

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

June 2003

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:2) I pray that you will gain a special blessing from the main study this month. There are only a couple weeks left until camp meeting here in West Virginia. I certainly hope you will be able to attend. The first meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Tuesday evening, June 17, with additional meetings each day until 7 p.m. Saturday evening, June 21. This will be a camp meeting, so please come prepared to camp with tents, sleeping bags, food, etc. There is no charge for camping. For detailed directions and further camping information contact us by using the information on page 12.

Putting Faith to Work

by Lynnford Beachy

“This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4)

Faith is essential to overcoming the world, and overcoming the world is overcoming sin, for John says, “All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” (1 John 2:16) These lusts are what bring forth sin in our lives, as James wrote, “When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” (James 1:15)

When the Bible urges upon us the importance of faith, it is speaking about a particular faith. Let me give you an example: Do you believe that Antarctica exists? Most people would immediately answer, “Yes!” However, how do you know Antarctica exists? Have you ever been there? Have you seen it for yourself? Most people have not, so they accept its existence by faith. They have seen evidence that it exists and trust that it really does exist, even though they have never seen it for themselves. Now, does faith in the existence of Antarctica help you in your spiritual life? Does it affect how you relate to God and your fellow man? Certainly not! This particular faith is not important; it has no bearing in your spiritual life. It will not help you to overcome the world.

There is a particular faith that we need in order to overcome the world—a faith in something that will give us the victory over temptation and sin. Right after John told us that our faith is the victory that overcomes the world, he explained what that faith must be based upon

when he wrote, “Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:5) The Greek word that was translated “believeth” in this verse is the verb form of the Greek word that was translated “faith” in the previous verse, so John was speaking about the same thing in both verses.

Here we learn that the faith that is strong enough to overcome the world is faith in the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. There is a very important reason why this particular faith will give us the victory over temptation and sin. It is because this faith is the key to understanding the magnitude of God’s love. John put it this way, “In this was manifested the love of God toward us,

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because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.” (1 John 4:9) The greatness of God’s love for us can only be understood when we realize the value of the gift He gave for us. He gave His only begotten Son to die for our sins. When we understand the meaning of these words and *let the thought permeate our being*, it overwhelms us with an appreciation for God like nothing else can.

John continued, “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect...” (1 John 4:16, 17) Knowing, believing, and then dwelling in God’s love for us will cause our love for God to be made perfect, and it will give us the victory over sin and temptation. This is why Paul wrote, “Faith... worketh by love.” (Galatians 5:6)

Some may say that it is impossible for us to gain this victory. Friends, that is the biggest obstacle in obtaining the victory over temptation, and it was invented by Satan himself. God promised that He always makes a way to escape from sin when we are tempted. Paul wrote, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13) God does all in His power to keep you from falling into sin, and He is able to do it if you will only let Him. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 1:24, 25) God wants us to have the victory over every temptation, and we can only have it through faith.

Walk by faith

There is an Old Testament Scripture that Paul often quoted, which says, “The just shall live by his faith.” (Habakkuk 2:4) We must live by our faith—every decision, every word, must be of faith, “for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” (Romans 14:23) We must “walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

Faith is the essential ingredient in a Christian’s life, yet few people realize how to exercise it and use it to gain the daily victories we so desperately need. This faith is inseparably connected to the Word of God, for “Faith cometh... by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17) Faith is

the dependence upon the Word of God to do what that Word says as Jesus illustrated in Matthew 8:5-10. Let us take a few minutes to see how the Word of God can be used to accomplish God’s will in our lives.

Faith in God’s Word

Paul exhorted us, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” (Colossians 3:16) Paul wanted us to allow the Word of Christ to dwell in us, because he knew that if we were to do this, it would accomplish a work in us that cannot be accomplished apart from the Word of Christ. Christ spoke only the words of God, His Father (John 12:49), so the Word of Christ is the Word of God, which is “quick [living] and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” (Hebrews 4:12)

The Word of God is of a totally different nature from the word of men. Men may speak words but, in order for what is spoken to come to pass, something must be done in addition to the words. Not so with the Word of God. God speaks and things happen. When God said, “Let there be light,” immediately “there was light.” God did not have to do something in addition to speaking His Word. “For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” (Psalms 33:9) His Word contains within it the power to accomplish what that Word says. This is why Paul made the distinction between the words of men, and the Word of God, when he wrote, “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

Notice that Paul says the Word of God effectually works in those that believe. If you do not believe, the Word cannot and will not work in you, for the Word works in you by faith. Notice also that it is not you who are to do the work, but the Word of God is to work in you.

The Scripture says, “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10, 11) It is God’s Word

that accomplishes what He pleases wherever He sends that Word. And take courage friends because, “to you is the word of this salvation sent.” (Acts 13:26) Did you get that? This Word that brings salvation, that brings life, that accomplishes what God pleases, is sent to you, and it will accomplish God’s will in your life if you receive it as the Word of God, “which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32)

Paul said that the Word of God is able to build you up. This is referring to building your Christian character; to making you a better person, more and more resembling the perfect character of the Son of God. As Paul says, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:13) This can be accomplished in you, and it will be accomplished in you, if you will only let God’s Word do the work that it was intended to do in you. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,” and it will accomplish this work in you, *richly*.

The Word that works

The Scriptures say that God’s Word is able to build us up; is able to work in us, but how does this work get accomplished? Let us learn some important principles from the Word of God that will help us to know how this is accomplished, and give us the tools necessary to apply this knowledge in our lives.

Paul wrote, “I... labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” (Colossians 1:29) Paul said that he labored, and strove, according to, or in cooperation with, God’s working which worked in him mightily. We have a part to play, we have to strive and labor, but our labor is not to do God’s work, but to let God do His work in us. It is God who does the work, and all we need to do is allow Him to do that work in us; to surrender our wills to the will of God. We need to cooperate with Him, and exercise our faith in His Word, so that His Word can come in and do the work for us.

Away with the idea that “I must do this; I must do that.” No matter how hard you try, you can never do the work of God in your life. God is the only one who can do His work in you. You may try, but it must always end in failure. That is why there are so many miserable Christians in this world. They try and try and try, but end up in failure, because they are trying to do the work that only God can do. God wants to do the work in us, but most of us are too busy trying to do it ourselves. So

God steps aside and allows us to try until we realize that we cannot do it and we call upon Him for help; in faith believing that He can and will help us. Unfortunately, often times, after we receive the help, we return right back to our old routine of trying to do it on our own and, again, we end up in failure. God wants us to realize that He alone can do the work in us, and we need to stop trying to do it ourselves.

I would like you to think about something that is particularly for those who have had a drastic transformation in their lives at the point of conversion. When you first became a Christian, who was it that changed your life? Did you do it yourself? Certainly not! Think back on those days. You knew that it was totally God who did the work in you. Sure, you had a part to play, but your part was to surrender your will to God and put faith in Him and His Word; that He could do the work in you. You saw amazing things happen in your life that cannot be explained except to believe that God did the work in you. Wouldn’t you agree? Yet, many people think that once God brings them to conversion, He leaves them to do the rest on their own. But, the Bible says, “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” (Colossians 2:6) The same principles that applied during your conversion also apply today. You received Christ into your heart by faith, and you must walk in Him in the same way, by faith. Faith in the beginning, faith throughout, and faith unto the end, is the only way we can gain victory in our lives.

The Word used as a tool

We are instructed to put on the whole armour of God in order to fight in our battle against sin and temptation. Included in the list of the individual armour is the Sword of the Spirit. Paul wrote, “Take the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” (Ephesians 6:17) Paul tells us that we must have the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. This Sword that we are to take is a mighty Sword, “sharper than any twoedged sword.” (Hebrews 4:12) With such a mighty Sword in hand, we must be instructed on how to use it. If you send someone into battle with a mighty weapon, who does not know how to use it, it can do a lot of damage to the person using it, and to his allies who are fighting with him. Much damage has been done by those who have wielded this Sword without knowledge on how it should be used. Therefore, let us get some training on the use of this Sword so that we can win the

victory and avoid harming ourselves or others in the process.

There is a precious promise in the Word of God regarding the Sword of the Spirit. The Bible says, “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.” (Isaiah 59:19) What a precious promise! Whenever the enemy comes against you, tempting you, the Spirit of God will lift up a standard against him. This is an important piece of knowledge in our education of the proper use of the Sword of the Spirit. I am sure you have experienced it yourself. Suppose you are in a store, and the enemy suggests to you, by putting a thought into your mind, “You can take that piece of candy, nobody will notice it is missing.” Immediately, the Spirit of God raises up a standard against the enemy, and a verse that you have previously read comes to your mind, “Thou shalt not steal.” The Spirit of God raised up a standard against the enemy by giving you the appropriate portion of the Word of God when it was most needed. The Bible says to let this Word dwell in you; let it accomplish what God pleases. The Word was given to you for a reason, and it must be used as it was intended, or you will not gain the victory. It was intended to be used by faith to repel and fight back the advances of the enemy.

Notice how Jesus used the Word of God to gain the victory over temptation: “The devil said unto [Jesus], If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.” (Luke 4:3) What happened next? Immediately, the Spirit of God raised up a standard against the enemy by giving Christ the portion of Scripture that He needed at that moment to gain the victory. “And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.” (Luke 4:4) Here is the proper way to use the Sword of the Spirit. The Spirit of God brought to Christ’s memory the Words He needed, and Christ used them to attack the evil suggestion of the enemy, and that Word gave Him the victory.

The next assault of the devil was overcome in the same way: “The devil, taking [Jesus] up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” (Luke 4:5-8)

Jesus believed in the power of the Word of God. He believed that the Word would accomplish what that Word says, and He used the Word of God as a tool, a weapon, to gain the victory over sin. We can gain the victory in the same way. We must accept the Word of God as it is—living and powerful, and allow that Word to do in us just what that Word says.

Let us look at a few practical applications of this principle in our lives today.

Grace and peace

The Word says, “Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 1:3) Grace and peace are freely offered to you right now. There is power and life in those Words to do what those Words say, but you can only have grace and peace if you believe in the Word. Do you need grace or peace today? You can have it right now if you will accept it from God. He gives it, and as truly as light appeared the moment God said, “Let there be light,” so certainly will you have grace and peace this very moment if you will accept it by faith in the power of His Word.

Overcoming sin

Are you struggling with sin today? Does sin have dominion over you in some area of your life? The Word says, “Sin shall not have dominion over you” (Romans 6:14), and this will be true in you this very moment if you accept it and believe it right now for yourself. Believe that His Word contains within it the power to accomplish exactly what that Word says. He says, “Sin shall not have dominion over you,” and it won’t if you let that Word do what it was designed to do in you right now. When sin seeks to have dominion over you, the Spirit of God will raise up a standard against it, and God may use this very text to give you the victory. Let God’s Word perform that victory in you. Let the Word do its work. (See also 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Jude 1:24.)

Righteousness by faith

Paul says that we can have “righteousness by faith.” (Galatians 5:5) Do you need righteousness today? You can have it, but only through faith. Paul wrote, “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” (Romans 3:21, 22) You can have God’s righteousness right now, for He promised, but it will only come upon “them that

believe.” Do you believe that God has righteousness to give, that He wants to give it to you, and that He is faithful to give it to you because He promised in His Word? If so, “ask and ye shall receive.” (John 16:24)

Forgiveness of sin

Do you need forgiveness of sins? God’s Word says, “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” (Jeremiah 31:34) This is a promise, and you can count on it. John wrote, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9) Many people doubt whether God has really forgiven them because they think their sin is too great. But God promised that He will forgive us our sins if we confess and forsake them. Solomon wrote, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13) If you have confessed and forsaken your sins, you can be 100% sure that God has forgiven you. Jesus promised, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37) Accept His Word and believe it for yourself, and it will be accomplished in your life.

Receive the Spirit

There are several other practical applications of the principle of accepting the Word of God by faith, that can be summed up by the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus explained how earthly fathers are eager to give good gifts to their children, and then He said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13) Jesus said that God, the Father, is much more willing to give His Spirit to them that ask, than any earthly parent is willing to give good gifts to his children. This is a promise. Do you believe it? If so, “ask and ye shall receive.”

Remember that God will give you His Spirit if you ask. Now, notice what comes as a result of that gift: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22, 23) Follow the chain of promises here. Jesus promised that God would give His Spirit to those who ask, and here we learn some of the effects of receiving this Spirit from God. When we receive His Spirit, we automatically receive “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness,

goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance.” These are promised to us; they are not something we can manufacture on our own. Do you lack love for God or your fellow man today? You need God’s love. Are you depressed? You need the joy of the Spirit. Are you troubled? You need peace. Are you irritable? You need longsuffering. Are you harsh or rough? You need gentleness. Are you unkind? You need goodness. Do you find it hard to believe? You need faith. Are you proud? You need meekness. Do you lack self control? You need temperance.

All of these problems can be solved by asking God for one thing—His Spirit. He has promised to give it if we ask, all we need to do now is to believe that He gives what He promised, for He cannot lie. If you ask God for His Spirit, and believe that He gives it to you because He promised, then you can be sure that He has given it to you. You may not notice a sudden change immediately even though one has taken place, but this is when you must exercise faith. Give it some time, and keep believing that He has given you His Spirit, and soon you will notice that a change has taken place.

Let me tell you a story to illustrate this point. When I first became interested in giving my life to God I knew very little about the Bible or conversion. I didn’t even understand how to pray or confess my sins. My dad told me something that helped me a great deal. He showed me Psalm 51:10 where David asked God for a new heart, and then he showed me Ezekiel 36:26 where God promised to give me a new heart. After this, my dad told me to ask God to give me a new heart, one that loves God and desires to do His will, and to believe that God had done it. He told me that I would not feel that I had been changed immediately, but that I should get up from that prayer and believe that God gave me a new heart because He promised. My dad said that after a few days I would notice the difference in my life if I continued to believe that God gave me a new heart. I did just what my dad said, and found that he was exactly right. The Lord gave me a new heart just as He promised.

We need to do the same thing when we ask God for His Spirit. He promised that He would give us His Spirit if we ask. In fact, in the very same verse that God promises to give us a new heart, He also promises to give us a new spirit. It says, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)


Love

When we receive God's Spirit there is something that comes with it abundantly, and that is love. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." (Romans 5:5) God promises to give us His Spirit and love abundantly. Notice how love acts: "[Love] suffereth long, and is kind; [love] envieth not; [love] vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

God promises to give you His Spirit if you ask for it and believe that you receive it. "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matthew 21:22) You will receive God's Spirit if you do this and, with it, He has promises to shed abroad His love in your heart. We just read how love acts, so this love will act this way in you if you believe. These are promises that you can count on. Today, right now, you can have love abundantly, in your heart, that is kind and long suffering; that thinks no evil, that endures all things. Do you want this love in your heart? Ask God for His Spirit, and this love will be poured out in your heart if you believe. Accept it, believe it, and watch it be fulfilled right before your eyes. Try it and see.

You are not the one who is to produce this love in your heart, but it is God who puts it there by His Spirit. It is God who loves in you, and you need to step aside and let Him do His work in you. Follow the simple plan: believe His promises, trust in His Word, let His promises dwell in you, and His Word will accomplish what He pleases in your life.

Long before the Lord showed me the connection between these verses, I have experienced the fulfillment of them for myself. Often, when an evil thought seeks to find a foothold in my mind, the verse comes to my mind that says, "Love... thinketh no evil." When this verse comes to my mind, I meditate upon it and use it to beat back the assaults of the enemy. I cannot count the number of times this happened to me, long before I understood how the Bible explains this process.

God has "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Peter 1:4) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 7:1) 

Injured Indian Pastor Update


Praise the Lord! God has provided once again for the needs of His people.

Last month we informed you of a minister we met in India who had been injured for spreading the gospel. Members of a Hindu extremist group in India tried to kill him by using a jeep to run into him while he was riding a small motorcycle on his way home from a missionary journey to a Hindu village. He was seriously injured and left for dead, but he was found two hours later by one of his friends and rushed to a hospital for treatment. He received an operation which saved his legs, but left him unable to walk, except with a cane.

A further surgery needs to be performed to replace his hip and remove the metal screws and plates that were used to hold his femur together. This surgery will cost 285,000 Indian Rupees (\$6,064 US). The family and friends of this pastor have been able to raise 30,000 Rupees, which leaves 255,000 Rupees (\$5,424 US) remaining to cover the cost of the surgery.


The Lord laid it upon the hearts of His people to help provide for this need by sending, to date, a total of \$5,493.20. This amount will cover the cost of the surgery and the transfer fee to get the money to India. Praise the Lord for His care for His people!

As of today we are waiting to hear a reply from this pastor before we can proceed with arrangements to have the surgery performed. We will keep you updated regarding the status of his treatment.

On behalf of this pastor and his family, I would like to thank each of you who contributed toward this project. 

An Apology

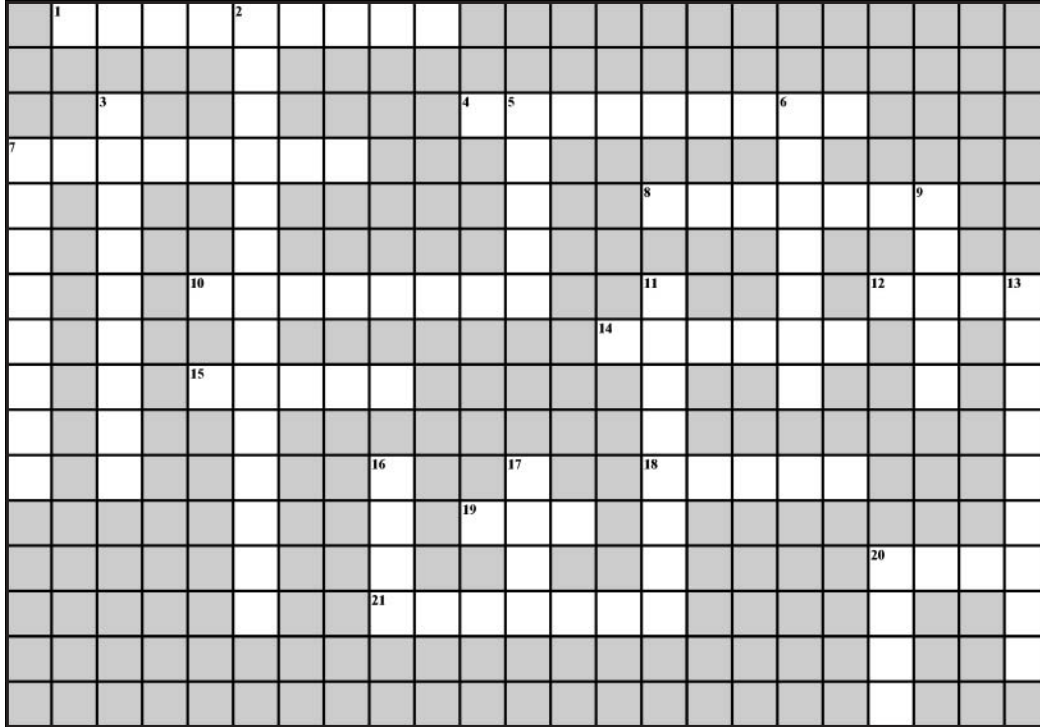
On page 5 of the February 2003 issue of *Present Truth*, I gave an explanation of the phrase that says a man and his wife "shall be one flesh." (Genesis 2:24) In my explanation I wrote, "This verse refers specifically to the marriage relation that, once consummated, makes a man and woman joined to each other. We know that this verse has this meaning because a man can even be 'joined to an harlot.' (1 Corinthians 6:16)"

One reader wrote expressing his disappointment for the way this was stated. I did not intend to convey the idea that a man and woman are *only* one in the sense of the marital relation, yet that is how it came across, and I am sorry for that. It is true that they are to be one in this sense, but in addition, they are to be one by uniting their lives together to work for a common goal. I apologize for not making this clear in the February issue of *Present Truth*. 

Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are beginning a series of crossword Bible studies that are based on the “These Last Days” Bible Lessons. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line.

How to Study the Bible



Answers are on page 12

- Who controls the course of human events? Daniel 2:20, 21—**19 Across**
- Before God performs His work, He reveals His plans to His servants the _____. Amos 3:7—**7 Down**
- God revealed or declared His plans from _____ times? Isaiah 46:10—**6 Down**
- The holy men of God in ancient times got their information from the _____. 2 Peter 1:21 (2 Words)—**3 Down**
- The Psalmist said that God will _____ His words for ever. Psalm 12:6, 7—**10 Across**
- Peter said that we have a sure word of _____. 2 Peter 1:19—**7 Across**
- We should live our lives by every _____ of God. Matthew 4:4—**17 Down**
- We must _____ to show ourselves approved unto God. 2 Timothy 2:15 — **15 Across**
- The prophecies of the Bible are not of a private _____. 2 Peter 1:20—**2 Down**
- Interpretations _____ to God. Genesis 40:8—**14 Across**
- **Note:** Do not interpret the Bible; let the Bible interpret itself. When you read something in the Bible that you do not understand, instead of trusting your own ideas, look for other Bible verses that will explain the meaning of the more difficult passage.
- The Bible tells us that when we study, _____ must be upon precept. Isaiah 28:10—**8 Across**
- To understand the Bible we must compare spiritual things with _____ things. 1 Corinthians 2:13—**4 Across**
- When we study the Bible we need the Holy Spirit to _____ us. John 14:26—**9 Down**
- **Note:** Whenever we study the Bible we should always pray that the Holy Spirit will direct our thoughts and help us to understand God’s Word.
- In the last days _____ times shall come. 2 Timothy 3:1—**11 Down**
- Evil men and seducers will abound, _____ and being deceived. 2 Timothy 3:13—**1 Across**
- False prophets shall arise and show great signs and _____ to deceive people. Matthew 24:24—**21 Across**
- To prevent deception, we must _____ all things. 1 Thessalonians 5:21—**5 Down**
- We are to test all ideas by God’s _____. Isaiah 8:20—**20 Across**
- God’s people are destroyed for lack of _____. Hosea 4:6—**13 Down**
- God’s word is a _____ unto our paths. Psalm 119:105—**18 Across**
- We must _____ in the light God gives. John 12:35—**12 Across**
- We must be willing to do God’s _____ before we can know if a doctrine is of God. John 7:17—**20 Down**
- God wants to show us things that we _____ not. Jeremiah 33:3—**16 Down**

Lessons on Faith (Part 8)

by Alonzo T. Jones

“To HIM that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Romans 4:5)

This is the only way that anybody in this world can ever become righteous. First admit that he is ungodly, then believe that God justifies, counts righteous, the ungodly, and he is righteous with the very righteousness of God.

Everybody in the world is ungodly. “Ungodly” means “unlike God.” And it is written, “All have sinned and come short of the glory [the goodness, the character] of God.” (Romans 3:23)

Anybody, therefore, who will admit that he ever came short of being like God in anything, in that confesses that he is ungodly.

But the truth is that *everybody*, in *everything*, has come short of being like God. For “they are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” (Romans 3:9-18)

Then, as there is not one on earth who is not ungodly, and as God justifies the *ungodly*, this on God’s part makes justification—righteousness, salvation—full, free, and *sure to every soul on earth*.

And all that anybody needs to do to make it all sure to himself on his own part, is to accept it—to believe that God does justify, personally and individually, him *who is ungodly*.

Thus, strange as it may sound to many, the only qualification, and the only preparation, for justification is for a person to acknowledge that he is ungodly.

Then, having such qualification, having made such preparation, all that is required of him to *obtain* justification, full, free, and sure, is to believe that God justifies *him*, the ungodly one.

It is quite easy for many to believe that they are ungodly and even to acknowledge it, but for them to believe that God justifies *them*—that is too much.

And the sole reason why they cannot believe that God justifies *them*, is that they are ungodly, *so* ungodly.

If only they could find some good in themselves or if only they could straighten up and do better, they might have some courage to hope that God would

justify them. Yes, they would justify themselves by *works* and then profess to believe in justification by faith!


But that would be only to take away all ground for justification, for if a man can find good in himself, he has it already, and does not need it from anywhere else. If he can straighten up and do better of himself, he does not need any justification from anywhere else. It is, therefore, a contradiction in terms to say that I am so ungodly that I do not see how the Lord can justify me. For if I am not ungodly, I do not need to be *made* righteous; I *am* righteous. There is no half-way ground between godliness and ungodliness.

But when a person sees himself so ungodly as to find there no possible ground of hope for justification, it is just there that faith comes in; indeed, it is only there that faith can possibly come in.

For faith is dependence on the word of God *only*. So long as there is any dependence on himself, so long as there is any conceivable ground of hope for any dependence upon anything in or about himself, there can be no faith, so long there is no place for faith, since faith is dependence on “the word only.” (Matthew 8:8)

But when every conceivable ground of hope of any dependence on anything in or about himself *is gone* and is acknowledged to be gone; when everything that can be seen is against any hope of justification, *then* it is that, throwing himself on the promise of God, upon the word only, hoping against hope, faith enters and by faith he finds justification full and free, all ungodly though he be.

For forever it stands written, “To him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” (Romans 4:5) “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ.” (Romans 3:22) “Whom God hath set forth... to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past.” (Romans 3:25)

This is what it is to exercise faith. Are you exercising faith? For “understanding how to exercise faith: this is the science of the gospel.” 

(This article was first printed in the February 7, 1899 issue of *The Review and Herald*. It is also found on pages 31-33 of the book *Lessons on Faith* by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner. I added some verse references that were left out in the original.

Editor)

Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (Part 17)

by George McDaniel

(This is the seventeenth in a series of health articles that are designed to help you gain a deeper appreciation for God's amazing handiwork of the human body and a better understanding of how it works and how it can be better maintained by simple methods. George McDaniel is my father-in-law, and has been a registered nurse for many years, which, along with much research, has taught him many useful health principles. I pray that you are being blessed by these articles. *Editor*)

Air

Air consists of a little less than 80% nitrogen, about 20% oxygen, 1% carbon dioxide, and traces of other substances, such as water vapor. As far as humans are concerned, the most important constituent of air is the oxygen it contains. The nitrogen is important to the formation of protein by plants, and also to dilute the oxygen. If the oxygen content in the atmosphere were much higher, fires would be a very great danger, and very difficult to control. You may remember the fire that occurred during a test of the American space capsule, Apollo I. The oxygen level inside the capsule was 100%. A fire occurred, apparently due to an electrical spark, and burned very intensely, killing the astronauts. Premature infants used to be given 100% oxygen to try to compensate for their underdeveloped lungs, until it was found that it caused them to become blind.

Oxygen is essential to life but, used in improper amounts, it can also be highly toxic. It is the major driving force in many aspects of human metabolism. It is the most potent antibiotic and the most efficient scavenger and detoxifying molecule. However, it can pick up one electron and become superoxide, which is a very potent oxidant (free radical) but also a deterrent to infectious agents. Free radicals can destroy unsaturated fats, proteins and other large molecules. The body has antioxidant defense mechanisms, including cellular antioxidants and antioxidative enzymes, which help protect us from the dangerous effects of oxygen.

This is one reason why a good diet is so important. Fresh fruits and vegetables contain substances that act as antioxidants and free radical scavengers, such as vitamins A, C and E, and phytonutrients too numerous to mention. A good diet also eliminates refined carbohydrates and refined oils, which can contribute to the production of free radicals.

Oxygen is the most essential ingredient for life. We can live for several weeks without food, several days without

water, but only a few minutes without oxygen. We need air for life and we need good quality fresh air for health.

Fats and glucose from the food we eat combine with oxygen from the air to give us energy. If you feel tired most of the day and lack energy, one of the things to consider is that you have a lack of oxygen due to poor breathing habits.

Breathing is natural and automatic. It is something we don't have to think about. It is controlled by nerve centers in the medulla at the base of the brain. There are monitoring areas in the body that sense the levels of oxygen and carbon dioxide. If oxygen gets too low, and/or carbon dioxide gets too high, a stimulus will be sent to the diaphragm to contract and initiate a breath.

If we had to consciously control every breath, it would be impossible to sleep because when we sleep we would stop breathing and soon die. When we are awake, we do have some conscious control of our breathing, but it is impossible for us to hold our breath for very long. Even if we could hold our breath to the point of losing consciousness, it is not possible to kill ourselves in that way because as soon as we become unconscious, the breathing control center in the medulla would take over and we would begin breathing.

Because breathing is not under voluntary control, we may think that we get enough oxygen into our systems, but this is not necessarily so. Improper breathing techniques can result in inadequate ventilation. We get enough air to sustain life, but not enough to be really healthy.

Most of us were born with proper breathing techniques. If you watch a baby breathe, you will notice that his chest expands slightly, the lower ribs flare out, and the abdomen bulges out with every breath. This is normal breathing. Many adults do not breathe correctly. Because of emotional constraints or other forms of stress the muscles tighten, which causes their breathing to be too shallow. Therefore, they don't get enough oxygen.

Many adults have very little abdominal movement; when breathing, only the chest moves. Shallow and restricted breathing reduces vitality and causes the metabolism to be lower. It leads to fatigue, exhaustion, and depression. It can affect every area of life—memory, creativity and concentration. It also can dull the fine points of mental activity such as will power, discernment and judgment. It can also affect our feelings, making us prone to develop negative feelings such as pain, anger, low self-esteem and guilt.

If you have some of the above symptoms, there is a good possibility that they can be helped by learning to breathe correctly.

It is important to become conscious of the way we breathe. By consciously practicing correct breathing techniques, we can overcome the bad habits and develop good habits of breathing. When good breathing becomes habitual, many of the symptoms it caused will go away and the stress that underlies it all can be relieved.

Several times a day, take a few minutes to breathe correctly. Breathing should be deep and balanced. Slowly

take a full, deep breath, expanding the abdominal muscles. This should take four or five seconds. Then slowly exhale for about five or six seconds. The abdomen should be relaxed. Remember that the lung tissue is mostly in the sides and back and less in the front. There is very little in the high chest. Most of the expansion should be in the abdomen and lower ribs. There should be little or no movement in the high chest. If you get dizzy or spacey, stop and begin again later. This is something that takes little time, is easy to do and costs nothing. It may also be very beneficial.

More next month.



Letters from our Readers



"We returned safely home. We visited the Northern Province and many people accepted the message. Praise be to God. We met Brother ____ face to face in Tanzania. We gave him six boxes of tracts, totaling 15,000 tracts, for Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.... Please remember mission Malawi this month. Thank you for your prayers and support. God bless you and give my regards to all." *Zambia*

"My husband and I enjoy your news/magazine. Our daughter is in the army and is in Iraq. Would you please send our daughter the magazine and keep her and all the troops in your prayers. If you have any extra back issues, please mail them also, as she will share reading material with others. Thanks so much!" *Ohio*

"I have been reading the *Present Truth* magazine you send monthly to my brother, and would like to receive one of my own. In April's magazine, the topic of "The Mark of the Beast" was very good and I learned a lot from it." *Kenya*

"I am praising the Lord every day for the truth that is presented through your organization and in your magazine." *Rwanda*

"Please send me some of your Bible studies and magazines." *Puerto Rico*

"We are so thankful to God that the truth is moving around Peru—everywhere in the whole territory, and it seems that we are still not doing enough. But we believe that it is God's time, and we wait in His mercy to wake this country up and get them out of the idolatry that does so much harm to themselves.... We believe Lynnford may have some wonderful testimonies about the people in India. We believe it must be similar to these countries—full of idolatry." *Peru*

"Please send some more copies of the newsletter, *Present Truth*. I have to send them to other workers." *India*

"I hope in the Lord that you arrived safely to your country. I pray for you and your family members and the

believers in your church. When you were here you started the work of spreading the gospel. All of your sermons were very, very useful to our believers. The Lord poured out His Holy Spirit. I hope that this gospel work will be continued in India, through our church. I wish to spread this message from villages and towns to the people; those who do not know our Lord Jesus Christ." *India*

"I read the story on your trip [to India]. Oh, how I envy you doing something worth while like that. Hopefully I will be used more in the future. I feel like I am wasting time and want to become more active in the fields where God has told me He wants me to work." *Australia*

"God has been blessing our devotionals through your magazine, and we were blessed beyond measure through the 'Lessons on Faith (part 3).' Most of the questions some people used to ask about the Holy Spirit were also answered on the other page about the Holy Spirit. We are so blessed.

"There is another very important subject which was on health—"Fearfully and Wonderfully Made (Part 11)" which was also a source of blessing to my wife. My wife is a medical evangelist and she so much loved the article and requested if you can send her all the past issues of *Present Truth* that contain all the articles.... My wife needs these articles of Brother George McDaniel. The articles are a source of blessing to our family and she is teaching the natural remedies to the body of Christ.

"My youngest daughter loves the puzzles so much that now her knowledge of the Scripture is increasing. Sometimes she asks me questions from it and, at times, I don't get the answer correct, it is full of fun." *Benin*

"If you have some helpful material send it to me, because I want to learn. I am studying the package you sent me very diligently. My duty is to tell others by duplicating the material." *South Africa*

Kenya Camp Meeting Report

by Pastor Maurice O. M. Anyango

(Some of our brethren in Kenya hosted a camp meeting in Homa Bay a few months ago. Pastor Maurice Anyango sent us the following report. I pray that it will be an encouragement to you. I deleted names of people and places to keep the information from being used against the message. *Editor*)

We are so glad that the camp meeting in Homa Bay took place as we had planned. Most of the visitors were pastors from different denominations. Even though I called them pastors, they use titles such as “Reverends,” “Bishops,” “Right Reverends,” “Archbishops,” “Rectors,” etc.

Recently I met one of the Archbishops of one of these churches. We invited him to come to the meetings, but he did not attend. When I asked him the reason, he said, “Even though your invitation was bearing my name I could not come because it was written to *Pastor* _____, while I am *Archbishop* _____.”

Even though we invited 87 different pastors, from different denominations, only 16 of them managed to attend. I hope the confusion in the title is not the reason that many of them did not attend. Nevertheless, we are glad that at least some managed to attend.

The average daily attendance was 125. This included the orphans who are staying with us who, at that time, numbered 54.

On Monday, the evening before the first scheduled meeting, eleven visitors had arrived. Therefore, we had an evening devotion, which I conducted. We also had beautiful spiritual songs from our church youth choir. Over three-quarters of the youth choir members are orphans who are staying with us. I can say it was a beautiful start.

On Tuesday we started as we had arranged. The main topic of discussion throughout the camp meeting was the truth about God. This is why we invited preachers from different denominations whom I knew very well to be Trinitarians. We started straight away to tackle this topic. On the first day, very few people followed the topic. It was hard for them to understand me as I was trying to explain that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I’m saying it was hard because they had always believed that Christ is God Himself rather than His Son.

After this introduction to the truth about God, Brother _____ taught about the Sabbath. This also became another touchy subject. Most of the Sunday preachers claimed that the Sabbath was for the Jews and not for Christians. It was therefore necessary to teach this topic starting from creation in Genesis, long before there was ever a Jew. We

thank God, for after three days of handling this topic, eight preachers, and about 22 other visitors, accepted the Sabbath. That afternoon I continued with the topic of the truth about God. After that, we heard spiritual songs from our youth choir and then we closed at 6:30 p.m.

On Wednesday it was a busy day with many topics being tackled. We discussed the Trinity, condition of the dead, the Sabbath and the Holy Spirit. Those who attended the lessons were able to follow the teachings concerning the truth about God. The response was positive, for people were able to understand that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God.

On Thursday we started with a morning devotion from Pastor _____ who has finally joined us, having fully understood the truth, and has made the decision to join us and work together with us. He was fired by his church after they discovered that he is a Sabbath-keeper. We thank God for giving this pastor the strength to stand during his testing time.

After the devotion, it was time to teach the last message on the the truth about God. This topic was fully understood by many people and they made decisions. We searched from one chapter to the other but there was not even a single verse that referred to Jesus Christ as “God the Son.” In addition, there is not even a single verse written that says, “God the Holy Spirit.” But we could find many verses that say, “the Son of God” and “the Spirit of God.” Many people rejected the doctrine of the Trinity and accepted the teachings according to the Scriptures. We also taught how the Catholic Church introduced pagan doctrines into Christianity, and that the doctrine of the Trinity is among the false doctrines the church introduced.

In the afternoon, Brother _____ taught the last message concerning the Sabbath. Many people made the decision to accept the message.

I taught the last topic of the day, which was about the condition of the dead. After that, I made a call to see if there was anybody who was willing to be baptized. Five people accepted the call. We praise the Lord for this.

On Friday, after the morning devotion, we heard a wonderful prophetic message from Revelation 17:1-5. The pastor who gave this message had been photocopying the *Present Truth* newsletters that I was sending him every month and distributing them to other pastors and church members. I love the way he has stood for the truth.

After that topic of Revelation 17:1-5, we went down to the lake to conduct the baptism of five people.

That afternoon, we did not have a sermon; we gave people time to prepare for the Sabbath.

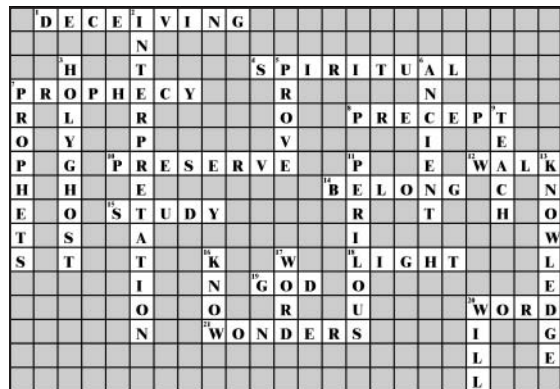
On the Sabbath day, we conducted the usual program. In the afternoon, we had a study on family life and, at the same time, another brother and I taught youth and children respectively. Then we heard songs from our youth choir.

On Sunday, after morning devotion and breakfast, the visitors departed. However, two pastors remained behind to learn more about God and His Son. They stayed for two more days and left on Tuesday.

We thank God for the success of these meetings. We thank all the brothers and sisters who contributed financially for the success of this camp meeting. May God bless all the brothers who are working hard for the salvation of Africa and for the work in Africa.

May God bless His work. We pray God will provide for His work and for His truth to continue spreading. ✍
(Pastor Maurice O. M. Anyango pastors a church in Kenya, and manages an orphanage with 59 children. If you would like to send him a word of encouragement you can write to him at: PO Box 132, Homa Bay, Kenya. His e-mail address is: maurice@racham.westernet.co.ke. *Editor*)

Answers to "How to Study the Bible" Crossword Puzzle on page 7



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Editor: Lynnford Beachy, HC 64 Box 128-B, Welch, West Virginia 24801, phone: (304) 732-9204, fax: (304) 732-7322, e-mail: berean@presenttruth.info.

Present Truth

HC 64 Box 128-B
Welch, West Virginia 24801
U.S.A.