

# Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 4, No. 5

“And ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:10

Sept./Oct. 2001

## Sitting at the Feet of Jesus

## Eternal Hide And Seek

Chad Janey

Psalm 34:4: “I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.”

Have you ever played a game of hide and seek? The game is well known: several people go and hide, and then one person sets off on a mission to find them, so that on the next turn the one who did the seeking can hide. I have many fond memories of playing hide and seek all throughout my childhood, and even into my teenage years.

There are many people in the world who, unfortunately, are playing a much more serious game of hide and seek, a game we will call “Eternal Hide and Seek.”

I am sure we have at some point in our lives heard said, or perhaps even said ourselves, “I’m just going to take some time and try to find myself.” I must admit that I never really understood how people could possibly need to find themselves. I came to realize, however, that what they actually meant was that there was an empty space somewhere inside themselves that they were desperately trying to fill. So off they went into the world, looking for what the world could offer them to fill their void. For some, perhaps, it was traveling, for others school, for still others a new job, or a family. They added more and more things to their lives trying to fill that empty space, but always ended up exactly where they started.

So what is the answer? How can one win this game? The answer is really quite simple. All one has to do is change the object of the search. Can you imagine playing a real game of hide and seek by yourself? You could never win the game, because even if you managed to “find” yourself, you would still be left doing the searching in the next round.

That is the same problem that those playing Eternal Hide and Seek face: they may find what they were searching for, but it really gains them nothing. The solution is to stop seeking self, and start seeking God. The good news is that He is never more than a prayer away. In Psalm 34, David tells us the result of seeking God. God will always hear our pleas, and He will deliver us from our fears. Verse 10 gives us an even greater promise: “They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.” God will provide us all of the good things that we need in our lives, and all we have to do is seek Him.

Perhaps you are searching for yourself, or perhaps there is just a little empty space somewhere in your life. No matter; seeking God is the answer.

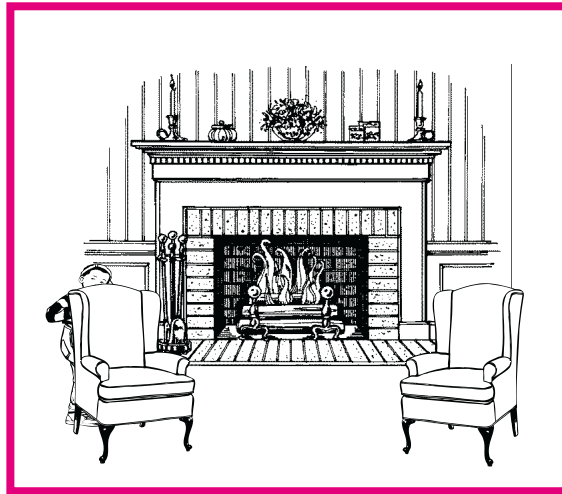
**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we praise and bless You at all times. We have tasted and seen that You are good. We come now, seeking You and seeking Your deliverance

from our fears and troubles, and confess that we cannot find the answers on our own. Please hear our prayers and deliver us. Amen.



[From Daily Devotionals at <http://www.presbyterian.ca/daily/>. Chad Janey writes from Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. Used with permission of the author.]

Our Mission Statement: Believing that we can find completeness in all areas of our lives only “in him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10), it is the mission of *Hearth to Hearth* to provide a forum for Christian women to reach out to each other in friendship, with joy and hope; and to encourage each other to find our completeness in Christ as we sojourn here on our way to the kingdom.



**Editorial****Reflecting on God's Gifts**

Much of this issue of *Hearth to Hearth* reminds us of God's good gifts to us. Beginning on page 8, Dennis and Linda Meeker share their thoughts regarding the wonderful gift of health that God has given us and how we can maintain that health to His glory, through cooperation with Him and His laws. Dee's Days on page beacons us to contemplate the fact that God is good and brings many special gifts even in the midst of trial.

Yet, in spite of all of God's good gifts, many of us spend our days playing "Eternal Hide and Seek" with God. (See front page.) Why?

When I read Milli Lewis' "My 'Frowning God'" (page 12), it reminded me of an incident from my own childhood. How well I remember the day—I was probably around six years old—when my parents decided it was time to clean out our playroom. My younger brother and I were shut out of the room while our treasures were systematically gone through and many things were discarded. I protested loudly (I remember crying and banging on the locked door), especially begging mercy on my precious dolls, but my cries went unheeded. When they emerged from the room some time later there had, indeed, been a great transformation in the appearance of the room, but my beloved doll babies were missing. It did not matter to me that the dolls were broken, some having disfigured faces or missing arms or legs. That only made them more precious to me; they were my children! My brother and I often played "hospital" with them. Sometimes he was the doctor and I was the nurse. Other times I was the mother, bringing her dearly loved child for treatment. I felt totally misunderstood and violated, and the memory of that day remained and affected my dealings with my own children.

I wish I could say that I made no such mistakes in raising my children. No matter how much we parents desire to reflect God to our children, the Image is blurred. (Take a look at the Q & A column

on page 4.) Our only safe course in helping our children to know what God is really like is to point them to the Scriptures, His Word, where He reveals Himself as He truly is.

As I view the devastation caused by the major flooding to 23 counties here in West Virginia in recent months, and contemplate the plight of the many (some right next door) left homeless and destitute with winter just around the corner; as I read the pleas for help from various African countries that regularly come across my desk here at Smyrna Gospel Ministries; as I review the prayer list on our board at prayer meeting every Wednesday night; as I visit my own mother in the rehab hospital where she is recovering from a mild stroke, and empathize with all the suffering and disease in every room, I don't even have to read the newspaper or watch the evening news to realize that Satan is indeed going around "as a roaring lion...seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

But where is God? Does He *really* care? Is He *truly* Love?

His Word tells me that He is right beside me when I go through life's darkest moments. I may not be able to *feel* His presence, but by faith I can know that He is there because He has promised. And the evidence that my faith rests upon is found at the cross. When Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" just as you and I do at times in our experience, He received the assurance that His Father was with Him and He died in peace, crying "with a loud voice...into thy hands I commend my spirit." Even though He did not feel His Father's presence, He knew that He was with Him because He had promised to be. And just as He was beside His only begotten Son when He hung on that cross 2000 years ago, I know that He will never leave this unworthy daughter whom He has adopted into His family. I am sure you will want to read Onycha Holt's retrospection on "The Gift of the Father." (Page 5) His was the greatest gift of all!



*Esther McDaniel*

**MAIL CALL:**

"My Never Again List" [July/August] hit the spot. What a wonderful list of promises! Now if I can manage to memorize them, I'll have ammunition for fighting practically any attack that Satan can think of to level at me.

*Tennessee*

Dee Stringfellow's "A Day in Summer" [July/August] reminded me of a statement that I came across somewhere about death. I will paraphrase it: "I must give up now this gift of life to receive a better one later." For me, it was "food for thought." Perhaps it will

be an encouragement to ones who have lost loved ones to death.

*Ohio*

Regarding the Q & A column in the July/August issue of *Hearth to Hearth*, I think Jesus' words in Matthew 12:34-37 are very applicable. Among other things He said, "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Would that our hearts were pure, then so would be our words!

*Tennessee*

The article by Dee Stringfellow brought something to mind. I'm sure those of us who have spouses have at one time or another had the thought

cross our minds about the emptiness we would feel if that loved one was called first. I know I have. So the poem printed with "Dee's Days" was very "befitting" and was much appreciated, as was the story itself. Thank you!

*Ohio*

Please remove my name from your mailing list as soon as possible. Previously I wrote requesting this removal (1-10-01) and you wrote back (letter received 2-5-01) saying you had removed my name from your mailing list. Since then I have received a magazine approximately each month. Per-

haps it “slipped through a crack” somewhere. In any case, I would appreciate it being taken care of now. I appreciate your willingness to send it, but it does not meet my needs at this time and I did not request it. Thank you.

Minnesota

[Yes, unfortunately, some things have “slipped through the cracks” in recent months. You can help by making sure the person whose name you send in truly wants to receive this newsletter. Thank you. Editor]

If she is on the Internet, this web site might be JUST THE THING for that lady in West Virginia who wrote the long letter you printed in the last issue of *Hearth to Hearth*: <http://www.flylady.net/index.asp>.

E-mail

[The May/June issue is] another excellent issue of *Hearth to Hearth*. I especially enjoyed the article entitled “A clean House?” I’m kind of a “messy” and a procrastinator when it comes to house cleaning, but when I read an article like that it inspires me. I liked the front cover, too, but it is kind of hard to read with the red lettering over the picture.

Ohio

I would like to request a subscription to *Hearth to Hearth*... would you please e-mail to the above address. If postal mail only is available, please send to... also please inform me of costs associated with same.

Australia

[We regret that *Hearth to Hearth* is currently available only by postal mail. It is sent free upon request. Editor]

## IDEAS WORTH SHARING:

1) I thought I would share a tip I recently learned, since it’s summer, and to me that’s “smoothie” season. I try to keep bananas in the freezer, but found that it was almost impossible to keep them from turning brown, at least a little bit. Then a co-worker told me a trick that really works. You put the cut bananas in a zipper bag, place a straw in the bag and zip closed to the straw. Now suck the rest of the air out of the bag with the straw. Quickly remove the straw and finish closing the bag as you

do so. It’s not perfect, but better than before.

Ohio

[Good tip! I’ve tried it, and found that it works for all fruits, veggies, breads, etc., forming almost a vacuum seal. Editor]

2) If you freeze peaches or berries in square or round plastic containers, fill the “head space” with crumpled pieces of waxed paper. The fruit on top stays beautiful instead of turning brown, and it even seems to taste fresher after thawing.

Tennessee

3) Ammonia works magic when it comes to cleaning glass or stainless baking dishes. Just saturate a rag or paper towel with it and place in a plastic bag along with the item to be cleaned. Tightly seal the bag and let sit overnight. In the morning, wash the item in hot, soapy water; it will clean easily and quickly and sparkle like new! Use large garbage bags and try it on your oven racks. Also works great for removing wax from glass candlesticks.

West Virginia

## PRAYER CALL:

1) Praise God for his continued blessings to each one of us!

2) Pray for my friend who is stepping out in faith to leave an abusive husband. Pray that God will give her wisdom to raise her children for Him.

4) Please remember to pray for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones at this time. We personally know

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several such families, and of others who are dealing with serious, life-threatening illnesses. All need the strength and encouragement of others as well as the comfort and peace that only God can give.

5) Remember the flood victims here in West Virginia. They have a lot of courage!

## EDITOR’S NOTES:

» **Moving?** Please remember to notify us of your change of address as quickly as possible if you don’t want to miss any issues!

» **Questions please!** If you, as the parent (or grandparent) of a teen (or if you, as a teenager yourself), have a question for the father and daughter team, you may send it to *Hearth to Hearth*, or send it directly to: Father and Daughter, P. O. Box 500, Keene, TX 76059. Anonymous questions are welcome; no real names are used in the column.

» **Most of the graphics** for this issue of *Hearth to Hearth* have been selected and/or created by Jennifer Priddy, currently of Welch, West Virginia. A big thank you to Jennifer for her help!

» **An intriguing** and insightful study on God’s Eight Laws of Life and Health begins on page 8. While some health experts espouse seven, some eight and others 10 natural laws of health, it all boils down to the fact that the One who created us knows best what this human machinery needs to keep it operating properly. Just as an automobile needs fuel, oil and water, so each cell in our bodies needs to be properly fed, oxygenated and hydrated if we are to enjoy good health. After we have done all we know to follow the laws that God has laid down for us, we can rest in Him, knowing that He who wishes “above all things that we would prosper and be in health,” will work in our behalf to bring it about. A cheerful disposition, an attitude of gratitude, and a “getting outside of ourselves” to help others are the fruits of that perfect trust in God.



## Teens and Parents Ask



### Father and Daughter Answer

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Dear Father and Daughter,

I'm in high school and my parents are always pressuring me to be more involved in sports. Just because I'm a guy they think that I should be on every team that my school has. They don't even ask me what I want to do. I hate all of the pressure. Any suggestions?

*No Athlete*

Dear N. A.,

I'm going to take a different approach in my response to your question. First, thanks for the question. Second, you might want to leave this article open on the breakfast table for your folks to "coincidentally" find and read.

I have been to a number of youth and high school games, and I have been embarrassed and appalled at the behavior of the parents. I have seen parents yell at a coach because their child didn't get to play as much as they thought they should. Wake up folks: it is a game! I believe that parents have taken the fun out of sports.

The pressure that they put on their kids to excel in a sport has caused some kids to misinterpret the Bible text found in Exodus, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me..." For example, in the *Washington Post*, April 20, 1999, the editor points out that in Littleton, Colorado, "the state wrestling champ was regularly permitted to park his very expensive Hummer all day in a 15-minute space. A football player was allowed to tease a girl about her breasts in class without fear of retribution by his teacher or by his coach. The sports trophies were showcased in the front hall; the art work, down a back corridor."

If you are the parent of N.A., cheer him on to excel in the "gifts" given to him. You should listen to him and find out what he likes. Many times as parents we encourage our children in a direction that we want and not what they want. You never know; you may have another Albert Einstein, Vincent van Gogh, or Thomas Edison living in your home.

*Father*

Dear No Athlete,

Dealing with other people's expectations of you can be one of the hardest things to come to terms with, and I totally know what you mean about not wanting to dis-

appoint the people that you care about. It's good that you respect your parents and are considerate of them, but at the same time you can't spend all of your life trying to please everyone else. Sooner or later (and the sooner the better) you're going to have to start making your own decisions on what you enjoy doing and what you want to do with your time. If you're not following your dreams you'll soon wake up to find yourself lost in a nightmare of expectations that aren't even your own. And besides, there's nothing so exhausting as trying to be someone you're not.

Have you told your parents that you don't want to play sports? Obviously things won't change at all if you never let them know what you're thinking. So if you haven't already, you should definitely explain to them that you don't want to let anyone down, but that you would prefer to pursue other interests. Also, it might help if you try to share your interests with them or involve them somehow in the things that you like to do. That is, unless your favorite pastimes involve things that you don't want your parents (or maybe the police) to know about, in which case, maybe you should just stick to playing sports.

*Daughter*

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## Wee Wit & Wisdom

After listening restlessly to a long, tedious sermon, a 6-year-old boy asked his father what the preacher did the rest of the week.

"Oh, he's a very busy man," the father replied. "He takes care of church business, visits the sick, ministers to the poor, and then he has to have time to rest up. Talking in public isn't an easy job, you know."

The little boy thought about that, then said, "Well, listening isn't easy, either."

[From the Internet]

The Sunday School teacher was describing how Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt, when little Jimmy interrupted.

"My Mommy looked back once while she was DRIVING," he announced triumphantly, "and she turned into a telephone pole!"

[From *Inspirations*, at <http://inspirations.sponge.org>]

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## **The Gift of the Father**

*Onycha Holt*

Over the rolling hills and into the town of Bethlehem came the Word of God. Over the starry expanse and into the fields near Bethlehem came the angel host. Over the eons of time salvation came to mankind. In the humblest of settings on earth, and in the most perilous of settings in the universe, came the greatest gift God has ever given. No other place in the universe has been so honored, and in no other place has such honor been so despised. But to those who perceived their need, He brought healing. No bruised reed would He crush, no smoking flax extinguish. (Isaiah 42:3) To all, He offers His gifts of peace with God and eternal life. Such is the great gift God has given men through Jesus. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. All things were made by Him and by Him we all are redeemed.

Yet a word only becomes a word when it is spoken or written. A word cannot express itself. The Father expresses Himself through His Son, and the Son came only to reveal the Father. “Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficieth us. Jesus saith unto him, “...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” (John 14:8, 9) Except for three instances (Matthew 3:17 and 17:5; John 12:38), the words of the Father were heard only in tones of the Son, the thoughts of the Father known only in movements of the Son, and the face of the Father seen only in the countenance of the Son. Yet, earth knew it not, and even heaven comprehended not the love of God until man’s fall was so deep, so dark, and so steeped in pride and arrogance that no other gift could save him. Unseen, unheard, and unknown to mortal man was the Father of all behind the Son. His great love for those made in His image was unperceived even by unfallen beings.

Jesus came to bring salvation to each of us and this gift is measureless. Without it we have no hope. But if

we can see beyond this, there is an even greater gift. Jesus has vindicated His Father before the universe. The great Lawgiver and His law stand holy, just, and righteous. And because of this gift, the universe is forever secure from such deceptions of Satan as, “The law cannot be kept,” or “The principles of God’s government make forgiveness impossible,” or “Man can save himself by his own works.”

Could the Father have done this— brought salvation to us and vindicated His own character—without giving His own Son? I don’t think so. No unfallen, created being could atone for us, for they are all amenable to the law. Surely no beast, however unblemished, could remove the condemnation of the law. Only God could accomplish this. And the Father could not be the sacrifice, for He is the great Lawgiver, the Ancient of Days. For Him to die for us would be as if to say, “I am the law and the validation of the law wrapped up in one.” There would be no evidence to uphold Him. It would be as a scientist who proclaims a universal truth based on his experiment alone, without any corroborating evidence from another. Jesus VINDICATED His Father. He WAS the evidence that in God justice and mercy co-exist.

Yes, we look to Jesus for the gift of salvation, but let us always remember that, in giving us Jesus, our heavenly Father is the great Giftgiver. Jesus participated in this gift so that He, in turn, could give us the opportunity of renewing an eternal existence with Him.

The Father gave His Son, the Son gave His life, and now it is up to us to decide what our “gift”—our response—will be.

Praise God for Their Unspeakable Gifts!

[Onycha Holt writes from Camden on Gauley, West Virginia.]



# What Hinders Communication in Your Marriage?

Part I  
Steve Carr

Communication is one of the most basic skills needed to establish and maintain any human relationship. In marriage it is especially important that a couple master this ability. Whenever you find a successful marriage, you will always find two people who have become skilled at communication. Likewise, wherever you find a failed marriage, a communication breakdown is always one of the root problems. Therefore, it is essential that you learn how to become a better communicator. Let's look at some basic issues that hinder good communication.

**Whenever you find a successful marriage, you will always find two people who have become skilled at communication.**

**1. Check your attitudes.** Your attitude is critical to being an effective communicator and is the basis for what you say and do. Without the correct attitude, your words will always come out wrong. You may be totally right in all that you say, but it's the way you say it that many times turns your mate off. Let's look at some of the attitudes I am referring to.

Do you have an arrogant or superior attitude when you talk with your mate, communicating that you are always right and that he or she knows nothing? Do you become indignant and refuse to listen when your spouse questions your actions or motives? Have you ever thought, "Who does he think he is to ask me that?"

The Scriptures teach that this attitude of heart is very destructive to your relationships. Solomon said, "He that is of a proud heart stirs up strife." (Proverbs 28:25) Is this attitude the cause of strife in your marital communication? If so, consider Paul's counsel, "To speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men." (Titus 3:2) Humility is the attitude of heart that keeps you from speaking evil of anyone or to anyone, and enables a gentle spirit to communicate effectively. Your home needs this attitude.

Another sinful attitude that destroys communication is deep-seated resentment or bitterness, which is like poison to your life and marriage. The Apostle Peter noticed this attitude when he spoke to Simon the sorcerer. Simon had become envious and bitter at the success of the disciples' ministry. When Simon asked for similar abilities, Peter said to him, "...You are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." (Acts 8:23) If you have a bitter and resentful attitude, your spouse will pick this up as soon as you begin to speak. Your tone of voice reveals the poison of unforgiveness in-

side. Jesus said, "If you have anything against anyone, forgive him..." (Mark 11:25) A heart of forgiveness will be your only remedy for this poison.

Indifference or apathy greatly hinder progress as well. Jesus described this attitude in the parable of the marriage feast; He invited many, yet "they made light of it and went their ways..." (Matthew. 22:5). This is the same attitude that many experience when their mates try to talk or spend time together. Indifference becomes apparent when you say "not now" or you simply change the subject. When you make light of your mate's request to talk or spend time together, you are communicating to your spouse that he or she is not really that important to you. Every time you indifferently turn your husband or wife away, it will cause discouragement and a greater distance between you.

Of course, not every time is an opportune time to talk. If you have to postpone a conversation or time together, make sure you communicate your sincere interest and willingness to spend the time it takes to build the relationship. Then, be sure you are the one to initiate the next conversation over that same subject.

Can you recognize any of these attitudes in your heart? If you do, be assured that they will hinder effective communication. The Bible describes each of these attitudes as sinful and requires you to put them off.

**2. Check your words.** Once you have examined your attitudes or the way you talk, now consider what you say. What kind of words do you use?

**When you make light of your mate's request to talk or spend time together, you are communicating to your spouse that he or she is not really that important to you.**

Do you use harsh words? Do you possess the skill to cut and slash your spouse verbally in the midst of an argument? If so, you may win the argument and be daily destroying your relationship. Solomon said, "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1) David also said the tongue can be like "a sharp razor" that can cut and wound a person very deeply. (Psalm 52:2) Is this what your tongue is like?

Speak in such a way that your spouse will receive your words.

Harsh, condemning words are incredibly destructive. Think how you feel when a person condemns or belittles you. Doesn't it drive you away from that individual and

make you want to retreat? If you speak this way to your spouse you will see the same results. Paul specifically commanded husbands, "...love your wives and do not be harsh with them." (Colossians 3:19) Likewise, this command could be equally given to wives. Clearly then, the husband-wife relationship cannot thrive with the use of harsh words.

Another class of words that must be avoided involves lying or deceitfulness, which slowly undermine your entire relationship. If you are deceitful and tell only half the story or a doctored version that makes you look good, sooner or later your spouse will catch on. Trust is fundamental to your entire relationship, but lies and half-truths will eventually undermine your credibility. Any amount of lying to your spouse is like taking an ax to the bottom of your own boat, it will ultimately sink the ship.

If you struggle with lying or deceitfulness, pray what David did, "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue." (Psalm 120:2) Do what Paul commanded: "Therefore, putting away lying, each one speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another." (Ephesians 4:25) As a married couple, you are members one of another in every sense of the word; you are one flesh. Don't lie to one another.

Similarly, exaggeration works to destroy effective communication. Are you an exaggerator? Do you hear yourself

**Any amount of lying to your spouse is like taking an ax to the bottom of your own boat, it will ultimately sink the ship.**

say these words, "you always do this," or "you never do what I ask?" The words always, never, or every time are like gasoline on the fire of an argument. These words will cause an explosion of anger because your spouse can always think of one time he or she did do what you say never occurs. The only solution to exaggeration is "...speaking the truth in love..." (Ephesians 4:15) The truth may be that your spouse many times does this or that, as opposed to always or never.

As we strive to speak the truth, let us remember to speak the truth in love, for certain words of truth can also greatly hinder your communication. I am referring to the true statements about your spouse's past failures which you bring up to use as ammunition during a conflict. These words cut deep, specifically because they are true, but they are words that should never be used to win an argument. If you have forgiven your spouse for a past failure, then it should be off-limits. Why? Because God talks about your sins this way: "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." (Hebrews 8:12) The word remember means "to hold in a mental grasp or to recollect so that it may be used at a later time to punish." God declares here that once He forgives, He

chooses not to remember your sins, and will never use them to condemn you; we must forgive in the same manner. Therefore, speak the truth about the present issue only.

Finally, foul language also tears down good communication. I have discovered that many couples swear and call one another names in the midst of an argument. If this occurs in your home, understand that these words will not be easily

**When you interrupt, it means you are thinking of how you want to respond instead of really listening, and this hinders meaningful and enjoyable conversation with your mate.**

forgotten because they demean your spouse and signify your lack of love and respect. Once you have said these words, you can't take them back. This is why Paul said, "...you must also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth." (Colossians 3:8) He also said, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers." (Ephesians 4:29) Don't tear your loved one down, but build him or her up when you speak. Ask God to put that check in your mind before you open your mouth. Pray as David did, "Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my mouth." (Psalm 141:3) God will answer this prayer.

**3. Check your actions.** The specific actions you take while you interact will either enhance or hinder your ability to effectively communicate. Let's look at some of these actions.

Are you a good listener, or are you quick to interrupt when your spouse is talking? This disrespectful action will greatly frustrate your mate and tends to stir up anger. James said you must be "swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." (James 1:19) When you interrupt, it means you are thinking of how you want to respond instead of really listening, and this hinders meaningful and enjoyable conversation with your mate.

A related action to interrupting is sentence-finishing. This occurs when your spouse takes a pause to think about what he or she is about to say, and you help your mate out by finishing the sentence. Such behavior is, again, extremely frustrating and reveals that you are not listening or trying to understand. It indicates that you have already pre-judged his or her thoughts and declares that you think you know what your spouse is about to say. Solomon said, "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him." (Proverbs 18:13) Rather, allow your spouse to fully complete the sentence, then respond. This will demonstrate you care and are truly listening in order to understand.

Explosive anger is another pitfall and is often only used to control a conversation. Sometimes people use anger to

(Continued on page 14)

# The Eight Laws of Life and Health

Dennis and Linda Meeker

“Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 2) God desires that we be in good health.

David, in Psalm 42:11, says that God “is the health of my countenance.” God Himself is our health. In this Psalm, the Hebrew word for health is **יְשׁוּעָה** pronounced “yesh-oo’ -aw,” which means something saved, deliverance, hence aid, victory, or prosperity. The root word that **יְשׁוּעָה** comes from means to be free, safe, to preserve, save (savior), get victory. Jesus’ name in Hebrew, **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ** pronounced “yeh-ho-shoo’ -ah” or **יְהוֹשֻׁעַ** pronounced “yeh-ho-shoo’ -ah” meaning, “He will save,” is derived from this same root word in connection with the Hebrew word for God. Thus, we see that the source of all true health is God Himself. To have health is to have life, and God is the only source of life.

Since God is life, His government is based upon laws of life. We find in creation eight natural laws of life; hence they are laws of life and health. They are: air, sunlight, temperance, rest, exercise, nutrition, water, and trust in Divine power. These laws are also spiritual since “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:24)

In the first chapter of the Bible we learn how God created everything. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1) In the book of Hebrews we have a further explanation of this: “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, *by whom* also he made the worlds.” Then in John 1:1-3 and 14 we are told, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” So we understand that Jesus was the Creator of all things that were made.

Psalm 33:6 adds more information: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” Jesus, the Word of God, spoke our world into existence and it is His word that upholds it: “Upholding all things by the word of his power.” (Hebrews 1:3)

The words we speak express the thoughts and feelings of our mind and heart. It is by listening to someone that we learn something about his character. In the same way, we learn the character of God by the words He has spoken. God spoke all things into existence; therefore, we have the expression of the character of God—which is His life. In the Bible, God tells what He is: “God is love.” (1 John 4:8) Let us see how God expressed His love in His work of creation.

**To have health is to have life, and God is the only source of life.**

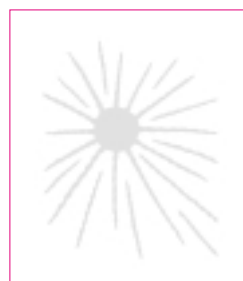
» **Air** is an element of God’s character in creation. (See Genesis 1:6-8, 2:7.) Verse 8 tells us that the atmosphere with which He surrounded the earth He called heaven. Without air, life would not exist upon our planet.

When we speak, we inhale and exhale air, or breath. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.” (Psalms 33:6) “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7) It was Jesus Himself who breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life. Every breath of air we take is the gift of life from Jesus—who is the Breath of Life.



» **Sunlight** is a part of God’s character. (See Genesis 1:3-5, 14-18.) Notice that God provided light before He made the luminous heavenly bodies! God is the source of all light. When light is passed through a prism, it can be seen to consist of all the colors of the rainbow. The brightness surrounding God’s throne is—a rainbow! (See Ezekiel 1:28 and Revelation 4:2, 3.)

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (John 8:12) “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.... That was the true Light, which lighteth every man.” (John 1:4, 9) The light, warmth, and life we receive from our sun are but a dim reflection of Him who is the true light and life of every man.



» **Temperance** is a part of God’s character. (See Genesis 2:16, 17.) It is self-control—which involves choosing only that which God says is good and refusing that which God says is evil.

Since God is life (John 14:6) and only good (see Psalm 119:68), goodness is life and evil is death. (See Proverbs 11:19.)

Man is to live by every word of God (Matthew 4:4) for Jesus said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (John 6:63) There is no evil or death in God. He made man in His own image. He fashioned man’s character after His own, with the same power of self-control.

As he came from the hand of the Creator, man’s character was only good, like his Creator’s, yet man was not made a robot. He was made with the power of choice to believe God’s word or not. Tragically, not only for the human race but for all of heaven as well, our first parents chose to partake of the knowledge of evil, which led to death.



» **Rest** is a part of God's character. (See Genesis 2:1-3.) There can be no true rest until a work is finished perfectly. God is perfect (Matthew 5:48) and His work is perfect (Deuteronomy 32:4); therefore, He is also perfect rest. (See Matthew 11:28, 29.) In Genesis 1:31-2:3 we are told that God finished His work of creation on the sixth day and saw that it was very good, that God rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made, and blessed and sanctified it (or made it holy).



Since man was created on the sixth day, the very first thing he did was to rest with God on the seventh day. According to Isaiah 40:28, God was not weary, neither was man, yet both rested. He had made the Sabbath for man (Mark 2:27) so that man would never forget that God was his Creator (Exodus 20:8-11). God made the seventh-day Sabbath as the perfect, holy day of rest for a perfect, holy race of beings who were to inhabit a perfect, holy earth. Man was to keep the seventh-day Sabbath by faith in God's word that God was his Creator, the One who brought him into existence.

» **Exercise** (or work) is part of the character of God. (See Genesis 1:31; 2:1-4; Deuteronomy 3:24; Psalm 145:4, 10.) God works through His word. God spoke the worlds into existence. (Psalms 33:6, 9; Hebrews 1:2; 11:3) It is by His word that all things remain and are kept in existence (Hebrews 1:3), and He gave to man the work of keeping the earth in its newly created, perfect state. (Genesis 2:15)

Even though man had physical work to perform, he had entered into God's rest. He had no part in creating the earth or even himself. All he needed to do was to *keep* the already-finished works God had given him. We understand how Adam was to keep the garden from the way in which he lost it. Faith in God's word has always been man's work, for Jesus says in John 6:29, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Not believing God's word produced disobedience and thus the loss of the garden and eternal life. The way man was to keep the Garden of Eden was to exercise faith in God's word.

» **Nutrition** (proper diet) is part of the character of God. (See Genesis 1:11, 12, 29, 30.) God is the only source of food for all creation. It was by His spoken word that all vegetation was created, which was the original diet of both man and animals. Since God had told him what to eat, Adam ate the proper diet by faith, and he had to believe that God's word would bring forth the food needed to sustain his life.



The power of God's word is still bringing forth the vegetation for our food today. We are told in 1 Peter 1:23 that "The word of God...liveth and abideth forever," and in John 1:1, 3, 14, that Jesus was the One that spoke to the earth, bringing forth

food for both man and animals. Jesus said, "I am the living bread." (John 6:51) Every loaf of bread we eat, is made possible by Jesus, who is the true Bread of Life.



» **Water** is part of the character of God. (See Genesis 1:1, 2.)

When God created the heavens and earth, He created the waters. It was by the power of His spoken word that the waters came forth. Next to air, water is the most essential element needed to sustain life. We are composed largely of water. Jesus told the woman at the well that, if she knew who He was, she "wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (John 4:10) Jesus said the water He gives will satisfy a man's (spiritual) thirst and "shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) The water we drink, every drop of rain that falls, is from Jesus, the Living Water, the source of all life.



» **Trust** in Divine power (faith) is part of the character of God. "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is

God, the faithful God." (Deuteronomy 7:9) "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) Divine power, creative power, was put forth in the creation of earth and mankind. (See Genesis 1:1, 26, 27.) This creative power is the distinguishing characteristic of divinity. Only He who is Life itself is able to create life. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Hebrews 11:3)

Man was created in God's image to reflect His character. To keep eternal life, Adam and Eve had only to trust in the divine power of their Maker's word (Genesis 3:2, 3) to resist Satan's temptations, for "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)

At the end of creation week Jesus, our Creator, saw all that He had made and declared it to be very good. (Genesis 1:31) This was a declaration of His character. God is life and life only; His character has no evil or death in it. Man was designed to be the highest expression of the character of God because he was made in the very image of God Himself. Adam was originally created with eternal life, conditional upon his obedience to every word of God, thereby retaining God's character, which is His life. When he chose to know evil, death resulted.



God's purpose was for man to reveal His character, or glory. (For an explanation of God's glory as His character see Isaiah 43:6, 7 and Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:5-7.) God's glory is also His law. (See Deuteronomy 5:22-24.) By faithfully beholding God's stan-

dard of character, man's character is changed (see 2 Corinthians 3:18) so that God's character is reflected in him, which, in turn, redounds to the glory of God. (Ephesians 3:21)

God does not change; "For I am the Lord, I change not." (Malachi 3:6) "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever." (Hebrews 13:8) Since God does not change, His purpose for man is the same. Yet Adam, having lost the image of

**"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2)**

God and eternal life, could not pass on to his offspring something he did not have. (See Romans 5:12.) To restore His image (glory or character) in man, Jesus, our Creator, became our Recreator by taking man's nature and combining it with His own Divine nature. (See 1 Corinthians 15:22.)

In Christ, the Son of God, is life, and all these laws of life and health exist in Him. The power used in the salvation, or re-creation, of man is the same power God used in the creation; and it is the same power being used in the upholding of this world. (See Romans 1:16, 20; 1 Corinthians 1:24.) "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17) "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being." (Acts 17:28) [Emphasis supplied.]

Man is both a physical and a spiritual being. The apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." In order to glorify God in our bodies, which is our physical health, we must be in harmony with the eight laws of life and health. Summed up briefly, they are as follows:

» **Air:** To provide our tissues with life-sustaining oxygen, we need to breathe pure air, keeping injurious substances out of our lungs. Christ is our breath of life. "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth...seeing He giveth to all life, and breath and all things." (Acts 17:24, 25)

» **Sunlight:** Moderate exposure to sunlight enables our bodies to produce vitamin D, which is essential for health. Christ is our true light. "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings." (Malachi 4:2)

» **Temperance:** Using beneficial things in moderation and avoiding all harmful things prevents health-destroying excesses. Christ is our source of power for self-control. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and earth." (Matthew 28:18) "As thou hast given him power over all flesh." (John 17:2)

» **Exercise:** Exercise keeps the body toned and operating at its maximum efficiency. Christ is the Master Worker. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5:17) "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, That ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:28, 29) "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Ephesians 2:10)

» **Rest:** Rest, at the proper times and in the proper amounts, allows our bodies to repair themselves. Christ is the true spiritual rest for all mankind. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

» **Nutrition:** Partaking of a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, grains and nuts, in moderate quantities, provides the fuel our living machinery runs on. Christ is the Bread of Life. "I am that bread of life. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:48, 51)

» **Water:** Adequate amounts of pure water are necessary for virtually every bodily function. Christ is our living water. "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me, and drink." (John 7:37) "And the spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17)

» **Trust in Divine Power:** Trusting our lives fully to God insures that we will not fall victim to stress, with its train of physical and emotional ailments. Christ is our source of true faith. "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Roman 12:3)

**Trusting our lives fully to God insures that we will not fall victim to stress, with its train of physical and emotional ailments.**

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2) "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." (Revelation 14:12)

To glorify God in our spirit, we must be partakers of His Divine character through Jesus Christ.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 2) In this verse, the Greek word for "prosper" means "to succeed in reaching." God's character reproduced in us is the goal to succeed in reaching—for He is our life and health.



[Dennis and Linda Meeker write from Decaturville, Tennessee.]

## A Day in Autumn

*Dee Stringfellow*

As I walk down the drive to the mailbox, I see that the leaves on the trees are starting to turn. It's somewhat cooler this afternoon. Fall is in the air. Once again I must think about what needs to be done here to prepare for winter. Do I have plenty of gas in the tank? Should I have the electric heat checked again this year?

I know the Bible is right when it says "a grasshopper shall be a burden." (See Ecclesiastes 12:5.) Young people might not give a thought to what must be done before winter, but life has taught us older people to have our concerns about being prepared.

Just walking to the mailbox gives me time to reflect on so many things, such as the gifts God gives us day by day. When I pick up the mail there is a note from a dear friend. "Thank you, Lord, for this gift."

My husband, Bill, died of cancer over a year ago now. He was ill for some time. Those were rough times, but in the midst of it all were the "gifts" our children gave us. When we married, 27 years ago, Bill had three children and I had three. Of course they have all been grown with families of their own for a long time now.

During Bill's illness our children came to help their Dad and me in whatever area they could. They took turns coming so that we would never be alone. The nurses from Hospice said that they never knew which children belonged to whom because of the way they all treated both of us. What a gift from our Lord in those difficult times!

These same children keep in touch with me at all times, now more than ever before. Each time I hear from one of them, it is another gift from our loving Savior.

The changes that have taken place in my life in the last year are many, but just as the leaves fall from the trees in the autumn, so changes take place in our lives, and the more often the older we get. When the leaves fall from the trees, a new leaf bud, God's handiwork, is already there, holding the hope of spring!

So, as His children, we must accept the changes that take place in our lives and know that, no matter how old we are, there is hope for tomorrow.

So often as the years pile up on us, we tend to look back more than forward, but if we watch for the gifts that God gives to us, we will look forward to each new day, come what may! Each day is a new gift to treasure and enjoy.

As I walk up toward the garage, I see my neighbor working in her yard. I'll walk over to visit for a minute. They have just built their log home up here on the mountain, and are so busy working and making it a beautiful place. Gloria and her husband work every day in town also, but they always have time for a visit or a phone call.

"Hi, Gloria, what are you doing?"

"Planting some fall Mums, Dee," she replies.

"What's going on with my neighbor?" she asks.

"Not much," I respond.

We visit a while and then, as I turn to come home, she gives me her usual farewell. "Now, Dee, if you need us for anything, just give us a call." A good neighbor is another special gift from God.

On the way across the yard I stop and check the fuel level in the gas tank. I definitely need to call about that.

I notice that the grass isn't growing so fast now. Maybe I won't have to mow too many more times before winter. That will be a welcome break—or, I should say, "gift."

Fall is upon us. We in the South look forward to the cooler days and the beautiful autumn colors that surround us. Even when the leaves on the trees start to die, their beauty—another of God's gifts—is unparalleled.

Today, as we continue our journey here on this earth, even after thousands of years of sin, the Lord still lavishes upon us so many of His matchless gifts, signs of His love—which is, itself, the most glorious of all gifts!

How many of God's special gifts to you have you discovered today? Why not take just a minute to think about them and to thank Him for them.

Now, didn't that make your day more beautiful?



[Dee Stringfellow writes from Spencer, TN]



## My Personal Testimony

# My “Frowning God”

*Milli Lewis*

The other day, my husband made a statement that caused me to stop dead in my tracks: “Just like we do things for our parents because we love them,” he said, “so we are to do things for God because we love Him.”

Suddenly, the realization hit me that I probably had never done anything for my dad because I loved him; I was afraid of him! In our family, we did what he said, or else! He constantly frowned and disapproved of our every action.

I had no idea how this had affected my life—my relationship with God—all through the years. I would get a glimpse of the beautiful love of the Father and His Son and then, as I tried to appropriate that love into my life, it wouldn't fit. Day by day, little by little, my mind would revert back to my picture of a frowning God. Discouragement would set in, and I would be devastated, because I did not understand how I could become so discouraged after such a beautiful experience in the love of God.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” (Psalm 1:1, 2) All my life I have interpreted such passages of Scripture as counsel for me to search out the law to find out what I am supposed to do for God, who is always frowning at me. Maybe, if I can discover just what He wants, and then do it, I might get a grin from Him. How sad!

It is difficult to believe that God is love (John 4:8) while in your mind's eyes all you see is a Being frowning down at you because He doesn't approve of your every move. Neither does such a view promote love for Him in the heart.

I must ask myself, Why do I read my Bible? Being raised a churchgoer, I think I found myself reading the Bible because I believed that was where I would find out what God wanted me to do. And I believe that one does find God's will in the Bible, but am I so busy trying to find out His will that I forget to find Him?

I was helping a friend make an extended move a few months ago. We had a caravan of vehicles, and we used two-way radios to talk back and forth. As we drove into the night we began to talk and share about the love of God. I had never before understood the risk the Father had taken when He offered His Son for us. I had somehow missed the point that the government of His entire universe was at stake.

As we drove through the night, I caught a glimpse of His love; of the enormity of His love. I began to weep and could not stop weeping and, for weeks after I came home, I basked in that love. Habits that I had struggled with fell away and were no longer a problem as I dwelt in His love, and I began sharing my wonderful experience with everyone!

I wish I could tell you that I lived happily ever after. Little by little, through various trials, inconveniences and small disasters, my focus turned to the pain I was feeling, and the image in my mind of a frowning God reappeared.

Isn't this the enemy's number one tactic? He might not be able to trip up truly sincere Christians on doctrine; they have the facts. Loose morals? They wouldn't think of it. He might not be able to trick them into dishonesty; honesty is important to them. He can, though, bring heartache and disaster, trivial inconveniences, problems in the church or trials between family members. The Christian begins to focus on the pain rather than Christ, and loses that sweet, sweet experience with the Lord.

I am thankful that, in spite of what my concept of God has been, He is still a God of love. He knows my heart and what it will take to bring me into the kind of relationship that He wants me to have. He keeps leading me by baby steps, and showing me little bits at a time because He doesn't want to overwhelm me. He keeps reminding me that, as I continue to spend time with Him and focus on knowing Him, He will guide me and show me what He is really like. He will also show me what His will is, but He wants me to know Him first. My delight must be in His

*(Continued on page 15)*

**YOU**

It matters little what other folks say,  
For it's only the things that you do  
That you will meet again some day  
When your journey here is through.

Let them think hard things, or say as much,  
They can only hurt your name.  
For your soul is something no one can touch,  
And YOU and your soul are the same.

Just keep that YOU that's in you right.  
Forget what the other folks may say.  
God's Word can be a shining light  
To safely guide YOU on your way.

*Wilma Carnell*

## A Page from My Experience

# Grandfather's Challenge

*Charles Millard Wilson*

My Grandfather and Grandmother Millard lived just five minutes away from our home in Laurel, Maryland, which was a very small town when I was growing up. I was their only grandchild for a number of years, so I got to be around them a lot. This was a good learning experience, as well as a lot of fun for me.

Grandfather started out as a hard working, keen thinking farmer; who later became a talented stone carver. I often went with him in his truck to deliver stonework and tombstones. We would pack a lunch, and as we set the stones, he would tell me stories of the olden days when he worked in his father's water-powered gristmill.

Quite often we would go on long trips together. Once we went to Hershey, Pennsylvania. The aroma of the chocolate candy factory reached us on the breeze some miles before we arrived. After a tour of the plant we were given a free candy bar—a real treat, though not a very healthy one.

One day when I was about seven years old, Grandfather came to our home and asked me to come over and sit on his lap as he had something to show me. He then pulled out of his pocket a most beautiful gold watch. It had a gold cover which protected the crystal and face from damage. He popped the cover up by pushing on the watch stem, and then asked, "Would you like to have this watch?" Naturally I said yes. "If you promise not to smoke until you are 21, you may have it now," Grandfather said. You may guess what my answer was. It really isn't hard to figure out!

I told Grandfather it was a deal, and I also said I wouldn't drink either, even after I was 21 years old. Guess what? I haven't done either, as I promised him, and I'm now a grandfather myself. I already knew at a young age that smoking was a "dead end street." As for liquor, beer and wine, I had seen their terrible effects, and I didn't wish to have those in my life.

Mother had told me of Grandfather's dislike for liquor long before this. She had told me about the time Grandfather was bitten by a poisonous snake on his farm. He got very sick. Neighbors brought over a bottle of liquor to help him get over the effects of the snakebite, but he rejected it, saying, "I'd rather die than drink that poison." He survived and, although he probably did not know it then, he no doubt recovered more quickly than if he had taken this "medicine."

Many years later, after Grandfather and Grandmother had passed away, I found a love letter Grandfather had written to Grandmother, postmarked before the turn of the century. In it Grandfather told, among other things, of a liquor store robbery in a nearby town, and he expressed the hope that this kind of business would be done away with.

Now, as I look back over the years to this beautiful gift of love from Grandfather, to his challenge and my promises kept, I think of how Grandfather chose to make a wise investment in his family's future. It is one that still lives and pays dividends 65 years later in the lives of my children and grandchildren and, hopefully, if time permits, my future great grandchildren. Modern medical research, as well as common sense, back up the wisdom of these decisions.

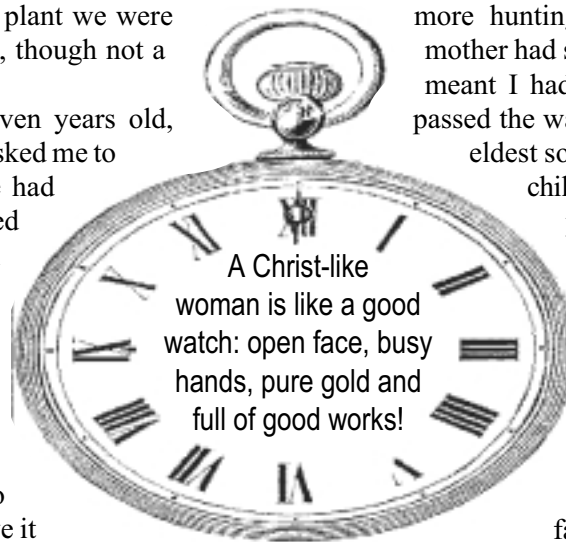
With the passing of my grandparents I found three more hunting case antique watches that Grandmother had stored away, and they all worked! This meant I had a watch for each of my children. I passed the watch Grandfather gave to me on to my eldest son. These watches were presented to our children on the same terms that Grandfather presented his watch to me. I'm trying to gather up more watches for my grandchildren. While finding these watches is no easy task, it certainly can produce investments of the highest order. Wall Street stocks and bonds can't come anywhere close to it for a profitable deal.

As the eldest son from a large family, Grandfather only had three years of formal education; but as a loving grandfather and a Christian businessman, I feel he was in a better class than most Fortune 500 millionaires.

Grandfather passed away back in the mid-1940s, while I was in the service of our country as a medical corpsman, but his wonderful influence still lives on in our family into the third and fourth generations. Think of the tremendous dividends my grandfather's challenge delivered, and is yet delivering, to his family these 65 years later.

If there are any grandparents reading this, please consider doing some shopping, and presenting gold watches or some other memorable keepsakes as symbols of a similar challenge to your family members. It might be the best investment you could make in their future, and it would further spread my grandfather's wise influence. My God-fearing, Bible-believing grandparents would have liked that.

[Mr. Wilson writes from his home in Hot Springs, North Carolina.]



(Continued from page 7)

simply manipulate the other party into doing what is desired. This person knows that his or her spouse will cower and retreat in the argument once the rage appears. Yet, this ploy is very foolish because you may seemingly win the argument, but in the end you risk losing relationship and intimacy with your spouse in the process.

However, there are times when anger is not a ploy used to control another. Sometimes an individual just has no control of the emotions that rage inside, due to a lack of desire or understanding as to how to control them. Such a person is simply out of control. Irrational anger is what drove the religious people of Jesus' day to attempt to throw Him over the cliff at Nazareth. These religious people were simply out of control. Luke says the people were "filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust Him out of the city...that they might throw Him down over the cliff." (Luke 4:28, 29) If you have explosive anger that is not dealt with, deep and intimate communication will be impossible. No one ever wants to communicate the deepest things of their heart with someone who is raging out of control in an angry fit. Remember, "...the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God." (James 1:20) Your wrath and anger can never produce something good or righteous in your marriage relationship. What you need to do is get some specific counseling from your pastor regarding how to control your anger. The sooner you take this action, the sooner you will learn how to communicate effectively.

Third, beware of blame shifting. This is usually done when your spouse points out one of your faults and you quickly cover yourself by shifting the blame to your mate or to another. This is what Adam and Eve did when they were

**No one ever wants to communicate the deepest things of their heart with someone who is raging out of control in an angry fit.**

first confronted by God for their sin. Adam said that it was, "...the woman You gave to be with me, she gave to me of the tree, and I ate." Eve also shifted the blame to Satan: "...the serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:12,13) Neither Adam nor Eve would take responsibility for his or her own actions. Adam in one breath blamed God for giving him this woman and blamed his wife for giving him the fruit. Eve in essence replied, "The devil made me do it." What solves this problem? Simply take responsibility for your own actions. Blame shifting is the result of pride and dishonesty. You know what you have done and your spouse does too, so why not admit it? Without you personally taking responsibility for what you've done, all you will do is play the blame game which only delays progress to a solution. This is a game that no one will win.

The last action that hinders good communication is the unwillingness to confess your faults during or after an argument. This is a problem that results from that same attitude of pride, and to resolve it the Apostle James suggests, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord...Do not speak evil one of another...Confess your faults one to another..." (James 4:10,11; 5:16) God requires you to humbly and honestly look at your own actions and not shift the blame. When either husband or wife takes this action of first confessing personal faults, it usually softens the other to do the same, and communication is restored.

But, you may ask, "How do I change all these sinful attitudes, words, and actions?" Take heart, there is a way!

To be concluded.



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(Continued from page 5)

law because it is a transcript of His character. I will meditate on it day and night. "My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate in thy statutes." (Psalm 119:48) If I focus on that law as a law of love, "[I] shall be like him; for [I] shall see him as he is." (1 John 3:2)

After having received a glimpse of this love, it is something I long to experience continually. I must let the Lord show me what is standing in the way, what is keeping me from understanding His love more fully. I want my love for Him to be rich and full, not selfish, cheap and shallow, having no roots. I want to understand more of the depth, the breadth, the intensity of God's love for me. I want to return to Him that same kind of love—the kind that will enable me to stand for Him, firm as a rock, without wavering, no matter what happens in the future.

The prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament experienced that kind of love. Job had it. He said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." (Job 13:15)

The whole 13th chapter of First Corinthians is about pure, unadulterated love, about loving with no selfish expectations. When we can love someone no matter what they do to us in return, we have learned true love. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8)

Amazing love!



[Milli Lewis writes from Batesville, Arkansas; Wilma Carnell writes from 4418 McAdam Crossing Drive, Pulaski, Virginia.

Care to comment? What has been your view of God? Has it changed over the years? Please write and share your testimony and be an "encourager" to others.]

## A Word to Parents

"I got two A's" the small boy cried,  
His voice was filled with glee.  
His father very bluntly asked  
"Why didn't you get three?"

"Mom, I've got the dishes done!"  
The girl called from the door.  
Her mother very calmly said,  
"And did you sweep the floor?"

"I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said,  
"And put the mower away!"  
His mother asked him with a shrug,  
"Did you clean off the clay?"

The children in the house next door  
Seem happy and content.  
The same thing happened over there,  
But this is how it went.



"I've got two A's," the small boy cried,  
His voice was filled with glee.  
His father proudly said, "That's great!  
I'm glad you live with me!"

"Mom, I've got the dishes done!"  
The girl called from the door.  
Her mother smiled and softly said,  
"Each day I love you more."

"I've mowed the grass," the tall boy said.  
"And put the mower away!"  
His mother answered with much joy,  
"You've made me happy today!"

Children desire a little praise,  
For tasks they're asked to do.  
If they're to lead a happy life,  
So much depends on you.

*Vivian Herrikan*

## Oh, Gramma Come Quick!

"Hurry Gramma, there's something I want you to see.  
He's crawling on his belly as cute as can be  
Along by the road, come quick, won't you please?  
The wonder of a ground squirrel is what the boy sees.

I run back to the dishes and wash up a pan  
"Oh, Gramma come quick I have a neat plan."  
In all of its detail he expounds and explains,  
While I wash the dishes so not one remains.

There's so much to do and more still to see  
"Oh, Gramma come quick on the clover's a bee.  
Besides, there's a hummer with his long funny nose  
Poked in a flower; now what do you s'pose?"

Gramma "commere" do you wanna see it?  
My block house needs a lady, do you wanna be it?  
Gramma, I colored this page just for you  
Which you like better? the green or the blue?

The sun settles down in its westerly nest  
"I'm not a bit sleepy." "But perhaps you could rest."  
So now I don't hear "Come quick as you can."  
For deep in sweet sleep is my five-year-old man.

When he's grown tall and handsome with voice rich and deep  
The memories of his childhood are the things I can keep.  
So proud of him then, but I'll wish I could hear  
"Oh, Gramma come quick! Oh, Gramma "commere!"

*Isabelle Edminster*



## Wit's End Corner

**“They...are at their wit's end. Then they cry  
unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth  
them out...” (Psalm 107:27, 28)**

Are you standing at “Wit's End Corner,”  
Christian, with troubled brow?  
Are you thinking of what is before you,  
And all you are bearing now?  
Does all the world seem against you,  
And you in the battle alone?  
Remember—at “Wit's End Corner”  
Is just where God's power is shown.

Are you standing at “Wit's End Corner,”  
Blinded with wearying pain,  
Feeling you cannot endure it,  
You cannot bear the strain,  
Bruised through the constant suffering,  
Dizzy, and dazed, and numb?  
Remember—at “Wit's End Corner”  
Is where Jesus loves to come.

Are you standing at Wit's End Corner”?  
Your work before you spread,  
All lying begun, unfinished,  
And pressing on heart and head,  
Longing for strength to do it,  
Stretching out trembling hands?  
Remember—at “Wit's End Corner”  
The Burden-bearer stands.

Are you standing at “Wit's End Corner”?  
Then you're just in the very spot  
To learn the wondrous resources  
Of Him who faileth not.  
No doubt to a brighter pathway  
Your footsteps will soon be moved,  
But only at “Wit's End Corner”  
Is the “God who is able” proved.

*Antoinette Wilson*

*Hearth to Hearth*

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