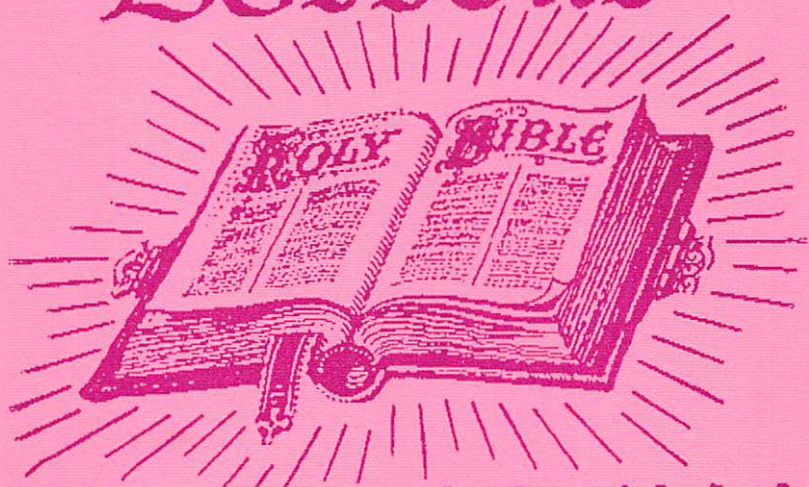


# Bible Lessons



"Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord,  
we are CHANGED . . . ." II Cor. 3:18

**ADULTS -- YOUNG PEOPLE**

Vol. 23, No. 2  
Apr., May, June  
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**Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People**  
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**Volume 23**

**Apr., May, June**

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**Publishing the Bible truths in the interest of  
Jesus Christ and His Church**  
**Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Wayne Murphey**

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## **Theme for Second Quarter, 1991**

The lessons for this quarter will be a series of studies of various subjects. Most of the lessons will begin with Scriptures found in the Old Testament and completed with the teachings in the New Testament that either fulfill or are directly related thereto. We have sought the Lord earnestly for guidance and inspiration in the preparation of these *Bible Lessons*, and submit them for use, praying and trusting God to make them a blessing. The Word of God, found in the Holy Bible, is food and nourishment for the soul, and with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the truths contained therein will build up and fortify us in the faith of Christ. It is our prayer that everyone who studies these lessons will be richly blessed in their soul.

—Bro. Leslie C. Busbee



**April 7, 1991**

### **SPRINGS OF LIVING WATER**

Joshua 15:16 And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

17 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

18 And it came to pass, as she came unto him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou?

Judges 1:15 And she said unto him, Give me a blessing: for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

Isaiah 41:17 When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.

18 I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.

Jeremiah 2:12 Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord.

13 For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

Jeremiah 17:5 Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.

6 For he shall be like the heath in the desert and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

7 Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.

8 For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

John 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

38 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Revelation 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

**Memory Verse:** . . . Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. John 4:14.

**Central Thought:** Without water there can be no life, naturally or spiritually. We must have the water of life in our souls or else we will have just a cold, formal religion and an old dry profession. We must not only have a religion, a church, a doctrine, or a belief, but we must have the water of life in Christ and the Holy Spirit to go along with it.

**Word Definitions:** "*Nether springs*": The deepest and low-

ernmost springs. *"Heath in the desert":* A naked bush, like the juniper tree that affords very little shade or worth.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have a very important truth in our lesson for today. Our first Scriptures recall a scene when Achsah, the daughter of faithful Caleb asked her father for a blessing to go along with the land that he had given her. She had been given a land, but she needed water for that land. She wanted not only the upper or surface springs, but she desired those deep wells of water that would sustain her in times of drought and famine. She knew that her land was useless without moisture. All of nature—animal and plant life—requires moisture to survive. It is the same way in a spiritual sense. We need water to sustain our life before God. Jesus brought that water of life to us when He came as our Shepherd to guide us to living fountains of water. We must be poor and needy, and have a hunger and thirst after the Lord. God can and will open up to us springs of living waters, right in the midst of the wilderness of this present world. All around us is the dry and barren desert of carnal-minded men who are void of real spiritual life and moisture. If we put our trust in man we will be a part of that barren waste of parchedness and death. But if we learn to put our trust in the Lord, we will have His river of life flowing right down into our souls. His Holy Spirit will inspire and strengthen us in the midst of all opposition and trial. Jesus promised to give us the Holy Spirit who would be rivers of living water flowing out of the depths of our innermost being. Oh, let us seek earnestly to have God, the living fountain of water, to be our God. It is possible that what we have can be a cistern, dug and hewn out by our own self-righteous zeal. There are many cisterns today. It means much to have the river of life and not just an old dead, dry profession. Let us seek God with all of our heart to have fountains of living water springing up within us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What profit is a land whereon falls no rain or moisture and is also void of wells or springs of water?

2. What is land without water likened unto in a spiritual sense?
3. Is it possible for us to have a dry profession and be without the water of life?
4. How can we obtain showers of blessings and a well of water springing up in our souls?
5. Is it possible for us to lack this vital water of life and be unaware of our need?
6. What kind of cistern or experience will one have if he or she refuses the Bible way?
7. What does Jesus offer to the thirsty soul who will come to Him?
8. What did Jesus say the rivers of living water refer to?
9. To whom is the invitation to drink of living waters given?
10. Will a person be disappointed if they will come to the Lord and seek His water of life with all their heart?

#### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Oh, how wonderful it is to have the water of life flowing in the soul! Water is such an important commodity of life. All civilization has followed and settled within range or contact of some sort of water supply. Without water, civilization will perish. Most cities of the world are founded on or near a river. Wells are dug, lakes are formed, and water is sought diligently for the health and happiness of all. We also need (and much more so) spiritual water, water for the spirit of man, the inner man. To the hungry and thirsty soul who reaches out for something more than just the natural things of life comes a promise of the water of life. We have a warning in our lesson today. We are warned against hewing out for ourselves cisterns. A cistern in a natural sense can be constructed so as to be a means for a household to have water. The water is hauled or caught from the rainfall and deposited into the cistern. But a cistern is an inferior water system to a well. If a person can have a well, it is much more desirable. Some areas are without good well water, and if there is no other source, then a cistern is advised. But spiritually speaking, it is not good to have a cistern or to get one's spiritual water from any other source for drinking purposes other than the wells of salvation. All in all,

we see the point—we need the water of life in our souls. Let us seek to have an experience that is constantly watered by the river of God. Let us pray and seek God for that refreshing and Holy Spirit inspiration that will cause to flow out of our innermost being, rivers of living waters for the good of those around us. Without this Holy Spirit anointing and inspiration, our experience will amount to nothing more than an empty and dry profession.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

I have read of a lower dungeon in the Mamertine prison, where it is believed that at one time the Apostle Paul was imprisoned. This lower dungeon is a huge cellar underneath a cellar, and very dark and depressing. It is in all ways unsuitable for the living of a human being, except for one feature—out of the solid rock, and flowing across the floor, is a spring of clear water. One person's description of it was, "The water reflects the torchlight, and looks like a beam from heaven lingering amid the glooms of death."

What a privilege it is to have that heavenly well of water that springs up into everlasting life flowing from within. It comes straight from heaven and can be found wherever we are and in whatever situation we are assailed with. It provides refreshment and comfort from the onslaught of the enemy. In the holds of the deepest gloom this stream will be flowing from within the Christian.

When a city is laid siege by an enemy, the water supply is of utmost importance. If the enemy can cut off the water supply the surrender of the city is imminent. But there is no way that anyone can cut off the supply of this life giving stream. People can attempt to staunch the flow of joy in a Christian's life all they may but it cannot be done. It is a gift from God, and one that will sustain us all the way to the portals of that heavenly city.

—Wayne Murphey



**April 14, 1991**

**GOD'S SPECIAL FAVOR TO THE POOR**

**Psalms 72:1** Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son.

**2** He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.

**4** He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

**12** For he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.

**13** He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

**14** He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight.

**Isaiah 29:18** And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

**19** The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

**20** For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off:

**21** That make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.

**Matthew 5:3** Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**James 2:5** Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

**Revelation 3:17** 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:

**18** 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.

**Luke 4:18** The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he



hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

**Memory Verse:** For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. II Cor. 8:9.

**Central Thought:** Only those who sense their deep spiritual poverty and need will be able to receive and appreciate the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Word Definitions:** *Poor*: Having little or no means; destitute. *"Precious shall their blood be in his sight"*: The term blood here refers to the life, welfare, happiness, and hope of the souls Christ redeems. The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Old Testament) renders this phrase: "Their name shall be precious before him." *"Terrible one"*: One who is oppressive, fearful, and tyrannical. *"Him that reproveth in the gate"*: An elder or spiritual leader. *Scorner*: One who scoffs or derides. *"Gold tried in the fire"*: Spiritual gold acquired by enduring great trials of faith for the Saviour's sake. *"White raiment"*: The pure righteousness of the faith of Christ. *Eyesalve*: The anointing of the Holy Spirit.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We have drawn our Scripture texts from several places in the Old and New Testaments which speak concerning God's special favor for those who are truly poor in spirit, who sense their deep poverty and need of His help and salvation. Our first Scripture, Psalm 72, is generally believed to be written by David for his son Solomon, whom he had chosen to be king in his stead. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, however, it becomes a prophecy of the real son of David, our dear Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. The things that are spoken here are truly fulfilled in the righteous reign of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. It shows the love, the care, the concern, and judgments rendered in the behalf of the poor and needy souls of men. The pity and compassion of Christ toward the broken

in spirit and souls down-trodden by the oppressor, Satan, is so beautifully expressed in this Psalm. We find the prophet Isaiah in full agreement with this thought. The words of the book (The Holy Bible) will be clearly perceived and understood by those who sense their blind and deaf condition. Truth will be revealed to the heart, beyond the veil of the flesh and physical senses. A strong judgment is pronounced against those who will not humble themselves and confess their need. They will be brought to naught, consumed, and cut off. Those who are quick to censure and find fault without true love and wisdom will find themselves outside the Kingdom of God. In the Revelation text we find Jesus speaking to the lukewarm church at Laodicea. They had lost sight of real spiritual values and supposed that financial gain and prosperity was a key to their success with Jesus. They were not aware of their true condition of heart. This serves as a warning to us today.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What causes a person to be unaware of their true spiritual condition before God?
2. Is it possible for a person to receive the grace of Christ if they are not conscious of their need of it?
3. What does it take for one to sense, confess, and put in for his needs to be met in God?
4. What is the attitude of the lofty soul who perceives not his own wretchedness in regards to others?
5. Will the vain and proud listen to the reproofs of wisdom?
6. What is the attitude of the poor and meek in regards to others?
7. How can we fortify our hearts from being blinded to our needs?
8. Is it part of God's working with us to cause us to be aware of our poverty and need?
9. Must we be diligent to respond to the dealings of the Lord concerning the needs of our soul?
10. Explain in your own words our memory verse for today. How was Christ made poor for our sakes, and how are we through His poverty made rich?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It has been said that humility in a person's heart will cause him to be keenly aware of his own faults and failings, and, at the same time, it will cause him to be inclined to be blind to the faults and failings of others. I believe this is true. And we can turn it around the other way. Pride in a man's heart will cause him to be blind to his own wretched condition and need, and, at the same time, it will cause him to be conscious of every fault and failing of his fellow man. A poor man, a truly poor man, is poor in the sense of realizing how poor and needy he really is. A person who is rich in this world's goods has a tendency to trust in those riches and be unaware of his own spiritual poverty. Jesus dealt with this when He made the statements: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God! How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God." (Mark 10:23-25). When a person does not realize or sense his need, he will not be seeking for that need to be fulfilled. And if the need is fulfilled, he will not be aware that the need is being met, because he never felt the need in the first place. So when the Scripture says "poor," it is referring to poverty of mind, heart, and attitude. It is so easy for human beings not to be conscious of their true condition. Many young people are so strong, active, and capable that they fail to sense their weakness and need of God; thus they make the tragic mistake of neglecting the need of their precious soul. Let us seek God that this be not so with us.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Very simply stated, the "poor in spirit" are those who realize they need someone to lead them. Too many people in this world are like alley dogs. They are indeed poor, going from one place to another hunting for food, but doing so with an independent spirit. They have no place of comfort to call their home, and no caring person to call their master. The Psalmist David, who enjoyed great things at the hand of God, said the Lord was his shepherd. (Psa. 23:1). There is a great contrast

between an alley dog and a sheep. Sheep are always owned, and wild dogs generally aren't. Although sheep may not know where their next meal is going to come from any more than the dog, they do have a master who does.

When people realize they must depend on God for the salvation of their souls, the raiment they wear, the health they have, the breath they breathe, the strength to face a day, the guidance and wisdom to make life worth living, and the grace to bear all things, then they are poor in spirit. This is the person God delights to make wealthy in heavenly riches.

Our lesson reading includes what God told one Church, "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." Rev. 3:17. There is a saying that, "The easiest way to remain poor is to pretend to be rich." This may be true temporally, but ever so much more spiritually. —Wayne Murphey



**April 21, 1991**

### **BEING ACCEPTABLE WITH GOD**

Genesis 4:2 . . . And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

4 And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

5 But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.

6 And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

I Peter 2:4 To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 12:28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

**Memory Verse:** Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer. Ps. 19:14.

**Central Thought:** It should be the sincere purpose and desire of every soul to be acceptable with God. We must love Him, fear Him, present our bodies as living sacrifices to Him, walk in the light of His Word obediently, and humbly serve Him faithfully.

**Word Definitions:** *"Firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof"*: The firstborn lambs and the best ones. *"Sin lieth at the door"*: Sin crouches, or lurks, at the door. If we fail to meet God's approval, we should be diligent to amend our ways immediately to escape the clutches of sin and condemnation that lurks right outside the door of our hearts, ready to enter in at the least opening. *"Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him"*: Cain was humiliated that his brother, Abel, had gotten the better of him in being accepted with God.

The message God seems to be speaking to him implies that if he will amend his ways and come the required route to gain God's approval, he will regain his place of leadership as the firstborn son. Sad to say, the course that Cain took certainly did not lead him to gaining back his lost estate. *"Prove what is the acceptable will of God"*: Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. The word "prove" here in both of these texts means to test, to discover, to find out to our own satisfaction and happiness.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

We have the account of Cain and Abel bringing their offerings to God, probably in compliance with the teachings of God through their parents. A study into the background of Cain and his attitude reveals why he failed to be acceptable with God. Josephus says that Cain's effort to till the ground was from a covetous disposition. His offering to God was not backed with sincere love and worship from the heart. He lacked the faith and self-sacrifice of Abel. And his reaction to being rejected further showed his naughtiness. God weighs the spirits of all who seek Him. Our acceptance with God must be upon the terms of His Son. We are acceptable unto God only through Jesus and by our obedience to His teachings. Cain failed in every point to please God—even in humbling himself properly when God put judgment on him. After killing Abel he felt he was being mistreated and that his punishment was much more than he could bear. Even when the goodness of God made a way that he could escape being the target of death, Cain still did not use the means to make amends. He plunged on in his selfish way and became an inventor of evil thoughts and practices. We have included several Scriptures from the New Testament which help us know how we can be acceptable to God without fail. Let us seriously consider these Scriptures. We must have reverence and godly fear before God. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." We must present ourselves completely to God as a holy sacrifice for love, worship, and service. We must plead the precious blood and righteousness of His Son, Jesus, as the basis for all of our acceptance with Him. We must walk in the light of His Word,

seeking always to learn more of how to be accepted of Him. With a sincere heart, a ready mind, and a willingness to obey His gracious law of truth, we can find acceptance with God and enjoy the blessings that His favor brings to all.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is it possible that a person's efforts to come to God will not be acceptable?
2. Can a person know when their approach to God is acceptable or not?
3. Describe the character and attitude of Cain and Abel.
4. What is God weighing and looking at more than anything else?
5. Name three important factors we must have in order to be acceptable before God?
6. How can we properly benefit from Christ's acceptance with God as a means of our acceptance with God?
7. What will happen to all who refuse to take the prescribed route of obtaining God's acceptance?
8. What does the darkness of sin and the world do to man's understanding of the will of God?
9. As children of light, what should we constantly be concerned with?
10. What are some of the benefits of being acceptable with the Lord?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Cain made the great mistake that many, many make today. Instead of being teachable and open for counsel as to how to become acceptable before God, the tendency is to rebel and go one's own way and to seek one's own pleasures. This is what Cain did. Being found unacceptable before God does not mean that we can never be acceptable to Him. It is not as bad to be unacceptable with God as it is to remain unacceptable and to neglect the provisions of grace that will enable us to become acceptable before Him. There is the story of a man who went to seek United States' citizenship. In his first few words

of conversation with the authorities concerning this important matter, he was told that he was not a citizen of the United States. His countenance fell at that point, and in frustration and despair he walked out of the office, not heeding the words of the man who wanted to explain to him how he **could** become a citizen of the United States. He went and traveled in disappointment around the world, thinking there was no way he could be accepted. Finally he broke his mind to a fellow traveler, who informed him that he could become a citizen if he would take the proper procedure. The man gave heed, did what he should have done before, and became a citizen of the United States of America. All have sinned and come short of God's approval and acceptance. But a way has been made whereby we can come to God, and through the grace of His Son, Jesus, find acceptance with Him. Let us take courage to seek God with all of our hearts, and He will help us to find that blessed state of being acceptable before Him.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Our acceptance with God to a great degree depends upon our sincerity of heart. How often selfishness gets in the way of sincerity. The Pharisee prayed in the temple, but it was not accepted of God because it was full of self. In a seven second prayer he used the word "I" five times, not quite one a second. One writer said, "It has been my experience that when you really come to the Lord, He never sends you away empty unless you come to him stuffed full of yourself."

The mother of James and John came to Jesus once and asked that her two sons might sit, the one at His right hand, and the other at His left hand, in his kingdom. Christ did not accept this request. For one thing, it was not His authority to give, but neither was it a sincere request. It was a selfish request. "And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the Lord: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest." Jeremiah 45:5.

A man who was a neighbor to Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, IL tells of an incident in which he heard crying coming from close by. In a little bit he saw Abraham Lincoln



walking down the street with a wailing boy under each arm. The neighbor asked him what was wrong. Mr. Lincoln's answer was, "The same thing that is wrong with all the rest of the world. I have three walnuts and both boys want two." Do you suppose it could be possible God views many in this same fashion?

The words of our mouth and the meditation of our heart should reflect noble things. They should be sincere by expressing concern for others and showing humility in ourselves. These are things God will gladly accept. —Wayne Murphey

— — — — —  
**April 28, 1991**

### **THE GREATNESS OF THE ALMIGHTY GOD**

Isaiah 40:12 Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and hills in a balance?

13 Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught Him?

15 Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.

17 All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.

Jeremiah 10:10 . . . The Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

12 He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion.

13 When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.

Isaiah 40:28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

25 Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;

27 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:

28 For in him we live, and move, and have our being: . . .

**Memory Verse:** Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. Ps. 33:8.

**Central Thought:** God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. Ps. 89:7

**Word Definitions:** *"Drop of a bucket":* A tiny droplet of moisture compared to the size of the bucket. *"Small dust of the balance":* A bit of powder compared to the size of the scales. (It would register no reading on the scales.) *"His discretion":* His wisdom and intelligence.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The 40th chapter of Isaiah is a very important part of prophetic writing. In the first part of this chapter we have the prophecy of John the Baptist as a voice crying in the wilderness, preparing the way of the Lord—the hearts of people to receive the Saviour who was about to come. Then the prophet makes the declaration that all flesh is as grass and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass, he declares, withers and the flower fades. Mortals will fade and perish like the grass, because the Spirit of the Lord blows upon them. We

need to be aware of our frailty and nothingness before God. "Man at his best state is altogether vanity." (Ps. 39:5). But then the prophet boldly states: "The word of our God shall stand forever." Peter quotes this in I Peter 1:24-25, saying that by the gospel of Christ this incorruptible Word of God is preached unto us. We live in a world where man and his works and abilities are elevated high in people's minds. People are not aware of their frailty as they ought to be. With inventions and advancements in science and knowledge, man has hardened himself against the fear and the knowledge of God in the pride of his own accomplishments. God is not in all of his thoughts. From the prophet Jeremiah comes a similar expression of the greatness of God. How little and insignificant become the nations when compared to the greatness of God! Like the small powder of dust on the scales or as the lingering droplet of water remaining after the bucket has been emptied, so is man at his best when compared to God. Less than nothing, man in his puny weakness is so far in the negative that any advancement he might make still renders him as nothing. But the most wonderful part of our lesson is the thought of God inclining toward mankind in helping them live as He would have them to. He, though so great and lofty, is not far from every one of us; He has plenteous mercy and grace for our every need.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the answer to the questions asked in the first two verses of our lesson?
2. Is it possible that we in our human reasoning might try to direct or counsel God?
3. If the nations are as a single drop in a bucket, what does the individual man amount to?
4. What does the expression "less than nothing" indicate about people, in comparison with God?
5. What can the Almighty God, who never wearies, do for us who in our best state will utterly fall?
6. What does the expression "wait upon the Lord" mean to you?
7. Of what does the order and beauty of the universe and nature assure us concerning its source?

8. Do the works and the inventions of man contribute anything to God's benefit?

9. What is much more profitable than inventing and manufacturing?

10. How do we know that God is not far from us?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

God is so great that He can hold the waters of all the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, and ponds in the hollow of His hand. All the dust of the earth He weighs and knows its measure. When He spoke the world into existence, there was no man to advise and give their ideas about how it should be done. Paul quoted the Septuagint rendering of Isaiah 40: 13 in two different places in his writings. In Romans 11 he discoursed about the relationship of the Jew and the Gentile, and he concluded with an expression of wonder at the workings of God, magnifying the depth of the riches of His wisdom and understanding as being unsearchable and past finding out, and saying, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" Then in I Corinthians 2 he spoke of the natural man not being able to perceive the workings of the Spirit of God, saying again, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him?" This implies the utter hopelessness and helplessness of man in his human power to even guess the ways of the Lord. But he concludes that part with a bright ray of hope for us: "But we have the mind of Christ." Yes, although we are unable to see or understand in our own abilities, with the mind of Christ the ways of the Lord are made plain, revealed by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit's inspiration and anointing, blinded and prejudiced man cannot perceive his own frailty, nor the greatness of God. But to those who will acknowledge their weakness and nothingness, God will manifest Himself to them in a wonderful, blessed way. Oh, how we need to seek the Lord and to feel after Him with our hearts and minds! He is very near, and we have but to cast off the veil of human understanding to receive the precious knowledge of the Lord.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

It is rather amazing that God has done and is doing such great things and people cannot feel after Him and find Him. He has undeniably left His mark on His creation. Robert MacArthur, a preacher of a past generation once said, "The mountains are God's majestic thoughts. The stars are God's brilliant thoughts. The flowers are God's beautiful thoughts." And it doesn't take a great scientific mind to detect this. Lawrence of Arabia has said that an Arab sheik, after hearing the Western scholar recount the wonders revealed by the telescope, said, "You foreigners see millions of stars, and nothing beyond, We Arabs see only a few stars — and God."

What would you think of someone who looked into a mirror and saw nothing reflected? If it was a good mirror, it would be time to be worried. The fact that people daily behold God's greatness and do not see Him reflected, denotes great spiritual blindness. Who is it that giveth power to the faint, and strength to those with no might? When we see someone who of themselves is weak, soaring as an eagle, whereas the youthful grow weary and utterly fall under the same circumstances of life, must we not acknowledge a great and mighty God? We must feel after Him. This signifies He is found by faith. We see His works with our natural eyes, but we must let our faith reach out in order to find Him. Then as we find Him, and we are found of Him, He will take up His abode in our heart and great things will follow. —Wayne Murphey



**May 5, 1991**

**A NEW CREATURE IN CHRIST JESUS**

**Ezekiel 36:25** Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

**26** A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh,

**27** And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

**II Corinthians 3:3** . . . Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.

**5:14** For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:

**15** And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

**16** Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

**17** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

**18** And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ.

**Ephesians 4:20** But ye have not so learned Christ;

**21** If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

**22** That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

**23** And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

**24** And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

**Colossians 3:9** Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;

**10** And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:

**Galatians 6:15** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.

**Memory Verse:** Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Titus 3:5.

**Central Thought:** The power and grace of salvation in Jesus Christ changes the soul of man from sin and hardness of heart to a new heart of love, tenderness, and obedience to God.

**Word Definitions:** *"Sprinkle clean water upon you":* This sprinkling is referring to the application of the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ to the soul of man. *"Heart of flesh":* Heart of tenderness and submission to God. *"Fleshy tables of the heart":* The tender and impressionable disposition of the heart. *"Constraineth us":* Holds us to; compels. *"Ye have not so learned Christ":* Ye have not learned of Christ after the fashion of this present evil world.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

From his state of captivity and bondage in the land of the Chaldeans, Ezekiel, the priest, was given the spirit of prophecy, looking forward to the gospel day when Jesus would come and fulfill the needs of the souls of men. It was very evident that what the people needed was not just a mere return to their own land, but they needed a work of power in their hearts to change and transform them according to God's pleasure. Ezekiel prophesies of God giving to men a new heart and spirit. The old, stony, hard heart would be replaced by a tender, loving heart that would serve God, not through constraint and threat, but through love and devotion. Jesus would have to die and bear the sins of mankind on the cross of suffering and death to bring this great experience to mankind. He died so that we can die to sin. He arose so that we can be raised from the dead state of sin to a new life of righteousness in God. Paul spoke much of this wonderful newness of life in his writings, some of which we include in our lessons today. Since Jesus

paid the price and died so that we can be delivered from the power of the flesh and sin, we have a chance to be made new creatures in Him. We can put off the old man of pride, vanity, strife, and greed; and can put on the new man of holiness, humility, love, faith, and tenderness. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the very inner being of man. It is the greatest miracle ever wrought by God Almighty. No need to try to reform and fix up the old man, we just need to let Christ transform our lives to His blessed image. Our hearts become tender and very impressionable. He writes His sacred laws upon the tender tables of our hearts by the gentle Holy Spirit. Upon our eager minds He inscribes His royal laws. How blessed to be made new creatures in Christ, the only means of pleasing God!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does man need most of all?
2. Is the prophet speaking of a new physical heart?
3. What are some of the manifestations of a hard, cold, stony heart?
4. What are some of the manifestations of a tender, loving heart?
5. How does God write upon the heart His laws?
6. What did Christ's death have to do with us giving up the old man?
7. In whose image is the new man fashioned?
8. What is wrong with the old man?
9. Is it possible for a person to profess Christ and still not be made a new creature?
10. Is there any effort on our part required in order to have the reality of the new man in us?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

All the woes and troubles that have come upon the human race have been the consequence of a defiled, sin-corrupted heart and nature. The flesh and its appetites controlled and held sway. Warped and blighted by evil desires and attitudes, the soul of man languished in depths of despair and gloom. There are many people today who are still in that awful condition, ruled and dominated by the old man. Strife, greed,



hatred, jealousy, murder, envy, and all the other bad qualities of heart and life are evident everywhere you look. If a person will become aware of his woeful condition, and cry to God for mercy, he can find deliverance from his sins. He can be made a new creature in Christ Jesus. He does not have to live with that cold, stony heart any more. God can give him a new, tender heart. He can be loving, kind, gracious, merciful, and patient instead of rude, selfish, ill-mannered, and hot-tempered. People need a new heart today. A person who trusts in Christ for salvation must learn to put off the old man, and put on the new man. This takes diligent effort on our part. We have to work on ourselves every day. God can and will make us new creatures in Christ, but unless we apply the practical application of His holy principles to our habits, manners, ways, conversation, and conduct, we will not get very far in the Christian life. The Lord does not force anyone to serve Him or go His way. We must be willing and determined to see to it that the Christ-life is implemented into every part of our lives. Nothing avails with God without being made a new creature in the image of His Son. A new creature in Christ, where the old habits of sin and wrong are passed away, can successfully live for the Lord. Anything else will fail. The plan of salvation calls for every one to be made a new creature in Christ and a diligent pursuit of the Christ-life in practical ways and daily conversation.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The Apostle Paul brings out an interesting concept in II Corinthians 5:16. "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." This is a result of Paul being a new creature. He no longer put great stock in the things of the flesh. This was true to such an extent that he didn't view people according to who they were kin to or what kind of name they had made for themselves. He says that even if a person had known Christ in the flesh, that really wasn't all that important. In Paul's writings, little is said about the temporal things of Christ, but he often talks about the spirit of Christ. Paul was a new creature and his thoughts centered on the spiritual aspects even of others.

Perhaps you can think in your own mind of what you feel when someone's name is mentioned. If you have known the person a long time, naturally a physical picture will be in the back of your mind, but if you have had experiences with them, many times the attitude of the person is how you subconsciously identify them in your thoughts whether good or bad. And this can even be true of someone as close to you as your companion. It is how it will be in heaven and it can be to a great degree on earth.

An old welsh minister, while one day pursuing his studies, his wife being in the room, was suddenly interrupted by her asking him a question, which has not always been so satisfactorily answered. "John Evans, do you think we shall be known to each other in heaven?" Without hesitation he replied, "To be sure we shall, do you think we shall be greater fools there than we are here?" John Evans and his wife have been gone from this earth for quite some years, and perhaps are knowing each other in paradise, not as husband and wife, but for what they are spiritually.

—Wayne Murphey



**May 12, 1991**

### **THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD**

Isaiah 24:4 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

19 The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly.

20 The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

John 3:16 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.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

I John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

I Corinthians 7:31 And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.

John 15:18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

**Memory Verse:** But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. Gal. 6:14.

**Central Thought:** If we would escape the impending destruction of this present evil world we must be saved by the salvation of Christ, deny the world and its lusts from having any part in our lives, and be willing to endure the tribulation that we will suffer from the world.

**Word Definitions:** *Languish*: To droop, be sick, weak, or feeble. "*God so loved the world*"; God loved the humanity that peopled the earth. "*Love not the world*": We are not to love the elements and things in the world that are contrary to godliness. "*Lust of the flesh*": The appetites and desires of the body undisciplined and unsanctioned by the holiness of God. "*Lust of the eyes*": The vain desire for outward beauty, charm, finery, and physical attraction. "*Pride of life*": The self-confidence of the present state of existence. "*Use this world, as not abusing it*": Use the material things of this present world only as it is fit and proper for Christians to do so, the word "abusing" meaning using to the full or overusing.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

It is a wise thing for us to be aware of the vanity, the danger, and the defilement of the world in which we live. We also need to keep in mind always that this present evil world is under the sentence of destruction from God Almighty. Because of its sin and transgression, the world is weighty with the seeds of perpetual destruction and doom. Our Scripture text in Isaiah declares that the world will be utterly dissolved and fade away. The beloved disciple John tells us that God sent His Son to save precious souls from destruction. Light has come into the world. Men are offered a chance to escape the destruction of the world and to flee from the wrath to come. We are lovingly entreated to not set our affections upon the things of this present world. The world with its lusts and pride will pass away. We are in the world, but we are not of the world. We may use various things of the world, but we must be careful not to overuse it. It will all vanish and fade away some day. Now the people of the world who hold to the world, will not appreciate the stand that the child of God takes against the things of this world. Therefore we will be hated and despised; we will have tribulation. But oh how wonderful that Christ has overcome it all! He has overcome the world, and by our faith in Him we can overcome the world! We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, not allowing ourselves to be defiled with any of its ways or means. To be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God. We may be friendly and cordial and

neighborly to the people of the world, but we must keep ourselves from being defiled with associations that will involve us with evil.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the main reason the world will be destroyed?
2. What has God done in an effort to save the peoples of the world?
3. How is a person condemned before God?
4. How can a person keep from being condemned?
5. Why do men love darkness rather than light?
6. What are the three listed elements of the world that are not of the Father?
7. How close are these things to us?
8. Is it possible to go too far in using the things of this world?
9. What are some of the things we can use of this world, and how can we abuse, or overuse them?
10. Why can we expect to be hated by the world?
11. What do we have as Christians that is so much better than the world and its treasures?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

The world that we live in will be destroyed completely when Jesus comes again. There will be a new heaven and a new earth brought to light after this present world is gone. This happy world to come will be the dwelling place of all the righteous in Christ. But while we are still here we must guard our souls from the defilement of the world. We must be very careful that we do not become involved with the vain pursuits and activities that are displeasing in God's sight. There are treasures above, in heaven, where Christ is at the right hand of God that are far more valuable and precious than what this world has to offer. Oh, let us turn from the vain things of this present, evil world and fix our eyes on those heavenly treasures. All that we can ever get ahold of or hoard up will pass away in that last great day. If our hearts have been set on those things and we have not loved and served the Lord Jesus, it will not go well with us. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof." Oh, what solemn words! "But he that doeth the will

of God abideth forever!" We can be a part of that great host of the redeemed who lived in the world but were not of the world. As strangers and pilgrims they pressed through the dark tribulations inflicted by the proud and vain around them. They endured the cross and shame. They kept themselves unspotted from the world. The world lost all charms to them. They had a vision of a greater and a brighter world to come. Let us strive earnestly to be in that number and enjoy life forever with the Lord who overcame the world for us!

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

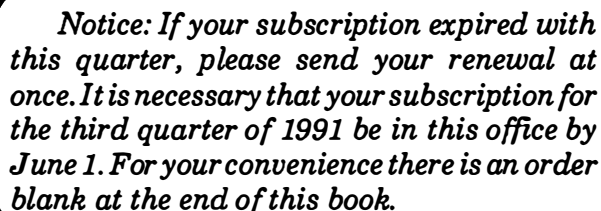
"The fashion of this world passeth away." Thomas Guthrie, in his sketches of the Cowgate, tells about being called to the dying bed of the wife of an elderly Christian. The old man had seen better days, and the surroundings he was living in were not too good. But though his neighbours were vulgar, his own manners were refined; his dress, though threadbare, was always well brushed; the misfortunes which had saddened his countenance had not soured his temper. It was kept sweet, and his spirit gentle and submissive by the grace of God. Sober among drunkards, decent among the depraved, and among hundreds who paid no respect whatever to religion, he was devout and regular in his attendance at church. Thomas Guthrie said he was what, in a sense, all Christians may and should be—a light shining in a dark place. But his wife had been a drunkard, with such a craving for the bottle, that to keep his Sunday dress from going, as all things else had gone, for whisky, he had to leave it with a kind neighbour.

On reaching his home, the scene which presented itself was melancholy to the last degree. The spacious apartment which at one time must have been well-furnished, contained hardly a stick of furniture; the walls were foul with dust, and hung with cobwebs; the air was close and stifling; in one corner was a heap of straw, on which, without any covering other than her ragged body clothes, lay his wife, drunk and dying, unable to comprehend anything of the One who pities the worst of sinners, and can save to the uttermost. Thomas Guthrie was haunted with dreadful forebodings. Yet while he

stood by that one, who with the deathrattle in her throat was hurrying away, drunk, to judgment, he could not help noticing the similitude of the handful of cinders on the hearth that was smouldering beneath a shattered mantelpiece of marble, or the beautifully modelled figures of the seasons that were looking down from the ceiling on this shocking spectacle. How forcibly it said to him, the fashion of this world does pass away.

—Wayne Murphey

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**May 19, 1991**

**THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS**

Isalah 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath nomoney; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfleth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

3 Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

II Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

I Timothy 6:11 . . .Thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Phillipians 3:7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 . . .That I may win Christ.

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;



11 If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

12 Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

**Memory Verse:** For many are called, but few are chosen. Matt. 22:14.

**Central Thought:** In the good tidings of His Son, Jesus Christ, God is inviting souls of men to turn from sin and this present evil world and live a godly life here and enjoy eternal life in that blessed world to come.

**Word Definitions:** *"Let your soul delight itself in fatness":* Enjoy the abundance of life and grace that is in Christ. *"The sure mercies of David":* The unfailing lovingkindness that God promised to David and to his seed, mercies that would not fail even though we might fail or come short. If we will humble our hearts and confess our needs and failings, the tender and sure mercies of God will hold us up and give us help and victory. *"The afflictions of the gospel":* The things that one suffers in consequence of his obedience to the heavenly call. *"Conformable unto his death":* To suffer as Christ suffered, to die as Christ died. *"If by any means I might attain":* If possibly I may attain. *"That I may apprehend":* That I may lay hold of eternal life as also Christ laid hold of me. *"The high calling of God in Christ Jesus":* The heavenly invitation that God has given to us in Christ to share eternal glory with Him. *"The mark":* The target or object; aim or pursuit.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

The gospel of Jesus Christ is an invitation to us. It is an invitation for us to turn away from our sinful lives to a new life in Christ and a hope of living forever with Him in glory. There

are many invitations sent to people—invitations to dinners, parties, celebrations, and special events. Usually, if the invitation is to something unusual or very enjoyable or profitable, the one who receives the invitation feels honored and blessed. And, if the one who is invited deems it worthwhile, there is a response to heed the invitation and attend. In our lesson today, we find God is giving out a call or invitation. He is calling us to come and enjoy the blessings of salvation and hope in His Son, Jesus. The apostle Paul, in his expressions found in the quotations from his writings in our lesson, had a high esteem for his calling and invitation to live for Jesus and be with Him some day forever. Whatever must be lost or suffered in answering the high calling of God in Christ Jesus he was willing to bear. He encouraged his son in the gospel, Timothy, to stay away from the vain pursuits of wealth and pleasure, and, instead, pursue the spiritual blessings that would enable him to lay hold on eternal life unto which he had been called. This call is for us today. Let us heed the Saviour's call, "Take the cross and follow me" with, "Where He leads me I will follow."

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Although the gifts and callings of God are without money and without price, is there anything required of us to be able to lay hold of these things?
2. Are people today spending their resources for that which is not bread? If so, how?
3. What is the fatness and the good that God wants us to be partakers of?
4. What must we do to enter into that covenant with God that He calls everlasting and the sure mercies of David?
5. What is this calling of God according to?
6. In your own words tell what the calling of God is requiring of you and what you hope to receive in answering and qualifying?
7. What are the four action words Paul enjoined upon Timothy in I Timothy 6:11-12?
8. What did Paul desire in his heart to experience and know with regard to his calling in Christ?

9. How real, how valuable, and how sweet is the call of God to you?

10. What could you sum up that Paul's goal in life was?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Suppose you would give me an invitation to your house for a nice fish dinner and evening of fellowship and joy together. Such an invitation would mean much to my heart. I would receive it joyfully, and would respond with an affirmative to your offer. I would begin to make plans for that special evening and look forward to its happy fulfillment. The invitation that God is giving to us in Christ is a like joyful opportunity. He is inviting us to come to Him and be saved. He has promised to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He wants us to leave our sinful ways and take up the cross to follow Jesus. He wants us to live holy, for He is holy. He is inviting us to be led by His blessed Holy Spirit all along our mortal journey. He wants us to be consecrated for His service and to be a vessel unto honor that He might work through us for the good of souls. He wants us to hold fast to Him through all the scenes of life and be faithful until our life is finished. He promises grace and help for every time of need, His presence to guide and sustain, and His Spirit to inspire and anoint us to do His will. He promises a home with Him in eternal glory at the end of the way. He promises a crown of life if we will be faithful until death. Oh, what a wonderful call and invitation we have been blessed with! Can you hear the Saviour calling you not only to be saved, but to live for Him all your life and share eternity with Him some blessed day? Give heed and answer the call today. It is worth all you will ever have to suffer in this life to reach the goal of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There is a saying that, "Choice, not chance, determines destiny." Just as true is the fact that being chosen, not called, will determine our eternal destiny.

Have you ever seen a courtship where a young man is very much enamored by the young girl, and the young girl seems

to have a liking for the young man, but before she makes a total commitment to him she lets him prove himself? To a certain extent, this is how the calling and choosing of Christ works. He has called all people to be saints. He loved all people so much that He died so they could be saints and dwell with Him in heaven. But before Christ chooses an individual for this to happen to, they must prove themselves worthy. Paul said he didn't consider himself to have already apprehended, but he followed after. We prove ourselves worthy of being chosen to inherit heaven by following after Christ.

An incident is recorded in which one army in a battle was being beaten back by another. The ensign, however, was not retreating and the captain shouted to him to bring the colours back. The reply of the ensign was, "Bring up the men to the colours." In order to be chosen of Christ we must follow after righteousness, fight the good fight of faith, and stand with Him.

—Wayne Murphey



**May 26, 1991**

### **THE BLESSING OF THE LORD**

Proverbs 10:6 Blessings are upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

28:20 A faithful man shall abound with blessings: . . .

Genesis 49:25 Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

26 The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.

Psalms 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments;

3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended

upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

**Ezekiel 34:26** And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing.

**Malachi 3:10** Bringye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

**Galatians 3:8** And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

**I Peter 3:8** Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

**Memory Verse:** The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it. Prov. 10:22

**Central Thought:** God has special blessings and benefits that He will bestow upon all who will trust and obey Him through the grace of His Son, Jesus Christ.

**Word Definitions:** *Blessing:* That which confers happiness, favor, and prosperity upon. "*Blessings of the deep that lieth under*": Special benefits derived from going through deep

sorrow and persecution where one is submerged out of sight, as if dead and forgotten. Joseph experienced this depth of sorrow. *"Blessings of the breasts and the womb"*: The blessings of children, increase, and nourishment. *"The blessings of my progenitors"*: The tenor of this text sums up to be thus: My blessings (Jacob as father) upon thee, my son Joseph, are greater than all the blessings upon my other children, reaching into eternal blessings; they shall come upon the head of Joseph who was prince, (or leader), of his brethren.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

From the very beginning all the happiness and prosperity that the earth and its inhabitants have enjoyed has come through the avenue of God's blessings. God blessed the creation and gave it increase. Every one who sought to please God and were willing to obey Him met with His great blessings. We have included in our Scripture texts the blessings that Jacob pronounced upon his son, Joseph, before he died. Oh, as we read these Scriptures about Joseph, we think about what he went through and how he was mistreated and wronged. But we see him take the humble attitude and not become bitter. God brought him out and gave him a blessing that was so far greater than any of the other blessings. We should remember this when God permits us to undergo heartache or adversity. There is a great blessing in store if we will take it right. Then we have Psalm 133 and the promise of special blessings upon those who are united in Christ. How wonderful is that precious anointing of the Holy Spirit upon humble hearts who are willing to bear and forbear with one another and to strive for the unity of the gospel! Each one of these Old Testament Scriptures points to the special blessing that Jesus brought to us in full salvation. The blessing that God promised to Abraham is fulfilled in those who receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in Jesus. These are spiritual blessings, going far beyond temporal blessings. These are blessings in the soul, outpourings of joy, prosperity, victory, and happiness that only the pure in heart can know. It makes us rich, not in material wealth, but in the riches of Christ Jesus and the eternal treasures of heaven.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of people enjoy the blessings of God?
2. Can a man really enjoy temporal blessings if he does not seek to glorify God?
3. Why are special blessings given to those who suffer for righteousness' sake?
4. "There the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Where is "there?"
5. Can a man expect God to especially bless him if he does not maintain a meek attitude toward others?
6. Can we expect God to bless us if we neglect His work?
7. How can we actually experience the blessing of Abraham?
8. By what means did Christ make it possible for the blessing of Abraham to come upon us?
9. What are the most important kinds of blessings God wants us to enjoy?
10. Can we expect blessings from God if we render evil for evil or railing for railing?

## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

How wonderful it is to experience the blessings of God, including the temporal blessings of sunshine, rain, harvest, and grain! How great are the blessings of food, clothing, shelter, and means to live on! God has certainly bestowed many such blessings upon us. But there are greater blessings God wants to bestow upon His creation. These are the spiritual, eternal blessings that come down and fill the soul of man. The Holy Spirit conveys these blessings of light, comfort, understanding, strength, courage, faith, love, victory, peace, and happiness. Sometimes the temporal blessings seem to stall and come short. But the spiritual blessings can keep flowing. As we maintain humility, faith, and steadfastness with God, enduring the hard times and holding on to the Lord regardless, we will receive rich recompense. It was hard for Joseph to suffer being separated from his father and brethren for those 20 years or so. It was hard for him to take being lied upon and wrongfully thrown into prison. It was hard for him to remain in the prison, forgotten for two more years by the man he had hoped would mention him to the king. Yes, this

was all hard, very hard to bear. But it all turned into a blessing. He kept his faith and courage and refused to be bitter and complaining. Let us take courage in the bitter things that come to us in life! There is a rich blessing in it all. It will all come out right if we keep the right attitude and spirit. God wants to bless us richly. He permits the sorrows and heartaches as preparation for His rich and choice blessings. We have proven this to be true over and over in our lives. The sacrifice that we make to please and obey God will turn into the richest blessings we have ever had.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Some years back in Enid, OK, a large metal wheat grainery building was filled too full and it bulged the sides out, spilling huge mounds of wheat on the ground. I imagine the birds and any other creatures with a liking for wheat had a field day. That is about what takes place when God opens the windows of heaven and starts pouring out blessings upon us. He has a vast storehouse and we are small creatures who cannot hold a great deal. Those around us should be the recipients of the excess.

This also works the same way concerning the church. Ezekiel 34:26 says, "And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing." This is speaking of Jerusalem, which is a symbol of God's church. Everyone who comes near the church, even those who are not saved, should be able to find something to satisfy their hunger.

It should be a real challenge to us to make sure we are in line with the blessings that are flowing out of heaven. As others taste that which spills over from us, we can help them also to get in the mainstream of God's outpourings.

One thing we might take heed to. We are told that God adds no sorrow with His blessings. (Proverbs 10:22). When God fills us up and it runs off to others, let's make sure we also add no sorrow to it, or we may give people a warped idea of what God's blessings are like.

—Wayne Murphey





**June 2, 1991**

**THE JOY OF GIVING**

Proverbs 11:24 There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

25 The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

19:17 He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

21:26 . . .The righteous giveth and spareth not.

22:9 He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

12:33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Acts 20:35 . . .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.

II Corinthians 9:6 . . .He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9 (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10 Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11 Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

Romans 12:8 . . . He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

**Memory Verse:** Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. II Cor. 9:7.

**Central Thought:** God will richly reward the liberal person who will bountifully and cheerfully give of himself and his means to help his fellow man.

**Word Definitions:** *Liberal:* Generous; willing and ready to give. *Alms:* Compassionate effort to benefit the poor.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Kindness and mercy to others less fortunate and in need has always been an attribute that God has been highly pleased with. Giving to help others is a work that brings much satisfaction to the heart as well as special favor with God, if it is done with the right attitude and spirit. Solomon made mention of this several times in the Proverbs from whence we have drawn the first few texts of our lesson. Jesus emphasized giving in His teachings, also. Paul refers to the statement Jesus made which is unrecorded in the Gospels concerning how much better it is to give than to receive. And then from Paul's writings to the Romans and Corinthians we have some clear instruction as to how God feels about one who is liberal and kind to help others. Paul quotes from Psalm 112:9 concerning the man who fears the Lord and delights greatly in His commandments. His dispersion abroad and giving to the poor was one of the qualities that God was well pleased with. It is a vital part of the Christian faith to be generous, self-sacrificing, and gracious to the needs of others. No one can get far in the Christian life without being benevolent and good-willed to his brother or fellow man. There is such a joy and blessing in giving, that once a person tastes of the sweetness found in giving to others, he or she will be inclined to indulge in its sacred practice often or wherever the opportunity

affords. A person never loses when he gives. He really loses when he fails or refuses to give. God will see to it that his own needs will be provided for when a man in love and kindness reaches out to another's need. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Is the Bible plan of giving fulfilled by the world in general today?
2. Can you think of certain characters in the Bible who were examples in giving?
3. Where is the greatest happiness found, in the giver or the receiver?
4. As a general rule, is a person naturally inclined to want to give?
5. If a person gives cheerfully with a loving heart, will he lose?
6. If a person lives selfishly, feeling that he cannot afford to share with others, will he gain?
7. What does God look at most: the amount given, or the amount retained for one's self?
8. Will a person have to answer to God for selfishly withholding what he could have given?
9. There are many other Scriptures on this subject. Can you think of any of them?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

It is very vital to the success of a person in the Christian life to be a cheerful giver, and a bountiful giver. Giving freely and cheerfully is one of the most beautiful aspects of the Christian life. We are not to give to be seen or to gain the praise of men. We are to give in secret, and God, who sees in secret, will reward us openly. (Matt. 6:4). The whole framework of the Christian character rests on the disposition of giving. God gave His Son; Jesus gave His life; we give our hearts and lives to Him; we give to others. The Christian life is one continual operation of giving. Give, give, give, and give some more. Earn all you can, save all you can, and give all you can. Liberality is very beneficial to the soul's welfare. The sooner a person learns the joy of giving in his or her life, the better off they will be spiritually. A person who draws back from giving is just

hurting their own self. One person said, "I heard they took up an offering last night. I saved myself some money by not being there." That person was wrong. They lost something, and their attitude shows just where they stand. God wants giving to be done freely and cheerfully. The practice of making one feel uncomfortable or forced into giving something is unacceptable with God. If an offering is to be taken, it is better for it to be carried out in a way that the freedom of the individual is highly respected. The widow can give her fifty cents and the wealthy man can give his twenty dollar bill. Both go into the fund unseen and joined together. God is pleased with the cheerful giver and He is observing those who are holding back.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"It is often said that 'you can't out give God'. What a blessing it is to be able to give to those who have needs and to those who are busy for the Lord. 'Give, and it shall be given unto you.' This is surely true. 'I will never forget when I received word in 1954 that my dear mother had taken her bed and was not expected to live. I was over 1500 miles away and I wanted to go to her bedside. The saints gave me an offering to pay my fare on the train. I will never forget what that meant to me and how I did appreciate it. Even as I write about it now, I pray God to bless each one who had a part in that wonderful deed. It has now been over twenty years ago, but it will never be forgotten. I could relate many times when others gave to me when I had a need. I could also relate many instances when I received such a blessing from giving. One dear woman came in the office and was talking to me. It seemed I sensed a need and felt impressed to give her five dollars. When I gave it, she was so happy and let me know she had needed food. The Lord surely did fulfill His Word. I was given five dollars very soon after that. I have had a number of similar experiences. Even if I had not been given to, I know I would never have lost, as God took note.

"The work of the Lord suffers because of many failing to do their duty. We must obey the Word of God on all points, if we would prosper in our souls. When we give we want to take our

hands off of the offering. The person who receives is responsible then. If he does not use it properly, you will not be held to account. You already have laid up your treasure in heaven if you have given it 'as unto the Lord.' When we watch and see how it is used, we are not giving it 'as unto the Lord.' "

—Marie Miles (Written in 1975)



June 9, 1991

### **THE FRUIT WE BRING FORTH IN OUR LIVES**

Proverbs 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

12:14 A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of his mouth: and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

Psalms 92:12 The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

13 Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.

14 They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;

Isaiah 32:15 Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.

16 Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field.

17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

Matthew 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Romans 6:21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Galatians 5:22 The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.  
James 3:17 . . . The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Hebrews 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

**Memory Verse:** . . . Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. John 12:24

**Central Thought:** Every person is bringing forth some kind of fruit in their life. God, through Christ, His Son, and the Holy Spirit, has made it possible for us to bring forth the right kind of fruit, good fruit that will be a blessing to us and to those around us.

**Word Definitions:** *"The fruit of his mouth":* Words spoken and expressions of the heart that are beneficial to others. *"Wilderness be a fruitful field":* The barren desert of a man's heart will become a fruitful garden.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

One of the most appreciated and valuable works of the natural creation is that of the production of fruit from trees and plants. The fruit that God first brought forth had seed in itself that would reproduce its kind. Even mankind was given the ability to reproduce and bear fruit of their kind. In our lesson today we want to consider and study the spiritual aspect of fruit, that is, the fruit we bring forth in our hearts and lives. It is a thought every person would do well to take heed to, for every one is bringing forth fruit in his life. What kind of fruit is the essential issue to deal with. From the Psalms, Proverbs, prophets, Christ, and the apostles come expressions with regard to the fruit of a person's life. We are bearing fruit that our families, loved ones, neighbors, and other fellow creatures are partaking of and being affected by. Isaiah's prophecy of the Spirit being poured upon us from on high has

its fulfillment in the New Testament when the Holy Spirit came from heaven upon those who were waiting for Him on the day of Pentecost. The prophet's language is very unique. He speaks about the wilderness, the fruitful field, and the forest. All of this is referring to the hearts of men. Many hearts are like the wilderness, or desert. They bring forth things which are not profitable. They are void of the blessings of heaven that would make their lives useful. But the Spirit of God can cause a desert heart to rejoice and blossom as the rose. The wilderness can be made a fruitful field. The fruitful field can be as a forest in its volume and opportunity. Think of the rich resources the forests produce, of the wood that has so many uses and products for the good of man. Our lives can be that way in a spiritual sense. By the Spirit of God living within us, we can be fruitful to the glory of God. —Leslie C. Busbee

#### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Which grows easiest and fastest: fruit or weeds?
2. How can you tell what kind of person one really is?
3. Can a person really bring forth the righteous fruits of the Spirit without the Spirit?
4. Does a person have to cultivate and work at his life in order to bring forth righteous fruit?
5. How does a person's mouth affect the fruit of his life?
6. Can a person be changed from a corrupt tree to a good one?
7. What kind of fruit does God want us to bear?
8. Will a person be benefited himself by bearing the fruit of the Spirit?
9. Does God enjoy the righteous fruit of a man's life?

#### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

The fruit a Christian bears is fruit that will endure unto life eternal. It is fruit and increase that will benefit him far beyond the fleeting ages of time. The fruit of a righteous man finds its true influence in the lives of others, and it will have its effect if we live close to God and keep low down at His feet in humility. The Spirit of God in our lives will bud and blossom into fruit before others. They will behold the beauty of faith, hope, and

love. Even down to the infirmities and limitations of old age the fruit of a godly person will continue to show forth. Notice it says, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age." This implies that they were bringing forth fruit before old age, and the old age does not stop the fruit. It is vital for young people to start bringing forth the fruit of righteousness in their youth. They must continue to bear such fruit right on up through the years, then when the time of old age comes, they will *still* be bearing fruit. Years ago I was privileged to see a giant old oak tree near Chico, CA. Oh, its majesty as a great spreading tree was beautiful to behold. Its branches reached so far that they had to have concrete pillars to hold them up. It was a sight I have never forgotten. But the most impressive thing about that tree was not the tree itself, but rather it was something I saw scattered on the ground under its great spreading branches. What was it? It was acorns. That old tree was still bringing forth fruit in old age. It made me think of how God wants us to bring forth fruit even when we get old. I was a young man then, and now I am up in the middle-aged years. My desire and prayer to God is that I will continue to be fruitful for Him until it is time for me to leave this world. May this be true for us all.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

One thought rather interesting to note is in Galatians 5:19 where Paul says, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest. . ." and he names seventeen different things. When he shows the contrast he says, "But the fruit of the spirit is. . ." Gal. 5:22. The fruit of the Spirit is singular, whereas the works of the flesh are plural. I have read it explained that joy is love exalted. Peace is love in repose. Longsuffering is love enduring. Gentleness is love in society. Goodness is love in action. Faith is love on the battlefield. Meekness is love in school. Temperance is love in training. A Godly life bears a fruit that is good for every occasion. This fruit is of a pure heavenly strain. If a fruit tree starts sprouting below where it is grafted, there is a real need to cut it away.

Fruit denotes passiveness. Works suggests aggressiveness. Fruit on a tree is something easily seen and readily enjoyed.



Works of the flesh are things which are camouflaged and which attempt to latch on to you and cause confusion. Fruit typifies something whole that is equally good throughout, while works are as leaven, steadily corrupting until there is nothing good. There is no doubt in the choice of preference between these two, but there are many, many people who are not bearing the fruit of righteousness. —Wayne Murphey



**June 16, 1991**

### **THE VALUE OF GODLY WISDOM**

Proverbs 9:9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

11 For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

12 If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.

Proverbs 8:11 For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

I Corinthians 1:17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

20 Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

2:6 Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

8 Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

3:13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

**Memory Verse:** Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Prov. 4:7.

**Central Thought:** With the guidance and counsel of wisdom a person can make a success of his life in the eyes of God, but without wisdom he will suffer defeat and frustration, and in the end be lost forever.

**Word Definitions:** *"The world by wisdom knew not God":* Man lost the knowledge of God because he became submerged in his own fleshly wisdom and human understanding. *"The foolishness of preaching":* Since man lost sight of God through his human wisdom, God planned to use something that would appear foolish and unimportant to offset and undo all of that build-up of vain wisdom. *Circumspectly:* Watching and observing in every direction.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The history of the world records accounts of the lives of men and women, some of whom were wise, and others who were foolish. Many started out wise and ended up foolish, and many started out foolish and ended up wise. The burden of the

book of Proverbs seems to be to present wisdom as the most important thing for a person to seek in this life. The author, Solomon, had asked of God that he might have a wise and an understanding heart to know judgment and right. This he had done when he first became the king of Israel in his father David's stead. But even this man who was endued with wisdom from God, at his request, ended up a foolishly, going after what he had warned others about in the book of Proverbs, namely, strange women. And today the same old story is being told in people's lives. People are foolish and dying for want of wisdom. In our lesson today we have gathered a host of thoughts from the sacred Scriptures that will help us to see the value of godly wisdom and the folly of worldly wisdom. It is so important for us to distinguish between the two. The fear and reverence of God is the basis of true wisdom. The basis of false, or worldly, wisdom is human reasoning. One man, Bertrand Russell, a noted British intellect, wrote a book called, *Why I Am Not A Christian*. In this book is found nothing but fleshy human reasoning, a perspective merely from a carnal-minded viewpoint. True wisdom, as our lesson states, is a hidden wisdom, hidden from the proud and worldly wise, but revealed to the lowly, the poor and needy. Let us acknowledge daily our need of the guidance of godly wisdom and make it our number one quest, desiring to have it always. If we will do so and be wise, we will be wise for our own benefit and profit, but if we fail to seek wisdom, the error and consequence will be our own. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Can you think of anyone who was wise in a godly way and proved the value of it?
2. Can you think of anyone who was not wise in a godly way and whose life showed their folly?
3. Ask yourself this question: Am I pursuing the wisdom of God in everything I am doing?
4. Why is the preaching of the cross foolishness to some?
5. Why *did* God choose to use the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe?
6. How would the princes of this world have treated Christ if they had been truly wise?

7. Name some of the reasons why humans are tempted to go against wisdom?

8. What kind of wisdom did Christ manifest and teach?

9. Is God desirous of giving us wisdom?

10. How does true wisdom cause a person to act and feel about himself?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

We have two wisdoms in the scope of life to choose between. We face this decision everyday we live. To choose the wrong wisdom is inviting disappointment and defeat. To look at things from a human standpoint is to accept worldly wisdom. Worldly wisdom is what condemned our Saviour to the death of the cross. The men who laid sentence for His death were ignorant of the wisdom of God. If Christ had been following the wisdom of the world, He would have resisted and fought against those who sought His life. But His was the wisdom from above, the wisdom of meekness and the fear of God. The worldly wise reject the wisdom of God for a number of reasons. Men want to know too much. They are not content to leave some things with God. They have to snoop into things that should be left alone. This is called curiosity. Man is too curious for his own good. He is curious because he is not content with the way God does things. He thinks he can make a better way. Man is too impatient; he is not willing to wait on God. He wants to rush things to satisfy his restless nature. Man is too full of fear and is not apt to trust. His vision being dimmed to the goodness of God, his doubts and fears overcome him and spur him to take matters in his own hands. And probably the worst problem man has with being able to trust the wisdom of God, is his own pride. Man is too proud and self-sufficient to attribute anything to a higher power. Instead of being honest with himself, or being willing to question his own understanding, he accepts the errors of those before him and plunges on in the way of human understanding. And thus the short life they are allotted in this world is spent in folly, and they soon are called to go out and face the God whose wisdom they so foolishly denied.

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

True wisdom comes only from above. Only God can give us the discernment and understanding to handle the problems of life. Solomon had to seek God for his wisdom. It was not inherited from his father David, or acquired from a school of learning, but was a direct gift of God. A person may possess much knowledge in this world, and knowledge is needed in knowing how to make a living, but compared to the mind of God, all other knowledge is as foolishness.

The first step toward gaining wisdom lies in following Christ's footsteps. One scripture says, "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments." When one perceives the evil of this world and the value of living a holy life, he has made a great stride toward acquiring wisdom. For many it is applicable to say that "wisdom crieth in the streets." Many people love the simplicity of living to please the flesh.

One saying is, "A wise man does first what a fool does last." This could not be any truer concerning repentance. The sooner a person repents of their sins the wiser they are. It is the fool that will be repenting at Christ's second coming.

If we have an honest heart before God, live in all the light He shines on our pathway, and ask for understanding in every situation, God will be pleased to give us the portion of wisdom we need to make life a great success. —Wayne Murphey



**June 23, 1991**

**CHRIST NOW SEATED UPON DAVID'S THRONE**

**Psalm 132:11** The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.

**12** If thy children will keep my covenant and my testimony that I shall teach them, their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.

**Luke 1:30** And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God.

**31** And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

**32** He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

**33** And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

**Acts 2:29** Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day.

**30** Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;

**31** He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.

**32** This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

**33** Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

**34** For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

**35** Until I make thy foes thy footstool.

**36** Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Revelation 2:26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

**Memory Verse:** Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Heb. 4:16.

**Central Thought:** Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has ascended on high to the right hand of the Father to intercede for all who come unto God by Him. This position of power fulfills what is termed the throne of David in prophecy. It is a throne of grace and mercy available for all to come boldly to Him for help in every time of need

### LESSON BACKGROUND

David, the son of Jesse, was chosen of God to be the leader of His people. “. . . He took him from the sheepfolds: From the care of the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob, his people and Israel his inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.” Ps. 78:70-72. David in his love and faith for the Lord God attained to three offices. He was prophet, priest, and king. He was a prophet. Many of his psalms were divine utterances of prophecy pointing towards Christ. *He was a priest.* By his closeness and favor with God he filled an intercessory role for men. *He was king.* He ruled Israel with wisdom and skill. He was also a mighty warrior and captain. No army in the world could stand up against him in battle. He was also a psalmist, the sweet psalmist of Israel. He was one of the most colorful and inspiring figures of the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit has inspired the Scriptures to call the Saviour as the son of David. David knew that God had promised him a Son to sit on his throne. Solomon, his son in the flesh did sit upon his throne, by divine appointment, after David had

passed on, but the real son of David was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The angel spoke of Him as being given of God the throne of his father David. In speaking of the Lord promising David the fruit of his loins to sit upon his throne, Peter spoke of Jesus fulfilling this by being exalted to the right hand of God, referring to two other Scriptures of David's prophecy of Him, namely, Psalm 16 and Psalm 110. The real tenor of the Scriptures declares the throne of David to be this position of power that Christ has at the right hand of God. From the book of Revelation we have two expressions of Christ's power at the right hand of God. The one alludes to Psalm 2 in which Christ would break the heathen (or nations) and the uttermost parts of the earth with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Then He speaks about Himself being set down with the Father in His throne, and agrees with the promise in the Psalm that those who overcome would be granted to sit with Him in that throne. All of this tells us that Christ is **now** seated on David's throne, this throne being in the heavens at the right hand of God in victory and intercession for the children of God who trust and obey Him. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the Lord swear and promise unto David?
2. Who would be able to sit upon David's throne?
3. What did the angel tell Mary that the Lord God would give unto her son?
4. What kind of kingdom did the angel say this would be?
5. How does Peter tie the promise given to David to Christ sitting at the right hand of God?
6. What is the real nature and office of the throne of David?
7. What is Christ doing at the right hand of God?
8. In what way is Christ truly the son of David?
9. Can we also be part of David's lineage today?
10. In what way will the followers of Christ have power over the nations?
11. What does sitting with Christ in His throne mean to us in terms of spiritual benefit?
12. Do these Scriptures carry sufficient proof that Christ is **now** seated on David's throne?



## **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

Many, many people today still look for Christ to personally sit on David's throne over in Jerusalem. They are looking for the Lord to descend from heaven and fight a big battle with the forces of Satan and defeat them and sit on David's throne. They do not see Him as seated on David's throne **now**. But in the list of the Scriptures in our lesson for today, we see that Christ is already on the throne of David. He is already our Saviour and King. His throne, thank God, is not an earthly one. It is set in the heavens at the right hand of the Father, not only ruling, but serving, blessing, and ministering. Christ rules with love and meekness. He reigns with power that wins the heart and the affections. Yes, someday He will bring the world to judgment and will destroy all the workers of iniquity. But now He reigns in love. He is looking forward to the time when all things will be subdued unto Him and He will gather His beloved unto Himself forever. But until then, He will continue to reign at the right hand of God to give victory and grace to all who come unto God by Him. We can sit with Him in His throne. We can share the triumph of His grace in our hearts today. We can have victory over sin, the flesh, and the Devil. We can come to this throne of grace in every time of need. He is interceding for us who are still down here in this wicked world meeting sorrow and tribulation because of our faith in Him. The victory is ours. Christ has conquered and we are sitting with Him in heavenly places. Let us keep our eyes on Him all the way through this troubled world. He is our King forever!

—Leslie C. Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

"David was an unusual person, chosen of God to be the head of a lineage which would bring the Son of God into the world—Jesus Christ who was to be the King that would sit upon the throne forever. When God talked to David through His prophet, Nathan, we notice that it took on a peculiar form. To other prophets, revelations of the Messiah were made objectively apart from themselves. Most of them were shown Christ and His day afar off. When revelations of the Messiah were made to David, they were usually connected with some-

thing in his own life, history, or experience; they had a shadowy foundation in something subjective or personal to himself; that thing enlarged, purified, glorified, constituted the revelation of Christ. This was in keeping with the typical relation which David and his kingdom had to Christ and His kingdom.

David was honored to be an eminent type of the Messiah, inasmuch as by his trials, his conflicts, and his conquests, he did very significantly prefigure a suffering, but at the same time, a triumphant Saviour." —Marie Miles (Written in 1979).

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**June 30, 1991**

**JESUS CHRIST, THE KING OF KINGS  
AND LORD OF LORDS**

Psalm 110:1 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Mark 14:61 . . . Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

I Timothy 6:13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:

15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

Revelation 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse;

and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

Psalm 2: 10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Revelation 11:15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.

**Memory Verse:** The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all. Ps. 103:19.

**Central Thought:** Jesus Christ has a kingdom and a power that no other king or lord has ever had or ever will have. His kingdom is everlasting and He will triumph over all the powers of evil and sin and will judge all men in that last great day.

**Word Definitions:** *"The Lord said unto my Lord":* The Lord God Jehovah said unto my Lord (ruler, owner, controller, master), referring to Christ. *"The only Potentate":* A monarch, one who possesses great power or sway. *Vesture:* Cloak. *"Kiss the Son":* The Septuagint renders this phrase, "Receive or accept correction or discipline." The general expression here is to embrace Christ and His doctrine, worship and love Him purely, bow to His rule and authority. *"When His wrath is kindled but a little":* For His anger is quickly kindled. The Lord went through so much and paid such a price for our redemption, that for us to draw back from His embrace incurs His anger immediately.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson just previous to this one, we studied about Christ seated on David's throne in intercession and ministering to the souls of men as a gracious King and Lord. Today we want to notice the truths in the Bible that picture Christ as the King of all kings and the Lord of all lords. Our first two Scriptures are from Psalm 110. This first verse has been quoted several times in the New Testament. It is without controversy speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ and His position at the right hand of God. Jesus affirmed to the high priest that He would be seen sitting on the right hand of power, and added also that He would be coming in the clouds of heaven. The apostle Paul declares Jesus as the only Ruler who is supreme above all else. He has immortality and dwells beyond the dim vision of man. In the Revelation we see Christ pictured again as overcoming and conquering the nations as the supreme King of kings. We have inserted the words of prophecy concerning Christ from the second Psalm just before the announcement that the King of kings had engulfed and subdued the kingdoms of this world. It is an entreaty that men ought to seriously consider today. How people ought to embrace and worship the King of kings! How they need to accept His discipline and correction! He is the Son of the most High God, and God has raised Him from the dead in power and glory for the salvation of our precious souls. Who would not want to bow before Him and submit their lives to Him! Only the proud and stubborn in heart who refuse to acknowledge Him as Lord would be so foolish. All the kingdoms of this world will pass away, but the kingdom of Jesus Christ will survive the crumbling ages of time and will reign in glory forever and ever. —Leslie C. Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did the Lord God say to our Lord Christ?
2. Is Christ still at the right hand of God today?
3. What is Christ doing at the right hand of God?
4. What is He looking forward to?
5. Does everyone acknowledge Christ to be King of kings and Lord of lords?
6. Will they acknowledge and bow before Him in the last day?

7. What should people be doing about the glorious King today?

8. What will happen to all who refuse to embrace Him and accept His discipline?

9. What will happen to all the kingdoms of this world when Christ comes again?

10. What are those who are with the Lamb referred to as being?

### **ADULTS' AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMENTS**

There reigns a mighty Monarch on a throne of endless sway,

High above the lofty heavens who will never pass away.

He ascended to this apex of eternal great decree,

When He bore our stains of crimson and arose in victory.

Once in human form He labored, manifesting heaven's love;

Now He sits beside the Father in those wondrous heights above.

He is watching, He is watching all the nations strife and flow,

Poor Saddam Hussein and Hitler, and the multitudes below.

He is list'ning, He is list'ning to the cries of all who pray,

And He's interceding for them in a blessed holy way.

Though the years are long and many since He entered heaven's gates,

Yet 'tis like a passing moment, and He patiently awaits—  
For the time is surely coming when the Father will declare:

"Time will surely be no longer, bring my people up from there!"

Then the heavens will be parted as He comes in pow'r complete,

And the earth and all its works will surely melt with fervent heat.

Poor benighted man is floundering in the woes of wormwood vile,

'Mid financial, moral evils, and domestic pits of guile.  
Sickness, sorrow, strife, confusion, murder, thefts of every kind;

Our society's polluted with a dark oppressive mind.  
Faith and trust in God rejecting, meekness, love, and grace are banned;

While mankind is sinking, sinking deeper in earth's sinking sand.

But there's hope for all who'll humble down before the Saviour's cross;

And there's help if we'll embrace Him, count all things for Him as loss.

Cast away all doubts, misgivings, and believe the gospel now,

Let His blessed loving Spirit lay His hand upon your brow.  
He will guide you through this valley of the earth's condemned abode,

And will lead you to His glory at the ending of life's road.

—Leslie C. Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In reading and studying about this everlasting Kingdom, it simply makes me feel privileged to be a subject of it. The main reason to be a citizen of a country is for the protection it provides. Man can provide for himself many of the necessities of life, but a national defense system is invaluable in sustaining life. We have an adversary who has great power, and he seeks each of us to destroy us. But he is no match for Christ who has unlimited power and authority. It makes a trusting soul feel very secure when considering the mighty King we serve.

Be it understood, the Kingdom of God, is not just another kingdom. A kingdom can be a wonderful form of government, or an inferior one. It all depends on the king. Christ is what makes this kingdom what it is. If a king is of the disposition to leave the palace and associate among the common people of his kingdom, he will likely be a good king. Christ did just that. He left the comfort of heaven and mixed with the poorest of humanity. And he views the subjects of His kingdom as His brothers. Anyone who is not of His Kingdom has simply missed the greatest citizenship ever offered. —Wayne Murphey



## IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING!



I thought that I stood in His presence—  
My bosom storm-shaken with sighs;  
I loved Him; ah, yes, how I loved Him,  
And trembled with joy 'neath His eyes!  
I walked, with His Spirit around me  
Like sunshine, for years and for years;  
His strength and His love had upheld me,  
And banished my sorrows and tears.

And now, as I stood in His presence,  
Unmindful of glories around,  
So He, my Beloved, was near me,  
And I sank to my knees, for I found  
His hand, with the marks of the nail-points,  
Received for my sins, and for me,  
Was stretched o'er my head, as I whispered,  
“Dear Lord, keep me ever by Thee.”

I yearned with a rapture of longing  
To feel that blest Hand on my head,  
And waited—when, lo, through the silence  
His gentle voice tenderly said:  
“What fruit dost thou bring, of thy service?  
What sheaves at My feet canst thou lay?  
The fields have long whitened to harvest—  
Hast thou toiled thro' the heat of the day?”

I trembled, and started; the service  
I thought I had rendered to Him,  
Seemed naught, with that question before me—  
His love filled my heart to the brim.  
I saw at a glance all the millions  
Who knew not of Him—and I wept;

For, oh, there was blood on my garments,  
And grief thro' my whole being swept!

"Dear Master," I whispered, "I love Thee!  
Have pity and mercy, I pray;  
I'll carry Thy Name to the millions,  
If Thou wilt but show me the way.  
I'll tell of Thy love and compassion—  
The joy when a sinner is saved;  
Thy Blood that was shed for their cleansing,  
Thy Name on their foreheads engraved

"Oh, grant me still time for Thy service,  
And seal me with strength from above;  
Touch my lips with a coal from Thine altar,  
And fill me, O Fountain of Love!"  
And then came this blessed assurance  
To thrill me and calm my distress:  
"Thy strength is made perfect in weakness,  
And, lo! I am with thee to bless."

—Author Unknown



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