

# THE NEW CREATION

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*“Prove ALL things and hold fast to what is good.”* – 1 Thess. 5:21.

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## Independence Day



The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a day of celebration in memory of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, severing political control by the 13 colonies from the British Empire (in 1776). War with the mother country continued into 1783. The Constitution was ratified in 1788; another war with Great Britain broke out in 1812. About 50 years passed before the Civil War between the North and the South was fought. Later, we had the Spanish-American war, WW1, WW2, the Korean war, the Viet Nam war, the 1<sup>st</sup> Gulf war, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Gulf War, the Afghanistan war, the Arab Spring Wars, the rise of Isis terrorism, and now the Syrian conflict. The history of America has been one of war with periods of peace and prosperity of various degrees in between.

As the United States expanded in territory, immigrants were encouraged to settle here. They, in turn, brought their culture, mainly from Europe, and the U.S. became a melting pot of many peoples. We only need to go back a few generations to find some one of our relatives coming from a foreign country. The Constitution allows liberty and freedom for all. It recognizes the rights of the individual and seeks to safeguard the people from tyrants. That noble purpose had a great influence in attracting those early migrants.

Today, things have changed. With the advent of terrorism and rebirth of Nationalism, the world is in turmoil. One of the consequences is the change in attitude toward migrants. No longer is America, as well as Europe, eager to take in the oppressed of mankind. Conflict is inevitable.

Not surprisingly, faith has been lost. As the scripture says, "when the son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" One of the things that we as a people are experiencing is the loss of confidence in our leaders to save us. Consequently, there is fear and failing of heart as we look at the things coming upon the earth. Surely, something great is happening in the

symbolic heavens and earth. The Apostle Peter speaks of this in 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:10, “...*the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up (or laid bare, literally found – NKJV margin)*” Yes, everything is being found out or laid bare, nothing can be hid. The truth is bringing the works of darkness into the light. Hallelujah! Conflict results: the battle between truth and error is underway. We know which will win. Be still and wait for the salvation of God. Moral principles and concepts, love of God and love of neighbor are all under assault. It will take a strong Christian to weather the storms that are coming, but God is faithful. He will provide a way of escape that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13). That escape will be our confidence in Him and His word. By increasing our faith in His promises and what His word teaches us regarding the present, and looking toward the future, we can have a more upbeat attitude toward what the Lord is accomplishing in the earth.

To that end, we hope that this issue of the New Creation Magazine will aid you in your walk with the Lord and give you confidence that whatever comes, God knows all about it, and is directing the issue for His glory and for our salvation. Remember, that when we pray for God’s kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven, we are praying for a change from the government that now is to the government that will be. That new government will be Christ Jesus and his faithful followers exalted as kings and priests in the new earth. Others may seek earthly powers. We seek submission, submission to God’s will and waiting for Him to bring forth the glorious day that man really desires but cannot accomplish. Let’s continue to pray and help one another in this narrow way. We are anticipating a true Independence Day, not independence from a country, but independence from sin and self, and change into the glorious likeness of the sons of God.

R. Whittaker

## Preaching the Gospel

*“And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?”* Romans 10:14

Christianity is made up of believers and unbelievers, the converted and unconverted people, both groups claiming to be Christians. The Bible teaches that one does not need to be a theologian to preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apostles were not learned, well-educated men or seminary graduates when they began to preach the Gospel. All they needed was the power and illumination of God's Holy Spirit to *“turn the world upside down”* (Acts 17:6).

The message of the Gospel of our Lord is the Good News the world desperately needs to hear. It is concerning the Person, life, death and resurrection of the Son of God and what these things mean in the framework of God's Plan of the Ages for the blessing of all the families of the earth (Genesis 22:18). If these things are not preached together, or if parts are left out, it is not the full Gospel of our Lord being preached, but one that is fragmented.

The message of the Gospel must make clear that every human being is lost, incapable of liberating himself from the power of sin and death or from Adamic condemnation. It must affirm that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Redeemer sent by God for man's salvation and the only Mediator or Reconciler between God and man, and between man and his fellow man. It is the only message that proclaims the forgiveness of sins and the gift of abundant and eternal life. There is no racial or social discrimination in the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jew and Gentile, educated and uneducated, oppressed and oppressor, rich and poor, all need to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But as the text above points out, *“How shall they hear if there is no messenger, no preacher?”* Will God send His angels down here to preach? Certainly not! He communicates His Gospel through human beings who are members of His family here on earth. However, there are qualities that we, as God's messengers need to have. The disciples had these qualities; they are

examples for us. Reading the book of Acts, we discover principles, which have permanent value for all Christians. The only people through whom God speaks are those who truly *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, who are *filled* with His Holy Spirit and who faithfully proclaim the Word of God.

In Matt. 28:19, the Lord gave a mandate to His disciples, "*Go, therefore, and teach all nations.*" They were the ones who had been with Him since the beginning of His ministry; they had seen and heard Him personally, and believed. They had seen Him dead, and His resurrection affirmed them in their faith and hopes. The doubts and fears they experienced when Jesus was on the cross and lay in His tomb were all left behind in the exhilaration of His resurrection. Now this group of disciples had the assurance that Jesus Christ was Lord indeed to the Glory of God the Father.

Today in a world of uncertainty and fear, God speaks through men and women who know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and obey Him. This is of the greatest importance in the work of evangelism. People who have not experienced the transforming power of Jesus in their lives cannot be God's preachers, regardless of their education or eloquence. They don't know Christ's true Gospel because they don't have a personal knowledge, relationship, and dependency on the Lord. God speaks through people who know Him intimately, who love Him and desire to serve Him, who are aware of Christian discipleship, and who have a saving knowledge of the true Gospel, desiring to be His witnesses wherever they are.

Today in the power of God's Spirit, we can go forward and proclaim the Truth in His Word, not to impose our will on others, or tell them how they should think and act. This would be contrary to the Scriptures and the Spirit of the Lord; but rather to let the Lord's Spirit work in their lives to guide and teach them, helping only when asked. We must encourage others to surrender unconditionally to His will; to let Him control their mind, emotions, and body, so that they can be used by Him according to His sovereign purpose. They should be guided and taught by *HIM*, not us.

Members of the early church held the scriptures in high esteem. They believed that the Scriptures were inspired by God and submitted themselves to the authority of the written revelation of God. So should we, and so should we teach others. To preach that to others we must live a new life (Acts 2:42-47). We must remember the unity of those early Christians was based on the teachings of the Apostles.

Those early Christians had brotherly communion, true *koinonia* fellowship in the New Testament sense of the word. Those who believed were of one heart and soul. This reminds us of Psalm 133:1 so often quoted by brethren everywhere: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*"

The early disciples were ready to live and to die for the Gospel. They were not Christians in name only. They were deeply committed to the Lord and to His people, and to the ones to whom they preached the Gospel. We must remember those times were often a great deal harder than now. There was much anti-Christian persecution, philosophies, idolatry, violence, and poverty. Nevertheless, the Apostolic Church won great victories because they were true believers in Jesus and ready to pay the price of discipleship.

May the Lord inspire each one of us, who know Him and have a know-ledge of His Truth, to become His heralds so others may hear and believe the glad tidings of the coming Kingdom and have the opportunity to become His disciples! May He empower us to boldly speak and deep in our hearts make us sensitive to give a testimony of genuine unity and love to a world profoundly divided by hatred and violence!

G. Boccaccio

*If you have found knowledge, hold it up so others may light their candles from it.*

## Overcoming Fear

### ***“There is no fear in love.” – 1 John 4:18***

Human beings have always feared the unknown or unseen; what we do not understand usually terrifies us. For example, many people are afraid of the dark because they cannot see and imagine things in the dark. People have phobias for almost everything today, so it should not surprise us that there is a phobia of fear.

Fear has become Satan’s number one tool that he uses to plague the hearts of many, unfortunately including believers. It is sad when Christians center their lives on the fear of some *possible* occurrence, bad luck, and more commonly here in Africa, the fear of witches, demons and evil spirits. This fear consumes them wherever they go because they are afraid that something bad is going to happen, some evil force out there will not rest until they are destroyed forever.

Satan’s kingdom is one of darkness and he uses dark places to frighten believers and make them turn away from God. Satan knows our strengths and weaknesses, and fear is just one of the many ways he has of bringing us down. People can actually become so entangled in their fears that they end up going to Satan for help. Whenever they do pray, they do not receive an answer because their prayers are not accompanied by faith.

Some Christians fail to realize that when Jesus died for all mankind, He redeemed us from Satan’s grasp. He gave us freedom, life, peace, and to all that believe He becomes their light, strength, power, and victory. That is why the word of God says, *“Greater is He that is in you, than he who is the world”* (1 John 4:4). And again, *“If God be for us, who then can be against us?”* (Romans 8:31).

Remember the account of Elisha and the Arameans. The king of Aram was at war with Israel, but God revealed all His plans to Elisha who forewarned the Israelites. The king of Aram’s plan was becoming futile and he was not happy. He sent out an army to capture Elisha. The city where Elisha was living was surrounded by the king’s horses and chariots. When Elisha and his servant learned of this, his servant was frantic. He feared that that their end was near. Elisha asked God to open his eyes and on the hills surrounding Elisha were countless horses and chariots of fire ready to protect them from the Arameans (2 Kings 6:11-18). Look through your Bible and you will see that God never forsakes His people. David said that throughout his life he never saw the righteous forsaken by God (Psa. 37:25).

This does not mean that bad things will not happen, or that evil spirits do not exist, because actually bad things do happen and these spirits do exist. However, we must never forget that *“He who keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleep”* (Psalm 121:3). The things that we fear will only become a real problem when we believe they can harm or destroy us spiritually and that God will do nothing to prevent it. Faith is very powerful, but do we use it enough? We have received the spirit of a sound mind, not the spirit of fear or timidity.

Psalm 27:1-3 reads: *“The LORD is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? When evil men advance against me to devour my flesh, when my enemies and my foes attack me, they will stumble and fall. Though an army besieges me, my heart will not fear; though war breaks out against me, even then will I be confident.”* God assures us of His protection in the morning, at noon, and at night. There is not a time when He is not with us.

We must ask ourselves, *“Do we believe that God is our All in All?”* If we understand this, then nothing, absolutely nothing, can shake us. The Apostle Paul tells us in Colossians 3:15, *“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...”* He goes on to explain in Philippians 4:7 that this peace *“transcends all understanding,”* which means that this peace goes beyond what is normal. When others are fearful and in despair, you will be smiling, rejoicing and praising God! Even in the worst situations, His peace will keep us calm. People will look at us and wonder what makes us so tranquil and happy, even in fiery trials.

As believers, fear should have no dominion over us. When we walk, eat, drink, sleep, or wake, we are to be without fear because Christ lives within us. We are the “untouchables” because God’s Spirit and power flows through us. This is the result of faith in God. *“...for though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil because my God is with me.”* This assurance comes when we commit all into God’s hands by faith 24/7. We can overcome fear and we can overcome the world through faith in the Word of God (1 John 5:4). It is only when we allow fear in our hearts that we are vulnerable to Satan’s attacks. Jesus said, *“I am with you always, even to the very end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20).

May Christ speak peace to our hearts and dispel fear forever!

S. Monye

## Lessons from the Good Samaritan

In the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 10, we find the parable of the Good Samaritan. We are told that an expert in the Mosaic Law stood up to test Jesus by asking Him... *"What must I do to inherit eternal life?"* He replied, *"What is written in the Law? How do you read it?"*

The man answered by quoting the two great commandments: *"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbor as yourself,"* Jesus replied, *'You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.'* But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, *'Who is my neighbor?'"* (vs. 27-29).

Jesus then told the story of the Good Samaritan: *"In reply Jesus said: 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have. Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?' The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.'* Jesus said, *'Go and do likewise'"* (vs. 30-37).

Jesus' selection of the three men in the parable was carefully chosen. The Priest and the Levite represented the Jewish spiritual leaders who were supposed to be good examples to Israel. But as a group, they failed miserably as Jesus tells them in Matthew 23. The injured man was one of

their own countrymen and they chose not to get involved in helping him.

On the other hand, the Samaritan was an outcast and was detested by the Jews. They would not have anything to do with any of them. Jesus choice of this person is therefore quite significant in this parable that portrays the Good Neighbor.

Some years ago, an elder brother said that the Samaritan did not ask the injured victim what he believed before helping him. He just knew that he was hurt and was moved by pity and compassion for the man. Note the extent of his help: *“But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have’”* (vs. 33-35). This Samaritan not only took care of the injured man’s wounds, but also took him to an Inn, paid the innkeeper to look after him, and gave the innkeeper a “blank check” telling him that whatever extra expense there might be, he would pay him for it when he returned.

May we follow his example in our ministry to do good as we have opportunity as we read in Galatians 6:10, *“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to **all** people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

When we think about the two great commandments, it is easy to see why our Lord linked them together. After all, what better way can we show our love for our Father than to show Him we love our fellow man by doing them good as did the Samaritan.

D. Anas

*He who is wrapped up in himself makes a small package.*

## Important Spiritual Gifts

*"If it looks like a duck, and walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it's a duck."* This reasoning is far from new. Jesus said, *"You shall know them by their fruit."* And again, in Matthew 12:35-37: *"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart brings forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things...For by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned."* Note here that the Lord says, *"you"*. He is speaking to us individually about judging others. Yet the thought clearly is that we should be discerning, and use the wisdom contained in the Lord's Word to keep harmful influences (leaven) out of our lives, and just as important, from all those striving to do God's will.

So it is necessary that we distinguish between judging good fruitage and improper judging, finding fault and condemning another's heart and motives. The Lord gave us many examples and instructions concerning how we are to walk after the Spirit, and needful it is to have a humble heart that neither condemns nor personalizes others 'bad' behavior. This spirit is embodied in that old expression, *"Hate the sin, not the sinner."* At the same time as noted above, God gives us His Word that we should discern between that which is good and that which is evil (Hebrew 5:14), or contrary to His will.

Please read the parable that Jesus gave of a sinner, (like every one of us - Rom. 3:9-10), who humbly sought forgiveness and went away justified, his sins not imputed to him, while another man, also a sinner, who saw himself as righteous, was not justified. This parable of the Pharisee and the Publican who prayed, given in Luke 18:10, is centered on the importance of the spiritual gift of *humility* (Galatians 5:22-23). This is the only condition by which we can receive God's grace when approaching Him through His Son, since *"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"* (1 Peter 5:5).

Like the Publican in the above parable who humbled himself before God, so did the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her

hair and tears. Jesus didn't dispute that she was a sinner, but told Simon the Pharisee, in Luke 7:47: "*Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.*" This is a statement to take to heart, for it states a positive correlation between forgiving, and being forgiven. Like the Publican, this woman knew she was a sinner, and demonstrated her love for the Lord who came "*not to destroy,*" as He told James and John, "*but to save*" (Luke 9:56). "*God is Love.*" And here Jesus demonstrated His likeness to our Heavenly Father by always showing mercy to the humble; all those seeking mercy as in these two examples. Also, remember what Jesus tells us in Matthew 6:14, "*For if we forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*" In a related matter in Matthew 18:21 we read, "*Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times?*" The answer Jesus gave in the verse that follows is amazing and demonstrates how **greatly** God loves us, even as sinners. Jesus said, "*I say not to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven.*" Here the Lord is instructing us to always and continually show mercy, just as He is merciful.....to forgive the repeating and repenting offender over and over again. Now I ask, "How often do we go to the Lord to ask forgiveness for the same offenses?" Given the obvious answer, let us remember what He warns in Matthew 6:15, "*But if you do **not** forgive men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses.*" Clearly love transcends judgment, and humility enables us to put others above ourselves for that greater reward that comes from obedience (John 14:23).

Now ask yourself the question, "Should we become more self-confident and sure of ourselves as our knowledge and understanding grow?" I believe the answer is "NO"; that the opposite is actually true. Greater knowledge and understanding should make us much more humble, even as Jesus Himself was humble, for as we grow in appreciation of the Glory of God, our own significance should greatly diminish against that understanding. And as the Scriptures teach, the more we learn and the greater our understanding, the more will be required of

us (Luke 12:48). Since God's ways are always far greater than ours (Isaiah 55:8-9), we should be truly humble, looking always to the Lord for greater understanding -- an unending, even eternal process. We should also always keep in mind that those we interact with are the Lord's children, giving us no right to interfere by judging them. To his own master he will stand or fall (Romans 14:4).

But unlike the duck given in the opening adage that is set in his fleshly course, man, created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), can transcend the flesh and walk after the Spirit if his heart's desire is to walk with God. However, first he must humble himself under the mighty hand of God, and demonstrate his love for God by keeping His commandments. Then spiritual gifts will shine forth (Galatians 5:22-23). *Come; let us walk together in the Spirit of God's love!*

J. DiCesare

*"We who are strong in the faith ought to help the weak to carry their burdens. We should not please ourselves, but we should all please other believers for their good, in order to build them up in the faith." Rom. 15:1, 2*

We may not deliberately put people down, but are we always careful of the weak, the sensitive, and the anxious? How do we react to differences of opinion? As mature Christians, are we critical of the young, for example? Paul's strategy is to remind his readers that we are one body in Christ, all redeemed sinners, accepted equally through the cross, loving one another as He has loved us. From Christ we learn humility (Phil. 2:5, 6)... We submit to one another in love having the same attitude of mind as Christ Jesus had.

We are all called to unity in worship and praise for all the promises fulfilled in Christ, that together we will be filled with all joy, peace and hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit. No cliques, no reserved seats, no pride, only acceptance in love and gratitude for our brothers and sisters in Christ."

Selected

## In My Father's House Part 1

*In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:2-3*

This passage is a very familiar one. Many of us have committed it to memory. When we read about many mansions and our Father's house, we think we know what it is saying to us. But this is a passage which is locked up tightly to our Western minds without an understanding of the culture and customs of Jesus' time. When Jesus spoke these words, the disciples instantly "connected" with two vivid mental pictures that told them what Jesus was talking about. I'd like to share them with you.

Biblical truth to remember: God is calling out a people for His name – Acts 15:14; a bride for His Son – Eph.5:23-32; John 3:29; Rev. 19:6-9. The Holy Spirit serves as an engagement ring – Eph. 1:13-14; II Cor. 11:2

The first picture is in v. 2, where Jesus says, *"In my Father's house are many mansions."* Modern translations describe "many dwelling places" or "many rooms". What the Jewish listeners "saw" when Jesus said this, is centered around a word they were very familiar with. It is the word "insula". The word describes a large "house" with many rooms, built around an enclosed courtyard. In the land of Israel, archaeologists have discovered many of these foundations. The word "insula" translates roughly as "house" or "household". The insula would house extended families over many generations. Here Grandpas and dads, moms and daughters, aunts and uncles, cousins and nephews would live together as family. An insula could hold as many as 120 people. Great, great, granddad would build the first house and as sons married, they would add on to the insula by building rooms for their families.

The NT writers pick up on this powerful word image. Paul writes in Gal 6:10, *"As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith (3609 from 3624).and in Eph. 2:19 – "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God (3609)." The Hebrews writer is also familiar with the concept of the insula or household. Heb. 3:6 – "But Christ as a son over his own house (3624) whose house (3624) are we if we*

*hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*” Peter writes in 1 Peter 2:5, *“Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house (3624) a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* And in 1 Peter 4:17, *“For the time has come that judgement must begin at the house (3624) of God.*

We see these NT writers using the words house and household to describe to their readers how the church should be like the intimacy, love and community of the insula. They knew that the home and the church should be places where there is warmth, protection, closeness, love, and sharing. The root meaning of the Greek words translated house and household is: “A Dwelling, (more or less extensive) a Family, (more or less related) Home, House(hold) Temple, Domestic, A Relative, Adherent, (those) of (his) (own) house(hold).” So the first “picture” the disciples saw was the warmth, love and caring of the family unit living at the “insula”.

**The second picture they saw is in v. 2 & 3** where Christ says...*“I go to prepare a place for you and I will come again and receive you.”* This picture is rooted in the Jewish wedding customs. Marriage and family were very sacred to the Jews. The single life was not well thought of. A Jewish rabbi commented, “A bachelor is not truly a man at all.” The most conservative rabbis said, “Cursed is the man who at twenty years is not married.” Marriage was usually early. Most men were married between 16 and 20. A girl was considered ready for marriage at 12 ½ yrs. old plus one day. Albert Edersheim writing in his book, Sketches of Jewish Social Life says, “A Jewish girl 12 yrs. old plus one day could be betrothed or given away by the father. Most girls were married between 13 and 14 years of age.”

The Hebrews didn’t just go out and pick a bride. When the Jewish son was ready to marry, there was an important family council in the insula. The purpose of the meeting was to decide on the proper bride for the son. The input of the parents was much more important than the feelings of the young man. In this meeting, the family considered far more than just the future bride. She needed to be pure, good, wholesome, and chaste. But in addition to this the family considered things like character--ironic in light of today’s Washington capers and America’s almost total disinterest in character. The family was concerned about the character of both the girl and her family. They considered: reputation, moral purity, community standing, kindness, attitude. These things were much more important than

wealth or beauty. You see, the community of the insula was very concerned with its reputation. None of them wanted to bring home a bride who would bring dishonor to the standing reputation of the family unit at the insula.

When the family had reached a decision, a party set off to the young lady's home. The members of the party were the young man, the young man's father, and probably a trusted friend of the bridegroom. This friend of the bridegroom functioned very much like our best man. He was in charge of communication between the young man and his future bride during the betrothal period.

In Judea, there were two, a friend of the bride and a friend of the bridegroom. At the wedding, they offered gifts, waited upon the bride and groom and attended them to the bride chamber. They were responsible for guaranteeing the bride's virgin chastity. Paul picks up this word-picture when he tells the Corinthians, *"I am jealous over you with Godly jealousy. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."* He uses this image of acting as a friend of the bridegroom guaranteeing the purity of the bride.

When they reached the home of the bride, the girl's father followed the ancient Eastern custom of hospitality. He tried to entertain the guests with choice food and drink. The visitors would refuse any refreshments until they had conducted their business. The first order of business was to announce the desire of the family to take the young lady's hand in marriage to their son. Then negotiations for a dowry price were conducted. The friend of the bridegroom was very much involved in these negotiations. His job was to act as intermediary between the two fathers. Sort of like a real estate agent. He was responsible to the groom and tried not to negotiate a higher dowry price than necessary, but he was also interested in treating the bride's family fairly. The dowry was money, goods or services paid by the groom's family to the bride's family to compensate them for the loss of her services. It was a society in which women weren't highly thought of as persons. They were seen more as property. They were valued for their skills and abilities rather than as equal and important persons. The dowry price varied according to the means of the families involved, but it could be a very substantial sum, sometimes as much as the price of a house. (Jacob, Rachel, Leah). When a dowry price was agreed upon there was a little ceremony. The father of the groom would solemnly pour a glass of wine from a skin he had carried. He poured it, gave it to his son

who took it to the girl and offered it to her. As he handed it to her, he said, *"This cup is the covenant in my blood"*. He was saying to her, "I love you, I want you to be my wife, I pledge to provide for you and to defend you with my very life if necessary. Will you be my bride?" At that moment the young lady had a decision to make. If she refused the cup she was saying, "No thank you. I don't want to become your wife." But if she reached out and took the cup, she was saying to the young man, "I love you." "I accept your proposal." "My life will be for you." "I will be your wife." If the young lady accepted the proposal the young man would say in the words of our text, "I am going, back to the insula, to prepare a place for you. I will come again as soon as I can get it ready." Then the little party would return to the insula and the young man would spend every spare, waking moment building a new room on the father's house for his bride. It took a long time. Besides the building of the room, there were lots of other things to prepare for.

This period of waiting was called the betrothal. The Jewish Mishnah tells us the writings of betrothal stipulated mutual obligations, the dowry amount, and all other points to which the parties agreed. During the betrothal, the young couple were considered as husband and wife in the eyes of the law. A young lady whose betrothed died before the wedding ceremony was considered a widow. The young man was excused from military service. The couple saw each other only occasionally. The number of visits varied with the distance and amount of time available to them. It was not like our engagement where there was very frequent visitation. There was no physical relationship until the marriage was consummated on the wedding day.

A Jewish wedding would have many guests and they would stay for a 7-day wedding feast. Everything needed to be prepared and gotten ready. Everyone was invited, all relatives, all friends, and friends of friends. It was usual for the entire village to be invited. It was considered a great insult to refuse a wedding invitation. Christ uses this word-picture in Matthew chapter 22 where he told the parable of the king who gave a wedding feast for his son. When he sent for the guests, they were unwilling to come.

(The final part of this article will appear in the next issue of the New Creation.)

D. Gorham

## Have You Taken It to Jesus?

Have you taken it to Jesus?  
Have you left your burden there?  
Does He tenderly support you?  
Have you rolled on Him your care?

Oh, the sweet unfailing refuge  
Of the everlasting arms;  
In their loving clasp enfolded  
Nothing worries or alarms.

Have you taken it to Jesus  
Just the thing that's pressing now?  
Are you trusting Him completely  
With the *when*, and *where* and *how*?

Oh, the joy of full surrender  
Of our life, our plans, our all;  
Proving, far above our asking,  
That God answers when we call.

Have you taken it to Jesus?  
'Tis the only place to go  
If you want the burden lifted  
And a solace for your woe.

Oh, the blessedness to nestle  
Like a child upon His breast;  
Finding ever, as He promised,  
Perfect comfort, peace and rest.

E. L. Hennessey

## Our All-Seeing God

*"Jehovah looks from the heavens; He beholds all the sons of men." "All things are naked and laid bare to his eyes, with whom we have to do." Psalm 33:13; Hebrews 4:13 (Darby Translation)*

A man planned to steal squashes from someone's front garden. He stood his small daughter on the garden wall with the instruction to watch and see if anyone was coming. A moment later he looked up and asked, *"Is anyone coming?" "No, no one, Daddy." "Did you look in both directions?" "Yes!" "And behind you at the fields on the other side?" - "Yes, but..."*

*"But what?" "There was one place where I didn't dare to look." "Where? I told you to look everywhere." - "Up there at the sky. Can't God see us, Daddy?"* The man stopped short. He was conscience-stricken. He thought for a moment, then took the child down from the wall and went home. The squashes stayed where they were.

God can easily use a child to teach the parents. That small girl was wiser than her father, who imagined no one could see him. He had forgotten that the Living and True God sees and knows everything. *Nothing is hidden from His eyes.* The girl did her father a great service in reminding him of that fact. And the father had every reason to fear God, for Holy Scripture states: *"The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom"* and *"The fear of Jehovah is to hate evil"* (Proverbs 9:10; 8:13).

Whether we like it or not, God's all-seeing eyes are constantly watching us. For one with a bad conscience that is unbearable. There is only one way out of this predicament; live according to God's will.

H.F.Ofner

## Cause and Effect

*“Jesus said to His disciples: “Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come. It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin. So watch yourselves.” Luke 17:1-3 (NIV)*

Do we ever think about the responsibility we each have to one another? Have we ever given much thought to what we say or the example we set as having an influence on those around us? Wouldn't it be great if we could say, like the Apostle Paul did in 1 Cor. 11:1 (NIV), *“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”*

We read in 1 Corinthians 10:31-33 (NIV), *“Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God-- even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.”* This scripture tells us that it is definitely possible for us to cause someone else to stumble by what we say and/or by what we do.

There are times when we may be tempted to want to share some news about someone that others have shared with us that may not be positive in nature. Where does this urging come from? Satan is a wily enemy ever seeking an opportunity to cause us to sin. In the case in point it would fall under the category of evil speaking, a pretty serious charge before the Lord. Our enemy tries to get us to justify in our minds that it is alright to tell someone such important news, maybe they could even pray for them! We can call it any name we want, *but the Bible calls it evil-speaking* (Colossians 3:8). If we succumb to this temptation it is possible that it could have far reaching consequences to the members of the family of God.

Have you ever heard of the term, *“The domino effect?”* To illustrate this, pretend the following are a row of stacked dominos:



Picture, if you can, a row of stacked dominos all standing upright on their ends; all spaced close enough together that if one was to be knocked over, it would hit the one adjacent to it knocking it over and so on down the row with the potential to knock over the entire row. What is the lesson we can learn from this simple illustration? Let's suppose that one of God's children gives in to the temptation to

speaking evil of someone. If the person with whom it was shared then shares this with someone else they also sin, and if this were to continue down the line many others would be tempted to do the same and thus sin would be perpetuated. Who is the one most responsible? If you said *the first one who gave into the temptation to share it* you would be right. That one is responsible not just for his own sin but *for all subsequent sins that would happen down the line*. Also, the others in line who repeated what was shared have likewise the responsibility for the sins of those after them. A sobering thought!

But suppose that you or I were somewhere in that row and we decide **not** to give in to the temptation to pass the gossip on, then what would happen? The domino-effect or chain-reaction would be broken because of our choice to remove ourselves from the row or chain. Illustrated, it would look like this:



I hope that this little illustration doesn't come across as too negative but I know of no better way to demonstrate the effect and responsibility that each one of us have to the Lord and to each other. May we be committed to seeing that our examples and words will always be edifying and never a potential stumbling block to another. Jesus said, *"It's not what goes into your mouth that defiles you; you are defiled by the words that come out of your mouth"* (Matt. 15:11).

There is an old adage that has been helpful to many in evaluating what we share with others. It is called *The Three Golden Gates* which poses three criteria through which our words must pass before they are spoken. Gate # one: **Is it True?** Gate #2: **Is it Kind?** And Gate #3: **Is it Necessary?** If what we are about to say does not pass through any of these three gates then it would be best left unsaid. Perhaps it would also be helpful to remember the Golden Rule: *"Do unto others as you have them do unto you"* (Luke 6:31).

Let us heed the advice of the Apostle Paul, *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think on such things"* (Phil. 4:8); *"Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification"* (Rom. 14:19).

E. Weeks

## The Mind of God (part 2)

God is **patient** or long-suffering. Patience is a learned behavior. God however, needed no learning. He possessed it from eternity. He endowed Adam with it, but he fell and very few of his descendants have possessed much patience in their fallen condition. Patience is closely associated with cheerful endurance or perseverance. Persevering is a trait that God surely has. He keeps on working out His plan even though opposed by many ignorant and some willful foes. Think of the long-suffering patience Jehovah shows in permitting the 6000 years of sin and evil, of the slanderous accusations he has endured, and of his ears hearing the cries of the suffering and sin-sick world and still waiting for the fulfillment of his glorious plan. Jesus likewise was persevering in doing the same as he endured the shame, slander, and suffering, never yielding to any but the Father's will. His meat was to do the Father's will. Knowing the outcome gives peace and endurance in the present. We have that knowledge and accordingly we will be at peace while we wait **patiently** for the grand future of the outworking of the Divine Plan.

God is **gentle**. When one is gentle, we feel at home in his presence. You probably know about Mr. Rogers of the kid's program, Mr. Roger's Neighborhood. He had a way with kids and they loved him. He allayed their fears. We would say that Mr. Roger's was gentle. So is God. He is not some dread master who is seeking his honor at the expense of yours. He respects you and calls forth your loving response to His gentle leadings. Think of it: If God be the first cause, none existing before him, and rather than a kind, gentle being, he was vindictive and delighted to see his creation suffer, we would have no say in the matter. We would have to yield to his power but we would not love him. We might obey him out of fear of torture, but it would be to save ourselves. Since he makes the rules, we are powerless to resist him. So how thankful we are that we have a powerful, wise, loving, just God who is also **gentle** to His creation.

God is **self-controlled**. All these attributes of God overlap one on another and fit together in perfect harmony, like the many varied instruments of an orchestra, all playing different parts but one harmonious whole. The trained ear will pick up those parts and identify which is now playing. Self-control is a prominent part of God's attributes. Without it, there would be no long-suffering patience or mercy. God exercised self-control as he observed His son suffering in his earthly pilgrimage, so much so, that he did not intervene in the crucifixion of Jesus. Obviously, Jesus had to exercise self-control in resisting temptations from his own flesh, his surroundings – the world, and his enemies – chiefly Satan. He was tempted in all points like as we are, or we could say we are tempted in all points like he was, that is, as new creatures. We need to develop self-control.

God is **virtuous**. God has high moral standards. In fact, He is the standard. All virtue finds its epitome in God. God defines His moral standard in the 10 commandments, and Jesus shows the spirit behind the commandments as vital to keeping them in Matthew 5. These teachings can be summed up in the two great commandments. In fact, all moral conduct can be decided by the two great commandments: 'Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul, and strength.... and love your neighbor as we love ourselves.' It may take work and time to apply these texts accurately, but that is our duty.

God is **joyful**. Joy is a reaction to a delightful sense of being. Our joy comes from a realization of the Father's love for His creation, shown by His provisions for their everlasting well-being. We take delight in His plan and wonderful works of creation. "Be glad in Jehovah and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for **joy**, all you who are upright in heart" – Psalm 32:11

God is **peaceful**. As with all the attributes, God has them intuitively by the nature of whom He is. We however do not have peace by nature but must learn to be at peace. This we attain by our faith in God's promises. Romans 5:1-3: We first

attain peace with God through the merit of Jesus' sacrifice – a necessary gift for the forgiveness of sins – then we attain a restful heart as we trust in the promises of God and wait for His deliverance

God is **unselfish**. We are born into this world selfish. In looking at young children, we find selfishness is well engrained in the fallen race. Little thought is given at that young age to appreciating and thanking those parents and caregivers for answering most of their demands. But gradually, over time, the gratitude develops and thankfulness and consideration is expressed. Somewhat likewise, our gratitude as New Creatures will be much greater now than when we first believed as babes in Christ. A growing realization of God's free grace and absence of selfishness will bring about this transformation.

God is **courteous**. He never seeks to embarrass us, to shame us, to disrespect us. Free will is always allowed and never stifled. He honors us in our decisions. They are our decisions, hopefully in line with his desire for us.

God is **sincere**. God has no guile, no hidden agenda, and no deception. He is not a hypocrite. He is the essence of purity, honest in all things, and his actions are always in line with truth and righteousness. There is no duplicity in Him. He means what He says. Titus 1:2 tells us that God cannot lie.

God is **forgiving**. He is ready to forgive. If the sinner turns from his wicked way, God is ready to receive him, to help him, and encourage him. In fact, the principle from which God operates is well summarized in Ezekiel 18:20-28, quoting from the NASB, *"The person who sins will die. The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity; the righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself. But if the wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed and observes all My statutes and practices justice and righteousness, he shall surely live; he shall not die. All his transgressions which he has committed will*

*not be remembered against him; because of his righteousness which he has practiced, he will live. Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live? But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and does according to all the abominations that a wicked man does, will he live? All his righteous deeds which he has done will not be remembered for his treachery which he has committed and his sin which he has committed; for them he will die. Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not right.' Hear now, O house of Israel! Is My way not right? Is it not your ways that are not right? When a righteous man turns away from his righteousness, commits iniquity and dies because of it, for his iniquity which he has committed he will die. Again, when a wicked man turns away from his wickedness which he has committed and practices justice and righteousness, he will save his life. Because he considered and turned away from all his transgressions which he had committed, he shall surely live; he shall not die."* The present heart condition is the important matter – not the past. Yes, God is forgiving.

Now, we come to the crowning texts of God's character. It can be summed up in these two. The first is God is love, 1 John 4:8 and 16. Again, as written earlier, 'as every lovely hue is light, so every grace is love.' The graces of love can only be expressed in deeds, and 1 Corinthians 13 gives us a definition of a heart filled with love. This kind of love is patient, kind, not jealous, doesn't brag, is not arrogant, is not rude, does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful, does not rejoice at wrongdoing, rather rejoices with the truth, bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things, and it never ends. Such is God's love in action.

The second crowning text to define God's character is also from the apostle John. 1 John 1:5 "...**God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all**". This text tells us what God is and is not. Light is contrasted with darkness. They are opposites. Light dispels darkness. Wherever God is, light is there also. Darkness has no place in God's character. Only what is right,

true, good, and all the attributes that we have listed reside in our holy God. There is none other, and soon His name will be exalted in all the earth. That day is fast approaching. He is looking forward to receiving you into His immediate presence. What a God we serve! Let us cast all our care upon Him because He cares for us! Such is the mind of God.

R. Whittaker

### **A Persian Fable**

"A Persian fable says, one day a wanderer found  
a lump of clay,  
So redolent of sweet perfume its odors scented  
all the room.

'What are thou?' Was his quick demand, 'art  
thou some gem from Samarcand,  
Or spikenard in this rude disguise, or other costly  
merchandise?'

*'Nay: I am but a lump of clay.'*

"Then whence this wondrous perfume--say!"

*'Friend, if the secret I disclose, I have been  
dwelling with the rose.'*

*Sweet parable, and will not those who love to  
dwell with Sharon's rose, distil sweet odors all  
around, though low and meek themselves are  
found?*

Dear Lord, abide with us that we may draw our  
perfume fresh from Thee.

Author Unknown

## A Portrait of Jesus: The Good Shepherd



*“If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them wanders away, what will he do? Won’t he leave the ninety-nine others on the hills and go out to search for the one that is lost?”* Matthew 18:12

The Pharisees had just criticized Jesus for eating with sinners. He regularly put himself in the place to find men and women who were lost and needed Him. They wouldn’t be found in the synagogues or the temple; he knew that, and through the parable of the Good Shepherd, He explains why. This parable was not only Jesus’ response to the Pharisees ignorant pride, but it was given so that we, centuries later, would know how to treat sinners. Even beyond that, it shows the heart of God for sinners. From the moment that Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, God set out to save them. His heart for sinners hasn’t changed since then. He sent His Son to die for those sins.

A sheep has wandered off, seeking to go its own way, not realizing that every step he takes away from the shepherd is a step closer and closer to danger...danger from predators, from rushing waters, from cliffs, from any number of situations that he would not be able to save himself from. The good shepherd leaves his 99 obedient sheep in search of the wanderer. When he finally finds him, he hoists him on his shoulders to carry him home. This is not a little lamb, but a sheep that weighs between 150-175 lbs. This is no small feat, this is a heavy burden for the shepherd to carry, but he does it none-the-less, willingly and rejoicing all the way home. This is the heart of our Savior, and verse 14 tells us this is also the heart of His Father, *“In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.”* He wants all His sheep safely home. This is the heart, that we, his disciples, should emulate.

Do we look at sinners and turn away like the Pharisees and see only their sins? Or are we like the Good Shepherd, going out of our way to seek the lost sinner and bring him back into the fold of God? To have the heart of the shepherd means to have a heart of love and compassion for the lost, to be willing to give our life for any lost sinner. We were once lost and He came and found us. Let us rejoice with Him in every lost sinner who is found.

D. Mathewson

## The Children's Story Corner: Be Saved



Dear Ones,

When I was downtown the other day, I saw a man on a corner telling everyone to "be saved". Have you ever wondered what it means to be saved?

In the Bible at Acts chapter two, Peter told a large crowd of Jews how to be saved. He said, *"Men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves also know--him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be held by it...Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."* Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* Then Peter said to them, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the holy spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."* And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, *"Be saved from this perverse generation."* Then those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers". (Acts 2:22-24 and 36-42)

These Jews were sorry that they had killed Jesus. Peter told them to repent (tell God they are sorry) and be baptized in Jesus' name and they would receive God's holy spirit and be saved from their wicked generation. 3000 were baptized and stayed with the apostles to learn more, have fellowship, and to pray.

These Jews knew a lot about God, but how about people who don't know God? Can they be saved? There is an example in the Bible at Acts 16:24-34 of a prison guard at Philippi who was saved after learning only a little about God and Jesus. *"...in the inner prison...at midnight (Paul and Silas) were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, ... and all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. Then the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm, for we are all here.' Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' So they said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.' Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized."*

In both cases, many of the Jews who saw the miracle in the Pentecostal event, and the Philippian jailer in the opening of the prison doors, were moved to ask how they could come into a relationship with God (how could they be saved?). They made inquiry and were told what was necessary to receive a relationship, namely repentance and faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus as atonement for sin. They believed and were blessed with the holy spirit.

The man I saw downtown probably had good motives to tell everyone to be saved, but without an inquiring mind on the part of the hearers and a truthful presentation of the means of salvation by the man, his words would fall on deaf ears. Eventually, all will be saved from the grave to come to an accurate knowledge of God in that kingdom of righteousness and peace, but for now, relatively few have the faith and spirit that constitutes them sons of God and inheritors of so great a salvation.

Your Aunt Nancy

## The Family Corner: Two Little Words --- I'm Sorry

*I will walk in my house in the integrity of my heart. "Psalm 101:2*



### Husbands and Wives --

'*I'm sorry*' -- two of the hardest words to utter in the history of mankind! Why are these words so difficult to say to others? What is the great *treasure* that is at stake causing us to swallow these simple words?

Well, there is indeed a lot at stake, perhaps more than you know. Unfortunately, it is *just* your reputation! Men seem to have a harder time with apologies than women do. *Being right*, as far as a man is concerned, means *not relinquishing power*. So if he wants to maintain his position as head of the house, a position of respect (which, incidentally, needs to be earned) he may believe that it is important for him to be *right* all the time. The pitfall is that this self-righteous attitude gives the complete opposite impression to the one he desires to leave.

To make situations worse is the *perceived* attack of the spouse. She may say some harsh things that are really not intended. In fact, her words are another way of expressing *emotional pain*. Obviously, this is not the righteous way to respond, but men need to understand the *reasons behind this type of a response*. Unfortunately, the emotions may already be controlling their own response as they attempt to *save face*. Harsh words are volleyed back and the damage is done. The words -- *I'm sorry* -- are even harder to come by now.

When men offend (and men, this *does* happen), their wives may be quick to analyze *why* this has happened. It may be that the man is not as correct as he thinks. It is my observation that men are generally insensitive to the emotional state of women. (The women reading this must be shouting 'amen'). So men, instead of *reacting* as if your manhood has been ravaged when

your wife responds emotionally, perhaps you can stop and think about *why* she has responded harshly. Remember, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger” (Proverbs 15:1), and again, “It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel” (Proverbs 20:3).

It is a good to be able to say, “I’m sorry my words upset you. Can you tell me why?” Now don’t expect the emotionally charged atmosphere to flitter instantly away. Expect a somewhat softer, yet possibly still terse response. Try to talk it through and do your best to understand *why* your spouse feels the way she does. It may very well be that you won’t understand; then this is an opportunity to pray over the matter and look for revelation from your Father. “In *all* thy ways acknowledge Him and He *will* direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

A wife needs to understand that an angry response coupled with belittling remarks will accomplish nothing but alienation and a wider gap between the two of you. Remember, if a man thinks he's being attacked, he will feel vulnerable, and he won't be as willing to give in on his position no matter how shaky the ground may be on which he is standing. Try to ask yourself whether you are attacking, and think of a way to approach him in a manner that's not so threatening.

### **Parents and Children**

Another unappreciated situation is parents unwilling to admit they are wrong to their children. Here is a story that well illustrates this:

“One afternoon I went into Andy’s room to mention something to him. I walked across the room to close some curtains, not noticing, however, that at the base of the window was his jade chess set. As I walked to the window, I stepped on the chess set and sent the pieces flying all over the floor. Without thinking how it sounded, I said, ‘Andy, you should not put your chess set on the floor; it could get broken’ Then I walked out of the room. A few minutes later Andy walked into my study... I looked up and asked him what he needed. With a

look of concern on his face he said, *'Do you realize that you walked into my room, kicked my chess set all over the floor, scolded me, walked out, and never said you were sorry?'* Fortunately, we both got tickled as we began to think of what happened. After I apologized, he said something very interesting, *'You know, if I had walked in here and confronted you as I just did, and you had tried to defend yourself, I would have really lost respect for you.'*"

Such incidents as in the foregoing story may not seem significant to us but our reputation as a parent is at stake when we fail to acknowledge wrongs done! How can our children trust us if we can't admit our mistakes? It can only lead to resentment and the worst fear of a parent, the dreaded *communication breakdown*.

### **Conclusion**

*"I'm sorry"* -- just two little words. But *so much* is riding on our being sincerely willing to utter them. Remember, before we can approach God in prayer we need to be reconciled to our spouse or child, and indeed any others where there is a breach before He will listen to our prayers (Matthew 5:23). There is so much riding on these two words. So, let's say *'I'm sorry!'* *Everyone will respect us for it.*

Andy Weeks

*There is precious instruction to be gotten in finding we are wrong.*

*You can't learn without mistakes.*

*Instead of putting others in their place, put yourself in theirs.*

*Be what you wish others to be.*

*Pleasant words are a honeycomb,  
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones—Prov. 16:24 NIV*

## Prayer List

*"Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you."* (1 Samuel 12:23)



### Let us be Prayer Warriors for our Brethren!

Anas, Julie – FL	Jones, Arlene - VA
Allen, Peggy & Russell – VT	Karavas, Anna - CA
Anderson, Family– WI (d)	Knapp, Jamie – NH
Andrada, Delores & Family – CA	Knapp, Joseph & Pat – IL
Bews, Sandra and Family TX (d)	Ketko, Marion – MI
Boswell, Arlene – IL	Leavitt, Denise & Richard – ME
Buxton, Jean & Family - UK	Lepitre Family - IL
Carpenter, Gloria – KY	Howes, Paul & Carla - UK
Caudle, James – WA	Kingsmith, Beresford - UK
Cline, Ruth – MO	Mazzotta, Eva – FL
Cooper, Carmela – NJ	Miller, Alain – Canada
Csutor, Judith – CT	Mitchell, Mitch - France
Day, Ronald – PA	Moore, Ralph & Maryellen – CA
Dickson, Roberta Jo – CA	Munoz, Sue - NY
Dobbins, Esther - NH	Newling, Roseanna – NH
Donnarummo, Dan – OH (d)	Niewiemiński, Elaine – NY
Duhaime, George & Martha – CT	Parker, Geraldine – CA
Dunn, Kim - IL	Penton, Jim – Canada
Fantuzzo, Sharon - NY	Phillips, Stella – OK
Fischer, Mike & Liz – WI	Riggio, Fran – NH
Foster, Jean – IL	Rowe, Bryan - UK
Gary, Inez – VA	Schultz, Dan – MN
Hauslein, Karen – MD	Schwartz, Ruth – TX
Hawk, Barbara – PA	Seminoff, Brenda - CA
Hildebrandt, Lois - FL	Tuscia, Priscilla – FL
Hogrebe, Joan – MO	Trent, Frank & Thelma - FL
Hopkins, Linda & Andrew – VA (d)	Weaver, Eddie - NY
Iannaccone, Bob & Marie – IL	White, Ken & Joan - NY
	Wisdom Hezekiah Ikpo - Nigeria
	Zychal, Ruth & Craig– NJ

(d) = death in the family

**Entered into rest:** George Ibasfalean, FL, March 29, 2019  
Doris Teunis, IL, April 7, 2019

**Important:** If you know anyone in the names listed above whom no longer needs special prayers, please advise us so we may remove their names. Also, if any of the information is incorrect, please let the editor know. Thank you.

## **Bible Correspondence Course New Graduates & Notices**

*Congratulations* to the following students who have completed their course and have been awarded a Certificate.



### **Basic Course**

- 1. Channing Ashbaugh, North Carolina, USA**
- 2. Colin Larose, Canada**
- 3. Michael Teeth, Ghana**
- 4. Elijah Mwelwa, Zambia**

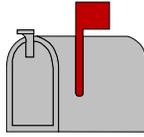
### **Ransom Course**

- 1. Sara McKinney, Arkansas, USA**
- 2. Nakoma Jackson Adie, Republic of Cameroon**

### **You are invited to view the following websites:**

<http://www.cdmi.org> (Christian Discipling Ministries International)  
<http://www.cbfchurch.com> (Christian Believers Fell. in NH)  
<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk> (Bible Fellowship in UK)  
<http://www.bbschurch.org> (Lombard, IL)  
<https://sites.google.com/site/quietwatersdevotions/home>  
<http://www.cartyorkshire.co.uk> (CART)  
<http://www.campblessing.com> (Camp Blessing)  
<http://www.homechristians.net> (Fraser Valley, B.C.)  
<http://www.christianrespondent.com> (R. Frye)  
<http://www.bibelgemeinde.at> (Free Bible Students, Austria)  
<http://www.bibelgemeinde.org> (Mission Work Bible Students, Austria)  
<http://www.kronline.at/bibelstudien> (Free Bible Students, Germany (English))  
<http://www.softgrafic.com/bibbia> (Italian Bible Students)  
<http://www.newcovenantfellowship.org.au> (New Covenant News- Australia)

## Letters from Our Fellowship and Readers



Dianna Middleton of Oregon writes:

*Greetings in the name of our loving Savior Jesus Christ! I wish you blessings, wisdom, grace and peace in your new position as Editor. We are privileged to be part of the harvest work, bringing those called, to Christ. Serving as a teacher has been a great opportunity to witness, not only in proclaiming the Truth, but also from the encouraging messages we write and receive from students. Our lessons proclaim the Word and the Plan of God, laying up treasures in Heaven, honoring and glorifying our Heavenly Father, and His Son Jesus Christ! What better work can there be?!*

*It has been such a joy over the years to read student letters, many greatly encouraged, sending love and amazing prayers of blessings for the work of our hands. The ripple effect of sending these lessons all over the world is astounding... we cannot know the work that God is doing through them, when lessons are even being used to teach villages and children!*

*A special part of the ministry for me has been serving prisoners in African prisons. Many students from 2 prisons in Zambia are sharing what they learn. Before I retired, I visited a prison in Nevada as part of a Workforce Development Program. The prisoners were SO very grateful that someone had actually cared about them. The warden shared that the prisoners were beyond grateful for that kindness, with many NEVER experiencing ANY-EVER. That touched me greatly, and stays with me. Our CDMI ministry has given me the opportunity to show kindness and God's love...What a blessing!*

*May God Bless and multiply the work of our hands to bring great fruit to His Kingdom.*

*In the love of Christ, Sr. Dianna*

[The following email from Pastor Rodgers Chuulu of Zambia, a Bible Correspondence Course student of Sr. Dianna's, and who is actively engaged in a prison ministry there, sent the following to Sr. Dianna in regards to his efforts to have a baptismal service at the prison for newly consecrated prisoners. He previously had written for prayer support]

*I really appreciate your constant prayers because indeed we had a special Church Service last Sunday [May 12], and the baptism exercise went on very well. We baptized 26 inmates in all, and it was such a joyous occasion. I had invited several other fellow Christians and preachers, and we had a memorable Church Service and baptism exercise in the pond within the prisons chapel.*

*I will take it upon myself to visit the prisons every week during the week to groom the newly baptized.*

*It is so beautiful to hear of the arrangement for the prayer warriors to start praying for us and the prisons ministry.*

*[The names of the 26 inmates then follows]. The last five names (ie from no 22 up no 26) are in the condemn section, while the rest are in the long service or long sentence section of the Maximum Prisons. The Church or body of Christ in the prisons is really growing, and we have a lot of work. 16 of these have chosen bibles of local languages such as BEMBE, CHEWA and LOZI.*

*Have a blessed day,*

*Pastor Rodgers*

*In Jesus' Name I greet you!  
May our Lord cover you and yours in His blanket of peace,  
love, and joy.*

*"His" Servant*

### **Our Lives are What We Make Them**

*Our lives are songs; God writes the words,  
And we set them to music at pleasure;  
And the song grows glad, or sweet, or sad,  
As we choose to fashion the measure.*

*We must write the music, whatever the song,  
Whatever its rhyme or metre;  
And if it is sad, we can make it glad,  
Or if sweet, we can make it sweeter.*

*Poems of Dawn*

## Conferences & Conventions

**Note:** If you would like to have your Convention, Conference, Camp, or Seminar published in The New Creation Magazine, send information or a program *at least three months in advance* of the issue month of the magazine to the editor, Bob Whittaker.

### **Bible Students General Convention, July 20-25, 2019**

University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho

Theme Text: Proverbs 3:1

Registration information online at [biblestudentsgeneralconv.org](http://biblestudentsgeneralconv.org)

### **Christian Believers Conference, 111<sup>th</sup> Annual, August 4 – 8, 2019**

Gordon College, Wenham, Massachusetts

Registration: contact Bruce & Chere Blake, 36 Chapel Lane, Somersworth, NH 03878 or email: [sblake4588@gmail.com](mailto:sblake4588@gmail.com)

cell # 603-953-7059

### **Bible Students Fellowship Conference, August 16-20, 2019**

Felden Lodge Conference Centre,

Hemel Hempstead, HP3 0BL, England

Theme: Salvation, - Philippians 2:12

Contact Nicholas Charcharos at [nick.charcharos@btinternet.com](mailto:nick.charcharos@btinternet.com)

## Donations

Many people around the world appreciate the New Creation magazine. For many, it is their only source of Christian communication. Also, for many, they only have it through the generous contributions of others. If you feel moved to help them in continuing to get the New Creation, please consider a donation to CDMI.

## Article Contributions

Please send articles for possible publication to Dennis Gorham,  
4 Alicia Street Somersworth, NH 03878  
email: [dennisgorham@comcast.net](mailto:dennisgorham@comcast.net)