

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

April 2014

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Colossians 1:2). I pray that you are doing well and filled with peace.

Upcoming Meeting: Adrian Ebans from Australia will be speaking at the Community Center in Kansas, OK on April 26. Meetings will be held 10 am to 12:30 pm, 3 pm to 4:30 pm, and 7 pm to 8:30 pm. We will have potluck lunch at 1 pm and a break for supper and fellowship at 4:30 pm. Call us at 304-633-5411 for more information. We look forward to seeing you.

How We Treat Each Other

by Lynnford Beachy

It is very important for us to understand how God wants us to treat one another. The Lord has given us many instructions on how to treat our brothers and sisters. We are to love God with all our hearts, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus said, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:37-39).

When we understand how much God loves us we will look upon our fellow men knowing that God loves them just as much as He loves us. The closer we come to God, the more we will have compassion upon our brothers and sisters, just as Jesus did when He was on earth. “Jesus,... saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward

them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things” (Mark 6:34). Christ is our example, and we are instructed to walk even as He walked (1 John 2:6).

The natural worldly outlook is prideful, “Every man for himself.” But this is not the Christian outlook. We are to look at all people with love instead of pride. God said, “These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto Him: A proud

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look..." (Proverbs 6:16, 17). The first thing on the list of things that God hates is a proud look. This could be manifested when we look at someone else with the thought that we are better than they. God gave us instruction that will guard us from giving a proud look. He said, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3).

Rebuke Not

The Bible gives us valuable instructions about how we are to communicate with others. Paul wrote, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity" (1 Timothy 5:1, 2). The Greek word that was translated "rebuke" in this verse is only used once in the Bible. This word means "to chastise (with words)" (*Strong's Greek Dictionary*). It also means "to chide, to strike upon, to beat upon" (*Thayer's Greek Lexicon*). This word means to use words to chastise or beat upon a person. This type of verbal abuse is prohibited, and would only be used to lift the speaker up above the one who is being verbally abused. If we are moved with compassion toward our brothers and sisters and look upon them as better than ourselves, we will not use such an unkind and harsh way of communicating with them.

These verses tell us to entreat them as a family member. The Greek word that was translated "intreat" means "to desire, invite, invoke" (*Strong's Greek*

Dictionary). It also means "to beg, to beseech, to encourage, to strengthen" (*Thayer's Greek Lexicon*). If a brother has erred from the faith, or done something against someone, we are to plead with him in love to change the course he has chosen.

We must be careful what manner of communication we use when dealing with a situation like this. The same exact words could be spoken by two different individuals, but one may have a much worse effect upon the situation. This is because of the tone of voice. The whole manner of deportment of the one speaking could push someone away rather than draw them to Christ. God wants us to bring people to Christ to be forgiven rather than to push them away from Christ.

Confidential

Jesus said, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15).

"I am not supposed to tell you this, but..."

If we have a problem with someone, we are not to go and tell someone else. What was done against us in private should be dealt with in private. There is no need for others to be brought into the matter. Solomon wrote, "Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another: Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away" (Proverbs 25:9, 10). He also wrote, "A talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter" (Proverbs 11:13).

This point is critical. There is so much gossip that goes on, both in and out of churches. God's people do not need to perpetuate this problem. If someone comes to you saying, "I am not supposed to tell you this, but..." the Christian response should be: "Don't tell me then." We should do all we can to keep from perpetuating sinful practices, and yes, gossiping is a sinful practice. It contributes to separating people's friendships. "He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends" (Proverbs 17:9). In the list of the seven things God hates, He said "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren" (Proverbs 6:19).

Jesus said that if I have a problem with someone, I must go to him privately before bringing anyone else into it. If this method is successful in dealing with the problem, then nobody else should ever be involved. Jesus counseled us to keep problems as small as possible, never blow them out of proportion or get people involved who have no business even knowing about the situation. Jesus told us what to do if our brother will not hear us. He said, "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" (Matthew 18:16). If you have a problem with someone, and you have already gone to that person and he would not hear you, then, and only then, should you bring one or

two more people with you to talk with the person. "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican" (Matthew 18:17).

"Some people are quick to criticize others, not realizing that their own problems are much more grievous in the sight of God."

If something wrong was done that was known by many people, then before many people the thing should be dealt with. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." (1 Timothy 5:20). But if something wrong was done, and you and the other per-

sons are the only ones who know about it, then it should be dealt with secretly and should not be revealed to anyone else. Keep in mind that the original Greek word that was translated, "rebuke" in the above verse, is different from the one we read earlier that says, "Rebuke not..." There is a time for loving rebuke, but it is not to beat someone with words. It must be accompanied with compassion and love. We should never come to someone to show them their faults unless we love them so completely that we are willing to die for them.

Removing the Beam

Jesus gave us an important lesson about dealing with our brothers and sisters. He said, "And why beholdest thou the mote [straw] that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote [straw] that is in thine eye, when thou

thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote [straw] that is in thy brother's eye" (Luke 6:41, 42).

The human nature is strange. We are more likely to see a small detail in someone else that needs correcting than the huge problem that needs correction in our own lives. Before we go to try to help someone remove something in their lives, we should first check our own lives. Sometimes what we perceive as a problem in someone else is actually much more of a problem in ourselves. Some people are quick to criticize others, not realizing that their own problems are much more grievous in the sight of God. We must guard against this type of hypocrisy.

True Friends

Jesus said, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Revelation 3:19). Jesus rebukes us, not because He wants to beat us up, but because He loves us enough to help us when we are in trouble. Solomon wrote, "Open rebuke is better than secret love" (Proverbs 27:5). We should be thankful when someone comes to us in love to show us a problem that we could not see on our own. Solomon wrote, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:6). A true friend will love enough to rebuke and chasten when it is needed. "He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour

than he that flattereth with the tongue" (Proverbs 28:23).

True friends are hard to find these days when the love of many is waxing cold (Matthew 24:12). To have a good friend, we must be a good friend. "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). True friends will not let petty differences separate them; they value their friendships enough to stick through hard times. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). A man sharpens, or helps perfect, the character of his friend. We need friends to encourage and strengthen us.

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10). The right kinds of friends are very important and helpful in our Christian experience.

I pray that we will all learn to have a closer relationship with our Creator so that we will be ready to hear every word that proceeds out of His mouth, whether it be a rebuke or not. In this process, I pray that we also will have a better relationship with our Christian brethren. Jesus said, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (James 2:8). **>>**

Present Truth
Faith at 211 Degrees

by Joseph E. Lahud

In the very earliest account of God, He reveals Himself as the Creator of the universe. The account simply states “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1).

This simple statement might be difficult for some to believe since we live in a world that teaches the popular idea that after a “big bang” the universe evolved into our current state. In other words, we come from inanimate rocks.

The Bible, however, teaches otherwise. In the next verse we read about God’s Spirit (His presence) hovering over the face of the waters: “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2). To the average professing Christian this statement would seem reasonable to believe. After all, it seems logical that after creating “the heaven and the earth,” the presence of the One responsible for bringing forth such an incredible masterpiece would be found at the event or site. In verse three of Genesis we are presented with a bigger challenge. It reads: “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

The creation account now places before us the idea that God simply spoke and light was manifested! In fact, the first chapter of Genesis mentions “God said” no less than ten times! Additionally, details of the first week reveal the creation of galaxies, suns, moons, stars, oceans, continents, trees, vegetation, sea and land animals, birds, and finally

mankind. Matter from nothing! Heavenly bodies precisely locked in orbits, laws of physics: gravity, thermal dynamics, molecules, atoms, DNA — all things. Can you imagine this? If you are not persuaded to believe that the God of the universe is capable of such ability, this whole idea would seem absurd and very difficult to accept. The idea that God created the universe simply by speaking, stretches one’s mind, it can be grasped by faith alone. “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear” (Hebrews 11:3).

The Bible says, “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1, 2). Here we learn that there was someone with God when He created the world. He created all things by Jesus Christ, the “only begotten Son of God.” “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

It is most important to understand and have intimate, personal knowledge of the identity of God and His only begotten Son, for how can we be expected to have faith in someone

you are unsure of? God our Father gave His most treasured possession in giving His Son, that through faith in Him (Christ) we could not only have a more abundant life here on earth free from sin but, more importantly, the free gift of eternal life. “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). Our loving heavenly Father gave all He could give for your life, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Dear Brothers and Sisters, you are greatly loved! Your life was purchased at a very great cost. You are greatly esteemed of God! He was willing to suffer the sacrifice of His only begotten Son for your life. This is the measure of His love for you. Please, never let circumstances cause you to believe that God would abandon you in your trials of life. Through Christ, you are never alone. When Christ rose from the dead, He purchased and secured a victory that is all encompassing. “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 15:57). His power sustains the universe He created. His power can and will sustain you through your trials in this life. “Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing” (Psalm 145:16).

What is Faith?

The Bible gives us the following answer: “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). So in order

to exercise faith—to hope in God—we are to believe in something we cannot see; something intangible, silent, colorless, odorless, invisible. We are to trust in someone most of us do not understand, which can be very difficult in a modern world filled with much physical, visual and audio stimulus. Faith is an area of the human spirit that becomes the battleground for the soul. “But 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).

Through Christ, God desires for you and me to know who He is. To trust in God we must be willing to take a position of vulnerability. We are called to trust in a mysterious God, and a Savior we cannot see. This places the believer in a position of risk—a risk of failure to achieve the desired outcome or result. Why did this method of exercising faith have to be so contrary to our carnal and mental comfort? To some of us, acting upon faith has been the cause of much agony. Why did a loving God leave us in such a difficult situation? It has been said “If it were easy, everyone would be doing it.” Our heavenly Father desires that everyone would believe in Him. “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Sadly, not all will come to repentance.

Not one would argue that in simple things it is easy to have faith. For example, someone may profess having

faith in the sun rising the next day. This seems reasonable. Because of past experience we are familiar with this and can expect this natural phenomenon. But the challenge comes when we are faced with something we are not familiar with. Most notable acts of heroism and bravery written in history typically occurred under the most adverse and impossible conditions. The Bible gives us much insight into both men and women, even youth who, under terrible circumstances, accepted overwhelming risks, overcame, and gained the victory because of their faith. The eleventh chapter in the book of Hebrews describes the sufferings, trials, and victories experienced by many saints in much detail. Some of these are:

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh” (Hebrews 11:4).

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Hebrews 11:7).

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son” (Hebrews 11:17).

“By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for

he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible” (Hebrews 11:24-27).

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection” (Hebrews 11:32-35).

There is much evidence in the sacred pages of scripture disclosing a certain type of faith in action bringing forth supernatural results. David, as a young boy in the midst of Israel’s seasoned warriors, was the only one with the courage to run down and fight Goliath. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, as a result of their faithfulness to God, were thrown into the fiery furnace and lived. Christ Himself was seen amongst them and a conversion took place in the heathen king Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel was thrown into the lions’ den and survived. Joshua prayed and the sun was held back, not going down for a whole day. Samson was given superhuman strength. In the midst of some eight-hundred-fifty heathen priests, the prophet Elijah prayed and fire came down from heaven consuming the

sacrifice offered. He prayed again, and on the seventh time it rained, ending a severe drought. After being beaten, chained, and incarcerated, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God; who answered by sending an earthquake and an angel to deliver them. Peter walked on water and raised Dorcas from the dead. These are just a few. I invite you to thoroughly examine these accounts on your own.

What kind of faith did these individuals exercise? Is it possible for us to experience these kinds of supernatural victories? Can we have faith of this magnitude? The answer is a resounding YES! “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11). What God did for these saints in the past, He can do—He will do—for us today! “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust” (Psalm 103:13, 14).

The Wrong Kind of Faith

In the book of Revelation, Jesus warns us of a condition He refers to as being “lukewarm.” Through the apostle John, Christ prophesied the state in which most Christian Churches are in today: “And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of

nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Revelation 3:14-19).

Many centuries earlier through His prophet Isaiah, God spoke the same startling declaration: “And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach” (Isaiah 4:1). Seven is symbolic of totality or completion — all. Women is symbolic in the plural to a church (Jeremiah 6:2). “Take hold” refers to professing to be followers of Christ. “Eat our own bread” refers to their spiritual nourishment through the result of their own doctrines (false doctrines, following after the traditions of man), not the doctrine of Christ. “Wear our own apparel” [garment or clothing] not the righteousness of Christ but their own standard. “Taking away our reproach” means they will consider themselves to be acceptable in God’s sight, blameless, without sin. But this is not so.

Some of us can identify with this condition. Perhaps we have attended churches which fit this description. Perhaps we struggle in areas of our life which seem impossible to break free from sin. These could be in the form of habits, addictions, thoughts, lifestyle, or physical condition. Perhaps our

struggle is in the areas of finances, employment, relationships, depression, and even hopelessness. Remember Paul and Silas in Acts 23-33. In their suffering they thanked and praised God and what happened? God did the impossible for them. In fact, the account states that even the jailer and his family were baptized unto the faith! Praise the Lord in your trial! Give Him thanks! For by this action you are exercising faith in the assurance that God is going to show Himself faithful on your behalf. By thanking God in your trials you are placing yourself at the feet of God's throne. When we do this we are taking hold of such faith even as Job when he declared: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15). The wonderful thing is that in the end God proved Himself faithful for He blessed Job by not only restoring all things lost, but also adding a double portion! Likewise, our heavenly Father desires to bless you above all you can contain or imagine.

God desires us to advance to a place He has for us. "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Isaiah 42:16). He also declares another wonderful promise regarding the outcome of our lives. This promise may be found in Jeremiah 29:11-14 where He declares: "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and

pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart and I will be found of you, saith the Lord: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the Lord; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."

The Right Kind of Faith—Boiling Hot

The apostle James affirms the principle of giving thanks in the midst of trials: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4). There is a principle regarding faith in action that must be practiced for us to harvest the fruits of such faith. Although "salvation by works" is not a correct biblical principle, there is a type of works which is:

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the

devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:14-26).

I would like to share a testimony regarding faith in action, which I had the privilege of experiencing. Several years ago when my family and I were living in a motel shortly after giving up our home, one morning I heard a knock on our door. Upon opening the door I found a woman standing in the hallway weeping (one of the housekeeping staff). In between sobs she explained to me that her beloved son, Bob (not his real name), had tried to commit suicide the night before and, knowing that we labored in ministry work, she asked me to pray for him. And so I did. Upon further questioning I found out that he was in a special hospital recovery unit only twenty miles from us. I offered to go visit and pray for him.

After making the necessary arrangements, I was allowed to visit him the next day. Here is what happened: I checked in with the front desk and received my visitor's security clearance. Then I waited for Bob in a kind of auditorium. After a few minutes I was approached by a six-foot-two-inch young man with bright blue eyes, head and face clean shaven, a distinct swastika tattooed on the left side of his neck and several other tattoos on his arms. He looked the part of a white Nazi supremacist. He shared with me about his struggles with suicidal thoughts, and how he tried to overdose with a large amount of cocaine. I shared with him a brief testimony about my past life of drugs and alcohol abuse, my deliverance, and that I had come to know for a fact that God was real, that He did exist, and that He loved me.

I asked Bob if he knew that God loved him so much that He gave His only begotten Son Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins. With a gentle, genuine, and surprised voice he answered no, he had never known that, and he wanted to know more about God's love for him.

I provided Bob with his own Bible and, after several Bible studies and deep discussions, Bob declared his desire to give his life over to God and asked if he could be baptized. The prerequisite for baptism as found in the Bible is this: that you believe that Jesus is the Son of God! Baptism is a



declaration of your faith that Jesus died for your sins and rose again. Through faith in His shed blood, we receive the free gift of eternal life! In the account of Philip and the eunuch, Philip responded by baptizing him (Acts 8:36-39). Accordingly, I had the privilege of baptizing a very joyful young man in the name of Jesus Christ in the swimming pool of a hotel. After changing into dry clothes, we had communion. As he was tipping his small communion cup to his mouth, my wife Kimberly Ann casually mentioned to him that Christ was a Jew. You should have seen Bob's eyes as he heard this. They opened up to the size of golf balls! You could clearly see the expression of great surprise and revelation in Bob's face. The last time I spoke with Bob's mother she happily informed me that Bob had a fiancée and a steady job.

What we witnessed in Bob's life was his willingness to step out in faith and act upon that faith, thus allowing the love and power of Jesus to fill his empty heart. It was a supernatural event! I believe we witnessed the power of God move upon that young man; the same power that moved upon a young David before he ran down to fight Goliath. Our heavenly Father desires to fill our hearts with that kind of power-changing faith.

Faith is a Gift from God

Water is one of the most abundant natural resources on planet earth. It is an amazing substance; a compound element composed of two hydrogen molecules and one oxygen molecule. The specific combination of these atomic elements makes a chemical

reaction that is expressed as H_2O . Without this chemical reaction life on this planet could not exist. It makes up for over two thirds of the planet's surface. It directly regulates our planet's climate and temperature. Our bodies are made up of approximately 55 to 75 percent water. One feature of water is its ability to be transformed from a liquid to a solid, and also to a vapor. At sea level, water boils and turns into steam when heated to 212 degrees; not 211 or 211.5, but 212 degrees. At this temperature simple water is converted into another form—a gas, which, when harnessed under pressure, can carry and release a great amount of energy. For example, a steam locomotive can pull hundreds of tons of weight while traveling down a track at speeds over 100 miles per hour! Steam is also used today to power large turbines in the production of electricity.

This principle of a simple substance transforming into another state and achieving unbelievable results is what true living faith can accomplish in your life! You can compare the Apostle Peter's faith to have been so hot that it turned into steam! He was able to walk on water (Matthew 14:29). As long as he was looking to Jesus Christ, it did not matter how intimidating were the waves, the howling winds, or the fierce tempest surrounding him. God's power sustained him and allowed him to defy a natural law. Peter's ability to walk on the water, superseding [perhaps use "contrary to"] a law of physics, was made possible by a supernatural law, a faith that grasped the power of God. "For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37). I pray that you

would believe that it is possible for you today, right now, to have such an experience as Peter did, by having faith in a God who loves you exceedingly! “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31).

I was inspired to title this message “Faith at 211 Degrees” based on the boiling point of water and the powerful results of steam. As water can turn into steam, so can our faith. I would have you believe that that one degree makes a difference as to whether we walk on water or we sink. Christ rebuked His disciples for not allowing the children to come to Him (Mark 10:13), and He added: “Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” (Mark 10:15). Children are typically not corrupted in their thinking by theology or prejudice. They see the world through eyes of innocence. They can generally experience new things without the bias that adults often possess. Just as a

child seeing a colorful butterfly for the first time is mesmerized by its beauty, so should we be wonderfully touched by beholding what God has done for us in giving us His only begotten Son. Brothers and sisters, we have all things in Christ Jesus!

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:14-16).

May we also be found with the faith of a child, that we may trust in our loving God with such a faith that will release His power in the circumstances of our daily lives, and allow Him to do the impossible—to His glory!

“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3). »

Speak Life

by Alisha Starr

“Look into the eyes of the broken-hearted;
Watch them come alive as soon
as you speak hope,
You speak love, you speak...
You speak Life.”

Is it possible that I have not given the same gifts of unconditional love and grace to my husband that I have always given to our children? This

thought hit me like a thunderbolt as I sat in an auditorium packed with other couples seeking to build stronger marriages through Christ.

Was it really possible that I had failed to apply the grace-filled principles of righteousness by faith to the man I consider my best friend in all the world? Could I have missed the opportunity to be grace to my husband?

Yes, there had been many times in our twenty-eight year relationship when I had magnanimously graced him with forgiveness for certain of his deeds and selfish attitudes—that's what a Christian wife should do, right? Show grace. The problem was, I had never allowed our marriage to step out of the "marriage by works" rut and into the miracle of "marriage by faith."

And it showed.

You know what I mean when I say righteousness by faith. It is completely trusting in Christ's merits for our salvation—relying on His righteousness as a substitute for our unrighteousness. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8, 9). We know that laboring to be "good enough" is a labor in vain: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Those who seek salvation by their own merits or abilities miss the blessings that only His grace can bring.

When I lived under the law, seeking to be righteous through my deeds, I was tense and filled with dread. All of the time! I seriously dreaded the day that Jesus would come again because I knew He would find me unworthy. I longed to hear "Well done," but knew in my heart that I would be denied the only words I had ever desired to hear from God and every human I had ever come in contact with.

I had not experienced grace in myself—for myself—so I did not know how to show grace to others. I was hard on myself and on everyone else. This, of course, extended most into that

crowning jewel of all intimate human relationships—my marriage.

Then, I was converted. Not to Christianity—I had always been a Christian—but to Jesus, the One full of grace and truth (John 1:14). To grace. Grace. It was life-changing. In an instant, I experienced the transforming power of His presence in my heart. His Spirit came and, convicted of my unworthiness and need of grace, I laid down my works on the altar of sacrifice and was transformed by grace. I knew by heart Romans 3:23—"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," but somehow, I had missed the rest of the passage:

"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: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Romans 3:21-28).

Gratefully, I had been converted by the One Who is not only full of grace, but of truth. Through the ensuing

years, Truth has revealed Himself more clearly to me (HE is Truth—John 14:6), and has patiently brought me to an understanding of the ways in which my behaviors and attitudes fall short of the abundant, glorious life He came to bring (John 10:10). He has steadfastly refused to patch me up when what I need is a complete transformation; to be transformed into His likeness—His glory—His grace (2 Corinthians 3:18).

A moment of clarity—a revelation of Himself—transformation—was what I experienced that night in the love-filled auditorium listening to my friend give her testimony about how Jesus redeemed her hopeless marriage. My marriage—though not even close to hopeless—needed something that only I could give it. It needed me to be completely transformed by the grace He has given MY HUSBAND. Not by my grace, given stingily and with a tight fist. I needed to experience the grace my husband has received from his Savior and delight in its transforming power for him the way I had delighted in the way grace had changed me. I had held my husband to the old standard of the law—“When WILL you prove to me that you are good enough?” “When will you FINALLY be trustworthy?” “When will I be SURE that you aren’t gonna bail on me?” We had an old-covenant marriage based on “law-keeping” (my law) and “works” (his), and it was nothing more than a white-washed tombstone—it looked good on the outside, but was full of the old bones of unforgiven grievances long past (Matthew 23:27).

“Oh, yeah? Well actions speak louder than words, baby!”

Indeed they do. And my actions shouted to him that he wasn’t good enough, trustworthy enough and that I thought—no, expected—that he would leave me when the going got rough. There isn’t enough grace in the universe to cover attitudes like these! (Romans 7:24)

Or is there?

He that “giveth more grace” to those who humble themselves before Him (James 4:6) has an unlimited supply! The words I have spoken to my children since their babyhoods came to me with such beauty and clarity that my knees buckled and tears flowed from my eyes!!

THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN EVER DO OR SAY THAT WILL MAKE ME STOP LOVING YOU

Precious words of life!! Now I knew that these words, so freely spoken to me by Christ Who hung on the cross for me, and whispered to my children as I rocked them to sleep at night, were THE WORDS that my husband had never heard from me. He had lived years without hearing that I love him unabashedly and with my whole heart full of grace for him! He needed to hear THE WORDS! Our marriage needed to hear THE WORDS! Words of life. Transforming words. Grace. Truth.

As we lay in bed that night, facing each other transparently for, perhaps, the first time, I spoke the words he had longed to hear. “There is nothing you can ever do or say that will make me stop loving you.” Period. End of story.

But not the end of the story. Not by a long shot. Christ’s ability to transform people and relationships defies what we can even think or imagine

(Ephesians 3:20) and He is faithful. Our marriage has grown more since that night not long ago than in the preceding ten years. That is not an exaggeration—it is our experience, and we praise Him for it.

You see, when you bring the truth about grace—that none of us are worthy enough, faithful enough or loving enough, but HE IS and that counts for EVERYTHING—into your marriage, suddenly the one whom God brought to you is the right one, the one who really does “complete” you, the one who actually meets your needs because now all you see is JESUS. You see His grace and His truth woven

through your lover’s heart, and He has accomplished so much more than a make-over! There is no white-washing because that which was dry bones is now alive in Christ!!

In the closing verses of Paul’s letter to the Galatians, he warns the believers about those who would taint their spiritual experience with rules and rituals that held no meaning. He exhorts the congregation to glory in “nothing but the cross” (Galatians 6:14). In verse 15, he boils it all down to one thing: What counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creature.

It’s all that counts in your marriage, too. Speak Life!!

»

Hurting People All Around

by Mittisse Barrett

Have you ever wondered what you could possibly do for the Lord, questioning whether you have any skills that God could use? I too have often been paralyzed by the awareness of my limited gifts, but not anymore. My purpose for sharing this experience is to give you a modern-day miracle of the little boy with his small lunch of barley loaves and fishes, and to inspire you to believe that it is not so much what you have, but what God can do with what you have. How He can take the little that we have and multiply it into a great meal for those who are hungering and thirsting for more than this world has to offer. They need Jesus; He alone can satisfy the hunger and thirst of the heart of humanity!

Let me begin with my own prayer life. For weeks, even months, I have

been pleading with my Father in heaven to teach me how to love Him as He deserves to be loved, and to teach me to love those that He loves. I desire a new heart, a heart that longs to be pleasing to my Father in heaven. I want to see people as He sees them and not with critical eyes. I need my Father’s eyes!

Now let’s get started with the Sabbath blessing that I received by listening to the voice of the Lamb. It all began one sunshiny day after fellowship with the Roan Mountain group. The worship service had ended, the lunch table was cleared and afternoon discussion had begun. This is usually a very enjoyable part of the day; however, for me, it was not. An overwhelming and heavy burden had consumed my thoughts. I believed that my

Father in heaven was trying to tell me something, but I questioned whether or not I was hearing His voice or my own. So I began to pray that He would make it clear; I needed to be sure. Consuming my thoughts was the unmistakable need to go find someone who was hurting and to bring encouragement. I was sure now, so gathering my belongings and the gift of literature, I was on an errand of the Lord.

Stopping along the way, I phoned a dear friend and requested that we pray. I had God's assurance that He was sending me, and now I wanted to be covered in prayer. I was ready! It was the Lord who was directing me, and I knew that He would have to show me where this person was. He did!

Using literature as the means to find the person in need, I began knocking on doors. God is so faithful! After knocking on only five doors, I met the lady that had been crying out to the Lord for help. She invited me into her home and, before any lapse of time, she began to cry a river of tears. These tears gushed from a heart that needed the assurance of a forgiving and loving Saviour.

This is her story: Just two years ago, she and her best friend were in a terrible automobile accident; her best friend died. Being the driver had left her feeling responsible and guilt ridden. She underwent physical therapy, which allows her limited use of her legs, but mostly she is in a wheelchair. As if this were not painful enough, she then learned that she had breast cancer and needed to have one breast removed. Unbelievably, the week prior to my Sabbath visit a friend's child

had died. No wonder she was draining her eyes of stored tears with me that Sabbath afternoon. What could I possibly say? "Lord help me to keep my mouth shut until she empties every ounce of tears," was my prayer. God knew that she needed a human to reveal His love to her. Someone with arms that could embrace her mangled body and to reassure her of forgiveness and that a loving Father in heaven had heard her cry. He sent me!

Underneath the wheelchair, the smoke from the cancer sticks, the mangled limbs and the tear-stained face, was a beautiful lady who had weathered a tremendous storm. He sent me to point her to the rainbow of promise; remind her of a loving heavenly Father who sent His Son to suffer so that we could have eternal life; help her to see that the Father loves her and only wants to bless her life, and that He has a purpose and plan for her life if she will only turn to Him; and encourage her to ask the Father to reveal His plan for her life. The Father wanted me to tell her that He had sent me there that day. I explained that I normally don't go door to door, but today was different. He had told me that someone was hurting and at the end of their rope. He wanted her to know that He heard her cry for help. He loved her!

I couldn't leave her without giving her a tool that had saved my life so many times: the act of seeking someone who has it worse than I do and helping him or her, had helped me during the loss of my husband years ago. This simple tactic had rescued me from despair many times. It

is only when we take our eyes off of our own problems that we can experience joy in the middle of the storm. Suggesting ideas to reach out to others from her own home seemed to bring purpose to her tormented soul. Wanting to keep in touch, I asked if I could have her phone number and address. As I knelt beside her chair, we prayed that the Father in heaven would send the Spirit of His Son, Jesus, to guide her and comfort her during the weeks ahead. I know that He heard our prayer because He sent me there!

I finished handing out literature in the area and returned to my car. Now the tears began to flow from my eyes; tears of joy. Not only had my heavenly Father used me to comfort and give hope to this lady, but He also answered my prayers. Without a doubt, I knew how He wanted me to love Him and those that He sent His Son to die for on the cross. He wants me to search for those that Satan has tried to destroy, so that Jesus can restore their lives. He wants me to seek the lost and, while seeking, I will be saved as a result; a natural result. The joy I experienced knocking on doors that day taught me how to really live a life worth living. I knew why I was created and my purpose in this life—to bring Jesus to those who are without hope. He is the only medicine for the hurting heart of humanity! He alone can heal! He alone can renew a right spirit within the heart! He alone can assure the sin-sick soul of a forgiving heavenly Father! He alone can change your life and mine!

I'd like to share a quote from the book *The Desire of Ages*, page 312.

“The service rendered in sincerity of heart has great recompense. ‘Thy Father which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly.’ By the life we live through the grace of Christ the character is formed. The original loveliness begins to be restored to the soul. The attributes of the character of Christ are imparted, and the image of the Divine begins to shine forth. The faces of men and women who walk and work with God express the peace of heaven. They are surrounded with the atmosphere of heaven. For these souls the kingdom of God has begun. They have Christ’s joy, the joy of being a blessing to humanity. They have the honor of being accepted for the Master’s use; they are trusted to do His work in His name.”

Please don’t be mistaken; if you see anything in me that looks like Christ, it is Christ. Apart from Him I know what I am—nothing. But there is hope for you, for this lady and for me! We can be partakers of Christ’s joy by doing the things that brought Him joy. He came to this earth seeking the lost—you and me. This is what brought Him joy, and it will bring joy to our hearts too!

The song that I learned as a young child has so much more meaning now. Will you sing it with me?

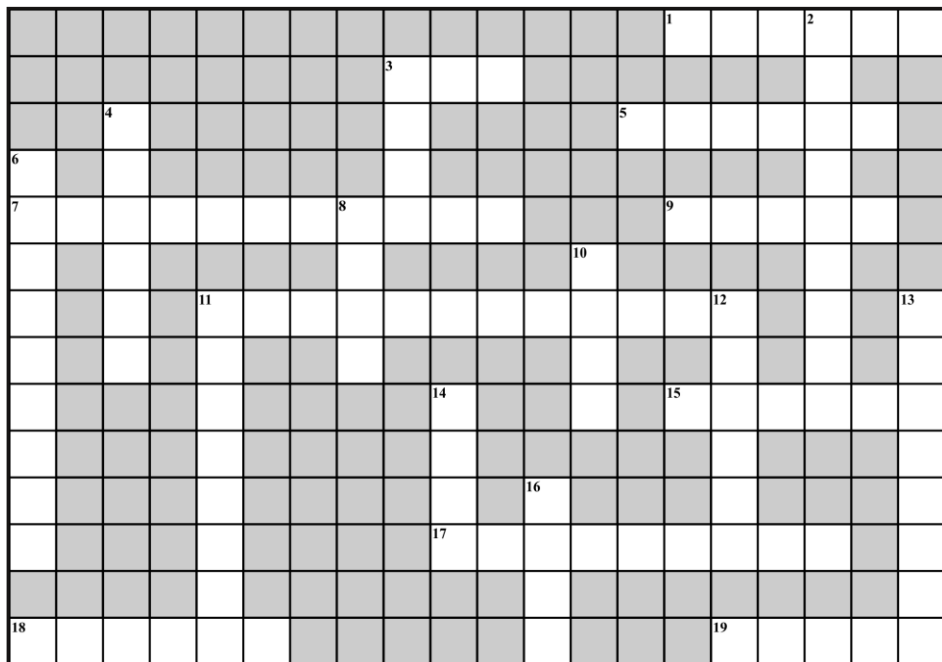
“I have the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart, down in my heart. I have the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, down in my heart to stay. And I’m so happy, so very happy. I have the love of Jesus in my heart. And I’m so happy so very happy. I have the love of Jesus in my heart!”



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

This month we are continuing a series of studies written by my children. 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.)

Truth - by Zachariah Beachy



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

- "God shall ____ forth his mercy and his truth." Psalms 57:3—**10 Down**
- "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have ____ each other." Psalms 85:10—**15 Across**
- "Truth shall ____ out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven." Psalms 85:11—**18 Across**
- "Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will ____ in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." Psalms 86:11—**14 Down**
- "But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long-suffering, and ____ in mercy and truth." Psalms 86:15—**2 Down**
- "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy ____: mercy and truth shall go before thy face." Psalms 89:14—**4 Down**
- "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy ____ and buckler." Psalms 91:4—**12 Down**
- "Before the LORD: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he

Present Truth

shall judge the world with righteousness, and the ____ with his truth." Psalms 96:13—**1 Across**

➤ "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth ____ to all generations." Psalms 100:5—**13 Down**

➤ "The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and ____." Psalms 111:7, 8—**7 Across**

➤ "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy ____ is the truth." Psalms 119:142—**3 Across**

➤ Commandments: "Thou art near, O LORD; and all thy ____ are truth." Psalms 119:151—**11 Across**

➤ "For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the ____ of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD." Psalms 117:2—**9 Across**

➤ "I have chosen the way of truth: thy ____ have I laid before me." Psalms 119:30—**6 Down**

➤ "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my ____; for I have hoped in thy judgments." Psalms 119:43—**19 Across**

➤ "I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy

lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy ____." Psalms 138:2—**8 Down**

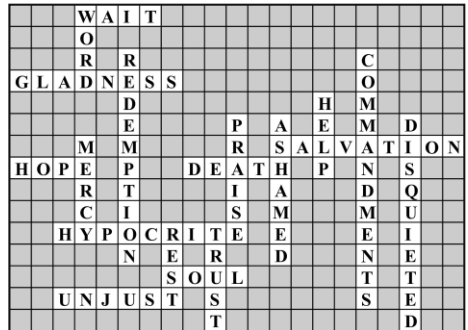
➤ "Of his own will begat he us with the ____ of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." James 1:18—**16 Down**

➤ "Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and ____." 2 John 1:3—**3 Down**

➤ "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the ____ of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:4—**17 Across**

➤ "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the ____, but by me." John 14:6—**5 Across**

➤ "I have no greater joy than to hear that my ____ walk in truth." 3 John 1:4—**11 Down**



Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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