Church Attendance

by Elder T. Roe Scott
(deceased)

I wish to begin this article by giving you a verse of scripture found in Romans 14:7 "For none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself." I feel that many people do not realize the truth contained in the verse. Each member of a church has some kind of effect upon the rest of the members either good or bad. If we are faithful to God and to the church, our influence will be good and if otherwise, then our influence will be just the opposite. It is important, therefore, that we strive to be faithful, not only for the joy we receive, but for the effect it may have upon others. We certainly should love God and the church enough to desire to be the right kind of influence upon the lives of those with whom we come in contact, both in and out of the church.

Members of the church are described in the Bible as members of a human body. The Apostle Paul tells us about this in 1st Corinthians 12:27, "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." He is speaking here of members of the local church.

We know that no member of our body is too small to affect the whole body and when such a member becomes infected, it can slow down the growth or progress of the whole body. For example, if the little finger becomes infected, then the whole body may need the care of a physician. The same is true in a spiritual sense. The Spirit of God joins us together and we become a member in the body of Christ in His church on earth. In 1 Corinthians 12:26, we find these words, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."

According to this scripture, if we are truly joined together in love, then we will be affected by other members of the body, whether it be in joy or in sorrow. I feel sure that if we could all realize our relationship to each other in the body of Christ (the church or visible body), we would be more careful to fill our places faithfully.

If only half the members of a church attend the services, the body is being half-fed and the other half is not receiving spiritual nourishment. Therefore, the whole church is weakened. It is said that a chain is no stronger than its weakest link. How true this is. Realizing this, we should all want to be strong for the sake of the whole church. We cannot be strong without proper nourishment. The church is our Father's house where we are to sit down together and feast at His table. The gospel of Jesus Christ is given to feed the soul and strengthen the inner man and provide all that is necessary to make us strong Christians. May God grant us grace to accept our responsibilities as members of the body of Christ.

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. Hebrews 10:24-25

Go, And Sin No More

by Elder Jason S. Solomon
Chattanooga, Tennessee

"When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10-11).

What Do You Believe?

Why are you reading this article? I mean, really? Why did you bother to even pick up this magazine? I suppose you may have many reasons. Perhaps you are an avid reader. Perhaps you look for God's Truth wherever you can find it. Or perhaps you were given this collection of articles to read by a friend. Maybe you found it on a table somewhere. Or maybe you found it in a pile awaiting disposal. Regardless of the circumstance you are here now.

According to the Scriptures, God does not cause all events (sin being the most obvious), but it is sure from a plain reading of Scripture that He has specifically made certain things to happen. From the act of Creation to the parting of the Red Sea and the eventual Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ, we see many evidences of God's direct and supernatural interaction within the cosmos. Despite how we came to the point of holding this small work of theology, whether by natural or supernatural means, we must face the claims of Scripture concerning these events and others like them. They point to a Divine authorship of our world, and further still, the implications of morality that this idea requires.

How so? Well, it really comes down to this simple question. Do you believe the claims of the Holy Bible to be true, including such things as a divinely directed creation; a supernaturally inspired revelation of that Creator, including His holiness and power; the sinfully, dead state of mankind without means of self-derived salvation; and the virgin birth, life, death and resurrection of the Son of God appointed as the Savior by that same Entity, God the Father, who directed all of history? If you can earnestly answer yes to that question, then you are indeed blessed beyond measure! In fact, you are like the Apostle Peter who, upon confessing that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, was told by Jesus that he could only have this understanding if it were granted from God (Matthew 16:15-17).

If you do not believe these things, then this little piece may offend you or maybe not. Either way it cannot have its full work without the prerequisite actions of the Spirit of God. Mere intellectual understanding of the Scriptures is not enough. It takes faith to grasp the Truth of Bible, for there are things within its pages that defy natural explanation and human comprehension.

Do You Live What You Believe?

When Baptists and others came out of the shadows of Europe, they were persecuted and threatened, imprisoned and executed. Why? Because others believed that they threatened the power of Rome. During the time of persecution in England, from which most of our theological ancestry hails, Baptists were hounded. They were believed by many to be heretics and schismatics.

The Church of England, desiring unification and uniformity, almost destroyed Baptist congregations in that land. After The Act of Toleration passed in 1689, over 100 Baptist ministers of London and the surrounding area finally published a document largely written in 1644, declaring their beliefs to dissuade continued persecution by other Christians. This document is called the London Confession of Faith.

Like many of the early Christians, these believers were known for their dedicated piety. That is their sound conviction to follow the Word of God in thought and deed. Piety should be our hallmark. People should realize that we are not like other people. We should work harder, give more, and love more deeply than others.

We must consider the state of our faith, because our life should reflect that belief. Jesus taught that our heart or our affection is tied to what we put our time into. For this reason He said, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20-21), because heavenly or spiritual treasures such as love, joy, peace, and all manner of righteousness cannot be taken away or destroyed. Therefore, our efforts should focus on reaching for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus in all that we do (Philippians 3:14). So then, if we believe, ought we not to behave in such a way that it is apparent?

Many of you certainly know John 3:16, but do you know 1 John 3:16? The Apostle who recorded those famous words and actions of Christ would later write: *"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever*

we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (I John 3:16-24).

In the message of the Gospel of John 3 delivered to Nicodemus, we find Jesus teaching that only by the graceful hand of God are His children reborn to new life in Christ Jesus. Only through this rebirth can a man even hope to see (much less enter) the Kingdom of Heaven delivered to the saints. Only by the new birth of Spirit and Water can a man enter into the Holy Realm of God. Therefore, we understand Christ's teaching in John 3:16 to mean that only those born of the Spirit, which is by the grace of God, can experience everlasting life. Furthermore, 1 John 3:16 teaches us that this new birth becomes apparent in us how? We are to lay down our life in the service of others, not in word only, but in deed and in truth.

While he acknowledged the innate sinfulness of even born-again believers, the Apostle Paul agreed with John that continuing in willful, wanton sin was an unacceptable abuse of the grace of God. In his letter to the church in Rome, Paul provides a lengthy discourse on the ineffectiveness of the Law of God to change sinful mankind, and the need for the grace of God to forgive our sins through the blood of Jesus Christ.

However, Paul went on to make it clear that abject sin should not dominate the life of the Christian saying, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:1-4).*

Therefore, because our sins were taken with Jesus to the grave through His propitiatory death, we should behave in such a way that we demonstrate our love and appreciation for Him. This love is best expressed in the newness of life found only in the Spirit.

Go, And Sin No More

While we are called to holiness and a pious lifestyle, we must beware self-righteousness. Self-righteousness and pride were the undoing of the Pharisees. Believing that by their heritage and behavior they could curry God's favor, the Pharisees made too much of the ceremonial aspects of the Law of God. Jesus chastised them many times calling them terrible names and warning others against their teachings as vain and poisonous.

One of the clearest examples of these confrontations demonstrated not only Christ's superior doctrine and power, but also His compassion and conviction for sinners. *"Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:1-12).*

In this most wonderful passage, Jesus teaches that He does not condemn the adulteress, but he turns the pointing fingers of her accusers back on them by forcing them to examine their own hearts. However, note that He does not tell her that she is merely free to go. Instead He said, "Go, and sin no more." While forgiveness comes to the child of God without price to the individual, it most certainly was paid for by the Savior.

He did not pay for those sins in order to allow us to sin as much as we wish. On the contrary, He expunged sin to make way for the Spirit of God unto everlasting life. He that follows Jesus shall not walk in darkness. May God grant us the will and the courage to seek Him in all things, not fearing the reproaches of the world, but glorying in the love of the Savior.

Your Financial Contributions Are Greatly Needed!

Today

by Elder Greg Phillips
Chattanooga, Tennessee

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years" (Hebrews 3:7-9).

These words are quoted from Psalm 95:7-9, "For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work"

(Psalm 95:7-9). They were written by David, and attributed here to the Holy Ghost, proving that David wrote by the inspiration of God's Holy Spirit. These words were originally a warning to the Israelites not to provoke God, as Israel tempted God in the wilderness and were excluded from that rest which he had promised them in Canaan. The apostle uses them here to persuade the Christians to hold fast their religious privileges, and the grace they had received, lest they should come short of the spiritual rest which Christ had prepared for them.

The rest promised Israel in the wilderness was not only rest from their present anguish and uncertainty of mind for people in their wanderings, but in due time a resting-place and settled habitation. In the wilderness, Israel never knew how long they would be in any particular place. They might encamp a month or one night. As the cloud moved, Israel had to pack all their belongings and follow. All this was to teach Israel faith and obedience. Only when the faithless generation died was the nation ready to enter into the promised land.

The apostle quotes this passage and applies it to those whom he addressed, because the admonition was as pertinent and important under the Christian dispensation as it was under the Jewish. The danger of hardening the heart by neglecting to hear His voice was as great, and the consequences would be as fearful and alarming. We should regard the solemn warnings in the Old Testament against sin and against the danger of apostasy, as addressed by the Holy Ghost to us. They are as applicable to us as they were to those to whom they were at first addressed; and we need all the influence of such appeals to keep us from apostasy as much as they did.

David regarded this rest as existing in his day, and that Israel might even then be invited to come and partake of the rest that was promised. Nearly five hundred years after the time when the Israelites were going to the promised land, and when the offer of rest was made to them, we hear David speaking still of rest, rest which was offered in his time, and which might then be lost by hardening the heart. It could not be, therefore, that the offer of rest pertained merely to the promised land. It must be something beyond that. It must be something existing in the time of David. The writer of Hebrews said, "For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day" (Hebrews 4:8). Jesus in this instance has reference to Joshua, the son of Nun. Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, and there can be no doubt that Joshua is here intended. The argument is that if Canaan was the rest under consideration, it was accomplished when Joshua led Israel into the land. Joshua did give them a rest in the promised land, but it was not all which was intended, and it did not exclude the promise of another and more important rest. David would not have spoken of a rest to be entered into in his day unless something else remained. It must be an offer of a spiritual rest still to be entered into. David evidently spoke prophetically of the real rest of God, the rest to be secured through the Greater Son of David, Jesus Christ.

The rest under consideration here is the Gospel rest, that rest which believers now enter into. This rest is peace and joy in Christ. We enter into it by degrees, and by believing enjoy more of it. This rest is to be labored for by prayer, hearing the word, and attendance to the services and ordinances of the church. This requires faith, diligence, and hard work. There will be difficulties and discouragements through the weakness of the flesh and the temptations of Satan. Israel had many obstacles and enemies to conquer before they enjoyed the rest of Canaan. They possessed the land gradually, constantly moving forward. We will face many battles as well. The blessings of rest, however, are well worth the effort.

Unbelief was the cause of all which befell ancient Israel in the wilderness between the times of their baptism unto Moses in the Red Sea and in the cloud (see I Corinthians 10:1-11) and the crossing of the river Jordan. Israel did not believe God's promise to give them the land of Canaan, so they were afraid to go forward. Unbelief produced disobedience, and disobedience produced hardness of heart and blindness of mind. All this brought down the judgments of God, and wrath came upon them to the uttermost. Paul wrote, "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as

they also lusted" (I Corinthians 10:6). A particular case of lust was that after flesh, when they longed for the fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and the garlic of Egypt, which they had left behind (Numbers 11:4,33,34). These are included in the "evil things;" not that they are evil in themselves, but they became so to the Israelites when they lusted after what God withheld, and were discontented with what God provided. "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread" (Numbers 21:5). Though they had seen water gush from the rock on two occasions, they said "neither is there any water." Though they were fed with manna, they said, "...there is no bread…" They called the manna "light bread," meaning it was of small substance and virtue, even though it nourished Israel in difficult journeys for forty years.

God's visible presence was constantly before them in the cloud, yet they did not trust Him to provide, even having seen His miracles. They wanted to see water. The manna proved to be sufficiently nourishing, but it was not "spicy" enough to suit their appetites. They were walking by sight and yielding to carnal appetites.

The children of God today are no less prone to lust after the things of the world than Israel of old. Things that are not evil in themselves can be a snare when we have an inordinate desire for them, or put the obtaining things before the service of God.

"Lust after evil things" can be quite subtle and may overtake us before we are aware. It manifests itself when believers desire entertainment over spiritual worship. It is evident when we desire eloquent and witty speech instead of the preaching of the word "...in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Corinthians 2:4). We "lust after evil things" when we try to make the true church look like the religious institutions of the world. When we put our pleasure above the service of God, we imitate carnal Israel in the wilderness.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, came preaching, "…Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Jesus began His earthly ministry by saying, "…Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). That message is valid and much needed now. We all need to repent of actions and attitudes. We need to turn away from the things of the world and seek the kingdom of God.

True gospel repentance, or "repentance unto life," is sorrow for sin, grief for having committed it, and a turning away from it with abhorrence, accompanied with sincere endeavors, in reliance on God's grace and the influences of the Holy Spirit, to live in humble and holy obedience to the commands and will of God. Repentance also includes sorrow for failing to do the things God has commanded, and making necessary corrections.

Today, now, at present, is the time to hear and obey. It is not to be put off till tomorrow. All God's commands relate to the present--to this day--to the passing moment. He gives us no commands about the future, he does not require us to repent and to turn to him tomorrow, or some later time.

Duty pertains to the present. It is our duty to turn from sin, and to love him now. We do not know if we shall live to another day. Every one, therefore, should feel that whatever commands God addresses to him are addressed to him now. Whatever guilt he incurs by neglecting those commands is incurred now. For the present neglect and disobedience each one is to answer--and each one must give account to God for what he does TODAY.

"To day if ye will hear," if you are willing to hearken to God, listen now, and do not defer duty to a future period. A willingness to change is necessary for reformation. The great difficulty in the mind of a sinner is in his will. He is unwilling to hear the voice of God, unwilling that He should reign over him. While this unwillingness lasts, he will make no efforts to change. When unwillingness is overcome and he determines to change, many difficulties vanish, and the work of obedience becomes effective.

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The Judgment of the Jews

by Elder Berley J. Welch
(deceased)

The first Coming of the Lord, His Coming by birth as the Son of Man, was discussed in a recent article. This is not, however, the only Coming of Christ that is mentioned in Scripture. There are three other senses in which the Coming of Christ is taught, (1) His Coming in Judgment against Jerusalem (the Jews), (2) His presence with His children as we live in the earth, and (3) His last coming at the time of the Resurrection. This article deals with the first of these three, His Coming in judgment against Jerusalem.

The true identity of Jesus is revealed in the Scriptures, And none of us can deny that He was indeed God manifested in the flesh. Being God, He is the Righteous Judge. This is clearly manifested in His judgment against the Jews. He had every right to judge them. He judged them fairly but severely!

National Israel had served its purpose as types, and the time had come for it to be put away. Israel had become one of the most sinful nations on the earth. God had foreseen this, "And told of her/judgment in Isaiah 5:1-6. "Now will I sing of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, And built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to: I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I WILL TAKE AWAY THE HEDGE THEREOF, AND IT SHALL BE EATEN UP; AND BREAK DOWN THE WALL THEREOF, AND IT SHALL BE TRODDEN DOWN: AND I WILL LAY IT TO WASTE: IT SHALL NOT BE PRUNED, NOR DIGGED; BUT THERE SHALL COME UP BRIERS AND THORNS: I WILL ALSO COMMAND THE CLOUDS THAT THEY RAIN NO RAIN UPON IT."

I believe the reference to the clouds in the last expression of passage has reference to the preaching of the gospel of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This ties the judgment to that point in time after God gave the gospel as the primary way that he would communicate with His people. God's special blessings were upon the Jews, but they misused them. Finally, the gospel was preached to them first, but they did not heed. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it." (Amos 8:11-12). There was a famine concerning the gospel among the Jews beginning when they would not heed and continuing until the present!

Finally, God describes the totality of His judgment in the fourteenth verse (Isaiah 5:14) saying, "Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it." Whether or not this is directly talking about the destruction of Jerusalem in the year A.D. 70, it fits the description perfectly.

God planted Jerusalem, and right away they began to follow after all kinds of idol gods. As a people, they had turned completely away from God when Jesus Christ came into the world. In the twenty-third chapter of the Book of Matthew, it is said "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of the righteous Able unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gatherest her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! BEHOLD, YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE." Here is the Judge placing His judgment upon National Israel! BEHOLD YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE. He is going to destroy it! There will not be left one stone upon another.

In II Chronicles 36:15, 16, He foretold this and what the situation was, "And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up bedtimes, and sending: because he had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place; but they mocked the messengers of God and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, till there was no remedy." There was nothing to be done. After the Babylonian Captivity, God brought Israel back into the land again so that captivity did not satisfy what God said in this passage. But when they turned

away from the preaching of the gospel by the Son of God, there was no remedy. God had withdrawn Himself from National Israel. He had placed the judgment of utter destruction upon them and Israel was no longer to be His nation.

Having determined what He would do, God did not lose any time in carrying it out. The present day nation called Israel is not a nation that God recognizes in any special way. That nation is finished. The types and shadows have passed away. We have no more use for them.

In Matthew 24:32-35, the parable of the fig tree teaches that the end of the Jewish age would occur during that generation. In the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses, Jesus said, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." That is, the old Jewish heaven and the old Jewish earth shall pass away. But God's words shall not pass away. His children among the Jews will all be saved ("My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Psalm 89:34.) but their heaven and earth shall pass away.

Peter spoke of this destruction of Jerusalem in II Peter 3:12, 13, "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Peter was looking for the coming of the gospel church upon the earth, and the passing away of the old Jewish church and all things of which He had prophesied in Isaiah 65:17: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

When Jesus was in the earth, and immediately afterwards, Jerusalem was the most wicked place on the face of the earth. They had false prophets, vulgar priests, bandits, and murderers who killed without mercy. There were men the vileness of whom the pens of men have never described. They were proud and cruel and addicted to the most horrible crimes, even to the extent that their own historian, Josephus, said that they acted more like infernal beings than men. They butchered twelve thousand noble persons in the flower of their age. They were like animals!

And God's wrath was poured out upon them. The pen of man cannot describe the hell, as was said, "Hell hath enlarged itself," that old National Israel was in. It was a place of torment to the extent that in the midst of starvation when the Roman soldiers smelled something cooking and investigated, they found that a mother had slain her baby and was cooking it to be eaten! Talk about torment!

Finally, the temple was burned on the tenth day of August, 70 A.D. Josephus said that the hill on which the temple stood was seething hot and seemed enveloped to its base in one great sheet of flame. But he said that in quantity the blood was larger than the fire. Josephus says that there were perhaps one million, one hundred thousand Jews slain; eleven thousand died of starvation, and ninety-seven thousand were sold into slavery. The population decreased from about five million to about three hundred thousand. God's Hand was heavy upon them!

God's judgment has continued against the Jews. Almost every century has seen an attempt by some ruler to exterminate them as a people. Millions of them were slain in our own lifetime in the gas chambers of Germany. Their religion has become an empty shell, looking no further than the city of Jerusalem and the wailing wall. Truly they are experiencing the famine of the word of God.

Christ came in judgment against His people of old. His judgment was severe. If His people in our day harden their hearts and stiffen their necks against Him, we can look for His wrath to be poured out against us, also.

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Come Unto Me

by Elder McKinley Wright
Jacksonville, Florida

There is a text in the Bible that does not receive the emphasis among Primitive Baptists that it should receive. Because other religious orders have applied it erroneously, using it to try to induce people to get born again, we have largely abandoned it to them. We have feared that if we emphasize invitation to follow the Lord, someone will identify us with the Arminians. Ignoring the text, we have failed to teach the whole truth, thereby robbing ourselves of a very great blessing. This text is Matthew 11:28: "COME UNTO ME, ALL YE THAT LABOR AND ARE HEAVY LADEN, AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST." Truly, no other gospel is as restful as that proclaimed by Primitive Baptists! But we seldom invite our hearers to come to Jesus to find that rest.

This is not a general invitation. The only ones whom Jesus was inviting to come to Him and find rest were those who were laboring and heavily laden. The Pharisees might have heard Jesus speak the words, but they heard no invitation. They were not laboring nor heavily laden. They were depending upon and were satisfied with their own personal righteousness. The Saducees did not hear an invitation. Their confidence was in the fact that God had a chosen people; but they looked only on the formality of the choice without ever considering that, because of His choice, God's chosen people have certain responsibilities. (Are there Primitive Baptists who have fallen into this condition?) Of course, how we come to be laboring and heavily laden is another lesson. Suffice it to say that this attitude comes only to a person whose stony heart has been melted by the power of God. In this passage, Jesus makes a promise to those who are laboring and heavily laden -- the promise that there is rest for them. Anyone who is laboring or has been laboring needs rest. And Jesus says in this passage that He has a place of rest for them. Any other application of the text constitutes addition to the word of God.

In the Hebrew letter, we are told that there is a rest for the people of God. Paul makes it plain that this rest is not over yonder in the next world. When we get there, we shall not even become tired. But while we live in this life, we become tired. Sin is prevalent in our lives, but the new man within us abhors it. This warfare between the old man and the new man is a heavy load. (Before the new man is manifested in the new birth, a sinner does not have this conflict; but after the new man is manifested, the warfare is continual.) If there were no place of rest provided for us, we would fall by the wayside. But Jesus promises **rest** to those who are laboring. Let me emphasize that this promise is made to anyone who is burdened about spiritual things.

Those who are **laboring** need **rest**. An example of one who was heavily laden is Job. Job was probably the most afflicted individual other than Jesus who ever lived in the earth. My opinion is that the purpose of his affliction was that his faith might be tested and strengthened. And I think that many of our afflictions are for the purpose of testing our faith. It is not that God wants to find out what kind of faith we have. He already knows. But He purposed that Job might learn about the presence of God with him in his afflictions, and that this knowledge might make Job a better servant of God. And those things that God permits to come into our lives as tests of our faith come for the real purpose of leading us to understand how God has been with us in our experience; and that having seen how He has been with us, we will learn to depend on Him more, and to rejoice in the fact that He is with us. Surely, when the three Hebrew children saw the fourth, when we can see Jesus walking with us in our afflictions, we are comforted in an indescribable way. Our experiences should lead us to begin to look for Him when we are in trouble.

Job was afflicted heavily. His body was covered with boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. He was so miserable that his wife seeing his suffering said, "Curse God and die." Surely she was motivated by love for Job when suggesting this. She knew that even death would be better than such suffering as he was undergoing. This tells us what kind of misery it must have been. Misery so great that it would cause this woman who loved him to just say, "Curse God and die and find relief from it. "She and Job had looked for relief everywhere they could imagine, and had not been able to find it. So, the only relief that she could see for Job was the relief that comes with death. But though afflicted, Job would not give up.

In Job 30:15 (and the following verses), Job expressed how burdensome his affliction had become to him. He said, "Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind: and my welfare passeth away as a cloud. And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me. My bones are pierced in me in the night season: and my sinews take no rest. By the great force of my disease is my garment changed: It bindeth me about as the collar of my coat. He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes. I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not."

There is more language in the same vein, but these six verses express the agony that Job was undergoing. Truly, **Job was laboring and heavily laden**.

Jeremiah was another who was in this condition. We find the record in the thirty-eighth chapter of his prophecy. Jeremiah lived at a time when Israel (the people of God) was most corrupt. They (the vast majority of the people as wall as the government) had completely forsaken God's way. Jeremiah continually exhorted the people to return to the good way. Of course, as he exhorted, some of those to whom he spoke were the wrong people. They had the ability to persecute him. And he spoke to them in the wrong way! One of these was the king. Jeremiah pointed out to him the wrong that was associated with the way he was conducting himself. Finally the princes (not the king's sons but the high people in the government it seems strange that in that time when the king was hardly a king at all those who were serving under him were called princes Instead of being called junior officers) went to the king and said, "We ought to put Jeremiah to death. He is hindering us In the things that we want to do. He points us toward God's way, and we don't want to walk in God's way." The king, Zedekiah, gave his permission for them to put Jeremiah to death. Jeremiah 38:6 says, "Then took they Jeremiah, and cast him into the dungeon of Malchia the son of Hammelech, that was in the court of the prison: and they let down Jeremiah with cords. And in the dungeon there was no water, but mire: 80 JEREMIAH BUNK IN THE MIRE." Here we see what they did to Jeremiah. They did not just execute him. They put him into the dungeon to die a slow death of deprivation and suffering. They Intended to leave him there to starve to death. They would have succeeded except for the intervention of an Ethiopian. They let Jeremiah down with a cord (rope) into the dungeon which had no floor so Jeremiah just sank Into the mud. if we in our imaginations put ourselves in his place and see ourselves as sinking down into the mud, and imagine the discomfort of the moment, we can see something of the condition in which Jeremiah was existing. We can am that he must have been laboring and heavily laden. He must have wondered many times why God would permit this to happen to His faithful servant. He must have wondered if he would have been justified to set aside his moral principles, going along with the crowd, following the path of least resistance.

The verses that follow tell how serious Jeremiah's situation was. When the time came for him to be lifted out of the dungeon, instead of just dropping a rope to him and telling him to put the rope around his body and then these thirty men (he had sunk into the mud so deeply that it required thirty men to lift him out) pulling him out, they also dropped rags to serve as padding around the rope. This padding would reduce his agony by preventing the rope from cutting into his flesh. Jeremiah was one who was laboring. He was persecuted! He was enduring untold agony, both physical and mental. He needed help!

The last example at which we shall look is king Hezekiah. The record is in the thirty-eighth chapter of Isaiah's prophecy. Hezekiah was a good king. There were not many good kings, but Hezekiah was one of them during the first part of his reign. After he had this experience, his manner of life changed drastically, but that is another lesson. According to the record (Isaiah 38:1), Hezekiah was extremely sick. Isaiah, the prophet, went to see him. Isaiah told him, "Thus saith the Lord, 'Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.' "

Hezekiah turned toward the wall and prayed. Verse three tells what he prayed, "... 'Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.' And Hezekiah wept sore". Isaiah's message disappointed Hezekiah. We can see the burdened condition of his heart in the fact that he wept SORE. No doubt he was enjoying his reign, feeling in his heart God's approval of his efforts at cleaning up the corruption that existed. He had been looking forward to a long and good reign leading the people back into God's way, only to be told that his life was being cut off. Surely this knowledge distressed him.

We have seen three examples of some who were burdened by the conditions of their lives. We shall now see **that there was a rest for each of them.**

Hezekiah's rest came in the next verses. "Then came the word of the Lord to Isaiah, saying, Go, and say to Hezekiah, 'Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years. And I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city. And this shall be a sign unto thee from the Lord, that the Lord will do this thing that he hath spoken; Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward.' So, the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down." So, Hezekiah received relief from his burden. Surely he was made to rejoice when Isaiah returned and gave him this message. He believed what the prophet had told him about setting his house in order. That is why he was troubled. So, surely when the same prophet came back almost immediately with the message, "God has added fifteen years to your life", It was a precious promise to him! God also promised that He would deliver him and his city out of the hands of the Assyrians, and that He would defend the city. These things must have warmed his heart. Sweet relief! But we should stop here for a warning. Hezekiah had been a good king up to this time. His prayer to God relating his faithfulness in serving God was not just idle words. He had done the things that he said. But when he had this experience of feel-

ing God's special blessings upon himself, almost immediately the direction of his life changed. He forgot all about God! There is a great tendency for the people of God who have received His mercy in such a great way to forget His blessings in our lives and turn away from Him to walk in another way. The last fifteen years of Hezekiah's life were spent in following the lusts of the flesh, seeking glory for himself. This should be a warning to us. But the point of this lesson is that God gave Hezekiah relief for his burden when he turned to Him. As our text said, "Come unto me ...and I will give you rest." God gave Hezekiah **rest** from the great burden that he was carrying.

A few paragraphs back, we left Jeremiah shut up in the court of the prison. As long as Israel remained a nation, he remained in the court of the prison. After having been in the dungeon, his being in the court, although still imprisoned, must have felt restful indeed. But God had even more blessings for him. The time came that God sent His people, Israel, into captivity. They had sinned grievously. When we sin, God is sure to punish us. He punished them. The king of Babylon came and took possession of the land. He killed many of the people, especially those who occupied high places in the government. But for Jeremiah, it was different. "Now Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him even as he shall say unto thee." (Jeremiah 39:11,12). So, God relieved Jeremiah's burden! He no longer had to endure the affliction of being in the mud in the dungeon, nor even of being shut up in prison. Instead, he was set free! And the person in charge was told to do anything that Jeremiah asked.

Jeremiah's reaction to the **relief** of his burden was different from that of Hezekiah. Soon after his being set free, a group of Israelites (who were now being oppressed by the king of Babylon) decided to leave Israel and go to Egypt. Jeremiah advised them not to go; that their situation would be better if they remained in Israel subject to the Babylonians. But they insisted on going to Egypt. Jeremiah's love for them was such that he went with them to Egypt, even though he knew that they were choosing the worst alternative. This is an example of one who has confidence in God. He has found **rest** from his labors! He places the welfare of God's people ahead of his own. No one can do this unless his burden has been relieved!

Job was very heavily laden by his physical afflictions. His wife had said, "Curse God and die." Surely he must have seen that as a way out of his misery. But he knew that **it was not God's way**, so he refused to take it. Instead, we hear him saying, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." He did not understand the things that were happening to him, but he was reconciled to God, and felt in his heart that because God was in the matter, things would work out for the best for him. Again, we hear him saying, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that **he** shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." He could not have expressed these things without being at **rest in God**.

Many other examples of people of God who were burdened in various ways but who found **rest** from their labors could be cited. But these are sufficient to show that there is a **rest** for the people of God -- not a place where we shall be freed from all afflictions and suffering, but an **attitude of heart** wherein we are confident that even in the midst of privation and suffering, things will work out well for us because of God's mercy and love for us.

We do not just find this rest by accident. The one who is laboring and heavily laden about the things of God is urged to "**Come unto me ... and I will give you rest.**" So this rest is obtained by coming unto Jesus. We come to Him when we submit our lives to His way, being completely willing to follow whatever way He points out for us to walk. When we do this, we will find a rest the sweetness of which we never even dreamed.

* *

Answers to Grow in Knowledge

1. Job 42:12 - end
2. Jeremiah 29:11 - expected
3. Matthew 13:39 - angels
4. Psalm 73:17 - understood
5. Proverbs 14:12 - seemeth
6. Romans 6:21 - ashamed
7. II Corinthians 11:15 - works
8. Philippians 3:19 - destruction
9. Hebrews 6:8 - beareth
10. I Peter 4:17 - judgment

I shall Pass through this world but once.
Any good therefore,that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being let me do it now. Let me not deter or neglect, for I shall not pass this way again.

God's Order in the House

by Elder George Daniel
(deceased)

Please read Psalms 127 and 128 before studying this article

Houses are built of earthly materials. Homes are built on eternal truths and values. Too often we confuse our thoughts by associating houses with homes. For example, we are all familiar with the line of the poem, "it takes a heap of living in a house to make a home". While this thought may be true, at the same time it may fail by a country mile to be "God's order in the home". What we want you to see with us in this in the very beginning is this truth: When God created man and made the woman from the man, and "brought her unto the man", He gave to mankind his first institution, which is marriage. On this God-given and holy institution, the home is built according to God's order.

Marriage and the home are as inseparable as bone and flesh are to the human body, or as butter and grits are to a southerner who was raised on the farm. Hebrews 13:4 declares, "marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." The modern day practice of single parent families and the home are the product of the devil. God's arch-enemy, the old serpent, Satan, the devil, the accuser of the brethren, the prince of the world, the prince of the power of the air (air waves including radio and T.V.), and by whatever other name He is called, is the author of this idea. Our government has aided Satan in this cause. The idea of helping families and needy children is good. But when a department of government is created that encourages women to have children out of wedlock, and the government will mail them a check each month, and the amount of that check will depend on how many dependents they have in their house, it is certainly easy for Bible-reading and God-fearing people to recognize that **"THIS IS NOT GOD'S ORDER IN THE HOME"** according to the holy scriptures!

The scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the inspired and inerrant word of God, and it is to them alone we shall now look as we pursue the subject of God's order in the home. May God enlighten the eyes of our understanding that we may know the truth.

INTRODUCTION

A definition of the words of our subject is needful just here. Already we have seen that the home is more than a house in which a family eats and sleeps. God's order links the home with marriage. This is the first God-given institution to man, and was given to mankind at large: meaning, to all men of Adam's race. Marriage is not confined to the church and its members. **THE CHURCH** of Jesus Christ is God's institution in the world, and was given or established by Jesus himself four thousand years after Adam and Eve were given to each other in marriage by God.

The word "order" is a Bible word, and is used 42 times in the Old Testament and 18 times in the New Testament. it means "regular arrangement, i.e. (in time), fixed succession (of rank or character), official dignity". The word carries the thought "to arrange in an orderly manner, (i.e.) assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot); Addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set". (Strong's Concordance). God's order in all things is "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ephesians 3:11). **ORDER IS HEAVEN'S FIRST RULE**. It is the opposite to confusion.

After declaring in I Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints", the Apostle Paul goes on in verse 40 to admonish the church at Corinth, "Let all things be done **DECENTLY AND IN ORDER**".

There is a "due order" taught in the word of God that is to be observed and followed in the church and in the home by those who would name the holy name of Jesus Christ and profess to be His church and people. There is more taught on this subject than one would ever be able to teach in one lesson. We shall only attempt to introduce the subject under these subheads.

FIRST: God's order before a man and woman enter into the holy marriage covenant.

SECOND: After the wedding ceremony the proper husband-wife relationships and responsibilities.

THIRD: After the home is blessed with children, or a child as so often the case, the proper parent-child relationships and responsibilities.

MAN AND WOMAN BEFORE MARRIAGE

Blessed indeed is that boy or girl that is born into a Christian family and is brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. To all such God commands, "children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right". (Ephesians 8:1). Such children honor their fathers and mothers by ordering their lives by the word of God which they have been taught in the home by God-fearing and faithful parents. Normal children reach the age when young men and young woman are attracted to each other. This is God's order! Happy is that individual who learns early in life that "He (GOD) hath made everything beautiful in his time". (Ecclesiastes 3:11). Childhood, youth, middle age, and even old age are beautiful to those who know and love God and His wonderful "order" in the lives of His people.

The wise man Solomon confessed in Proverbs 30:13-19, "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air: the way of a serpent upon a rock: the way of a ship in

the midst of the sea: and the way of a man with a maid." When a courtship begins between a Christian boy and a Christian girl "the way of a man with a maid," will be "the way of an eagle in the air", and never "the way of a serpent upon a rock." Any young man who resorts to the way of the serpent rather than the way of the eagle Is not worthy of a Christian companion. He should before and after marriage look well, as with the eye of an eagle in the air, to protecting and preserving the good name and reputation of the maid! Before and after marriage, their lives should be "the way of a ship in the midst of the sea." That is to say they should ever labor together in love and fellowship to keep the ship in the midst of the sea and off of the rocks! So many marriages are entered into today with the thought that if it doesn't work out, we can always get a divorce. **THIS IS NOT GOD'S ORDER!** Christians should always understand that "except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it." With right training in the home from childhood, a young couple will want a period of courtship in order to know, as best they can, if marriage is for them. They should come to know each other better. Not in the modern trial marriage way, but in **GOD'S ORDERED WAY**. They should be agreed first in their faith in God and their religious convictions to the extent that this would not be a wall between them. God's order forbids a believer marrying an unbeliever!

Second they should understand that God's order in marriage is "till death do them part." Under the law, "Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." (Matthew 19:8-9). These are the words of our Lord Jesus to the Pharisees, and the only Old Testament grounds for divorce and remarriage. God suffered this because of the hardness of men's hearts who married girls thinking they were virgins and afterward learned that they were not, but had committed **FORNICATION** before the marriage covenant was entered. **GOD'S ORDER** is that young men and young women keep themselves pure in body and enter the marriage covenant **BOTH VIRGINS**. The only New Testament grounds for a Christian to be divorced and remarried is found in I Corinthians 7:12-15, where it is a case of a believer being married to an unbeliever. They are to remain married if they can, but **if THE "UNBELIEVING DEPART**, LET HIM DEPART." A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases." (verse 15).

The old idea that a young man must get out and sow his wild oats before he gets married and settles down is the doctrine of the devil. It never was, is not now, and never will be **GOD'S ORDER!** The modern idea that the young woman, in order to be "liberated, must also sow some wild oats and gain experience is from the same old devil!

That brings us to this **THIRD CONSIDERATION** which should be a MUST for all young people who call themselves Christians. A Christian man and a Christian woman should enter this holy covenant relationship in all **HONESTY** and **TRUTHFULNESS,** and this should ever after be their golden rule in their marriage and home. The old adage, "honesty is the best policy" should ever be the rule. The person who enters marriage as a deceiver and remains a deceiver will surely do some reaping in tears. For example, it is more common today than in past years for a young man while he is still sowing his wild oats to father a child out of wedlock and then leave the poor girl to bear all the shame alone. He refuses to marry her, but later marries a "nice" girl, but never tells her anything about his past. God's word says, "be sure your sin will find you out," And again, "God is not mocked for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When the truth does come out, and sometimes it is not till years later, think of the people who are hurt. Sometimes the shoe is on the other foot, and a young girl comes up pregnant. She often has an abortion, which makes her a willful murderer! Sometimes she has the baby and never knows who adopts her child. Later, she meets a "nice" young man and marries him, never revealing her past life and hoping he will never know. This kind of **DECEPTION** destroys homes and lives and touches children, parents, and families. **GOD'S ORDER** is that we always be honest and truthful. When these things are observed and followed, the words of Psalm 144:11-15 will be a glorious reality: "Our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth". That is, they will be as the children of Issachar of whom it was written in I Chronicles 12:32, "which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do." And our daughters will be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace. That is, they will adorn the home and the Christian profession.

I have appreciated through the years the word of a fine Christian man to his teenage daughter as she left home to take a job in a distant city. "Your mother and I have tried to raise you right according to God's word. Always remember whatever you do, good or bad, will be no reflection on you, but upon your mother and me."

HUSBAND-WIFE RELATIONSHIPS & RESPONSIBILITIES

In creation, "God created men in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them". (Genesis 1:27). The woman was created in the man. "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help **meet** (answering to, fit, proper for, aid, to surround, i.e. protect or aid-help, succour) for him." (Genesis 2:18). This is how God did it. "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, (just here let me inject the thought that if God's order had approved of polygamy, He would have taken two of Adam's ribs and made two women, but he didn't!) and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman. And brought her unto the man." (Genesis 2:21-22). In this, we see God's order is **one man for one woman!** Also, we recognize "The man is not of the woman; but the woman of

the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man. Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God." (I Corinthians 11:8-9, 11-12). It takes the woman to make the man perfect and complete. They complement each other. It was never in the mind of God to have one without the other! In a like manner, God never in all eternity saw His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, without a bride. Even now, this bride is being prepared, "As a bride adorned for her husband" (Revelation 21:2) to the end, "That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:27).

Christians, when they enter the marriage relationship by a holy and binding covenant, are to be aware that the two of them are now one, and that this holy relationship is a beautiful Symbol of the union of Christ and His bride. Adam's response to God's gift of the woman to him, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." (Genesis 2:23).

Adam was no ignorant cave-man who evolved from a monkey or a seaweed! Not only did he name the woman God brought unto him, but every beast of the field and fowl of the air which God had made, he brought to Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. I know of no man today who is able to do that! Do you? It pleased God to do it this way because God created Adam to have dominion over every living thing that was upon the earth. Adam was Lord over the earth. God made him so.

Just here, let us notice a parallel between Adam and Christ. Genesis 5:1 reads, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made He him." Luke 3:38 declares that Adam was the son of God. We believe Adam was the only son God ever created. Matthew 1:1 reads, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." We believe that Jesus Christ is the only **BEGOTTEN** son of God. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: The second man is the Lord from heaven." (I Corinthians 15:47). "Adam is the figure of Him (Christ) that was to come." (Romans 5:14). Adam, the earthy man, and his marriage to Eve, pointed to and was a shadow or figure of Christ, the Lord of glory, and his marriage; the marriage of the lamb. That is why I do not accept the idea that marriages in the human race are made in heaven. Adam's dominion was the earth. Christ is the Lord of glory. The union of marriage in the human family in the earth terminates at death. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband **SO LONG AS HE LIVETH**: but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." (Romans 7:2-3).

Jesus taught that, "from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man **LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER,** and cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh; so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10: 6-9). Sometimes fathers and mothers fail to recognize that **THIS IS GOD's ORDER IN THE HOME**. When their son or daughter gets married, a new family unit is formed. A failure to accept this truth often leads to a Mother-in-law/ Daughter-in-law difficulty or a Father-in-law/Son-in-law unpleasant situation! When Solomon penned the Proverb, "Whoso findeth a wife ,findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord," he made no mention of the in-laws on either side. We fathers and mothers just have to some day come to grips with the fact that our "little boys and girls" are all grown-up now, and have their own lives to live and their homes to make. This is **GOD'S ORDER** in the home.

Husbands and wives are heirs together of the grace of life. As such, they have responsibilities, first to God, second to each other, third to the family members, and last to those outside the immediate family. God should always be recognized as over all in the home and family. "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is man; and the head of Christ is God." (I Corinthians 11:3). Husbands are to love their wives, "Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." (Ephesians 5:25). Any man who does not love his wife enough to die for her just does not love her enough! If he loves her that much, then he should be willing to live for her. That is, he should let her know daily that she is the one and only one for him. In turn, wives are to "submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Such submission is seen in the life of Sara, as she obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. She did this humbly; in love for her husband and in respect for **GOD'S ORDER**, and not as wives today sometime say to their husbands when they are disagreed about something, yet the wife submits with a sarcastic "Yes, my lord".

The union of husband and wife is expressed in their coming together in the bed that is undefiled. Sex appears on the T.V. shows of today to be everything but what God ordained it to be. The marital act, which term we prefer to the term, the sex act, was, and is of God, and in the bonds of holy marriage is an expression of the true love both husband and wife have for each other. Marriage is a symbol of the union of Christ and His virgin bride. For that reason, husbands and wives should know, cherish, and obey the laws of God as given in I Corinthians 7:1-14 concerning the holy covenant relationship they entered into at the marriage altar. In obedience, we adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and this is **GOD'S ORDER** in the home. It is wrong for the wife or the husband to defraud the other by refusing to come together in the marital act "except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give

yourselves to fasting and prayer: and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." Sometimes, a wife will deny her husband's desire for her love, until he yields to her will in some particular matter. On the other hand, husbands sometimes become so involved with their work and activities in the business world and civic community that they neglect and fail to see the needs of their wives at home! That leaves the door open for Satan to get the advantage, and Satan stays on the job. God's order, as is recorded in I Corinthians 7:1-14, covers the situation when husbands and wives separate. They are to remain unmarried or be reconciled. In order to avoid fornication, which the Bible defines as the unlawful sex act between unmarried male and female, "Let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." (I Corinthians 7:2). After marriage, the wife is commanded in verses 10-11, "Let not the wife depart from her husband: But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." This is in order to avoid adultery, which the Bible defines as the unlawful sex act between a married person, or persons, and another, who is not his lawful wedded companion. Verse 12-15 addresses the case of a believer being married to an unbeliever. To me, the unbeliever does not necessarily have to be an unregenerate person. It should be emphasized that the believer is not to put away, or make life so miserable for the unbeliever, so as to drive the unbeliever away, nor to leave the unbeliever. But if the believer does all that God requires to make a success of marriage, and still **THE UNBELIEVER DEPARTS**, then let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases. I understand this to teach that the believer is then at liberty to marry whom he will, but only in the Lord, which would mean a fellow believer, who also was at liberty to be married to whom they would be married; but only in the Lord.

GOD's ORDER is "that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully". (I Timothy 5:14). It is enlarged upon in Titus 2:1-5, in this language; "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; that they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, **KEEPERS AT HOME,** good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

As we pass on to the third and last part of this subject I submit unto you that these thoughts only touch in a small way this great subject. Those who seek to know more will find the holy scriptures a complete furnisher and of those who practice its teachings it is said, "Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord." (Psalm 144:15).

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS & RESPONSIBILITIES

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate." (Psalm 127:3-5). From this and other similar scriptures, it is evident that God purposed for families to be large families. God promised Israel of old blessings and cursings when he gave the law to them through Moses. This is one of the promised blessings. "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live. And the Lord thy God will put all these curses upon thine enemies, and on them that hate thee, which persecute thee. And thou shalt return and obey the voice of the Lord, and do **ALL** His commandments which, command thee this day. And the Lord thy God will make thee **PLENTEOUS IN EVERY WORK OF THINE HAND, IN THE FRUIT OF THY BODY**, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy land, **FOR GOOD**: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good, as He rejoiced over thy fathers." (Deuteronomy 30:6-9).

Large families are happier as a rule. Where there are no children at all, it is sometimes the case that the husband and wife drift apart, and the marriage ends up on the rocks. Others may tough it out, but there is seldom that special bond between them that is experienced by those whom God blesses to have children in the home. To some extent, we are all selfish and self-willed by nature. More or less, we tend to think the world revolves around us. We want what we want, when we want it, and just like we want it. After the marriage ceremony is over, the average couple has a year ahead of them in which they must learn to consider someone other than self. That is why we have heard so often that the first year of marriage is the most difficult; and that the marriage that survives that first year will come nearer to being a lasting one.

Then, when the first-born comes to live in the home, there are some major adjustments that have to be made by both husband and wife. Only those who have experienced this know what I mean. It is no longer a husband/wife relationship only. The little one is loved even before his arrival; and after his arrival, he soon becomes the center of attraction. The husband must learn that his wife now has two in the home with whom she must share her love, and life, and time. The wife must, for a while at least, learn to get by on broken bits of rest. She may even sometimes long for the good old days when she could go to bed at night and not have to get up until she pleased. It does not help her at all when the baby does sleep through the night if her husband lets her know that she has been neglecting him since that little bundle from heaven came to live with them. It is rough on husband and wife when at times they both are made to wonder if the little bundle really did come from heaven! **THE ADAM NATURE SHOWS OUT EARLY IN LIFE**.

Little boys and girls are not like the

animal world. Once I witnessed the birth of a calf. In a few minutes the calf was up and wobbling on its four frail legs. It soon had found its source of milk and in an hour's time was following its mother as she walked through the pasture grazing. Baby boys and girls are different. That is why God-fearing parents have always prayed as did Manoah after his wife told him the angel of God had appeared unto her and told her that God was going to give her and Manoah a son. "Then Manoah intreated the Lord, and said, "O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, **AND TEACH US WHAT WE SHALL DO UNTO THE CHILD THAT SHALL BE BORN**." (Judges 13:8). In answer to this prayer, God has given us his holy Bible to be our textbook. Mothers are to "guide the house", that is be home makers, and "give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (I Timothy 5:14).

World War Two was the beginning of the exodus of mothers from the home to work in war plants and in the business world. I do not hesitate to say just here that a return in this nation today to God, and **GOD'S ORDER** in the home, would immediately solve the unemployment problem with which we are faced.

Fathers are commanded by God, as being the head of the home, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 8:4). God will always bless that family where the father is faithful to do his duty. We need to "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him." (Isaiah 5l:2). Abraham is the father of the faithful. Faithful fathers today will receive the same commendation from God as did Abraham of whom God spake and said in Genesis 18:19, "For I know him, that **HE WILL COMMAND HIS CHILDREN AND HIS HOUSE HOLD AFTER HIM,** and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." Husbands, and more so when they become fathers, should establish the family altar and not let a day go by without gathering all the members of his family around the holy Bible to read and have prayer. A father who lets his child go off to college before the whole family has read the Bible through together at least twice should hang his head. I hang my head down before you today because I failed. Our family lacked three books of the Old Testament of completing the Bible through for the second time when Walter went off to school.

In closing this part of the subject of God's order in the home as respecting proper parent/child relationships and responsibilities we observe the following:

FIRST: Children are commanded by God; "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." (Ephesians 8:1-3). **GOD'S ORDER HAS NEVER BEEN TO LET THE CHILDREN RULE THE HOME.** Failure on the part of parents to order the home according to God's perfect rule is responsible for the breakdown in the homes of this nation today.

SECOND: Parents, and especially the father, should have simple rules to go by in the home. These rules should be in harmony with the word of God and carried out in the fear of God.

THIRD: Never lie to your children. Of the God-fearing mother and virtuous woman of Proverbs 31:10-31 it is written, "Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." Parents should tell their children the truth when they ask questions such as, "where do babies come from?" It is better for the child to learn the truth from the parents than to be taught what they will learn on streets. If you promise a child a whipping, be as good as your word. "Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." (Proverbs 23:13-14). Also **KEEP YOUR WORD WHEN YOU HAVE MADE PROMISES TO YOUR CHILDREN**.

FOURTH: Love your children but do not build your life around them. All our lives must have their center in God. Children should grow up knowing their parents love them as their children, but that mother and daddy love each other in a special way. This special relationship between mother and daddy will continue on after the children are grown, married, and have children of their own. **THIS IS GOD'S ORDER IN THE HOME**, and children should grow up in a sense of security in the love of their parents, and yet in the knowledge that mother and daddy have a relationship based on love that existed before children came into the home, and will exist after all the children are grown and gone! Parents who let their parent/child relationship come between their husband/wife relationship need to satop and examine themselves, "whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." (II Corinthians 13:5).

FIFTH: Parents should try to do better by their children than their parents were able to do by them. This is the only way we can ever repay our parents for all they did for us in every way: Loving - Caring - Giving - Providing for needs in food, clothing, shelter, education and moral training in the home, and by carrying us to church and exposing us to the service of God's house and the fellowship of His saints, "For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children."

SIXTH: Parents should never get their priorities so mixed up that they fail to put first things first. God must come first, family must come ahead of business, civic, and social world. That means families should spend lots of time together! Work together, vacation together, pray and play together, and all else that makes a close family.

FINALLY: Parents ought to so live before their children, ever looking to God for wisdom, grace, and guidance, that it will be easy for children to obey their parents in the Lord: for this is right. **THIS IS GOD'S ORDER IN THE HOME!**

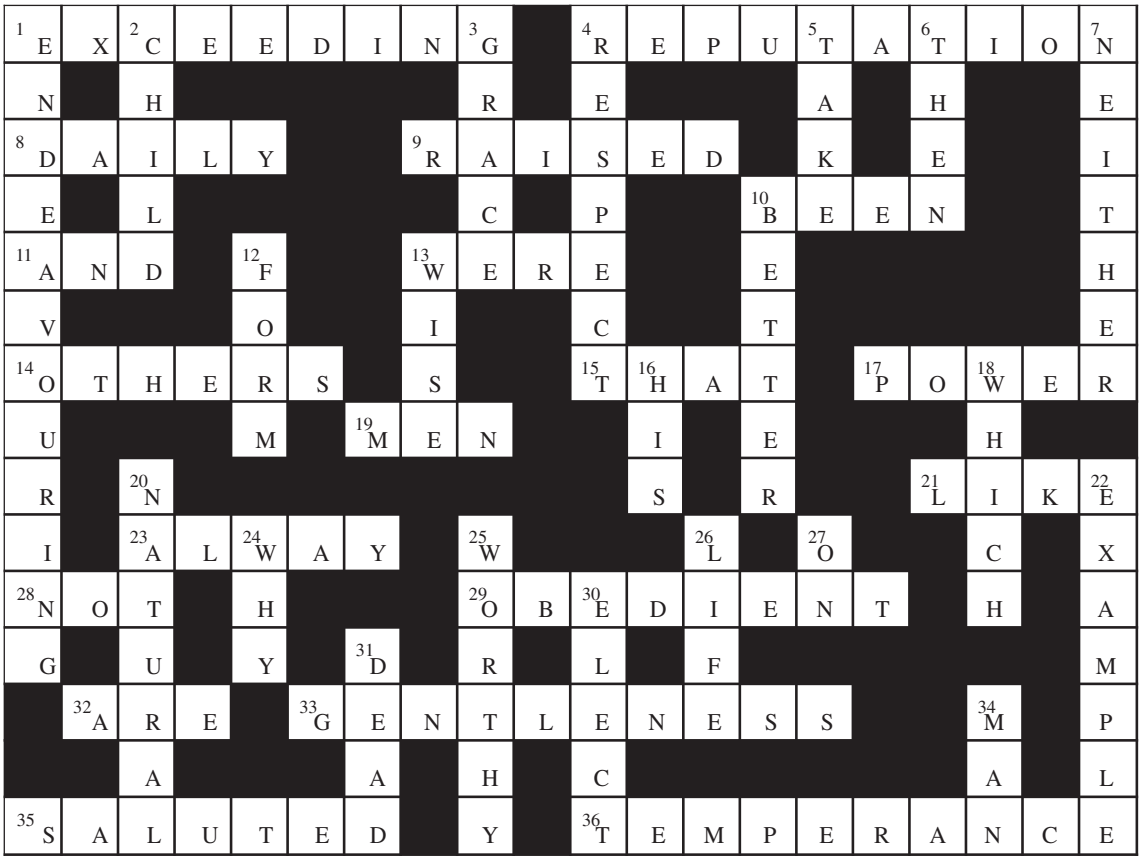
"THERE IS A WAY WHICH SEEMETH RIGHT UNTO A MAN, BUT THE END THEREOF ARE THE WAYS OF DEATH" (Proverbs 14:12).

Bible Reading Calendar for June

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	II Chr. 1,2,3	John 12:1-19
2	II Chr. 4,5,6	John 12:20-50
3	II Chr. 7,8,9	John 13:1-17
4	II Chr. 10,11,12	John 13:18-38
5	II Chr. 13-16	John 14
6	II Chr. 17,18,19	John 15
7	II Chr. 20,21,22	John 16:1-15
8	II Chr. 23,24,25	John 16:16-33
9	II Chr. 26,27,28	John 17
10	II Chr. 29,30,31	John 18:1-23
11	II Chr. 32,33	John 18:24-40
12	II Chr. 34,35,36	John 19:1-22
13	Ezra 1,2	John 19:23-42
14	Ezra 3,4,5	John 20
15	Ezra 6,7,8	John 21

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Ezra 9,10	Acts 1
17	Neh. 1,2,3	Acts 2:1-13
18	Neh. 4,5,6	Acts 2:14-47
19	Neh. 7,8	Acts 3
20	Neh. 9,10,11	Acts 4:1-22
21	Neh. 12,13	Acts 4:23-37
22	Esther 1,2,3	Acts 5:1-16
23	Esther 4,5,6	Acts 5:17-42
24	Esther 7-10	Acts 6
25	Job 1,2,3	Acts 7:1-19
26	Job 4,5,6	Acts 7:20-43
27	Job 7,8,9	Acts 7:44-60
28	Job 10,11,12	Acts 8:1-25
29	Job 13,14,15	Acts 8:26-40
30	Job 16,17,18	Acts 9:1-22

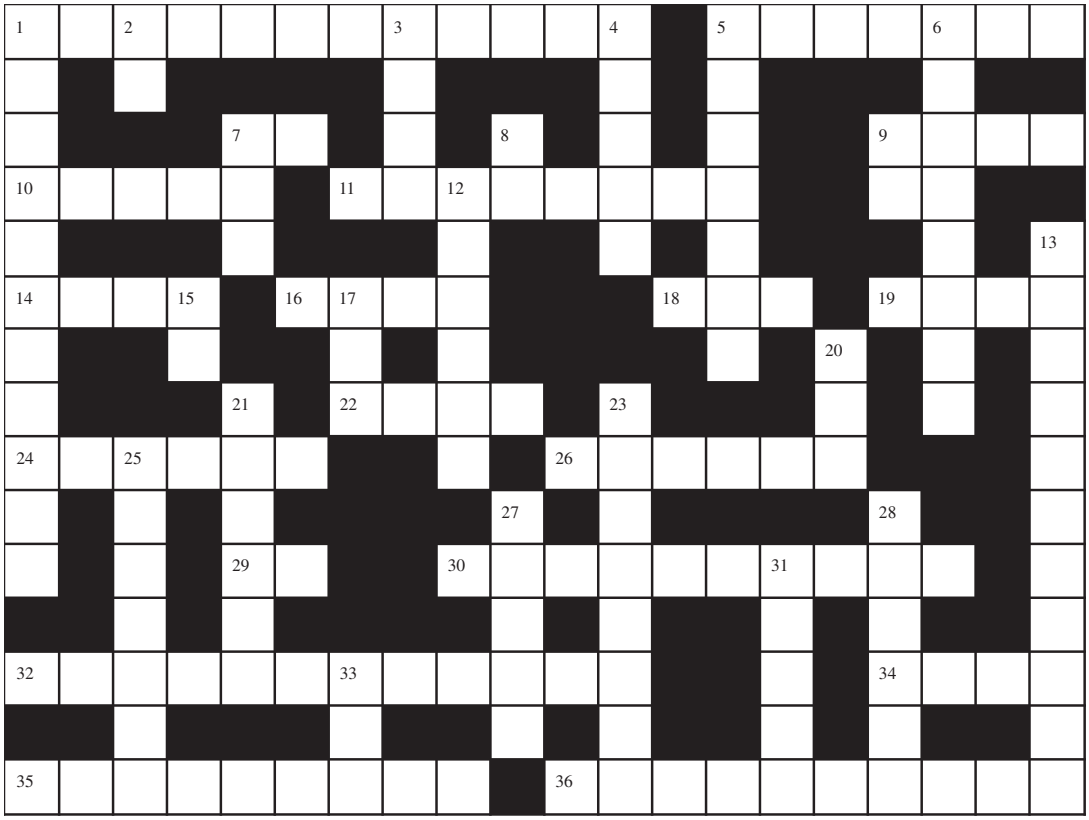
ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE MAY 2011



Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "And not only so, but we glory in _____ also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;" 5. "And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness _____." 7. "Paul _____ apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus." 9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the _____ of God " 10. "...for I am merciful saith the Lord, and I will not keep _____ for ever." 11. "But the natural man _____ not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him:..." 14. "Who _____ saved us, and called us with an holy calling not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace,...." 16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone _____ believeth;..." 18. "And to knowledge temperance; _____ to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;" 19. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have _____." 22. "Ye are the _____of the earth'...." 24. "...ye have not _____ my voice saith the Lord " 26 "Enter into his Gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with _____" 29. 'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed _____ with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" 30. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in _____and sin;" 32. "Let your _____ be without covetousness;..." 34. "Make a joyful noise _____ the Lord, all ye lands " 35. "And beside this, giving all _____ add to your faith virtue;..." 36. 'But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, _____, goodness, faith,"



DOWN

1. "And the Lord said unto me, the backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than _____ Judah." 2. "____ the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." 3. "I will instruct thee and teach _____ in the way which thou shalt go:..." 4. "_____ the Lord with gladness:..." 5. ".. and be _____ with such things as ye have:..." 6. "Only acknowledge thine _____, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God,..." 7. "And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou ____ careful and troubled about many things" 8. "Know that the Lord he is God:..." 12. "So David and His men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their _____, and smote them with a great slaughter." 13. "For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all _____." 15. "...for _____ hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." 17. "...but if the salt have lost _____ savour, wherewith shall it be salted?. . ." 20. "...I will guide thee with mine _____." 21. "The eternal God is thy ____, and underneath are the everlasting arms:..." 23. "...come before his _____ with singing " 25. "In hope of _____ life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;" 27. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable _____ of righteousness unto them which am exercised thereby " 28. "..._____, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you:..." 31. "... and he _____ thrust out the enemy from before thee; and shall say, destroy them." 33. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their _____, and will heal their land."

Things We "Ought" To Do

The word “ought” means to have a duty to do something, to be obliged, to be expected. Please look at some of the following Scriptures where the word of God is so emphatic as to say particular things we ought to do!

1. “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Matthew 23:23).

2. “And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1).

3. “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:26).

4. “If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet” (John 13:14).

5. “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

6. “Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device” (Acts 17:29).

7. “Seeing then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly” (Acts 19:36).

8. “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

9. “For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith” (Romans 12:3).

10. “We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1).

11. “And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know” (I Corinthians 8:2).

12. “So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow” (II Corinthians 2:7).

13. “Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours, but you: for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children” (II Cor. 12:14).

14. “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself” (Ephesians 5:28).

15. “For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Ephesians 6:20).

16. “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Colossians 4:6).

17. “Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more” (I Thessalonians 4:1).

18. “For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you” (II Thess. 3:7).

19. “And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not” (I Timothy 5:13).

20. “Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake” (Titus 1:11).

21. “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip” (Hebrews 2:1).

22. “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat” (Hebrews 5:12).

23. “Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:10).

24. “For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that” (James 4:15).

25. “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness” (II Peter 3:11).

26. “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked” (I John 2:6).

27. “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren” (I John 3:16).

28. “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (I John 4:11).

29. “We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellow helpers to the truth” (III John 8).

NOW THAT WE HAVE A LIST OF THINGS WE OUGHT TO DO, LET’S BE DOERS OF GOD’S WORD AND NOT HEARERS ONLY!!!

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Matthew 7:21