

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

October 2012

“...unto the church... which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Thessalonians 1:1).

God is wonderful! It is exciting to see how the Lord works in so many amazing ways. Praise God for being so good! Change is happening all around us, but we can be confident that the God who provided for us yesterday will take care of us in these uncertain times. “Have faith in God” (Mark 11:22).

Faith in the Word of God

by Lynnford Beachy

Faith is an extremely important part of the Christian’s experience. The Bible says, “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). John wrote, “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). Jesus even said that God’s work in this world is to get us to believe (John 6:28, 29).

We know that faith is a necessity, but what is faith? The Bible says, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). Here we have a Bible definition of faith, but it is a little vague. If this is all we had to explain faith, we may not know what it really is. Let us notice an example of

faith in action so we can know exactly what faith is.

The Faithful Centurion

“When Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me:

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and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour" (Matthew 8:5-13).

Here Jesus described faith in a practical way. He said that the Roman military officer had great faith, even greater than anyone in Israel. What did this man do that caused Jesus to make such a startling remark? The centurion wanted something done, and he wanted Jesus to do it. When Jesus offered to come to his house and do it, the centurion refused, asking Him to "speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Here is the key to understanding faith. The centurion asked him simply to "speak the word only" to accomplish what he wanted. The centurion was content with Jesus speaking *the word only* without any other evidence that what he wanted would be done. So faith is depending upon *the word only* to do what that word says.

The Power of the Word

God said, "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 55:11). God's word is powerful, and able to perform what that word says. There is an inherent difference between the word of God and the word of men. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). God's word is powerful, man's word is not.

Paul 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). Believing that God's word is powerful enables that word to effectually work in us. Jesus said to the centurion, "as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." Faith in the power of God's word is the key that unlocks the power of God in our lives.

God's word is able to do what that word says. When God says something it happens. When God said, "Let there be light," immediately "there was light" (Genesis 1:3). When God says something that is not so, immediately it becomes so. That is why it is "impossible for God to lie" (Hebrews 6:18). A lie is to say something that is not so. The Bible does not say that God does not want to lie, or that He chooses not to, but that it is "impossible for God to lie." God's word

is so powerful that He “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). Man’s word is not powerful. When man says something that is not so, he must do something in addition to that word to make it so. If I say, “the grass is purple,” I have to paint the grass to make it so. But if God says, “the grass is purple,” it immediately becomes purple. This is the intrinsic difference between God’s word and man’s word. God’s word is powerful, man’s word cannot compare.

Instantaneous Results

There is an interesting story in the gospel of John of how quickly God’s word performs what it says. We read, “So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed,

and his whole house” (John 4:46-53).

When Jesus was here He spoke only the words of His Father (John 12:49; 14:10). When Jesus spoke, it was the word of God, His Father, speaking through Him. The moment Jesus spoke the words, “Thy son liveth,” this man’s son was immediately healed.

God not only heals us physically, but the most important healing is spiritual healing. God forgives us and we are immediately justified (made innocent). This is not a long process. God already spoke the word, “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). The moment we confess our sins, He forgives them, and will never mention them to us again (Ezekiel 33:16). We must also believe the rest of the verse that speaks of God cleansing us from all unrighteousness. God is able to give us instant victory over temptation, “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4).

Satan wants us to think that victory over temptation is a long, drawn-out process that requires a lot of time. He wants us to believe in evolution when it comes to victory over temptation. But God is a God of instant creation. Paul wrote, “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). When we accept Christ into our hearts, God creates in us a “new heart” and a “new spirit” (Ezekiel 36:26). God has promised, “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). When we are tempted, there is always a way of escape, and that way is to call upon God. He says, "And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Psalms 50:15). Peter gave us a striking example of this when he walked on water.

A Lesson from Peter

The disciples left Jesus on the shore and were alone in a boat on the sea when something startled them. "And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid. And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he said, Come...." (Matthew 14:25-29). Peter wanted to do something amazing, something unheard of. He knew that it would be futile to attempt to walk on water without Christ's word. But Jesus said, "Come." Peter had the word of God, the Father, who was speaking through Christ, bidding Him to walk on the water. With the authority of the God of the universe behind such a bidding, Peter could confidently step out of the boat, and he did.

"And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water,

to go to Jesus." (Matthew 14:29). This is absolutely amazing! What was holding Peter up? Was it the water? Certainly not! Peter was held up by the word of God, which worked in accordance with his faith. Jesus said in another place, "as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee" (Matthew 8:13). If Peter had not believed the word of God, he would not have been able to walk on water. There was nothing holding him up but the word of God. He could just as easily have been walking across the Grand Canyon, a mile above the ground. Peter was walking by faith in the word of God.

Unfortunately, Peter did not continue this walk of faith. The Bible says, "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:30, 31). Jesus identified Peter's problem as a lack of faith. Thus showing that when He was walking on water it was by faith in the word of God only to do what that word said.

When Peter began to sink, what kept him from drowning? Was it his faith? Peter had faith that Christ would come to His rescue, but at that moment he lost faith in the word of Christ to keep him walking on water. His faith shifted from God's ability to keep him walking on water to God's faithfulness in keeping him from drowning. As he believed, he received. Jesus immediately caught Peter when he cried out to Him, but He wanted him not to sink at all.

Where Do You Stand?

How is it with you? Jesus asked His disciples, “Where is your faith?” (Luke 8:25). In what do you put your confidence? Do you believe God can do what He says? Jesus made some radical statements about faith. He said, “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” (Mark 11:23). To this day I have not seen a mountain cast into the sea, but Jesus said it can happen. Notice the key element needed for this to take place. If a man “shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass.” To have faith like this, we must look again at the definition of faith. Faith is depending upon the word of God only to do what that word says.

When God told Moses to hold his staff out over the Red Sea and it would part, Moses believed the word, and it happened (Exodus 14:15-22). But if Moses had not been told by God to do that, how successful would he be when he stretched out his rod? Nothing would have happened, because without the word of God, Moses could not have true biblical faith. Under these circumstances Moses would have retained some doubt about his success. Faith must be connected to the word of God for it to be true biblical faith. People put faith in all kinds of things, but nothing is as dependable as the word of God, and therefore no faith can be as strong as faith in the

word of God. I might say, “It is going to rain tomorrow.” But how do I know it is going to rain. Is it because the weatherman told me it would? Have they ever been wrong? Many times! How can I be sure it will rain tomorrow? The only way I can know for sure is if God said it will rain tomorrow. Then I can be absolutely certain it will happen.

Elijah told Ahab “As the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word” (1 Kings 17:1). Elijah was a weather forecaster. How did he know? God told him. Three and half years later God told him about the weather again. “And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth” (1 Kings 18:1). Just as God promised, it rained again. With this kind of inside information from the creator of all, anyone can be a confident weather forecaster.

When Elijah called all the prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel and had a test to see which God would answer by fire, he was certain that the true God of heaven would send fire. Elijah put his life on the line when he called that meeting, and he did it by faith in the word of God. In his prayer Elijah revealed the source of his confidence. He said, “...let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word” (1 Kings 18:36). Elijah was confident that his test would be successful because he had God’s

by Kendra Beachy

word to rely upon. He knew that God would send fire because God said that He would do it.

It is only when you have the word of God to rely upon that you can have faith strong enough to move mountains. There were many miracles recorded in the Bible that were just as amazing as moving a mountain. The key to all of them is dependence on *the word of God only* to do what that word says.

God has not changed! He still is able to work amazing miracles in our lives today, the greatest of which is to take a filthy sinner and make him white as snow. This is truly a miracle! And we have the word of God to depend upon for this miracle. The Bible says, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (1 John 5:14). "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication" (1 Thessalonians 4:3). When you ask God to sanctify you and "keep you from falling" (Jude 1:24), you have the word of God to depend upon, that God's word will do what it says.

Jesus said to a man who was healed of blindness, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark 10:52; see also Matthew 9:20-22.) The same is true with you today. Your faith in God will make you whole from your sins. Jesus said, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22). Have faith in the precious promises in His word, for it is "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).

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Dear Friends,

It is good to be home! It has been over three weeks since we left for the Tennessee camp meeting and other points north. We really loved our entire trip, and I am happy to report that for the first time I was able to make the whole trip and not get sick! Praise the Lord for continued health.

Camp meeting was a blessing. I really enjoyed connecting with others in the family of God. Lynnford spoke on "Walking with God" and "Walking in the Spirit." Recordings of the presentations are available. Please let us know if you would like them. The six-part series in the January-September issues of *Present Truth*, "Answering Objections," has been compiled into booklet form and is now available. Its objective is to answer the most commonly encountered Bible verses used to support the Trinity doctrine.

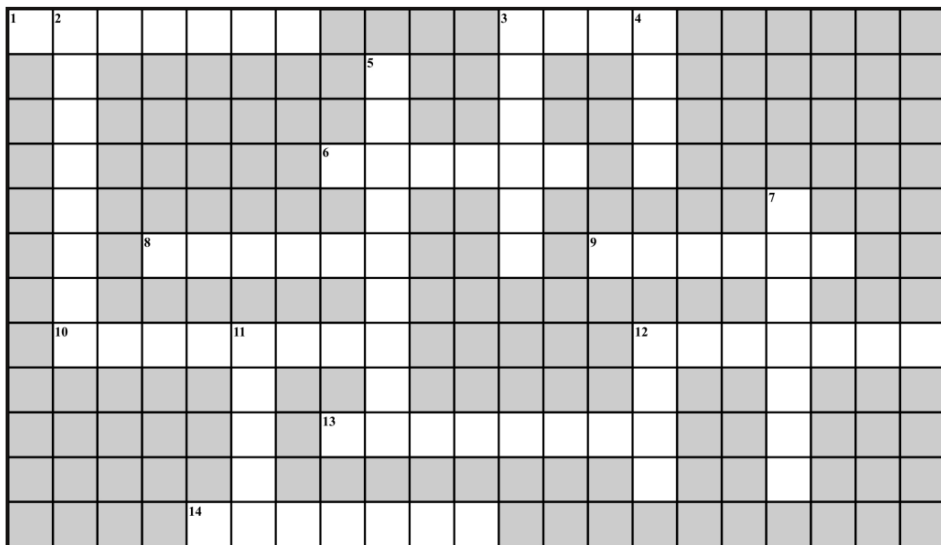
Since *Present Truth* is a small paper I find it difficult to include pictures and family updates in this forum without robbing from space used for Bible Study. Because of this I will be sending an additional paper out via e-mail and postal mail at least four times a year. If you would like to receive the additional paper please send your e-mail address or postal address to sidenotes@gmx.com. I will continue to update on ministry happenings here as needed.

Smiles and Prayers, Kendra

Present Truth **Something for the Young at Heart**

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies based on the book, *Bible Handbook*, by Stephen Haskell. 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. (The KJV is required.)

The Close of Probation



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue.

➤ There will be a time when Jesus will announce, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust ____; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy ____; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous ____; and he that is holy, let him be holy ____." Revelation 22:11 (1 word)—**11 Down**

Note: This is a time that is sometimes called the close of probation because after Jesus makes this announcement, there is no changing your condition. It is vital that we are right with God at the close of probation.

➤ John "saw four ____ standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth,..." Revelation 7:1—**6 Across**

➤ Then John "saw another angel ascending from the east, having the ____ of the living God:..." Revelation 7:2—**3 Across**

➤ The angel commanded the other angels to "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have ____ the servants of our God in their foreheads." Revelation 7:3—**3 Down**

Note: After God's people are sealed, they cannot be hurt by the turmoil going on around them. Read Psalm 91 for an explanation of how God will protect them during this time.

➤ Ezekiel described the same event when he wrote, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst

of Jerusalem, and set a ____ upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.” Ezekiel 9:4—**12 Down**

- The holy and righteous people will be “____ among the living in Jerusalem.” Isaiah 4:3—**7 Down**
- Of those who overcome, Jesus said, “I will not blot out his name out of the book of ____, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.” Revelation 3:5—**4 Down**
- “And at that time shall Michael ____, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1 (2 words)—**1 Across**

Note: The name Michael means “who is like God.” Jesus Christ is the one who is most like God, so this name fits Him very well. Michael is the one who stands for God’s people, He intercedes and mediates for them. Jesus Christ is not an angelic being, but the ruler of the angels (Revelation 12:7; Jude 1:9; Joshua 5:13-15). In Daniel 11:20, 21 we find that the term “stand up” means to receive or take a kingdom. When Jesus stands up He ceases to be high priest, takes His kingdom and is called “King of Kings” from that time forward.

- “For there is one God, and one ____ between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 2:5—**13 Across**

Note: After Jesus stands up to receive His kingdom and ends His priestly

ministry, there is nobody to mediate between God and men. There will then be a terrible time of trouble, but God’s people will have been sealed and will be protected from all the turmoil around them.

- Those who receive the mark of the beast “shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without ____ into the cup of his indignation;...” Revelation 14:10—**12 Across**
- Christ will “put on the garments of ____ for clothing;...” Isaiah 59:17—**5 Down**
- John saw “seven angels having the seven last ____; for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” Revelation 15:1—**14 Across**
- “And the ____ was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the ____, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.” Revelation 15:8 (1 word)—**8 Across**
- When God sent the plagues on Egypt He told Pharaoh, “I will put a ____ between my people and thy people: to morrow shall this sign be.” Exodus 8:23—**10 Across**
- “A ____ shall fall at thy side, and ten ____ at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” Psalms 91:7 (1 word)—**2 Down**
- “Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the ____ of the wicked.” Psalms 91:8—**9 Across**

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

You May Freely Eat?

by Jim Raymond

Finding Joy in Hand Washing

Rub hands together. Sounds easy enough, but hand washing is actually a complex behavior with far-reaching consequences.

With all that is at stake, hand washing must be a mindful event. It is literally hand to hand combat against a simple but persistent global enemy using the most basic form of opportunistic germ warfare. It is a battle in which the health and wellbeing of many are at stake. Some of whom may be quite a distance from the local scene. Only patient diligence in practicing the battle plan over the long haul will win this germ war. Take heart, the effectiveness of the hand to hand battle behaviors can certainly be improved by training and mindful understanding of the objective, the process, the tools, and the enemy.

First, the objective—The context of this discussion centers around bacteria that are called transient (germs that are ready to move on), most of which were likely picked up from contaminated soil, water, animals, contact surfaces, other people, and the over growth of bacteria which often inhabit the unseen recesses of the microscopic folds of our own skin (where they may provide some beneficial services). Some of these transient bacteria called pathogens can be formidable enemies that can cause pesky illness or pandemic death. These pathogenic germ enemies can never be eliminated, nor can a truce be made, so they must be kept within certain boundaries and their numbers must be kept low enough for the immune system to handle. No paranoia allowed

here, germs are not intentionally out to “get” people, nor has God left people defenseless. So, be mindful. Be diligent, not fearful. Because they are ready to go, the best way to help everyone everywhere is to wash them down the drain and mindful hand washing is the best way. Mindful hand washing knocks the transients off the skin by pitting one hand against the other. In this case both hands need to know what the other is doing, and this is accomplished by mindfully moving them in varying counter positions, to apply skin to skin friction covering every square millimeter of the hands from fingertips to wrists. This is the objective; a 90% reduction in transient bacteria is the result.

Mindful Action—Being mindful and purposeful during hand washing is imperative if we expect to arrive on the other side with clean hands. The Bible says, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might;...” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). Physically, a mindful approach is essential to take the disconnected snap-shot hand washing steps “off the washroom walls” and make hand washing one graceful movement. Spiritually, and most importantly, a sanctified imagination can facilitate a mindful connectedness to the bigger picture, by relating hand washing to our inherent social responsibilities that stretch personal hand washing to global health. Saving lives is, after all, the highest calling of hand washing.

Mindful study of the hands. To begin, fully open the primary hand to examine the topographical angles,

textures, highs and lows that will work against making effective hand to hand contact. While opening and partially closing the primary hand, examine it from every angle. Notice how the 3-dimensional complexity changes various contours by smoothing or deepening creases, crevices and pockets that can trap and hide bacteria. Next, match hands palm to palm, and palm to dorsum (back of hand) to plan how to match high spots to low spots, flats to curves, and the many other opposing contours to ensure total skin contact on both hands. The next learning event adds a layer of information by showing areas on the hands which are frequently missed when washing hands.



Dorsum



Palm

Missed Areas

In the Missed Areas illustration, the darker the shading the more frequently the area is missed or under washed. This happens when the correct steps are not followed completely. The objective is to make

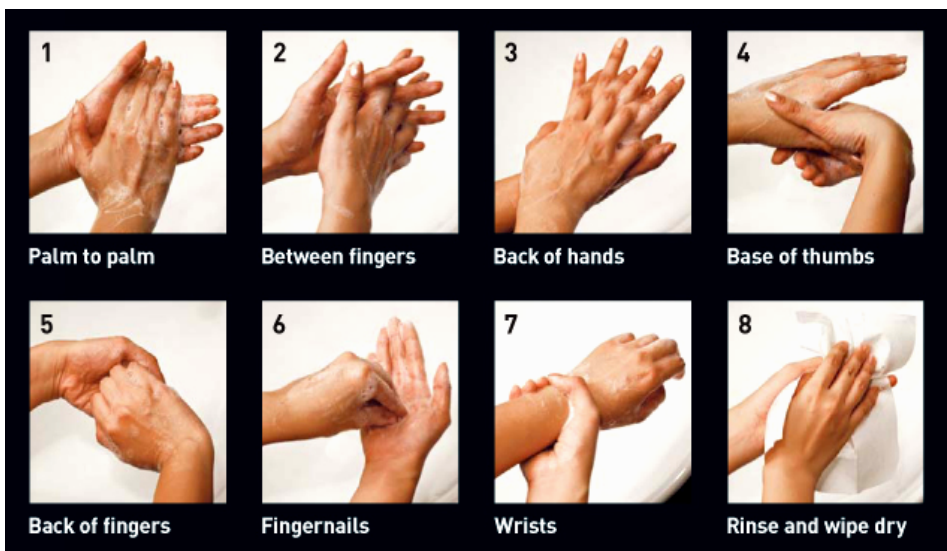
sure that all areas are washed well and that includes all darkened areas in the diagram. Another cause of inequity of coverage to be aware of is that right handed people tend to wash the left hand more thoroughly than the right hand. Likewise left handed people give more attention to the right hand. So be mindfully even handed.

8-steps to Safe Hands

Important Lead-in Steps, 1. Make ready a clean towel within direct and unrestricted reach until needed at the end of the washing process.

2. Wet hands with water. If using a washing agent, add the water in the order that best works to sufficiently cover all hand surfaces with the chosen agent.

Important Final Steps, 1. Thoroughly rinse hands in running water while continuing to repeat the above steps for a few seconds or until all washing agent is rinsed away. (Note: If



within the confines of washroom, kitchen, or other shared space, avoid the instinctive, uncontrolled shaking of the hands which splatters contaminated water over an ovoid radius extending several feet in both directions!)

2. Use the clean towel to thoroughly dry the hands starting from fingertips to wrists. This usually takes about 10 seconds.

3. If the towel is for a single service, use it to deal with any needed contact with utilities and exiting surfaces.

The steps shown in **8-steps to Safe Hands** are adequate to get the job done, but the 8 photo frames can show only where the camera stopped the action in the entire range of motion. Likewise, it cannot reveal the movements on either side of the pose to support an understanding of the seamless transitions (if indeed there were any) from one step to the next. If the process of frequent daily hand washing is ever going to be something more than just “8 more things I gotta do” there must be some source of pleantry or value akin to (even if not as intense) the graceful, fluid movement of ice skating, walking, fly casting which can be a joy to watch and experience. The next goal on this journey to make hand washing a sustainable component of daily life is to add something akin to the joy of movement, social connectedness, or some way of adding value to the whole earthly milieu into the hand washing experience. This very important job is left to the user. Connecting to the pleasure on movement itself can be started with visualizing and personalizing the order and movements until it all works best.

Ready to put it all together? Accessing all that was gained by the mindful study of the three preceding learning

events, the processing centers of the brain should be ready to use the God given imagination faculties to “Draw out” the stagnant positions in the **8-steps to Safe Hands** illustration to create a mental 3D movie scene for each frame. Each scene must supply the missing hand contact motion that will cover all parts of the hand surface including as many of the commonly missed spots as the position will comfortably allow. After thinking up a working scene for each of the 8 frames (or at least 2) start trimming the starting and ending parts of each scene to connect the motion between the scenes that fits the best until the whole process flows together like one smooth “dancing hands” routine.

Personal examples include: The position suggested in frame #4 is awkward. Reversing the grip so the hands are aligned flows better; it does not challenge the wrists, and the hands fit a little better under the water stream. The thumb tips and nails may also be addressed during this scene. Neither frames #5 or #6 work well at all for hands with nails that are not kept trimmed to the nail bed. If nails are not so trimmed, a nail brush with appropriate bristle length is a requisite accessory tool. Find a small brush or make one from the head of a quality tooth brush. Trim or remove the handle to fit pocket or purse). The longer the nail the more effort is required to reduce bacteria levels. Artificial nails are porous and may offer a safe harbor to tremendous numbers of germs and fungus which are much easier to share than to remove. For nails not trimmed past the fingertips, position the fingers at a lower angle than shown in frame #6 so all the nails just barely touch the palmer surface while working the fingertips back and forth and circularly in

the hollow of the palm. Back to frame #5 which not only can be painful with nails, but it does not fit neatly under the water stream. Modifying this pose so the hands are aligned (as in frame #4) and alternately resting the nails of one hand on the heel of the partnering palm seems a better fit while including more dorsal finger contact (almost to the 3rd knuckle). Both hands and the curved fingers need to be moving (scratching-like and rotational) so the palmar skin and nails make good contact and the palmar skin can work into the connecting crevices at each side of the nails. While in this pose, sliding the sides of the fingers against each other, as if drumming impatiently on a table, adds contact friction time to the sides of the fingers without adding any more time to complete the whole step. Make sure the personalized hand washing time and effort fit the chosen nail style using lowered angle or brush.

As the owner, feel free to personalize the routine by changing the order of the 8 frames or scenes and /or even the position suggested in the frame. Own the routine and make it work the best; make it one of life's little joys.

Drying hands after washing is a critical step in microbe reduction. Washed, but still wet, hands will transfer an average of 68,000 bacteria from the fingertips when touching skin, whereas dry hands will only transfer 140 (a 99.8% transfer reduction rate).

It takes about 10 seconds to dry the hands to a 96% moisture level with natural fiber toweling. Using a blower type hand dryer, it takes 45 seconds to achieve the same dryness. The bad news is that air-blower dryers are known to accumulate and concentrate fecal material and germs from the air in the toilet room.

Number of Bacteria Transferred by Wet and Dry Fingertips When Touching Skin, Food, or Utilities

	<i>Wet</i>	<i>Dry</i>	<i>% Reduced</i>
Skin	68,000	140	99.8
Food	31,000	655	94
Utilities	1,900	30	99

Obviously skin to skin bacterial transfer is much greater when moisture is present. So if the next handshake feels a bit too damp, head to the wash-room and avoid the blow dryer; if no towels are available, seek toilet paper or seat cover paper.

Tools—Washing agents: Soap is the preferred washing agent only in westernized industrial cultures. From a worldwide perspective soap is used the least (about 30%). Other than plain water, ash or clay are the top washing agents of choice.

The primary benefit of soap is that it sticks to skin and needs a bit of rubbing to remove it, so people tend to wash hands longer than with plain water. This is a worthy benefit. People using water only can choose the higher 25 to 30 seconds range of recommended washing times to reduce bacteria to similar levels as those of soap users at the 20 second mark.

Even “soap only for everyone” advocates admit the effectiveness gained by using soap is that it “adds to the time spent washing, breaks down the grease and dirt that carry most germs by facilitating the rubbing and friction that dislodge them.” Moving away from cultural bias and marketing emphasis, the same can be said for ash or clay (mud) which also coat the hands and are similarly as effective as soap in reducing fecal coliform bacteria on con-

taminated hands when the same washing times and steps are followed.

However, in countries or communities with closed waste-water plumbing (either private septic or municipal collection and treatment systems) plain soap is deservedly the most acceptable hand washing agent. Unlike detergents, sanitizers and antibacterial soaps, it is gentle on both the skin and the skin's microbiota (resident bacteria) as well as bacterial based septic systems. Clay, ash, or saw dust would surely clog the whole system. So, hi-ho, hi-ho, it's straight to soap they go.

Ever worry about the slimy, mushy looking bar of soap swimming in a pool of its own juices so common in the toilet facilities at outback truck stops? Several studies, ranging from dental clinics to public toilet washrooms, found that very dry soap bars were not infected, but in each public facility that left the used bars floating in a surrounding moat, **each bar** had its own mix of micro-flora (averaging from two to five different types of microbes) with the bars used most having the most different species. No surprise here!

Not so quick, two surprise findings come out of this research: First, bacteria were alive and flourishing. Second, even though all bars resting in pools of water were infected, none of the bacteria was able to stick to hands. The take-away is also twofold. It reinforces the fact that soap is a poor bactericide. This should be especially reassuring to those folk, with normal skin moisture, who are concerned that frequent but brief exposures to soap (not to be equated with detergent based bars or liquids) would be harmful to the skin's so called "friendly" microbiota. Finally, don't worry about ugly soap.

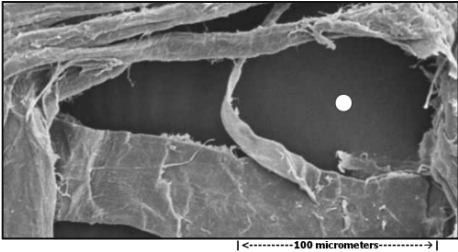
Tools—Hand and nail brush: A soft hand and fingernail brush can be a very helpful tool at work or home where it can reside in the washroom or private space. Long bristles can scrub the whole hand while short ones are especially helpful to get under the nails. It works best to hold the brush still and move the nails from side to side with very short vibration-like movements. Holding the brush low in the sink and perpendicular to the sides will reduce the splatter zone size. Be sure to clean the brush regularly; a peroxide or bleach soak or even the dish machine heat cycle (if it won't melt) works well for this purpose.

Tools—(Deserving False Security Warnings) Gloves: Wearing gloves can cause further problems by producing a humid environment favoring the growth of microbes and may contain irritants such as latex and talcum powder. They are of limited use, but carry a perceived value far exceeding reality. Gloves are easily abused which is exacerbated because of a false sense of security. Gloves add process complexity, and can increase cross contamination risk; transferability of germs is higher than that of skin, and removal difficulty often propels contaminated sweat droplets great distances. Gloves increase expenses as they must be changed frequently, and increase hand washing need because they must be washed by the same rules as bare hands, plus before donning and immediately upon removal. Use only when a compelling justification exists, and manage them in accord with the inherently unavoidable risks.

False Security Warning—Alcohol-Based Hand Rubs (ABHR): Hand washing with soap and water is significantly more effective at removing *C. difficile* spores from the hands of volunteers than are ABHR. After ABHR

use, a simple handshake can readily transfer 30% of the residual spores to the hands of recipients.

False Security Warning—Toilet paper in the U.S., was first produced in 1857. Before becoming popular, many other things commonly used in early America included leaves, corncobs, newspaper, mussel shells, and magazine pages.



*Close Micrograph Showing a
Typical Sized Pore in Toilet Paper*

What looks like a giant chasm in the above micrograph is all relative to the size of the beholder. The head of a common tailor's pin has a diameter of 2 millimeters (mm) (2000th of a meter) which equals 2,000 micrometers. The pore on the right (fiber circled area with the white dot) is 100 micrometers wide. If holes of this size were linked together like a chain, it would require 20 links to span the head of a pin. That's a tiny pore. The hole is a typical pore in a piece of toilet paper. The white dot in the center is the relative size of a red blood cell which, at 8 millimeters, is 5 times larger than an extra-large sized fecal germ. The germ-sized reality is that this hole is a chasm thru which about 84 red blood cells can fit at one time. It's truly a chasm to the hundreds of big germs and to the thousands of viruses that can get through this single hole at one time. Except for the occasional direct collision with a paper fiber, most organisms of this size would never even "see" that there was something in the way!

It should now be evident why fecal bacteria counts on fingertips zoom up after toilet paper use. The morbidly confident deduction is that toilet paper fails at blocking germs in sufficient manner to decrease the need to wash up after toilet use. So it will not keep feces off the hands nor off of the things that people put in their mouths. Go wash those hands!

In the United States, a reported fifteen million trees go into the production of the thirty-six billion rolls of toilet paper used each year at an estimated worldwide cost over \$20,000,000,000 (20-billion). Seems a dreadful waste for something so lousy at doing the job for which it was bought with hard-earned money. Instead of chopping down trees, perhaps TP makers ought to consider making and installing affordable bidets.

Critical Hand Washing Times:

- Before and after food preparation.
- Before and after handling meat or fish.
- Before switching from raw to ready-to-eat food.
- Before moving or switching to other food items or batches.
- Before and after eating.
- Before and after wearing gloves for medical or food purposes.
- Before and after treating a cut or wound.
- Before and after dealing with contact lenses.
- Before and after intimacy.
- After visiting the washroom and / or toilet.
- After touching eyes, nose, ears, mouth, pubic, perianal, wounds or other bacteria friendly area.

- After changing a diaper.
- After touching a pet dog, cat, reptile, or any other animal (avoid petting zoos).
- After touching plants or soil.
- After visiting a school, hospital, nursing home or church...
- After contact with any body fluids or touching items that may have contacted body fluids.
- After cleaning the washroom or toilet facilities.
- After coughing, sneezing, smoking, eating, drinking or other hand-to-mouth incident.
- After handling garbage or trash.
- After handling yard or household equipment, laundry, chemicals, used dining ware or utensils.

Personalizing this list by adding and removing items as applicable will help predict the number of daily hand washings needed. This list is long but not exhaustive; to best use this information look for the redundant common principles and use them to plan personal hand washing decisions accordingly. The flu or diarrhea you and yours miss will be the immediate blessing. The bigger blessing is knowing that both near and far down the line, untold numbers of God's children are not in the wake of sickness and death from your hands.

Hand washing and personal hygiene are among the few MOST important lifelong habits to inculcate in early childhood and to continually perfect throughout life for health as well as social reasons. Children must be encouraged to mindfully practice good hand washing techniques so they will instinctively know both when and how to

get their hands thoroughly clean, dry and safe.

Healthy skin is actually the only primary defense against bacterial harm. Improper hand washing—excessive use of friction (obsessive rubbing, abrasive grit or brush bristles), alcohols (ABHR), and / or detergents--can damage skin by scoring or removing the thin film of skin oils that protect the top layers of skin (called the stratum corneum) allowing excessive dehydration. Damaged skin is susceptible to infection by most bacteria residing on the skin whether categorized as commensal (just there), mutualistic (can be beneficial), and pathogenic (lurking predators). Most bacteria can belong to one or more of these groups depending on the circumstances. The same *Staphylococcus aureus*, which is usually grouped as commensal skin flora, is also the horribly pathogenic “S” in MRSA—almost correctly described by the news media as the unstoppable skin eating bacteria. The old adage, “roses in a corn field are weeds” fits in this case, and can also apply to the germ groupings termed commensal and mutualistic—any germ out of bounds is likely “up to no good.” So keep the dog house in good shape so the roses can’t eat the dog.

Bacteria are everywhere and on everything. Learning to live with them does not include indifference, nor **obsessively washing hands until they fall off**. Working by following a few simple steps and mindfully making adjustments for new learning will draw a personal plan to keep the number of bacteria on hands and in food as low as possible. Outside of the medical industry, and a couple of other hand sacrificing professions, it will be difficult to hand wash too much. Washing too

vigorously or too frequently can extract many of the protective oils from the skin. This can cause skin to lose moisture, crack and potentially even bleed, providing germs a point of entry into the body where they can do more harm. This can be a problem even when using only plain water. Barring any underlying condition, 2 to 3 dozen 20-30 second washing events (12 to 18 minutes max) a day should not be a concern. Using moderate friction for the requisite number of washings to cover the personalized critical “When to Wash” events (plus 3 or 6 for good measure) will contribute significantly to keeping fecal and other pathogenic contact contaminants out of your body and protect the community by not serving any to others. Be your brother’s keeper and break the link in the hand to mouth contamination chain.

Why Wash Hands—Blessings reaped by hand washers

- Hand washing significantly reduces Acute Respiratory Infection (ARI) risk by reducing viruses like adenovirus, corona virus, Asian flu virus transmitted by the fecal-oral route.
- A study of 305 school children found that youngsters who washed their hands four times a day had 24% fewer sick days due to (ARI) and 51% fewer days due to upset stomach.
- Hand washing reduces risk of diarrheal diseases by 45%.
- Hand washing by mothers lowers incidence of childhood diarrhea.

Knowing thy Enemy—here’s a short list of hand washing highlights to help:

World-wide washroom studies show that only 70% of people wash their hands, and only 30% of people who do so use soap as the cleaning agent.

- All washing agents including plain water are effective in reducing bacterial counts from hands.
- Physical action of scrubbing, washing and clean towel drying was more important than which washing agent was used.
- Proper washing should remove about 90% of transient bacteria with 15-30 seconds of systematic rubbing.
- Bacteria double in number in less than 20 minutes, so few need to worry about washing too often.
- Between 2 and 10 million bacteria live between the finger tip and elbow.
- Transient germs on hands can live up to three hours.
- Millions of germs hide under watches and bracelets, and there could be as many germs under a ring as there are people in Europe!
- Up to half of all men and a quarter of women fail to wash their hands after they use the bathroom.
- The number of germs on fingertips doubles after toilet use.
- It is important to make sure all parts of the hands and fingers are cleaned, especially the fingertips, which often get missed.
- 8 out of 10 people have fecal material under their fingernails, and in 5 of the 8 the material is not their own.
- Bacteria carried on pathogen contaminated hands can cause food poisoning, colds, flu, diarrhea ... and death.

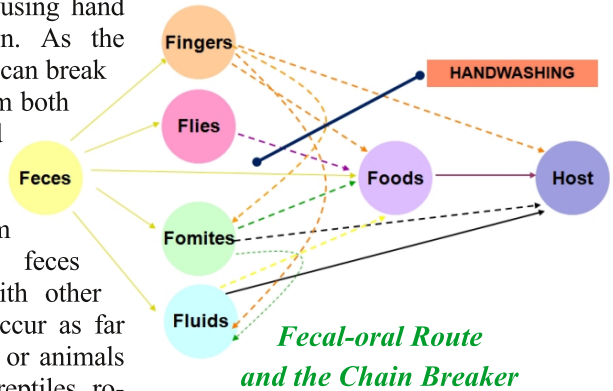
Breaking the chain—The way hands are involved in passing on pathogens is through a chain of events starting at infected fecal contamination and winding up in the mouth of some unsuspecting

victim. The fecal contamination can be carried by water, soil, hands, flies, food, which become reservoirs of contamination and infection. This chain is usually called the fecal–oral route, or alternatively, the oral–fecal route or orofecal route. This writing focuses on the fecal to hand to mouth route and using hand washing to break the chain. As the graphic shows, hand washing can break all chains of transmission from both of the animate (fingers and flies) reservoirs. The most common source of pathogenic bacteria on hands is from infected human or animal feces [same process can work with other body secretions]. This can occur as far back as the field when crops or animals were contaminated by birds, reptiles, rodents, amphibians, farm animals, workers, or feed, etc. When hands touch anything that is contaminated with pathogenic bacteria they can work like a rubber stamp and transfer the germs to whatever they touch. Common transfers can occur indirectly by touching things such as, food, utensils or counters and plastic cutting boards, sink faucet handles, banisters, door knobs and a multitude of other things and surfaces.

The other common way transfers can occur is directly from things to their new owners and on to others by handshaking or other forms of touching. A worse case is when the new owners eat lunch, before washing up, and become infected. Now as vectors (animate sources of germs) they can do a lot more damage unless they break the chain frequently.

Ever fly with the germs? Well hold on; it will be a quick mindful moment trip. The victim courier just picked up the germ load from a chance meeting with a friend who stepped out of the air-

port toilet room—with unwashed hands. It was a quick greeting and a firm handshake Ka-ching! The victim, and now a germ courier, grabbing the carry-on Ka-ching stamps the handle and zooms off to catch a plane on the last boarding call. Zipping right past the



washroom, not daring to take the time now to wash, not that it is ever a top priority. Stamping Ka-ching, Ka-ching, Ka-ching the banister is now ready for the slower stragglers. Stows the carry-on and nestles into the seat Ka-ching the seat belt, Ka-ching to the arms of the seat. Ka-ching Ka-ching Ka-ching all the way to lunch. It's a sandwich! Clutching that Big Zac burger as if it was trying to get away KA-CHING swallowed in almost one bite! Finally gets washed up. Half way around the world it's off and running again grabbing the carry-on Ka-ching-gnihc-aK a fresh batch! Lots of Ka-ching-ing and some business to do in town. Back home two days and the worst case of Montezuma's revenge on record. Thinks the courier; "It must have been the water at that little restaurant in the middle of Tuikaba." The whole family gets sick by the end of the week, and friends follow suit within a few days. Wonder what happened in Tuikaba? We can only assume. We never hear.

Post-flight assignment, take a mindful moment and think of all things the courier's hands may have touched while in Tuikaba. What about all the places hands have gone and what they have touched. It's a lot isn't it? They have even been to the moon.

Next assignment, go to a busy mega-market type department store and observe what all those hands are touching in the toy, house ware, tool, and especially the fresh produce areas. Take a mindful moment to think about the implications, and don't forget that 8 out of 10 of those hands have something to share. Try, to resist the urge to shout out **"STOP RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE**, and go wash those grimy hands. **AND DO NOT FORGET THE FINGERNAILS**, because I know what's there!"

Why aren't we all dead? There is a wonderful praise-worthy reason: First, thank God for the donor's immune system! If the immune system is working for the donor the pathogenic germs on the fecal debris will be killed. Said donor will not become infected and neither will be the victim. Sorry, but the gifted fecal debris will still belong to the victim. Yucky but not deadly—there's the silver lining. Say the gift does arrive infected, then thank God for a healthy and robust immune system. That's why we don't get sick every time we shake hands or go to the market. Queasy? Always! Sick? Rarely! Thank you Father!

Since the mid 1800's, the link between hand washing and contact transmission of infection has been well established in both US and Europe and it is irrefutable. Long before Holmes and Semmelweiss, God gave many instructions to his people about washing to prevent the spread of contamination (read Leviticus 15 as an example). An

ancient Indian text listed the cleaning steps to be followed:

"After defecation: The generative organ is to be washed once, The anus is to be washed three times, The left hand to be washed ten times and The right hand to be washed seven times. Both feet are to be cleaned three times. Fist full of earth is to be used for washing before use of water. The water utensil is to be washed too"

Sharing the Woe—If knowledge was perfectly related to performance then one would think that microbiologists would be right-on with hand washing. Not so! An observational study reported that 80% of qualified microbiologists attending a national meeting for microbiology scientists failed to wash their hands after visiting the toilet. Personal observations have confirmed that hand washing among state health department inspectors were not much better than the general public.

Hospitals; that's it! Surely medical people have it together. Why, failure to wash up there would kill. A national healthcare safety and quality performance auditing organization recently reported that 51% failed to meet hand washing standards. Compliance to the standards for doctors was 60% and 80% for nurses. Performance standards, by the way, are not set at 100%, so reported compliance numbers are higher than actual practice. This is a way of setting targets that are attainable and not totally discouraging. It's a lot easier to face the need to eat an elephant one bite at a time than in one swallow; so it's not cheating. Everyone in the system knows how and why it works, but outsiders—customers or patients—need to know too so they can better calculate actual personal risk.

Apparently, the gender gap phenomenon is working in hand washing too, just as the ubiquitous “Please Wash Your Hands” improves hand washing in women but not in men. Likewise, in hospitals female physicians wash their hands between patient contacts much more often than male doctors.

Hats off to Dr. Anwar Ul Haque, MD; Chief Editor for the International Journal of Pathology, for his candid disclosure and admonition: “...it is a common knowledge that doctors are reluctant to use this most efficient and effective means of curtailing infections after seeing each patient.... We have an absolute obligation on ourselves not to become a vector of transmission of infections to the patients. Simple hand washing by clean water may reduce communicable and oral-fecal route diseases by 90%. So let us make it a habit to do frequent hand washing, especially before eating, drinking and after examining each patient.”

How can any top healthcare practitioners escape bearing the mark of Cain by choosing not to wash their hands when they know that not doing so can do mortal harm to those who are trusting that their healthcare provider will answer “Yes!” to the question: “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Jesus answered this question positively by his selfless life, and makes it clear that agreement with him by our works is prerequisite to

his Kingdom (see James 4:17 and Luke 9:23).

Knowing is not enough—Is it true that clean, healthy hands save lives? Yes, this is a fact which has been well known for centuries, why does it continue to be ignored or rejected? The lackluster behavior by professionals topping our modern scientific and medical professions is especially discouraging, and just as faith without works is dead, neither understanding nor even teaching hand washing is enough to save lives. It is every person’s responsibility to be doers of what is known about hand washing. Hand washing is the most effective and inexpensive way to prevent diarrheal diseases and pneumonia, which together are responsible for the majority (36%) of child deaths. Globally, these two diseases result in 3.5 million children dying before they celebrate their 5th birthday! Effective hand washing can prevent 1.1 million of these deaths.

And the last question: Is it also true that failing to keep our hands clean and healthy kills people? Dare we blame it on the germs and just go back to sleep?

Thank God for 70% of people (worldwide) who are mindfully acting on the fact that they can break the chain of contamination and change the health and wellbeing of their families and of the world starting from where they wash their hands.

Blessings! JR

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