY THE FIRST STEP!

THE BIBLICAL PRESCRIPTION
FOR RESOLVING THE CONFLICT
BETWEEN FLESH AND SPIRIT
IS NOT PERSONAL DISCIPLINE OR SELF-CONTROL.
POWER OVER THE FLESH COMES ONLY
THROUGH A SPIRIT-CONTROLLED LIFE.

ALTHOUGH THE CONFLICT WILL BE WITH US
FOR AS LONG AS WE LIVE IN THESE BODIES,
GOD PROVIDES
US WITH THE RESOURCES FOR SPIRITUAL VICTORY.
WHEN WE ALLOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD
TO TAKE OVER AND WORK STRONGLY IN OUR LIVES,
WE CAN TRIUMPH OVER OUR FALLEN NATURE.

**GOD WILL
DRIVE**

WHEN JESUS AWAKENS OUR SPIRIT,
HE ALSO GIVES US A NEW SET OF DESIRES.
WE BEGIN TO LONG
FOR INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD,
A DEEPER KNOWLEDGE
AND COMPREHENSION OF HIS WORD,
AND CLOSER COMMUNION WITH OTHERS
WHO ARE ALIVE IN CHRIST JESUS.

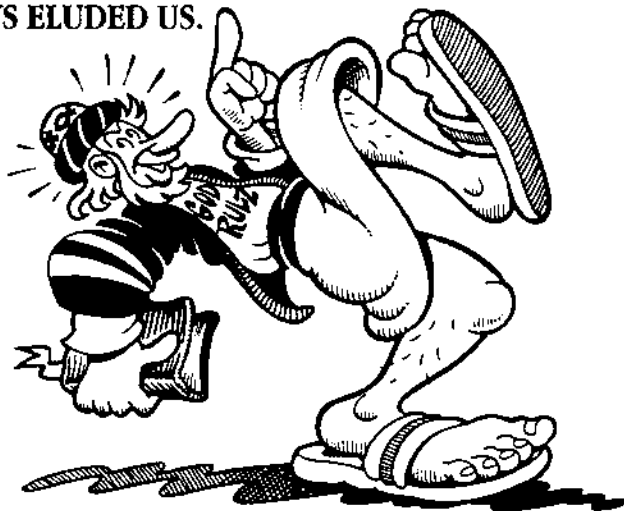


L  **K** up and read 1 JOHN 1:3 WRITE IT DOWN: _____



WE NO LONGER DESIRE TO LIVE AFTER THE FLESH
BECAUSE WE HAVE COME TO REALIZE
THAT THE END OF SUCH THINGS
IS FRUSTRATION AND DEATH.

LIVING FOR THE FLESH ALWAYS COMPELLED US
TO REACH OUT FOR SOMETHING MORE,
SOMETHING JUST BEYOND OUR GRASP,
SOMETHING THAT WOULD FINALLY BRING
A SENSE OF LASTING SATISFACTION.
YET THE PROMISED FULFILLMENT
ALWAYS ELUDED US.



AS WE LIVE AFTER THE SPIRIT,
HOWEVER, WE DISCOVER A PEACE
THE WORLD CAN'T UNDERSTAND.
THE ENDLESS STRUGGLE -
THE ACHING EMPTINESS - IS GONE
AND WE DISCOVER A WONDERFUL SENSE
OF PURPOSE AND MEANING.

THE FLESH NO LONGER HAS
THE ALLURE IT ONCE DID AND
THE BATTLE INSIDE US IS WON!


L  **K** up and read ISAIAH 26:3 WRITE IT DOWN: _____

No Cause to Boast

ONLY WHEN WE ADMIT THAT WE ARE INCAPABLE OF DELIVERING OURSELVES FROM THE
LAW OF SIN AND DEATH CAN THE DOORS BE OPENED FOR THE GLORIOUS POWER OF GOD
TO WORK WITHIN US AND DO FOR US WHAT WE ARE INCAPABLE OF DOING FOR OURSELVES.

AS THE POWER OF GOD
TRANSFORMS US FROM THE INSIDE OUT,
ALL WE CAN DO IS
GIVE THANKS AND GLORY TO GOD.
WE ARE UNABLE TO SAY TO OTHERS,
"I USED TO BE INVOLVED WITH SIN.
BUT ONE DAY, I DETERMINED
THAT JESUS DIDN'T LIKE IT,
SO I MUSTERED UP
MY WILLPOWER AND DISCIPLINE
AND DECIDED I JUST WOULDN'T
DO THOSE THINGS ANYMORE."
THERE IS NO ROOM FOR BOASTING ABOUT
WHAT FINE, SELF-CONTROLLED PEOPLE WE ARE.

GIVE THANKS!

L  K up and read GALATIANS 6:14 WRITE IT DOWN: _____




WHEN GOD REVEALS TO US AN AREA OF THE FLESH
HE WANTS TO CHANGE,
WE ALWAYS START OUT WITH THE BEST INTENTIONS.
WE SEE THE UGLINESS OF OUR SIN AND VOW
WE WILL NEVER FALL IN THAT MANNER AGAIN.
AND SO WE COME UP WITH VARIOUS DISCIPLINES
AND STRATEGIES TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM.
BUT SOONER OR LATER WE WATCH
AS ALL OUR BEST-LAID PLANS FALL APART.
WE GET SO FRUSTRATED WE CRY OUT, "GOD, HELP!"
AND THEN AMAZINGLY ENOUGH, HE DOES.
**HIS SPIRIT MIRACULOUSLY
BEGINS TO TRANSFORM OUR LIVES.**

As we overflow with gratitude, we see how God's way of transformation is so wonderfully simple and yet much better than our own misguided efforts.

GOD NEVER INTENDED
THAT THE FLESH RULE OVER US,
AND HE HAS PROVIDED THE RESOURCES AND
THE POWER FOR US TO EXPERIENCE VICTORY.
BUT AS LONG AS WE ARE COMMITTED
TO TRYING TO WORK OUT OUR OWN STRUGGLES,
EVEN OUR BEST EFFORTS GET IN THE WAY.
ANY ATTEMPT AT GODLINESS
THAT ARISES FROM OUR OWN STRENGTH
IS A WORK OF THE FLESH
AND IS JUST AS DETESTABLE IN GOD'S SIGHT
AS THE THING WE ARE TRYING NOT TO DO.
WHEN OUR VICTORY COMES FROM GOD'S WORK ALONE,
OUTSIDE OF OUR OWN EFFORTS,
THE END RESULT IS GLORY AND PRAISE UNTO GOD.

IT'S GOD'S WORK!

L  **K** up and read **ISAIAH 40:31** WRITE IT DOWN: _____

IN HIS GRACE, GOD HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO ENJOY CONSISTENT VICTORY. STILL, THIS SIDE OF HEAVEN, THE BATTLE NEVER ENDS.


EACH DAY PRESENTS THE CHOICE WE EACH MUST MAKE. WILL WE LIVE FOR THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH, OR WILL WE YIELD OUR LIVES TO THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD?



VICTORY!

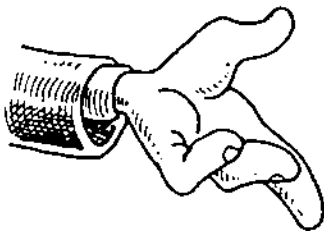
WE CAN NOW HAVE SUCH A WONDERFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAT IT IS NO LONGER WE WHO LIVE, BUT CHRIST LIVES IN US. THE LIFE WE NOW LIVE, WE LIVE BY FAITH IN THE SON OF GOD, WHO LOVED US AND GAVE HIMSELF FOR US.

BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE, EACH OF US ARE NOW A NEW CREATION IN CHRIST JESUS. OLD THINGS ARE PASSED AWAY; EVERYTHING HAS BECOME NEW.

L  **K** up and read **2 CORINTHIANS 5:17**

WHEN WE BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD, THE SPIRITUAL SIDE OF US COMES ALIVE!

WE SUDDENLY REALIZE THAT THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN OBEYING THE INSTINCTS OF THE FLESH. WE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE INNER HUNGER WHICH OUR FLESH COULD NEVER SATISFY CAN BE FULFILLED IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. THE MORE WE COME TO KNOW GOD, THE MORE WE EXPERIENCE HIS PEACE AND JOY AND DISCOVER THAT THE LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WE ENCOUNTER IN THE SPIRIT IS LIMITLESSLY BEYOND THE NARROW SPECTRUM OF THE FLESH.



KNOW GOD!

HOW BEAUTIFUL IT IS WHEN WE LET GO OF OUR OWN FUTILE EFFORTS AND ALLOW THE SPIRIT TO WORK! FOR HIS VICTORY COMES FROM THE INSIDE OUT, NOT THE OUTSIDE IN. AND THAT'S THE KIND OF VICTORY THAT LASTS!

THURSDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY!

Free Indeed!

BEFORE WE CAME TO CHRIST,
ALL OF US WERE CHILDREN OF WRATH
AND OUR WHOLE MANNER OF LIFE
WAS SPENT TRYING TO FULFILL
THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH AND MIND.



NO FREEDOM HERE

THERE IS NO FREEDOM TO BE FOUND
IN SUCH A DREADFUL CONDITION.



WHAT A CONTRAST
TO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY
WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN IN CHRIST JESUS!

AS CHRISTIANS,
WE RECEIVE GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS,
AND HAVE BEEN GRANTED FREEDOM
FROM BEING SLAVES OF OUR FLESH.

WE HAVE BEEN GRANTED THE CAPACITY
TO TURN FROM SIN
TO SERVE AND WORSHIP GOD.

WE ARE FREE IN CHRIST!

PAUL INSISTED

THAT WHILE ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL FOR US,
"ALL THINGS ARE NOT EXPEDIENT."
THAT IS, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE
AREAS OF FREEDOM WE COULD PURSUE
THAT WOULDN'T PUT OUR SALVATION IN JEOPARDY,
THEY WOULD IMPEDE
OUR PROGRESS IN OUR WALK WITH GOD.

WE ARE TO AVOID AREAS
THAT WOULD DISTRACT US
FROM A SIMPLE, WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION TO GOD.

1 Corinthians 6:12

Freedom Badly Used

So many times people misunderstand Christian liberty, thinking that freedom in Christ means they can freely commit all kinds of sin. They use their freedom as an occasion for the flesh. This is totally against what Scripture teaches about Christian liberty. Our liberty is never a freedom to sin freely; it is never a license to sin.

What are some of the ways we as Christians can misuse our liberty in Christ?

Romans

6:1-2

WE MUST REMEMBER

THAT WE ALSO HAVE FREEDOM NOT TO DO SO.
WE SHOULD NEVER USE OUR FREEDOM
AS AN OCCASION FOR OUR FLESH -
TO YIELD TO ITS IMPULSES.


L  **K** up HEBREWS 12:1-2 WRITE IT DOWN: _____

Freedom to Serve

HONOR GOD

HOW SHOULD WE USE OUR FREEDOM IN CHRIST?
HOW CAN WE USE OUR FREEDOM
IN A WAY THAT HONORS GOD
AND HELPS US TO GROW IN GRACE?

PAUL HAD THE ANSWER IN GALATIANS 5:13.
HE SAID WE SHOULD USE OUR FREEDOM
TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE.

L  **K** up and read GALATIANS 5:13

SCRIPTURE CONSTANTLY REMINDS US

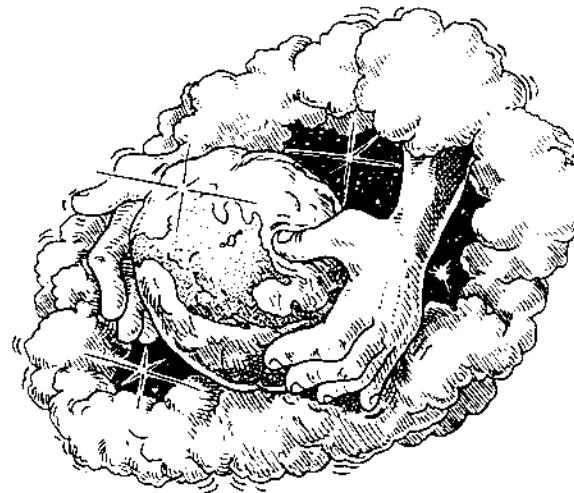
OF THE HIGH VALUE GOD PLACES ON BEING A HUMBLE SERVANT.
OVER AND OVER, THE BIBLE REMINDS US THAT IF WE WANT
TO BE REALLY GREAT IN GOD'S KINGDOM,
WE MUST SERVE.

JESUS MADE A MAGNIFICENT STATEMENT TO HIS DISCIPLES
AT THE BEGINNING OF WHAT WE CALL THE GREAT COMMISSION.
HE SAID, ALL POWER IS GIVEN UNTO ME
IN HEAVEN AND IN EARTH" (MATTHEW 28:18).

CAN YOU IMAGINE

HOW MUCH POWER THAT MUST BE?

ALL THE POWER OF THE UNIVERSE WAS GIVEN TO HIM.
THE SAME POWER THAT LIT THE FIRES OF THE STARS
AND HOLDS EVERY ATOM TOGETHER BELONGS TO JESUS.



AND WHAT DID HE DO WITH THIS POWER?

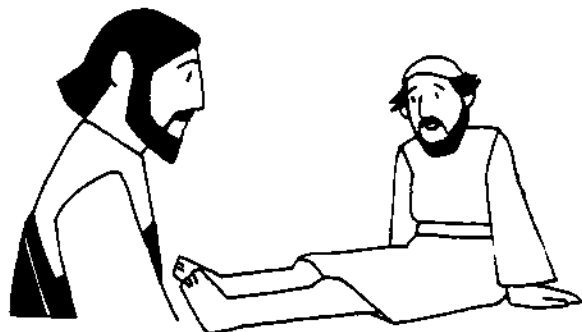
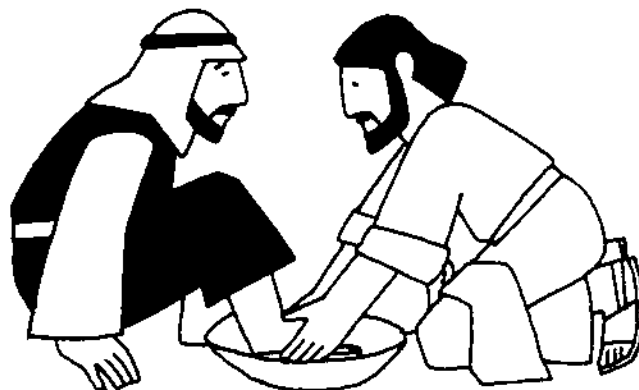
SHAKE THE UNIVERSE?

SPIN OUT A FEW NEW GALAXIES? NO.

HE TOOK OFF HIS ROBE,
GIRDING HIMSELF ABOUT AS A SERVANT,
AND WASHED HIS DISCIPLES' FEET.

AFTER HE HAD WASHED
THE LAST DIRTY ANKLES AND TOES,
HE ASKED HIS MEN, IN EFFECT,
"DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE DONE?
I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE.

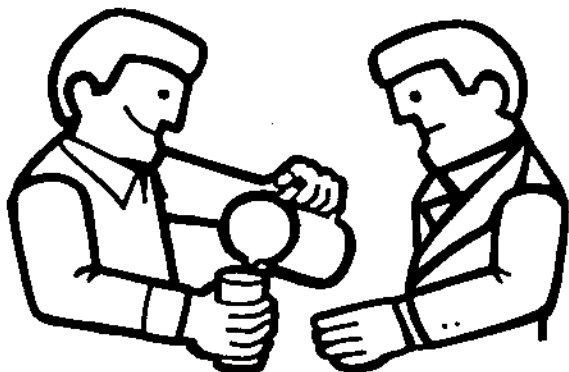
FOR IF I, BEING YOUR LORD, HAVE SERVED YOU,
THEN SO ALSO OUGHT YOU TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER."



WHAT IF RIGHT NOW YOU COULD SAY,
"ALL POWER IN THE UNIVERSE IS MINE"?
WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH SUCH POWER?
JESUS TOOK A TOWEL AND A BASIN OF WATER
AND WASHED THE FILTHY FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES.
ALL POWER IN THE UNIVERSE WAS HIS -
AND WHAT DID HE DO WITH IT?
HE WASHED THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

THERE ARE VERY FEW OF US WHO WANT TO SERVE.
INSTEAD, WE LOVE TO GIVE ORDERS AND BE WAITED ON.
"GO GET ME THAT!" "HAND THAT TOOL TO ME."
"I NEED YOU TO GO."

HOW WE LOVE TO GIVE ORDERS,
AND HOW WE GET UPSET
WHEN THE ORDERS AREN'T FULFILLED!
WE GET HURT, WE POUT.
WE ENJOY RULING OTHERS...
BUT GOD'S GREATEST BLESSINGS
ARE NOT TO BE FOUND THERE.
WE HAVE BEEN SET FREE
NOT TO BOSS OTHERS AROUND,
BUT TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE.



WITHOUT QUESTION,
THIS BLESSING REQUIRES A WORK
OF GOD'S SPIRIT WITHIN OUR HEARTS.
MY FLESH CERTAINLY REBELS AT THE IDEA
OF SERVING SOMEONE ELSE IN LOVE.
OFTEN MY IMMEDIATE REACTION
TO EVEN THE SIMPLEST REQUEST IS,
"IF YOU WANT A GLASS OF WATER,
GO GET IT YOURSELF!
WHO WAS YOUR SLAVE YESTERDAY?"

MY FLESH LOVES TO BE SERVED.
BUT I HAVE BEEN SET FREE
FROM BONDAGE TO MY FLESH
AND NOW I CAN SERVE OTHERS IN LOVE.
WHAT A JOY IT IS TO SERVE IN LOVE.
ALL OF THE LAW IS SUMMED UP IN ONE PHRASE:

Jesus
Others
YOU

LOOK up and read MATTHEW 22:37-39 WRITE IT DOWN: _____

Freedom to Love



TWO HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE JESUS, BUDDHA SAID, "DON'T DO TO OTHERS WHAT YOU DON'T WANT THEM TO DO TO YOU." NOTICE HE PUT IT IN THE NEGATIVE. IF YOU DON'T WANT SOMEONE TO BUST YOU IN THE NOSE, THEN DON'T BUST HIM IN THE NOSE. IT IS A NEGATIVE INJUNCTION.

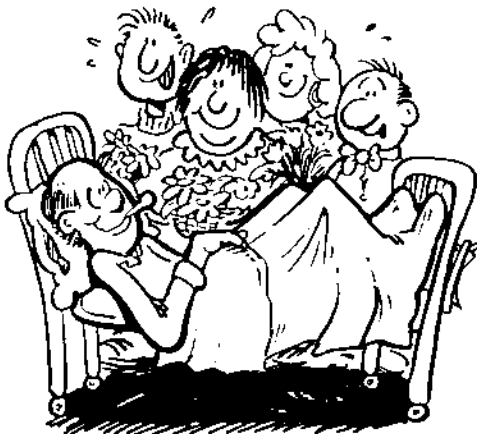
The golden rule isn't merely avoiding wrong; it's actively seeking out practical ways to express love.

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THEY ARE RIGHTEOUS BECAUSE OF WHAT THEY DON'T DO. "WELL," THEY MAY SAY, "I DON'T HURT ANYBODY. I'VE NEVER KILLED ANYONE."



LOOK up and read what Jesus said in LUKE 6:31

WRITE IT DOWN: _____



EVEN AS I WOULD LIKE TO BE SERVED,
I SHOULD SERVE.

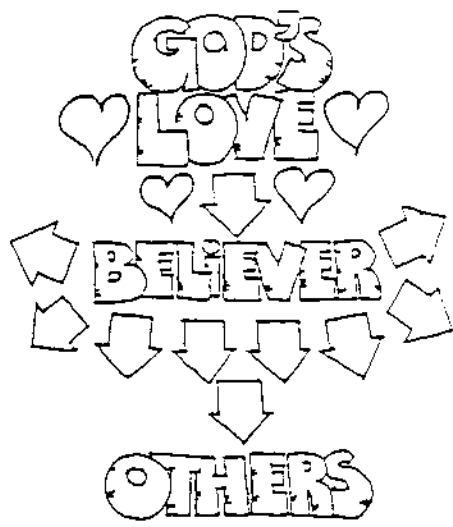
EVEN AS I WOULD LIKE TO BE LOVED,
I SHOULD LOVE.

EVEN AS I WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE GIFTS,
I SHOULD GIVE.

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES
MEANS TAKING THE INITIATIVE
TO DO FOR OTHERS IN A
CREATIVE, ACTIVE, AND JOYFUL MANNER.

AGAIN...

*The golden rule isn't
merely avoiding wrong;
it's actively seeking out
practical ways to express love.*



LOVE

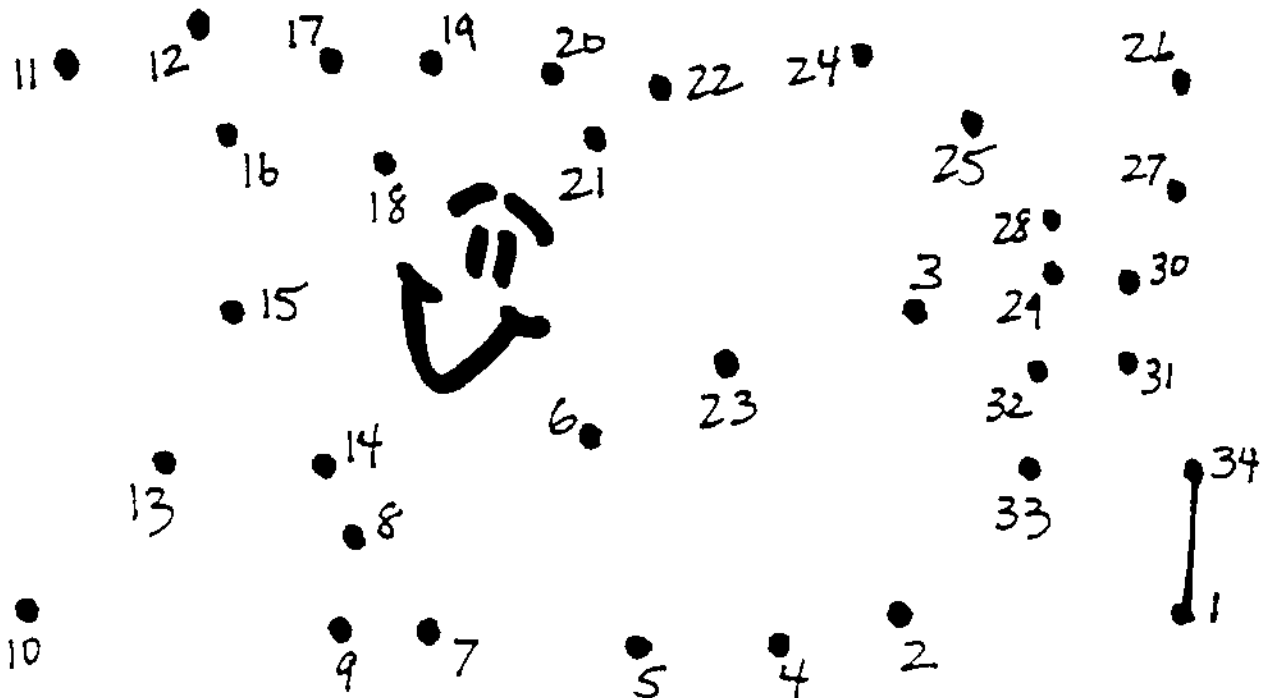
JESUS SAYS WE FULFILL THE LAW

**FIRST BY LOVING GOD
THEN BY LOVING OTHERS**

AND TREATING THEM
AS WE WOULD LIKE TO BE TREATED.

*May the Lord help you to freely love, to freely serve, and to freely
seek the best interests of one another.*

Why don't you pray now, and ask the Lord to help you to love God
and to love your neighbor as yourself?



THURSDAY BONUS PAGE!

M E Y Z C G K D L P G L L L H S J P H C C C F F G F I P S M
 N D F W F B C V Z C B I C Z O B G L R F N Z G O B N U W R V
 F P G Y T V P D D A W Z F X U G P K K V G R J N I V F R H Z
 X L S S U H T G N E R T S I C E B N L L A H S T D G R M Z A
 D T Y O F L E S R U O Y S P L Q N D X V S K Q U T E G O W V
 R V U H U S R S N I A K Y V R A Z E T I O V N Y N D X D Q G
 O O K D B S H U O U X K A U I O R N W V H X N G M O K D I D
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 U E W Z W E Y X T E M Y M O O Q Q Q B M J R E F D E X H Q O
 F F L K A R L W F O E A F Q H X F S I B X I O X O V A S Z R
 W E S T P G P D C J N Y Q G N O B Y C F F H X N O J L A Y W
 H M E L L G Z W U D W F P J N Q O U R U Y C N I Y B I Q D Z
 T R R Z P S G G M C D H U Y J W N V W V L J A S A L U Y P S
 H A R B B S E E L V N K T S G E I Q Z C O B W B U L W J G W
 M Z G H C K N R M K E B M T L Y R T Z K J C Z O Y L M O Q H
 Z A Z U N T X V T R A E H C D V T B K P I Y S M Q S D G H C
 L R E A X Q R M B Y T A W T K L U G N S E V O L W N J L X R
 H R F H E D J Y E V W E Z A Z K Q M W I G C X I Y X D P R Y
 G W O Q W N R K O M L W F U Z S P V R R D F N Q F B B J C E
 O B L W G R U Y B U M Z M I N F H O D W H I H Y S S R I K V
 H Q I Y V R O L U F I L K Y Q H H I S K P Z F M Y T J I U A
 Y Q F I I P Y A M J N K F W P X F T E C Z F S P B P E C E F
 C K K U J M B T H A D L U A M M F Q A H A S P S F Y Z U A X
 W M H I J C Y M J H M L E Q O P E Q W K G T N B Y Y G K G E
 E G L B X A J P M B N V E Q Q G Q K N L C G K T Q Q C K T V

COMMANDMENT

GOD

LORD

NEIGHBOR

STRENGTH

YOU

COMMANDMENT

GREATER

LOVE

SHALL

YOURSELF

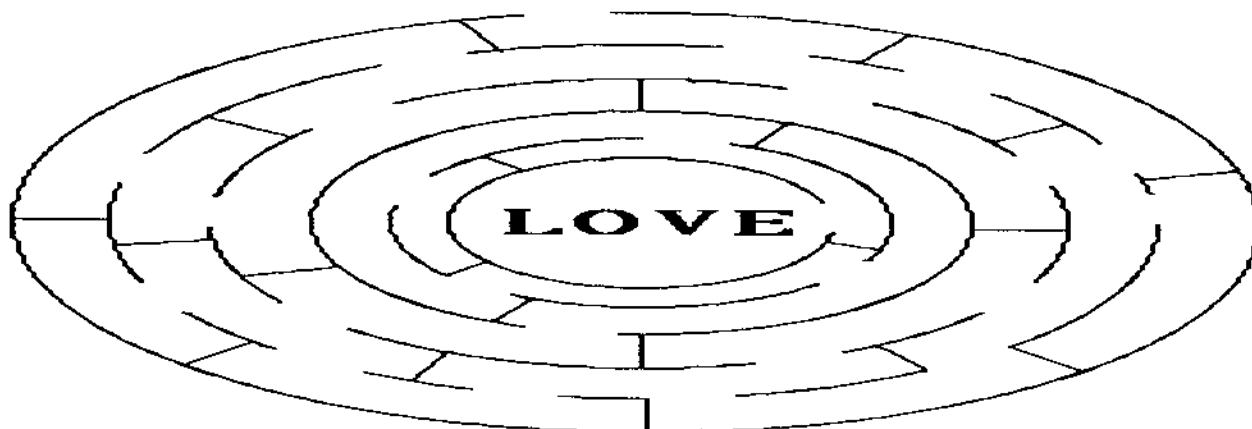
FIRST

HEART

MIND

SOUL

YOUR



FRIDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY!

You're Dead!


IN ROMANS 5,
PAUL LAYS OUT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
THROUGH GRACE IN STRONG, GLORIOUS TERMS.

IN VERSE 20 HE STATES,
"WHERE SIN ABOUNDED,
GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND."

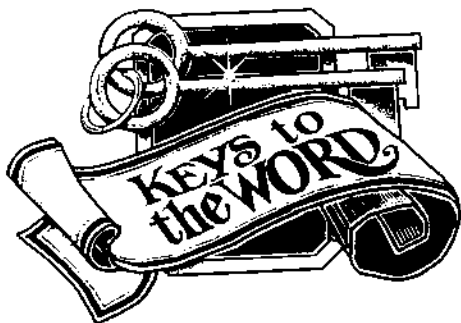
IN THE FIRST VERSE
OF THE NEXT CHAPTER
HE IMAGINES SOME PEOPLE SAYING,
"WELL, THEN, LET'S GO OUT
AND DO A LOT OF SINNING
SO THAT GRACE MIGHT MUCH MORE ABOUND.
THE ABOUNDING GRACE OF GOD IS WONDERFUL.
LET'S GIVE IT A CHANCE TO REALLY ABOUND."

Romans

PAUL ANSWERS, IN EFFECT, "PERISH THE THOUGHT! HOW CAN WE WHO ARE DEAD TO SIN
LIVE ANY LONGER THEREIN?"

L  K up and read ROMANS 6:2

HIS ANSWER CONTAINS AN IMPORTANT KEY TO THE CHRISTIAN WALK AND EXPERIENCE!



THE DEMANDS OF THE LAW WERE FULFILLED
WHEN WE BECAME CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST.

THE OLD ME AND YOU WERE CRUCIFIED.

SO IF THE OLD SELF IS DEAD,
THEN HOW CAN WE
BE LIVING ANY LONGER IN SIN?
WE ARE DEAD TO THAT OLD LIFE.


L  K up and read GALATIANS 2:20

WRITE IT DOWN: _____

*We don't live an old selfish life anymore. Now we walk after God by
trusting in Jesus!*

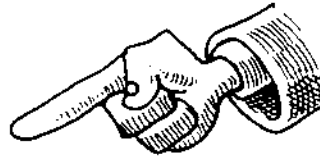
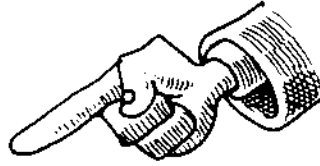
If You're Dead, Act Like It

**A PERSON WHO HAS BEEN
BORN OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD
WILL MANIFEST IT IN HIS LIFESTYLE.**

L  **K up and read what Jesus says in LUKE 6:46-49**

**THE APOSTLE JOHN WROTE TWICE
IN THE SAME LETTER
THAT WHOEVER IS BORN OF GOD
CANNOT PRACTICE SIN.**

L  **K up and read 1 JOHN 3:9; 5:18**



Love God and Do What You Will



**THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINS ME
TO LIVE A LIFE THAT PLEASES HIM.**

**HAVING TASTED THE GOODNESS OF HIS LOVE,
I DON'T WANT TO WALK AWAY FROM HIM.**

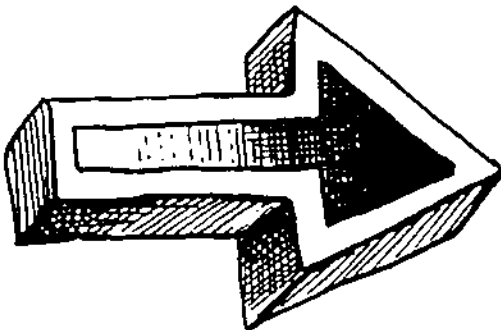
**I WANT TO DRAW AS CLOSE TO JESUS AS POSSIBLE
BECAUSE I LOVE HIM AND HE LOVES ME.**

**I DON'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN ANYTHING
THAT WOULD DISHONOR HIM.**

**IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD,
NO LONGER DO I DEBATE
WHETHER SOMETHING IS RIGHT OR WRONG.**

**RATHER, I FIND MYSELF ASKING,
"IS THIS PLEASING TO MY FATHER?
I LOVE HIM AND WANT TO PLEASE HIM.
HE LOVES ME SO MUCH
THAT I DON'T WANT TO HURT HIM.
WOULD MY FATHER BE PLEASED IF I DID THIS?"**

**PLEASING
THE
LORD**



**A LOVING RELATIONSHIP
IS WHAT GOD IS SEEKING WITH EACH OF US.
HE DOESN'T WANT TO BIND YOU WITH A LAW.
HE WANTS TO DRAW YOU
WITH HIS LOVE TO HIMSELF.
THIS IS THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S GRACE,
THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH GOD IMPUTED TO US
APART FROM THE LAW.**


A Lingerin Problem

IT IS POSSIBLE FOR US TO KNOW
AND EXPERIENCE THE GRACE OF GOD.
WE CAN LIVE IN THE JOY AND PEACE
OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST
AND THE CONFIDENT ASSURANCE
OF OUR RIGHTEOUS STANDING BEFORE GOD IN HIM.

**THIS CONFIDENCE
COMES THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE
THAT I WAS CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST!**

THE LIFE DOMINATED BY MY FLESH IS DEAD
AND I NOW LIVE A NEW LIFE
DOMINATED BY THE SPIRIT OF JESUS CHRIST.
I HAVE A NEW NATURE,
THE NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST.



L  **K** up and read 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17
WRITE IT DOWN: _____

BUT I STILL HAVE A PROBLEM.

**I AM STILL IN THIS BODY,
AND AS LONG AS I AM IN THIS STATE
I AM SUBJECT TO THE POWERFUL FORCES
OF MY BODILY DRIVES.**

THUS, THERE IS WARFARE GOING ON INSIDE OF ME.

**IT'S CRUCIAL TO REMEMBER THAT
SCRIPTURE MAKES AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION:
MY SPIRIT IS REDEEMED, BUT MY BODY IS NOT.**

THAT CREATES A TREMENDOUS CONFLICT.



L  **K** up and read what Paul says in Romans 8:22-23

**AFTER JESUS HAD PRAYED IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE,
HE CAME TO THE DISCIPLES AND FOUND THEM ASLEEP.**


**HE SAID TO PETER, "SIMON, SLEEPEST THOU?
COULDST NOT THOU WATCH ONE HOUR?
WATCH YE AND PRAY, LEST YE ENTER INTO TEMPTATION.**

**THE SPIRIT TRULY IS READY, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK"
(MARK 14:37-38)**

The flesh is!
WEAK!

NO TRUER WORDS WERE EVER SPOKEN.
MY SPIRIT, INDEED, IS WILLING,
BUT MY FLESH IS WEAK.
WE GROAN AND SAY, "OH GOD,
HURRY THE DAY WHEN YOU WILL DELIVER US
FROM THIS BODY OF CORRUPTION."

**ONE DAY, WE WILL ALL BE LIBERATED
FROM OUR FALLEN NATURE!**

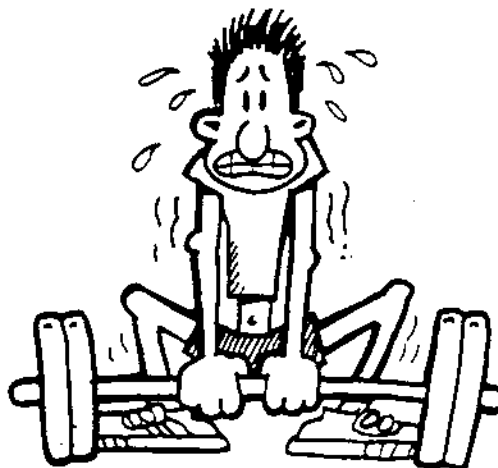
L  **K up and read 1 CORINTHIANS 15:53-57**



NOW, IF YOU ARE CAUGHT OFF GUARD
AND FIND YOURSELF AGAIN YIELDING TO THE FLESH,
DOES THAT MEAN YOU ARE NO LONGER SAVED?
DO YOU HAVE TO GET SAVED ALL OVER AGAIN?

NO.

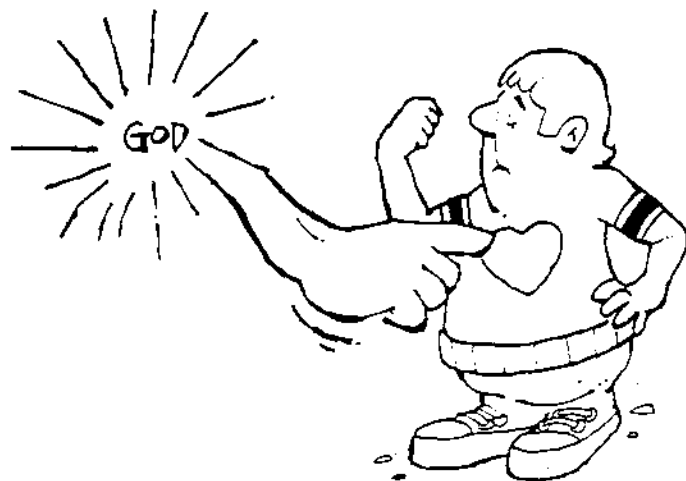
BECAUSE YOU STILL BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST,
BECAUSE YOU STILL LOVE THE LORD,
IT IS STILL YOUR FAITH
THAT IS IMPUTED TO YOU FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
IT IS PRECISELY BECAUSE OF YOUR FAITH
AND YOUR NEW LIFE IN CHRIST
THAT YOU CANNOT GO ON
BEING DOMINATED BY YOUR FLESH.



IN THE MEANTIME, ALL IS NOT LOST.
IN OUR MOMENTS OF WEAKNESS,
THE SPIRIT RAISES UP CONVICTION AND POWER
AND OUR MINDS ARE TURNED TOWARD THE LORD.

WHEN WE SEEK HIS HELP AND HIS STRENGTH,
WE BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE HIS VICTORY.

WE MUST RELY DAILY UPON
THE STRENGTH AND POWER OF JESUS CHRIST
TO LIVE THE LIFE HE WANTS US TO LIVE.



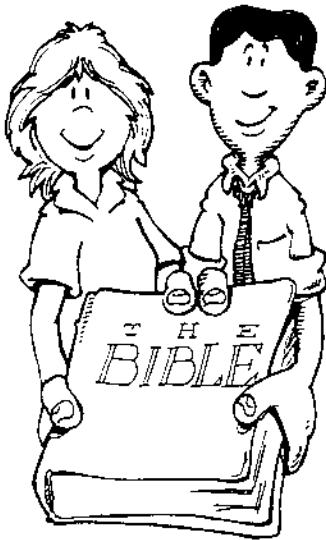
THOUGH WE MAY FALL INTO A PIT FOR A TIME,
WE CAN'T STAY THERE.
GOD WON'T LET US STAY IN THAT STATE.
HE WON'T LET US GET BY WITH SOME OF THE THINGS
THAT WE MIGHT LIKE TO DO
THAT EVERYBODY ELSE IS DOING.
THEY MAY DO IT AND GET BY WITH IT, BUT WE WON'T.
HE WILL SEE TO IT THAT WE WON'T!
IF WE TRY TO FOLLOW WORDLY WAYS AND DO THE THINGS
THAT THE "LIFE IN THE FAST LANE" CROWD DOES,
WE ARE EITHER GOING TO FAIL AT IT,
HATE IT, OR GET CAUGHT.
BECAUSE HE LOVES US AND WE ARE HIS CHILDREN,
WE SIMPLY CAN'T GET BY WITH SIN LIKE THE WORLD DOES.

God loves you.
You are so very dear to Him
that He chose you and called you
to be His eternally.
That is why the grace of God
does not lead to wild living.

**THERE IS INFINITELY MORE JOY
TO BE HAD IN THE SAVIOR THAN IN SIN!**

There
is
JOY!
in
the
LORD!

How Can We Stand Fast?



**THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY FIRM FOUNDATION
FOR OUR FAITH AND CHRISTIAN WALK.**

**WHEN OUR LIVES ARE FOUNDED
ON THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD,
WE WON'T BE CARRIED AWAY
BY THE LATEST DOCTRINAL FAD OR
"NEW AND IMPROVED" VERSION OF THE GOSPEL.**

**HOW IMPORTANT IT IS THAT WE STAND FAST
ON THE TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD!
THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO MAINTAIN
THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY PROVIDED TO US
SO ABUNDANTLY IN CHRIST.**


WE NEED TO HAVE

A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF THE SCRIPTURES TO BRING STABILITY TO OUR LIVES.

It's All or Nothing

**THOSE WHO DEPEND ON THEIR WORKS
FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS
CAN'T ADOPT A PICK-AND-CHOOSE APPROACH.**

**IF WE ACCEPT ONE GOOD WORK
AS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION,
WE BECOME DEBTORS TO THE WHOLE LAW
WE MUST KEEP THE LAW IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

L  K up and read GALATIANS 3:10

L  K up and read JAMES 2:10 WRITE IT DOWN: _____



**READ!
THIS!**

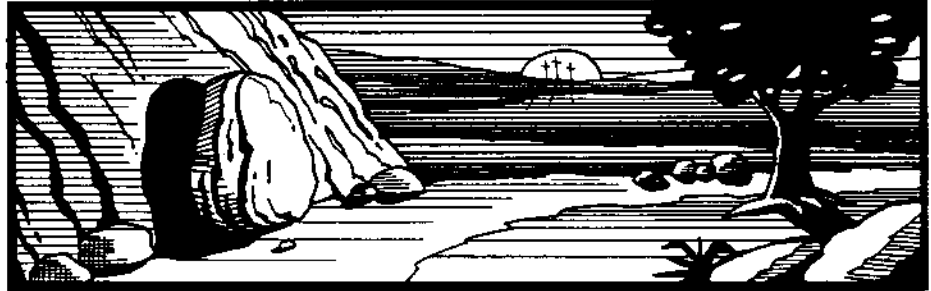


**IT IS HELPFUL TO REMEMBER
THAT NO ONE WILL BE
IN HEAVEN BECAUSE OF HIS GOOD WORKS.**

**WE WILL NOT HAVE TO LISTEN TO
ABRAHAM OR DAVID OR PAUL
TALK ABOUT THE WONDERFUL THINGS THEY DID
TO ACHIEVE A RIGHTEOUS STANDING BEFORE GOD.**

**THESE MEN SIMPLY BELIEVED GOD,
AND THEIR FAITH WAS ACCOUNTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

**NONE OF US WILL STAND IN HEAVEN COMPARING
GOOD WORKS WITH ONE ANOTHER
BECAUSE THERE WILL BE ONLY ONE
WHOSE WORKS WILL BE HONORED
BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD—
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
JESUS AND JESUS ALONE WILL RECEIVE
THE GLORY FOR OUR SALVATION.**



**IF IT WERE NOT FOR HIM,
NONE OF US WOULD GET THERE!**

**LOOK up and read GALATIANS 6:14
WRITE IT DOWN:**



**NO MATTER HOW MANY GOOD DEEDS
WE'VE DONE FOR HIM,
NO MATTER HOW MANY PEOPLE WE LED TO HIM,
OUR GLORY IS IN JESUS CHRIST,
WHO DIED FOR US.
OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT
A QUESTION OF GOOD WORKS, HUMAN EFFORTS,
KEEPING CERTAIN RITUALS OR DIETARY LAWS.**

**OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS BOTH AT THIS MOMENT
AND FOR ALL ETERNITY
IS A RESULT OF OUR SIMPLE FAITH
IN GOD'S SON, JESUS.**

**RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH
REMOVES ALL THE DISTINCTIONS
BETWEEN THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN CHRIST.
WE ARE ALL SINNERS,
SAVED ONLY BY GOD'S GLORIOUS GRACE.
THERE IS NO OTHER WAY
TO RIGHT STANDING BEFORE GOD.
THERE IS ONLY ONE KIND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
THAT GOD WILL ACCEPT:
THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST.**

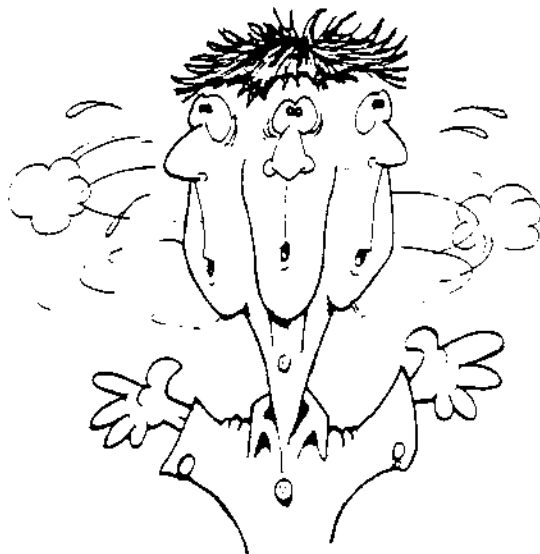


**THIS IS NO SMALL ISSUE FOR US AS BELIEVERS.
WE MUST STAND FAST IN THE LIBERTY
WHEREIN CHRIST HAS MADE US FREE.**

**WE MUST NOT ALLOW CONDEMNING RULES TO COME IN
AND DOMINATE OUR LIVES SO THAT WE FEEL THAT,
UNLESS WE ARE PRAYING SEVEN HOURS A DAY
OR READING 25 CHAPTERS OF SCRIPTURE IN OUR DEVOTIONS,
WE ARE NOT REALLY RIGHTEOUS.**

**OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT DEPENDENT
UPON HOW MUCH WE READ, PRAY, FAST OR GIVE.**

**OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS IS BASED UPON SIMPLE TRUST IN JESUS
TO WASH US AND CLEANSE US OF OUR SINS
AND TO MAKE US PURE IN THE EYES OF THE FATHER.**



THE WORK OF OUR SALVATION HAS BEEN DONE.

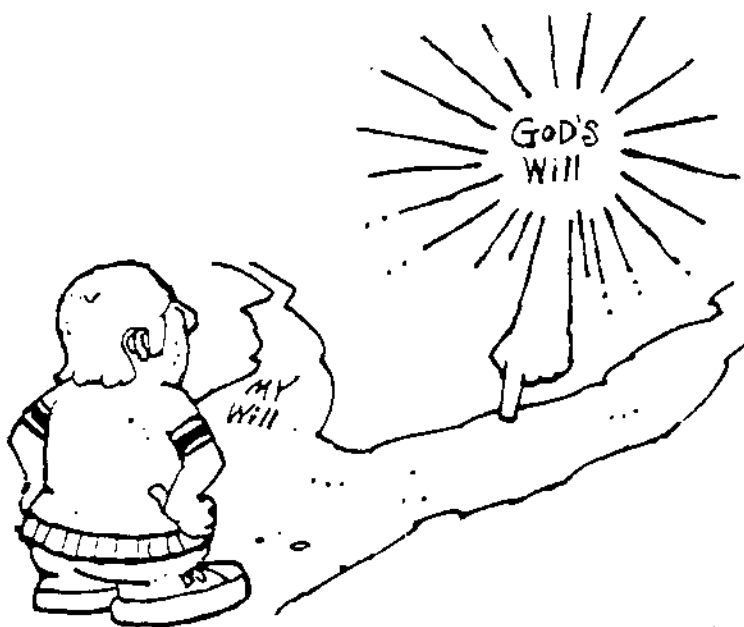
THERE IS NOTHING WE CAN DO TO IMPROVE IT.

**OUR GOOD WORKS RESULT FROM
GOD'S ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE;
WE DON'T DO WORKS TO EARN HIS LOVE.**

**WALKING ACCORDING TO CHRIST'S COMMANDS
DOESN'T MAKE US MORE RIGHTEOUS--
JUST HAPPIER AND MORE SATISFIED.**

**WHAT BETTER WAY TO LIVE THAN GIVING
MY EXISTENCE TO THE ONE WHO LOVES ME SO MUCH
IN THE HERE AND NOW AND WHO HAS PROMISED
TO TAKE CARE OF ME FOREVER?**

**TO BE LED AND GUIDED BY GOD
IS THE MOST FULFILLING EXPERIENCE IN THE WORLD!**



Two Choices Only

***All of us are either trying to work and be good enough to please
God, or we are believing and trusting God to do for us what we can't do
for ourselves.***

***At each moment of our lives we find ourselves on one road or the
other.***

***If we are still trying to please God through being good enough, we
will feel defeated and frustrated.***

***If we have trusted in God's grace to transform us and form Christ
within us, we will enjoy life and peace.***

YOUR ONE DUTY

God has given you but one simple responsibility: to believe in His promise. You can enjoy the blessing of a relationship with God even though you may not pray enough, or give enough, or sacrifice enough because of your faith in what God has already done for you.

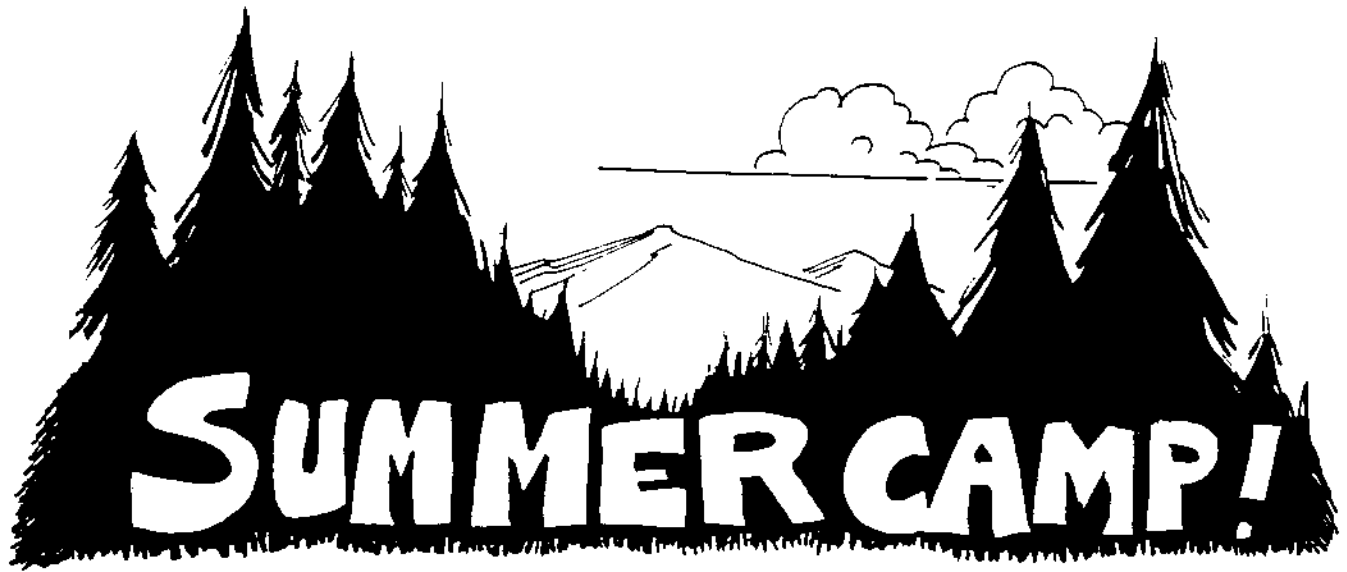
God made Jesus to be sin for you that you might be made the righteousness of God through Him. Jesus imparts to you His righteousness when you simply place your faith and trust in the work He has done for you. His work is all of grace.

Paul opened his letter to the Galatians with the salutation, "Grace to you." He closed it with, "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen." His benediction takes on a rich depth of meaning in light of the letter's sharp focus on the glorious grace of God. The grace of Jesus, not the law of Moses, was the Galatians' greatest need. To walk in the power of His Spirit, not in the vain efforts of the flesh, was their calling.

How did the Galatians respond? We are not told. Perhaps this is because the question raised in Galatia is always an open one. Will you rely on your own righteousness, or will you trust in God's gracious provision? Will you remain in the simple message of salvation by grace through faith? Or will you add your own list of righteous works to the finished work of Christ? Will you walk in the flesh or in the Spirit? Will you glory in the cross of Christ alone? Or will you seek the approval and rewards of this world so that you may glory in your flesh?

These are issues that every believer in every generation eventually must wrestle with. The answers you stand for will spell the difference between peace and fear, pride and true humility, even spiritual life and death.

May you stand without wavering for the grace of Jesus Christ. May you not be moved by the deceptive desire to please men, May you be so heavenly minded that you are of the greatest earthly good, holding out the word of life in an increasingly dark and hopeless world. And may you glory this day in what Jesus has done for you, and in that alone.



MY SUMMER CAMP DIARY PAGE

THE NAMES OF THE PEOPLE IN MY CAMP FAMILY ARE _____

I AM IN FAMILY # _____

MY COUNSELOR AT CAMP IS _____

THE MOST FUN CAMP ACTIVITY IS _____

THE BEST CAMP MEAL WAS _____

THE FIRST DAY OF CAMP I FELT _____

MY FAVORITE CAMP SONG IS _____

FRIENDS I'VE MADE ARE _____

SOMETHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT GOD IS _____

MY FAVORITE CAMP GAME IS _____

MY FAVORITE CAMP SKIT IS _____

I LIKED CAMP BECAUSE _____

