

Willie

# Bible Lessons



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

**ADULTS — YOUNG PEOPLE**

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

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## **THEME FOR THIRD QUARTER, 2005**

We are inspired of the Lord to set forth a series of studies this quarter on the subject of "Spiritual Things." The souls of men need to be delivered from the bondage of the corruptible, physical things to the reality of eternal, spiritual things. The Bible clearly reveals what these spiritual things are, and these are the things we will endeavor to cover in this series of study. We will begin first with Spiritual Creation, Birth and Life. Then we will take up other things such as Food, Water, Light, Beauty, Riches, Rest, Worship, Vision, Pleasures and Kingdom. Our prayer to God is that this series of lessons will cause each one to be more concerned and interested in these eternal values that can be ours in the bountiful provision of salvation and grace in our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. —Bro. Leslie Busbee



**JULY 3, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL CREATION, BIRTH AND LIFE**

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins:

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

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:

11 Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. II Corinthians 5:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Every person in this life needs to be re-created, made a new creature and born from above to obtain entrance into the kingdom of God. This is accomplished by the grace of God through the working and power of His Holy Spirit quickening the soul to a life that is heavenly pure as God is pure.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Ephesians 2:1, 5), "*quickened*": made alive.

(Ephesians 2:2), "*course of this world*": This is referring to this present, material world that will one day pass out of existence. Satan, the god of this world, is so successful in blinding earth-minded souls to the reality of the impending doom of earth and time. Thus men live their short and uncertain lives all involved and tied up with the vanities of material and fleshly matters. "*prince of the power of the air*": The ruler of the authority of this present, encumbering world, which is the devil, satan, the enemy of all righteousness, who gets people carried away with physical pleasure and earthly wealth, things that will one day perish forever.

(Colossians 3:10), "*renewed in knowledge*": This means to be renovated (changed, made entirely over and restored) unto recognition, full discernment and acknowledgement of the truth of God. This is accomplished through the refreshing revelation of the indwelling Spirit of God.

(Colossians 3:11), "*Barbarian*": A foreigner, or one who speaks in a language that another cannot understand. "*Scythian*": a savage. "*all, and in all*": All things to us that we need for life and godliness and ever present to bless all things that come our way for our good.

(John 3:3), "*born again*": born from above. This means to be regenerated or given new life from a spiritual, eternal source, from God out of heaven. "*see the kingdom of God*": To see means to behold, understand, be aware of, know, discern and perceive.

(John 3:5), "*water*": This is certainly not to be taken as referring to literal water, but it is rather a typical term that refers to the Word of the gospel of God, which, along with the Spirit of God, effects the transformation of the soul from earthly and material things to heavenly and spiritual things. The Word has a cleansing effect that is accomplished by us obeying its precepts and commandments. "*enter*": To pass through the door that has been made available. The spiritual birth Christ is presenting here is the entrance way into the kingdom of God, the Church of God.

(John 3:7), "*Marvel not*": Do not wonder and allow yourself to be confused about this vitally important truth.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our first lesson in this series of studies on "Spiritual Things" will be that of the New Birth, the wonderful work of the soul of man becoming a new creature in Jesus Christ. We draw our lesson text from the blessed sayings of our Lord Jesus and from the writings of His apostle, Paul. Paul, writing to the brethren at Ephesus in the preceding chapter, had mentioned the exceeding greatness of God's power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. This mighty power is the quickening agent that transforms our souls from sin to a righteous and spiritual life. God exerts this power through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who sits with Him in heaven. It brings new life to the repentant soul who turns away from sin and lifts him up to communion with Christ in the spiritual realm where God and man do meet.

Then our text in Colossians 3:9-11 speaks about putting off the old man with his sinful deeds and putting on the new man,

which means to adapt our hearts and minds to those principles that were manifested in Christ, actually living and doing as He did, imitating His example of holiness and submission to God.

Then we have the words of Jesus that He spoke to Nicodemus concerning being born from above. To poor Nicodemus the thought of being born the second time was a complete mystery. This shows how deep in the dark the leaders of Israel were to the real essence of the Word of God. It is still true today. The second birth is a spiritual, new creation wrought by the Holy Spirit and is an indispensable requirement for those who want to successfully please God.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. In what way does man need to be quickened and made alive?
2. What is a born again child of God quickened and raised up from?
3. Name the various things of the old man and the new man.
4. Why did Nicodemus question about the thought of being born again?
5. Why is being born from above so necessary for us to experience?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The born again experience that Jesus introduced to Nicodemus is the answer to the puzzling questions that has plagued man through the years. What? How? Why? One such person we have on record is John Bunyan, author of *Pilgrim's Progress*. He was a man who, upon falling under deep conviction for his sinful condition before God, groped and searched for the answer to his desperate need. He wandered in ignorance seeking for help and was a pitiful sight to those around. He wanted deliverance from the chains of guilt and sinful ways but all of his efforts were fruitless. He was not aware of the wonderful miracle of the new birth. One day, as he happened to pass by a group of women sitting out in the sunshine, he overheard something said in their talking to one another about being born again. Right away he became interested and asked the women what they were talking about. They encouraged him

to seek out their pastor, John Gifford. He did, and from him John Bunyan was introduced and shown the way to find the life and victory he so greatly yearned for. And, after seeking earnestly for it, he obtained the blessing and went on to be a precious vessel for the Lord, giving to us the wonderful treasure of his thoughts about the Christian life and the sojourn of a Pilgrim through this world to that home above.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam *was made* a quickening spirit.” I Corinthians 15:45. All of us have been born of a natural birth and understand the needs and characteristics of these earthly bodies. These natural bodies are a wonderful creation of God but they were defiled because of sin and separated from the presence of God and the beautiful garden they were originally placed in. As a result of his sin, Adam caused much toil, grief, misery and death to be a part of all the generations of mankind that have been born of a natural birth.

Deep within the heart of man there is a longing for the innocence and purity that Adam and Eve once experienced in the Garden of Eden. In our young life we each experienced a taste of that innocence before we came to the age of accountability, but as each person grows into adulthood sin causes that time in our life to become only a memory. For just as a lifeless piece of bark floats down a stream, even so people who continue to follow the natural inclinations of the flesh will drift farther and farther from the man or woman that God intended them to be. Eventually they will go into perdition with many sins to their credit. Therefore we have a great need for “the last Adam” who was made a “quickenings spirit.”

When the power of the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual life, we no longer follow the downward current of this world that is leading to destruction but we begin making our way upstream toward the One who is the source of life. Spiritual life can be discerned by the progress that is made over time. It is more than just a happy, self-satisfied feeling—the enemy has rocked many people to sleep in that cradle of deception and has stolen their souls. True salvation will cause one to be an overcomer. The child of God will satisfy his hunger with the Bread sent from heaven and his thirst will be quenched by partaking of Living

Waters. The energy supplied by these soul-invigorating foods will cause one to triumph over sin and unrighteousness.

The quickening spirit of the Lord will cause the darkness that once enshrouded the life of a sinner to give way to brilliant rays of heavenly sunshine that will enlighten the pathway of the just. Thank the Lord, we will become a product of the workmanship of Jesus Christ when He "restoreth" our soul and leadeth us "in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake."

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**JULY 10, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL DARKNESS AND LIGHT**

Ephesians 5:5 No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

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..

Isaiah 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

Psalms 36:9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light....

I John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

II Corinthians 4:4 The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Isaiah 2:5 O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:6.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** We, as mortals sentenced to die, need the light of regeneration that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has brought to us. This is spiritual light, an inward illumination of the heart, to bring to our knowledge the truth of God and His perfect will concerning us.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Ephesians 9), "*fruit of the Spirit*": fruit of the light administered by the Holy Spirit.

(Ephesians 10), "*proving*": testing, approving and discovering. Verse 9 is inserted between verses 8 and 10 in parenthesis. The expression is: "Walk as children of light, being enlightened as to what is acceptable unto the Lord." The light of God is to enlighten the understanding of man so that he can clearly see what the will of God is.

(John 8:12), *"the light of life"*: The spiritual light of spiritual life, the shining forth of the blessed truth of the gospel of Christ, illuminating and making known the truth of God and His salvation.

(John 12:35-36), *"Yet a little while...Walk while ye have the light...While ye have the light, believe in the light"*: Oh, the seriousness of this saying of our Lord! He is implying that we must be diligent to walk in and obey the light that God shines on our pathway, because, if we do not hasten to believe in and walk in the light, it will be gone from us and we will be in darkness, ignorant and unmindful of the knowledge and understanding that God wanted us to have.

(I John 1:5), *"God is light"*: The Almighty God, our heavenly Father, the Creator of mankind and the earth and heavens: He is light. He is the Father of lights, the Giver of light from the dawn of creation. He is all light, having not a bit of darkness, ignorance or error. He is the perfection of light, no searching of His understanding. Nothing is hidden from His sight, "...all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him..." To make contact with Him we must deal with the light, for God and light are inseparable.

(I John 1:7), *"as he is in the light"*: As He, God the Father, is in the light. If we would have fellowship and relate to God on peaceful and acceptable terms, we must accept, receive, embrace, respond to, obey and walk in accord with this blessed spiritual light. We must let it illuminate and instruct us. We must be in the light as He is in the light. Thus we can have fellowship with God and with every person who is in the light with Him. Receiving, obeying and walking in the light makes the blood of His Son, Jesus, effectual in cleansing us from all sin. Otherwise, Christ could have shed His blood a thousand times, but it would accomplish nothing for us if we failed to walk in the Light that shines through His Word and Holy Spirit.

(John 1:5), *"The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"*: There are two ways we can take this statement and both are true. The darkness cannot stop and quench the light. The light will shine regardless of the resistance man will wield against it. It brings responsibility to man that he will have to answer for to God at the judgment. And then the darkness of the soul of man so many times does not comprehend nor understand the light. The light comes and man perceives it not.

(John 1:9), "*lighteth*": illuminates or enlightens the heart and the mind.

(II Corinthians 4:4), "*the god of this world*": This is the god of fleshly lusts, fashions, wealth and the love of self. The agent and influence back of these idols that worldly men worship is satan, the devil, the archenemy of God Himself. His power is to blind hearts.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Light is God's gracious gift to us. It was the first thing that God brought forth in creation. "Let there be light: and there was light." Genesis 1:3. It was on day four that He created the sun, so we know that the light brought forth on day one was not literal light. It was the light of God Himself, shining upon the darkness that covered the face of the deep. It was the same light that shone in the face of Jesus Christ, who declared Himself to be the light of the world. And it is the same light that illuminates the souls of men who obtain the new birth and possess the salvation that is in Christ. Let us rejoice in the light of the gospel, embrace it and walk diligently in obedience to His life-giving Word!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does it mean to walk in the light as children of light?
2. What kind of darkness does the light of God seek to illuminate?
3. Who brought the true Light to enlighten the souls of men?
4. What responsibility does the Light bring to the souls of men?
5. Who is the "god of this world" and what does he seek to do?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

What a wonderful experience to be enlightened in our hearts by the spiritual Light of God! "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105. William Cowper (author of "There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood"),

wrote another song that says, "The Spirit breathes upon the Word, and brings the truth to light." To be illuminated by the Spirit of God through the avenue of the Holy Scriptures is one of the true Christian's greatest joys. It is our main source of guidance through this troubled and confused world. It is vitally necessary for the soul to be aware of their darkness. Sad to say, the majority of people walk in the light of their own fire, in the sparks kindled by pride and self. (Isaiah 50:11.) Until a person becomes aware of their darkness, the light of God will have little or no effect. Thank God for conviction and awareness of our darkness and our need for the light. We give heed to the Scriptures and the prophetic Word that was ratified in Christ as unto a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the Day Star arises in our hearts. (II Peter 1:19.) It is upon the people who sit in darkness and the shadow of death that the Light shines. It is to people who sense their need and woeful condition that the salvation of God can and will appeal to.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

When the apostle John saw a vision of the bride of Christ, which Paul, in Ephesians 5:23-27, tells us is the church of God, which He has purchased with His own blood—all the redeemed; he saw a beautiful city, the new Jerusalem—ZION—coming down from God out of heaven, having a beautiful light. (Revelation 21.) In Psalm 50:2 we read that "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." Jesus told us that we were a city set on an hill, that "cannot be hid." (Matthew 5:14.) He tells us that we, Zion, being the light of the world, should let our light shine before men. (Verses 14-16.) In a prophecy of Zion, Isaiah 60:19-20 tells us that God is her "everlasting light." Other verses in the Psalms let us know that Zion is "beautiful for situation" (meaning, *elevation*—that city set on an hill) and that "God is in the midst of her." (Psalm 48:2 and 46:5.)

I once attended a public elementary school program and was delighted to hear the children begin to sing, "This Little Light of Mine." To my dismay, however, they sang with the emphasis that *they* were the light, that there was power and goodness in each of them that they were going to share with the

world. Sadly, there was no mention of God being the light, as the Bible declares in the Scriptures I just shared with you.

The only light that the church of God has is that Sun of Righteousness (Malachi 4:2), that Day Star, (II Peter 1:19), in the midst of every redeemed individual within her. Sometimes we come to service with the thought, "I hope the power of God will come down in our midst." Well, did you come with the power of God within you? Do you have the Sun of Righteousness rising up within your heart, making *you* that perfection of beauty and that city set on an hill?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**JULY 17, 2005**

### **MEAT WHICH ENDURETH UNTO EVERLASTING LIFE**

Isaiah 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; 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 satisfieth 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.

John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

30 They said therefore unto him,...

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

53 ...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

**MEMORY VERSE:** It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** From God the Father and from His Son,<sup>1</sup> Jesus Christ, we have the message that man needs to eat something more than literal, earthly food. We are in need of spiritual food for the life and health of our never-dying souls. And this food is the Word of God that comes to us through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 55:1), "*Ho*": A solemn expression meant to call us to attention, as if to say, "Hey there! You listen to me, for I have something of dire importance for you to hear." "*he that hath no money*": He that has no silver. "*come ye*": Move; put forth an effort to draw near. "*buy*": The Hebrew word means to deal in or obtain grain. "*without money and without price*": This means that God is speaking of food and commodities that you cannot obtain with silver or gold. It is therefore that which is of spiritual, eternal value.

(Isaiah 55:2), "*not bread*": of no real lasting value. "*good*": beneficial, profitable, nourishing and wholesome. "*fatness*": richness for the inner man.

(Isaiah 55:3), "*sure mercies of David*": The everlasting mercies God promised to David because of his faithfulness, which are fulfilled and brought to us through our Lord Jesus Christ, the seed of David. Paul applied this to Christ's resurrection in Acts 13:34, "And as concerning that he raised him up

from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David."

(John 6:27), "*Labour not*": Toil not, be not engaged in or with. It is a caution against being too overly concerned with earthly food. "*meat*": food. "*sealed*": stamped with the mark of God's approval for security and preservation.

(Verse 31), "*manna*": From the Hebrew word which means "what is it?" This was the expression of the children of Israel when they found morsels of bread lying around on the early morning ground. "Manna?" (What is it?) Moses reminded Israel in Deuteronomy 8:3 how that God fed them with manna which they knew not, that He might make them to know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.

(Verse 32), "*Verily, verily*": Truly, truly. "*Moses gave you not that bread from heaven*": That manna that God gave Israel in the time of Moses was not the real bread from heaven that Christ was seeking to introduce to them.

(Verse 54), "*eateth my flesh, drinketh my blood*": This is spiritual language describing the soul receiving the body and blood of Christ as the atonement for their salvation from sin.

(Verse 57), "*he that eateth me*": He that partaketh of My Word and My Spirit.

(Verse 63), "*the flesh profiteth nothing*": It is a spiritual eating, partaking of the Spirit of Christ and making it the rule of our life. It would be of no profit for us to eat of the literal body of Christ, but to partake of His doctrine and His Holy Spirit is wholesome and beneficial in a truly spiritual way.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Today's lesson, in this series of the study of spiritual things, is that concerning the Meat that endures unto eternal life, which Jesus has to bestow abundantly upon all of His disciples. Our first scripture from Isaiah 55:1-3 is the Universal Call of the Almighty God to the sons of men, an invitation to come and partake of spiritual food. It is, with the rest of the chapter, a presentation of the most wonderful opportunity we can have in this life, which is an opportunity to attend the Great Supper of spiritual nourishment, the greatest feast of all. "The sure mercies of David" sum up to be the partaking of the risen life of Christ as Paul expressed in Acts 13:34.

Our scriptures from John 6 declare that Jesus has something so much more wonderful and needful to give us than the literal loaves and fishes that He had just shared with the throng on the day before. He had so graciously fed the multitude from the young lad's lunch of five barley loaves and two small fishes. The people were so carried away in mind and spirit by such a miracle that they wanted to come and take Jesus "by force to make Him king." On account of this He withdrew from them into a mountain alone. But the next day they were after Him again. So it is in our day. The appetite for literal food dominates our society. People are eating themselves, as the old saying goes, "digging their graves with the fork and the spoon." It is one of man's strongest passions and is overloading the body and bringing destruction to their physical health. Jesus would have us to be aware of this danger and to be concerned about a more needful food, the food for the soul that we need, to prepare us for our eternal destiny.

We have chosen for our memory verse the response that Jesus gave the devil at the suggestion of turning stones into bread to satisfy His intense hunger after fasting for forty days. Jesus chose to wait on God to provide the physical food instead of doing something Himself. He referred to God's lesson to Israel in the ministration of the manna He gave to them, to show that literal bread alone is not sufficient for man to live on.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What does the Lord God offer to us through the prophet Isaiah?
2. In what ways can we spend our money for that which is not bread?
3. What does Jesus offer to us rather than the food that will perish?
4. What did Jesus say that the "Bread of Life" is?
5. How can we "eat" of Jesus in the way that will give us eternal life?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

While mankind is ruining their health by overeating and obesity, there is a food that they are quite ignorant of. While they feed their spirit on the filthy literature, immoral movies and the

vanities of television, there is a diet of wholesome food that is quite overlooked and rejected. It is a sad world today because man feasts not on the Bread of Life that Jesus has made available. His Word, His doctrines, His Spirit, His example of godliness, humility, obedience to God, love, faith, purity and holiness are the only source of the Bread that will endure unto everlasting life! Let us avail ourselves of this golden opportunity! Let us deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and strive for that Meat that will help us to really live the life of Christ here and in that blessed world to come! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

We have been “fearfully and wonderfully made:...” (Psalm 139:14.) It is truly a miracle when we think of each intricate part of our body and how the Lord causes it all to work together to form a healthy human body. It is a blessing and we should nourish and cherish it as our temple unto the Lord. To willfully abuse it in any way is a disregard to our Lord’s craftsmanship.

On the other hand, we see the spirit of the world caught up in the preservation of the human body—as though they could make it last forever. Notice all of the attention and research given to the study (and worship) of the human body. It is as though they are still searching for the “fountain of youth.”

It behooves us to keep a balance on these things. While it is wise to take care of the body the Lord so lovingly gave us, it is good to remember that this is not our soul’s eternal home. Even in the best of care, the body will eventually grow weak, become afflicted and die. We must keep our eyes on that Bread of Life—the eternal preservation of our souls.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**JULY 24, 2005**

### **TRUE JOY AND PLEASURE IN THE SPIRIT**

Psalm 36:7 How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

8 They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures.

Isaiah 55:10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:

11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

Psalms 16:5 The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.

11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Psalms 19:9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Psalms 84:1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Romans 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

1 Peter 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Romans 14:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** While the temporal, earthly and physical pleasures of this life are but short-lived and have no true value, there are true pleasures to be found in being a child of God through the blessings of His Word and Holy Spirit.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Psalm 36:8), "*river of thy pleasures*": The abundant flow of God's delights.

(Isaiah 55:13), "*thorn and the briar*": These are symbols of God's curse on account of sin. "*fir tree and the myrtle tree*": These signify God's blessings of spiritual life and peace that are enjoyed in the heart of the true believer and follower of Christ.

(Psalm 16:5), "*portion*": that which is divided and weighed out. "*cup*": This signifies the supply of all things that pertain unto life and godliness.

(Psalm 16:6), "*lines*": borders, boundaries, limits and extensions. "*pleasant*": enjoyable, satisfying and wholesome.

(Psalm 16:11), "*Thou wilt shew me the path of life*": As this is a part of an important and vivid prophecy of Jesus Christ, we must apply this first to Him, even as Peter quoted this in his message at Pentecost in Acts 2:25-28. God raised Christ up from the grave, opening up the way for Him to possess eternal life and immortality. He also caused Him to ascend up into the glorious presence of Himself and set Him at His own right hand to be our Intercessor and High Priest forever. This scripture can be ours also if we follow Jesus all the way through life and death and into immortality.

(Psalm 19:9), "*clean*": bright, pure, sound, clear and unadulterated. "*enduring*": standing, not failing or changing, trustworthy, dependable and sure.

(Psalm 84:1), "*amiable*": A romantic word meaning enjoyable loveliness.

(Psalm 84:10), "*better than a thousand*": One day in the Christian life is better than a thousand days spent in sin. "*I had rather be a doorkeeper*": The Hebrew expression is: "I have chosen to stand at the threshold." The threshold means the vestibule, or just inside the door, that is, the lowliest place.

(Psalm 84:11), The Hebrew with word definitions reads: "For Jehovah God is a sun (a source of light) and a shield (source of protection); grace (help, favour and kindness) and glory (splendor and abundance) will Jehovah give. He will not withhold good to those who walk in integrity (entirety, completeness, truth, without spot and undefiled).

(Romans 5:11), "*joy in God*": rejoice in great happiness and confidence.

(I Peter 1:8), "*full of glory*": glorious or glorified; beautiful and pleasant.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today we have drawn from the Scriptures wonderful truths about something that is so real and yet experienced by so few in this pleasure mad society and indulgent world. But the pleasure that is enjoyed by those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious goes far beyond the thrills and frills of fleshly vanity. This is the enjoyment and pleasant experience of the inner man, the spirit part of us that relates to that Supreme Being who gave us our being. From the Psalms we have found vivid expressions of the enjoyment of being in God's House, in His Service, and partaking of His Word. In the earthly phase of the worship of God was found great delight but was pointing toward that spiritual realm of blessings that would be enjoyed by those who would be raised up with Christ to sit with Him in heavenly places. There are many more scriptures that we could have employed to bring out the beauty and reality of the spiritual pleasures in the Lord Jesus. And we cannot put in words the full extent of the vision of their contents, but it is enough to declare that it is well worth one's time and effort to obtain them. People need to die out to this fleeting, fleshly realm and seek the immortal, invisible God and let Him reveal Himself to their souls. Sinful pleasure is a curse and a snare, like a drug or intoxicating liquor. May the Lord awaken hearts from their slumber to seek the true riches and drink of the river of His pleasures!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why are the majority of people so ignorant of spiritual pleasures?

2. What part does God's Word have in enjoyment of spiritual pleasure?

3. Why is the worship and service of the Lord so enjoyable to the saints?

4. Why are the spiritual blessings so much more real than those of the flesh?

5. What sacrifice must we make to be able to enter the spiritual realm?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

To be able to enter the kingdom of God and experience the righteousness, peace and joy of the Holy Spirit there must be a sacrifice made on our part. We must first become aware of the folly and vanity of the physical and earthly pleasures. As long as we are enraptured and carried away by the thrill of fleshly enjoyments there will be little or no move to leave them. But through the blessed work of the conviction of the Holy Spirit we can be made conscious of the emptiness of earthly pleasures. The love of fleshly pleasure is so mixed with sin and transgression that the fear of God and the dread of being lost forever will help bring about their overthrow in the minds of men. We have experienced it and have heard others testify of this very thing. So there is no way that we can have both kinds of pleasure ruling in our lives at the same time. One or the other has got to be given up. This does not mean that a person cannot have any kind of pleasure of the earth or the physical. It just simply means that the fleshly pleasures are fully subject to the rule of the Spirit of God. A man, as a man, may enjoy his work, his home, his wife, his family and even enjoy recreation, exercise and some domestic play. But the paramount and most important part of a godly man's life is in the spiritual things of worshipping and serving His God. Everything in his life is in complete accord and subjection to the Lord and His pleasure. And the heart must be kept so sensitive to the holy impressions and leadings of the Holy Spirit that any violation or encroachment on man's part is keenly felt and prompt correction is made. Keeping one's body in submission to the Spirit is indispensable to spiritual success. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

There have been many testimonies given concerning the grass being greener, the sky bluer, the stars brighter and the flowers more colorful when the soul found Jesus. The change, of course, was not in nature but in the individual's heart. An individual whose sin has been forgiven, guilt lifted, whose heart and conscience are now clean are in a position to truly enjoy the Creator and His creation.

Occasionally, our family takes an outing for camping, fishing or hiking. Various activities can help promote family togetherness. However, I have found that when God was the focus of the trip and I took and made special effort to hear His voice, the trip was multiplied in richness. Earthly pleasures without God will never fully satisfy the human heart. It is vain to seek earthly pleasure as an end. A song called "The Happy People" explains it well:

Who but the Christian is happy and free,  
Filled with the glory of God?  
None in creation so happy as he,  
Washed and redeemed in the wonderful blood.

Tell me not, then, of the pleasures that sting,  
Coiled under roses of pride;  
None but the holy and innocent sing,  
Out of a bosom where pleasures abide.

Jesus, the One who my sorrows hath healed,  
Thou art the One who my spirit hath sealed;  
Only thy glory from heaven revealed,  
Only thy favor can happiness yield.

Salvation, with its various facets, also brings greater pleasure, depth and richness to our relationships between husband and wife, parents and children and with our fellow man. The Bible, from beginning to end, is a guide to a happier, richer and fuller life. Self-help books that work well are simply applying time tested Biblical principles found in the Scriptures.

—Bro. Bob Wilson

**JULY 31, 2005**

**SPIRITUAL COMFORT AND CONSOLATION**

Isaiah 66:10 Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her:

11 That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory.

12 For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.

13 As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

II Corinthians 1:3 Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.

John 14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

II Corinthians 7:4 Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation.

5 For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears.

6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

7 And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Psalm 23:4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Although there is much opposition and trouble against those who seek to be godly and led of the Holy Spirit, God is a God of all comfort and through His Holy Spirit He ministers uplifting comfort to sustain the faithful and true.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 66:10), "*mourn for her (Jerusalem)*": To weep, lament and grieve. Jerusalem had been chosen by God as the place for His name to dwell and was a beloved city of the people of God. The sorrows and destruction that came upon Jerusalem brought great mourning and grief to those who loved and cherished her as the city of God.

(Isaiah 66:11), "*consolations*": comforts.

(II Corinthians 1:3), "*all comfort*": total, complete and perfect comfort.

(II Corinthians 1:5), "*consolation*": the same Greek word is also translated "comfort": It means solace, uplifting encouragement and peaceful rest for the mind and heart.

(John 14:16), "*another Comforter*": Jesus was foretelling the coming of the blessed Holy Spirit, who would not only be with them, but would be in them, an indwelling source of comfort, strength and guidance. Jesus was to ascend back to the Father in heaven to intercede for them, but, in His place, He would send the Holy Spirit to be their Comforter, Teacher and Guide.

(John 14:18), "*comfortless*": The Greek word means "orphans." They would not always remain in their state, bereft of His gracious presence, for He would send the Holy Spirit to take His place, Who would be able to do and accomplish much, much more than what He could do.

(II Corinthians 7:4), "*glorying*": boasting, rejoicing, being jubilant for success and blessings received.

(II Corinthians 7:5), "*fightings*": conflicts and controversy. "*fears*": frightful feelings of alarm and dread, calling for help and protection from God.

(II Corinthians 7:7), "*earnest desire*": longing. "*mourning*": grieving and lamentation. "*servent mind*": zeal and concerned interest.

(Matthew 5:4), "*mourn*": to grieve and bewail for sorrow and anguish.

(Psalm 23:4), "*thy rod and thy staff*": The shepherd's rod was usually for reproof and correction while the staff was for support and protection. I can see concerning our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, that the rod is His Word, doctrines and counsel, while the staff is His Holy Spirit that comforts and supports us in His Word.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The comfort that the Almighty God has for humankind is one of our greatest needs. The troubles and difficulties and adversities that we meet in this time world depress and weigh down upon our spirits. From the cradle to the grave our mortal pathway is thick with obstacles and hindrances. We need a helping hand. Satan is cunning with abuse and despair. But there is help for the downcast and discouraged. God is the God of all comfort. We have in our lesson scriptures that portray the Lord as a great source of comfort and consolation. The prophet Isaiah promises comfort for Jerusalem, which is for us today who are a part of the New Jerusalem, the Church which Jesus purchased with His own blood. He pictures us as a babe nursing the breast of its mother. Any one who has observed this touching scene of motherhood can see the picture of what God's comfort means to the hungry soul. The apostle Paul brings out in his epistles the great tribulations that he met in the Christian faith but interposed its dark picture with the brightness and blessing of God's comfort. He also shows how we, as the children of God, are a comfort to each other. Jesus pointed His disciples to the coming of the Holy Spirit and the comfort they would receive from Him. Those who suffer grief and sorrow can find comfort and we, passing through this vale of the shadow of death, find comfort in His Word and Holy Spirit. Thank the Lord for God's great and wonderful comfort! —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who needs God's great comfort and for what reason?
2. What are some of the sorrows and griefs that God's people bear?
3. Why did God send the Holy Spirit into the world?
4. What is our Shepherd's rod and staff?
5. What scriptures can you recall as being a comfort to you?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

There are many hard things that we face in life. People so often misjudge and fail to understand us. There are disappointments and close places that tend to depress the spirit. In our efforts to please the Lord and be a help to others we meet with failure and frustration. We have an awful adversary that is always taking advantage of depressing things to accuse and cast down our courage. Jesus knew that it was not going to be easy to live in this wicked world and carry on His work. It was in the Father's plan for Him to come into the world and accomplish the work of redemption for the souls of men. But He was not to remain and be with His disciples. After His work was completed it was the Father's design to transport Him up into heaven itself to intercede for His own which were to be left in this world. But Christ was given the power to send the Holy Spirit to live in our hearts. His presence in our souls brings comfort and soothes our anguish and griefs. Many times down through our mortal journey we have faced rough and rugged adverse conditions. We are cast down as the apostle Paul was at times. Satan is there to make it so hard with accusations and depressing thoughts. But, oh, how sweet it is to go to the Lord in prayer at the throne of grace! The Holy Spirit engages our spirits with the Father and He sends down the comfort and uplift that we need. He brings the Scriptures to our mind. "Through patience and comfort of the scriptures" we "have hope," Paul said in Romans 15:4. And as we receive comfort from Him, we are able to comfort one another. By this we are able to fight on and endure faithfully to the end.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

When considering the comfort that comes from the Holy Spirit, it is very precious to know that God understands exactly

what we need. The Lord knows us even better than we know ourselves. He is aware of the feebleness of our minds and the weakness of our bodies. If He gave us everything we wanted, our heart would likely stray away from Him just like the children of Israel did when the Bible said the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play.

Since the Lord knows us so well, He is able to deal with us individually and can provide the balm of comfort that soothes our troubled spirit when others don't understand. We should realize that God does not have the shortsighted vision that is so evident in humanity. Sometimes we have preconceived notions about what we need while the Lord has other plans in mind for us. He has promised that all things will work together for our good, therefore we must trust Him to be faithful to us no matter how circumstances may affect our lives.

Sometimes the Lord does use other people to give us comfort and we should not overlook the family of God and their ability to lift us up when we are struggling. There are many years of combined experience among God's people and they possess the gifts of the Spirit. The Church has a very important place to fill in nurturing those who are suffering. I Corinthians 12:26 identifies the care the body has for one another when it says, "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

The comfort and consolation that we receive from the Holy Spirit is part of the mystery of godliness. It is a force that is hidden from the proud in heart but revealed to the humble, consecrated child of God. The comforting power that ministered to the apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ, as they suffered terrible persecutions and hardships for the sake of the Gospel, is evident testimony of its effectiveness. God can open the windows of heaven, like He did for Stephen when he was being stoned, if He sees it is necessary. When Paul and Silas were beaten and locked in the dark prison, they were not separated from the comforting power of the Holy Spirit. As they sang praises to God in the darkness of the midnight, the Lord sent an angel of deliverance.

Hope is a wonderful key of promise that has comforted many weary souls. When our hope is in Christ it is called "an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast." The hope we have in Christ will soothe our hearts when we have lost a loved one who died in the Lord. The sacrifice Jesus made for mankind and

His resurrection by the power of God has taken the sting of death away.

The comforting power of the Holy Spirit is what gave the apostle Paul the boldness to say, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." II Corinthians 4:8-9. Truly this lesson can only scratch the surface in trying to describe the precious treasure we have of the Holy Spirit. Words are inadequate; you must experience His presence to really understand. —Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**AUGUST 7, 2005**

### **THE SPIRITUAL WATER OF LIFE**

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.

John 4:6 ...Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well:...

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But 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 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.

39 (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 21:6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Revelation 22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. Revelation 22:17.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, has opened for us the fountain of the water of life. This water is the Holy Spirit that comes to dwell within us to give spiritual life and communion with our God, who is the fountain of living waters.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Jeremiah 2:13), "*cisterns*": A man-made reservoir to hold water, sometimes hewn out of rock. He is not speaking of a literal thing but rather the effort and activity of people in their religious zeal to formulate doctrines and beliefs without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Instead of giving up the world and dying out to the flesh to find contact with the quickening and enlightening of the Holy Spirit, men go about to study and figure out their own creeds. They use scripture but too often it is void of spiritual perception. The multiplicity of churches and doctrines that we have on hand in the world is proof of this.

(John 4:14), "*springing up*": gushing, leaping and flowing upward as an artesian well. This inward well of the Holy Spirit living in our hearts shows life and power from its source, while cisterns of the creeds of men do not.

(John 7:38), "*as the scripture hath said*": This means as the Scriptures have prophesied and foretold about Jesus as the

Anointed of God, the Saviour of the world. "out of his belly": Out of his heart, the center of his innermost being.

(Revelation 21:6), "*Alpha and Omega*," The first and last letter of the Greek alphabet.

(Revelation 22:1), "*clear as crystal*": beautifully bright, radiant and transparent, with no contamination or impurity.

(Revelation 22:17), "*whosoever will*": Whoever is determined, freely purposed and definite of choice, who gladly chooses, prefers, wishes and inclines his heart to find delight in drinking of the spiritual blessings of Jesus Christ. "*freely*": without cost or charge; as a gracious gift.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Water is the most common substance on earth. More than 70% of earth's surface is covered by water. Every living thing consists mostly of water. The human body is about 2/3 water, a chicken is about 3/4 water and a pineapple is about 4/5 water. On the average, a person takes in about 16,000 gallons of water in his lifetime. These are quotes from the *World Book Encyclopedia*.

Today we study spiritual water, the Water of Life that Jesus Christ opened up to us. Our first scripture is from the book of the prophet Jeremiah and what he says here is just as true now as it was in his time. It is a warning to us. It is so common and easy for a person to have a profession that will amount to just a leaking cistern. It means so much for one to really repent of their sins and give up this old sinful world and give all to Christ. We have Christ's conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. Water was an important part of this woman's life just as it was with everyone else. Jesus used this important factor to introduce to her the truth of living water. Jesus said that He had water to give that was not just a drink of water, but that it would be an actual well of water within, an artesian well springing and flowing in the soul.

On the last day of the feast of the tabernacles, Jesus issued His great invitation for people who were thirsty to come to Him and drink. But it was not literal water that He was offering. It was the Holy Spirit that He was to provide for all who would believe on Him. He was pointing forward to the receiving of the Holy Spirit. It was the same thought that He had given the Samaritan woman.

Then we have from Revelation the scene of the river of life flowing from the throne of God. This was also pictured in Ezekiel 47 where the prophet described the great river of water flowing from the House of God that went down into the desert and the Dead Sea, healing all the waters so that they would be alive with fish. It is the spiritual water flowing from heaven down into men's souls and then out to the world through the ministry of the gospel of the Son of God.

Notice that it is for those who thirst for the water of life. Really that is what men are thirsty for, though so often they are not aware of it. The things of earth do not satisfy the soul. It is only by partaking of the water that Christ has to give that we can really live.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of water does Jesus offer to us that we really need?
2. What are the cisterns that people are hewing out today?
3. Why are people so prone to forsake the true Fountain of Living Waters?
4. What did Jesus speak of that He called rivers of living water?
5. What must we do to partake of the living water Jesus spoke about?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Every one of us is spiritually drinking something every day. We are drinking of the pleasures of the flesh and the things of this present, evil world, or we are drinking of the water of life that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The woman of Samaria to whom Jesus introduced the water of life had been married five times. This shows the kind of water she had been drinking of in her life. We say this not critically nor intentionally condemning but with sorrow and pain of heart. Great throngs of humanity are drinking of things that are detrimental to their souls. The vast majority of our society drink daily from the cup of vanity and iniquity as they view the filth and fleshly lusts that spew over the television tube. Recently we had a big notice in our newspaper of a circus coming to town. The pictures that it portrayed confirmed my convictions that I would not be there. It is awful what humanity is drinking of! Jesus has something so much

more enjoyable and profitable for us to partake of! How much better it is to commune with the Lord in prayer and have His Spirit bless our souls and fill our hearts with rejoicing! How much better it is to hear an anointed message from one of His ministers preaching the everlasting gospel of Christ! Thank God for the well of springing water that He has placed within our hearts!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Which would you rather have in your yard to admire? A clear, rushing stream tumbling over boulders, surrounded by lush ferns and wild flowers, forming deep, clear pools of cold, pure water—or—a dank, smelly bog, a runoff from someone's drain, covered with an oily film and clogged with trash and old car parts? Which would you prefer for your water supply?

The choice is obvious, but to many people their lives are sad examples of the second illustration and it seems that they prefer that smelly bog, even when, year after year, Christ holds out the water of life to them.

When Jesus stood on that last day of the feast of tabernacles and declared Himself to be that Water of Life that would be in them, through the Holy Spirit, a gushing well of everlasting life, He knew that they were celebrating the feast that commemorated the wilderness experience of the ancient Jews, where God caused the water to gush down out of the broken rock. Jesus was that Rock. He was broken for us and out of Him flows the river of the water of life. New every day. Ever flowing, renewing, replenishing, cleansing, nurturing, healing, generating life. Is this your experience? Or do you live every day with a stinky pond, eking out existence on someone else's prayers, sending out a filthy and smelly influence to all around you? I'll take the well—the water of LIFE. —Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**AUGUST 14, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL WORSHIP OF GOD**

Psalms 95:1 O come, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

Psalm 100:3 Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

John 4:23 The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Acts 17:24 God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that 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; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Isaiah 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? And where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

Matthew 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

**MEMORY VERSE:** O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth. Psalm 96:9.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The eternal Lord Jehovah, the Creator and Giver of life and all things, is worthy of a complete devotion and worship. But we must worship Him from our hearts, in tune with His Spirit and His Word to be acceptable unto Him.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Psalm 95:1,6), "*come*": A call for response, action and special effort to leave what we are involved with and take time to worship our wonderful God. "*make a joyful noise*": In the Hebrew the expression is "shout." "*worship and bow down*": Humble ourselves and bend the knee.

(John 4:23), "*worship*": The Greek word means to prostrate one's self in homage, reverence and adoration. "*in spirit*": not in outward show or grandeur, but with regard to the spiritual realm where God is. "*truth*": sincerity and trueness of heart in accord with the truth in the Word of God.

(Acts 17:25), "*neither is worshipped with men's hands*": The Greek expression here is "nor by hands of men is served." In other words, the Almighty God is complete and Lord over all creation and He needs not man's help or counsel. We need Him but He does not need us. It is not His need of us but His love for us that draws us to Him.

(Acts 17:27), "*feel after*": To seek and search to touch and make contact with. "*find*": To discover and experience His reality.

(Isaiah 66:2), "*poor*": afflicted, lowly and needy. "*trembleth*": with deep reverence, godly fear and respect for God.

(Psalm 96:9), "*holiness*": sanctity; being hallowed and sacred and dedicated to God.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The Lord Jehovah is a loving and affectionate Being who yearns for the love and worship of His created beings. The sense of God's greatness and the vast scope of His goodness inspires wonder and admiration in the souls of men. This is evident from the earliest accounts of man. Offering sacrifices to God was the outreach of man's heart. The sacrifice of something alive and valuable with God in mind seemed very appropriate. We see it in the account of Cain and Abel and then in that of Noah and his family. Abraham was very much for building altars and offering sacrifices.

In our scriptures are portrayed the loving worship that befits us to have in our hearts toward our Creator. But God is wanting something more than animal offerings and outward ceremonies. He wants love, devotion, thanksgiving, praise, honour and worship based on faith and confidence in His Word

and faithfulness. The scriptures from the Psalms express well this desired sentiment of His heart. Jesus declared to the woman at the well the kind of worship that His Father was looking for. Not in a certain place geographically, nor outward ceremonies, nor visible earthly gifts, but in the Holy Spirit's inspiration and His Word's direction is found the true worship of God.

We have included part of Paul's message to the Athenians concerning our worship and devotion to God. Not in temples made by human hands or the aid and service that human hands can supply is found what God is seeking. He desires that men seek and feel after Him. He wants to be wanted and loved. He desires to be appreciated and honored. He does not need us, but He yearns for our fellowship. Also from the prophet Isaiah we find it expressed again. The Almighty fills the earth and sky, so it is folly to suppose that by human hands a house could be built to house Him. No, these things are not what He is seeking for He created them to start with. He is seeking a poor and humble heart who will be moved by His Word and Holy Spirit. Our scripture in Matthew 15:8-9 in a quote by our Saviour from Isaiah 29:13 speaks about a worship in some that is mere talk, with the heart far from Him. It would do us all well to take heed that our worship is in accord with His Holy Spirit and His holy Word.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why does the Lord God desire worship and adoration from us?
2. What are some of the ways and means that we can worship God?
3. What kind of worship did Jesus say God seeks for?
4. What does God love to behold men doing concerning Him?
5. Who is God looking to instead of a man-built house?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Let us consider some of the characteristics and works that the Scriptures attribute to the Almighty God. If these things are true and we have no question about it, we should be filled with such awe and admiration that our hearts would be completely overwhelmed. "Oh, look at the universe that He has made; see the twinkling worlds on high! Alone on His fiat are these mighty

planets stayed; then we know He can never lie!" Think about the earth hanging out in space upheld by His command alone. Think about the order of the stars and planets. Behold that glorious sun that so faithfully makes its rounds, day by day and season by season! Consider the beautiful moon and its monthly changes! There is no answer for the existence of these marvelous realities except in a wise and loving Creator who fashioned it all for the good and happiness of mankind.

Who designed and fashioned the human body? The writer in Psalm 139: 14-16 states that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, beheld and known of God ere we were formed in the womb, with all our members written in His book when as yet there were none of them! Think about the functions of our mortal temple. Our five senses are marvelous. How about our breathing, our nervous system, digestive system, circulatory system, bone structure, elimination and filtering system and our brain with all of its wonders? We did not just happen to be! We are the work of a wise and skillful Being. The human body is His masterpiece of creation. Think of His plan for man to have a helpmeet, one like him, yet beautifully different. Oh, the goodness and wisdom of the Almighty!

We owe everything to this invisible and immortal God! We need to bow down to worship, love and adore Him! And then, on top of all of this, consider His sending Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, into the world to save and transform the lost and straying to find Him and know Him. Behold how He can commune with us so sweetly and clearly through His Word and Holy Spirit. With this blessedness as the basis of our worship to Him, it all can be a joyful and fulfilling experience that we can blissfully hold fast to all of our mortal days. Think of the hope that His gospel foretells that we will one day enjoy! Oh, we are so richly blessed of this wonderful, loving God. We owe Him all the love that we can muster with heart, soul, mind and strength!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Webster's dictionary defines worship as "adoring reverence or regard." So what do we find in this world that is worshipped? Many things: sports, sports figures, politics, political figures, movies, actors, music, singers, various entertainment and hobbies. It would be interesting to know just how much time, money and personal comforts is expended to chase after the

worship of these things. It is not uncommon to hear of someone standing in line for hours just to purchase a ticket to a concert or just to line up to go shopping; or painting their faces in mascot colors or spending hours at a ball field to practice for the next game. People do this all of the time and think nothing of it—because it is what they worship. It is what they love to do. Their heart is in it!

If this kind of energy can be expended for worldly pleasures, then how much more should we be interested in the worship of our Saviour. A Saviour who is so worthy of our praise, songs, prayers, testimonies and devotions. It is not a drudgery when you do what you love and you love what you do. So put your whole heart into the worship of our Saviour. He is worthy!

—Sis. LaDawna Adams



**AUGUST 21, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL FRUIT**

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.

Luke 6:43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Romans 6:20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth; proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. Ephesians 5:9-10.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** A tree is known by its fruit, so a Christian is known by the fruit brought forth by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, making manifest all the qualities and attributes of the love of God.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Jeremiah 17:5), "*maketh flesh his arm*": His strength is in the flesh and material things, not in the Spirit of the Lord. "*departeth*": turns aside.

(Jeremiah 17:6), "*heath*": a parched and withered tree.

(Jeremiah 17:8), "*not be careful in the year of drought*": The Hebrew says simply: "He will not fear when the heat comes."

(Luke 6:44), "*bramble*": a prickly, briar-like shrub.

(Romans 6:20), "*servants*": enslaved and under bondage. "*free*": unrestrained.

(Romans 6:22), "*free from sin, servants to God*": loose from the slavery of sin and enslaved to God. You cannot be free from righteousness without being enslaved to sin. And you cannot be free from sin unless you are enslaved to God.

(Galatians 5:22), "*gentleness*": kindness, usefulness and moral excellence.

(Galatians 5:23), "*temperance*": self-control.

(James 3:17), "*first*": firstly and preeminent in time, place, order or importance. "*pure*": The Greek says "truly pure." "*gentle*": mild, forbearing, moderate and patient. "*easy to be entreated*": compliant, yielding and not difficult to deal with. "*without partiality*": not showing favor or preference to party, rank or appearance. "*without hypocrisy*": sincere and without pretense.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The spiritual fruit we want to consider today is found in the qualities and traits that are brought forth in a person's life. In an unregenerate person these qualities and characteristics are warped and stained by the influence of original sin and the surrounding world. They are thereby rendered vain and unwholesome because they lack the essential ingredient of faith, love and godly fear. The fruit that God wants paramount in our lives is not how many souls we influence and turn to righteousness, but it is rather the holy and faithful life that bears witness of the grace of God. Whether we win souls or not, we must have the fruits of righteousness abounding in our daily life. This is our goal to so yield and be obedient to the inspiration and leadings of the Holy Spirit that Jesus can be seen in us.

The scripture text of our lesson deals with this kind of fruit that will be brought forth through the virtue and power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. Our first scripture from Jeremiah shows the distinction between those who trust in man and the flesh and those who put their trust in the Lord God. Even if a man is successful in earthly endeavor and in the praise of men, if he lacks faith in God and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, he will be of no real value in the sight of God. But the man who trusts not in himself, but in the Lord will be blessed of the Lord to bring forth the beautiful and beneficial fruit that will bless his fellow man and glorify his God.

Luke brought out what Jesus spoke concerning the good tree and the corrupt tree and John related what Jesus said about abiding and remaining in Him as the only way that we can bear fruit. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but with Christ within us we can go forth and bear much fruit. Paul in Romans 6:2-22 shows the former life of our unsaved state as being void of real fruit because of our enslaved condition to sin. But he points out that being set free from sin and becoming enslaved to God will bring forth fruit unto holiness. And Paul labels in Galatians 5:22-23 what the real fruit of the Spirit is. He brings

this out so clearly after listing the works of the flesh that dominate the soul void of the Spirit.

We have also included what the writer stated in James 3:17-18 concerning the wisdom from above. He shows the contrast this has with the wisdom from beneath which is earthly, sensual and devilish, accompanied with envying and strife, confusion and every evil work. How much better is the wisdom given by the Holy Spirit from above that is accompanied by the good fruits of righteousness, brought forth in peace and love!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What determines the kind and quality of the fruit we bring forth?
2. What is the only way we can bring forth the fruit of righteousness?
3. Why does bondage to sin make a person to be a corrupt tree?
4. What are some of the real fruits of the Spirit of God?
5. How can we have and maintain that wisdom which is from above?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

What a wonderful blessing is the lovely and nourishing variety of fruits that God caused the earth to bring forth! These gracious gifts of God far outdo the many concoctions of food that man seeks to have. Just think of the many fruit trees (we know not their number) that God planted in the Garden of Eden. Then consider the various fruits that we have access to today. There are apples, pears, oranges, bananas, grapefruits, grapes, plums, peaches, apricots, lemons, limes and many more nourishing fruits that we can enjoy and find wholesome benefits from for the health of our bodies. Think of the beauty of an orange tree or an apple tree that is loaded with beautiful and tempting fruit! How blessed to be able to walk up and pluck some of that fruit and enjoy it on the spot!

But as we consider this lovely thought, let us think about the beauty and blessing of a kind of fruit that is far more valuable and nourishing! This is spiritual fruit that can come forth from a person's life who has escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust and have obtained that precious faith through the righteousness of Christ Jesus our Lord. How

about the list that Paul gave us of the fruit of the Spirit? Just look at it! Isn't it beautiful and desirable? What is there in this world greater than love? It has been said that love is the basis of all the other fruits. Joy is love rejoicing; Peace is love at rest; longsuffering is love enduring; gentleness is love being tender; goodness is love in action; faith is love believing; meekness is love being lowly; and temperance is love in perfect self-control. Let us earnestly seek the Lord daily in prayer that we, "always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (fruit). II Corinthians 9:8. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The words of Jeremiah send warning and caution to us today—"Whose heart departeth from the Lord." He didn't say, "whose profession departeth from the Lord." Many times people depart from the Lord in their heart, yet still hold on to their profession of God.

There was a time in my own experience where God had been leading me in a particular way. I endeavored to follow the leadings but because of a lack of experience and understanding I met with failure. I then began to draw back from this leading for fear of failure. My heart began to stiffen and harden to this leading. At the same time, I recognized that I didn't want to go back into the world; I had been empty and lonely there. Yet I became unwilling to move forward. I purposed in my heart to continue to pray and read yet it became like reading a newspaper. The joy, inspiration and fire I had at one time felt was no longer there. I then became confused, frustrated and I felt like a little mouse in one of those mazes trying to find a way out. I was in this condition for several months. I thank God for His patience and longsuffering. Through His mercy, I came to realize my need to repent. I repented with tears and godly sorrow and I consecrated to be a failure and I endeavored once again

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to follow His leading. Once again His spirit began to bear witness in my heart that it was right.

Had I continued on in my stubbornness, I perhaps could have kept saying that I loved God. Perhaps I could have kept going to services and maintaining a good moral life but I would have been void and become like Jeremiah says, a desert, salt land, uninhabited. The book of Hebrews exhorts us not to harden our hearts. One song has the phrase—"say not Christ is in thy desert for we can believe it not." This is the only way we can stay connected to the vine of Christ, through honesty, repentance and humility. We dry up spiritually if we harden our heart and it is certain that no fruit can grow on a dry vine.

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**AUGUST 28, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL BEAUTY OF THE HEART**

Isaiah 3:16 Moreover the LORD saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:

17 Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will discover their secret parts.

18 In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments...

24 And it shall come to pass, that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle a rent; and instead of well set hair baldness; and instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty.

Proverbs 11:16 A gracious woman retaineth honour:...

Proverbs 12:4 A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.

Proverbs 31:10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her,...

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

13 ...She worketh willingly with her hands.

20 She stretched out her hand to the poor; yea,...to the needy.

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

I Timothy 2:8 I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;

10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

Proverbs 11:22 As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. I Peter 3:3-4.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The real, true beauty of a person is not the attractive face, figure or the wearing of jewelry and fancy clothes, but it is rather the shining forth of the Spirit of Christ from within and the beautiful and holy life one lives.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 3:16), "*haughty*": proud. "*wanton eyes*": blinking, winking eyes in an effort to get men's attention or admiration. "*mincing*": walking in a way to show off self. "*tinkling with their feet*": to put on anklets or ornaments around the ankles.

(Isaiah 3:17), "*smite with a scab*": scrape away the vain beauty. "*discover their secret parts*": The Hebrew says, "their shame shall be laid bare."

(Isaiah 3:18), "*the bravery of their tinkling ornaments*": the beauty of their anklets.

(Proverbs 11:16), "*gracious*": kind, helpful and beneficial.

(Proverbs 31:10), "*virtuous woman*": a woman of strength and valor.

(I Timothy 2:8), "*wrath*": uncontrolled, excited anger or passion. "*doubting*": The Greek meaning here is "much arguing, disputing and debate."

(I Timothy 2:9), "*modest*": decent, orderly or what is becoming to one's profession of godliness. "*shamefacedness*": down-cast or bashful, not showy or brazenly exposing the body.

**"sobriety"**: soundness of mind, disciplinary, with self control.

**"broided hair"**: braided hair entwined with ornaments.

(I Timothy 2:10), **"becometh"**: fit or suitable.

(Proverbs 11:22), **"without discretion"**: having turned aside proper intelligence and good perception.

(I Peter 3:4), **"hidden man of the heart"**: the beauty that is spiritual, hidden from the human eye, but real in the heart; that which God looks upon and values.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

Our lesson today will deal with one of the most touchy matters of humankind and that is our outward appearance. Outward beauty of this mortal body is one of the most important things to the majority of people. The female body especially is concerned. Many women are so involved in their minds about being attractive and in style about their person that they have little or no thought for the most important aspect of beauty. But the Word and the Spirit of God is calling us to make inward beauty and spiritual attractiveness the priority over our outward appearance. Let us quote from Adam Clarke in his comments on I Timothy 2:9. He says, "When either women or men spend much time, cost and attention on decorating their persons, it affords a painful proof that *within* there is little excellence and that they are endeavoring to supply the want (or lack) of moral good by the feeble and silly aid of dress and ornament." On I Peter 3:3 Clarke says further: "The proper ornament of a woman is that which becomes her best. This is neither gold, nor pearls, nor scarlet, but those things which are an evident proof of gravity, regularity and modesty. Women are in general at as much pains and cost in their dress, as if by it they were to be recommended both to God and man. It is, however, in every case, the argument either of a shallow mind, or of a vain and corrupted heart." Concerning the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, Clarke says, "All the ornaments placed on the head and body of the most illustrious female, are, in the sight of God, of no worth; but a meek and silent spirit are, in His sight, invaluable, because (*they are*) proceeding from and leading to Himself, being incorruptible, surviving the ruins of the body and the ruins of time and enduring eternally."

Our first scripture from Isaiah 3 is very descriptive even of our modern age as well as that of the women of Israel in Isaiah's

day. God is still displeased and grieved with the way men and women adorn and expose their bodies. We have included the wise sayings of Proverbs, very expressive in this matter of women's most important beauty to possess and exhibit. And from the New Testament we have the wise counsel of two of the actual apostles of our Lord Jesus. May we issue the dire warning that to willfully disregard and ignore the counsel of these holy prophets and apostles will cause us to miss the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. In light of the Scriptures, how does God look upon artificial adornment?
2. Where is a woman's real beauty to be found?
3. Why is gold, pearls, jewelry and costly array forbidden?
4. What kind of ornament is, in the sight of God, of great price?
5. What kind of beauty will be beautiful on the great judgment day?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Outward beauty is so esteemed and coveted by people who live after the flesh. It is, along with every other fleshly lust, of great influence on the human mind. Many, sad to say, make outward appearance the deciding factor in choosing a wife or husband. The feelings and emotions can be so stirred and overwhelmed through outward appearance that very little does one suspect how deceitful and perilous it is. Oh, they just know they are in love and this beautiful or handsome person is surely the one. But statistics have proven that too often this handsome and attractive person can and so many times will, bring great sorrow and heartache. For this cause this matter of striving for spiritual beauty is so important. I take the stand to say that a woman who is lacking in outward appearance but has the inward qualities of godliness and holy love, affords much more the promise of happiness than one beautiful outwardly who is void of inward grace. That selfish and unholy inner man will penetrate and stain all the glitter that is on the outer man. And that sweet and gentle spirit of a godly woman will shine through and brighten her outward bearing, however plain or uncomely it may be. And beside all this, let us remember that God looks

on the inward beauty and by that will we be judged by Him. We want the beauties of holiness, humility, steadfast faith, submission, patience, purity and trueness in the eyes of God. That He will be pleased with us is the most important thing. Artificial outward beauty is not only worthless in His sight but it also really is grievous and displeasing to Him. He does not want our objective to be to adorn the outer man, but to be meek and beautified with salvation. (Psalm 149:4.) —Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

The Scriptures in our lesson from Proverbs 31 identify some characteristics of the heart that it would be well for young people considering marriage to give attention to. Christ is also looking for these virtues in His bride.

Verse 11 identifies trustworthiness. To be trustworthy one must be dependable. Can the Lord and others depend on us to be faithful in the tasks we are given to perform? Sometimes people will seem to be very dependable or spiritual when others are present but when no one, other than God, is observing they begin to shirk their responsibilities and cut corners in their tasks. Deceit and hypocrisy are both closely associated with an untrustworthy person while one who can be trusted is truthful and faithful in all that they do.

Verse 12 identifies one who is consistently good. For one to be consistently good it will be necessary for them to resist the temptations that are presented from time to time. Many people are failures in this area. When one allows feelings to take control in their life, they are subject to extreme mood changes which the enemy will use to make life miserable for everyone around them and it will be hard for that person to keep the grace of God in their heart. May each child of God be consistent in their walk with the Lord. Jesus said, "...but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matthew 10:22.

Verse 13 says, "worketh willingly." All of us are aware of what can be accomplished by work. Animals can be forced to work, but willingness is a virtue of the heart. Isaiah 1:19-20 says, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword:..." The Lord seeks our willing service and He has done much for us in love to cultivate willingness in our hearts. However, willingness or the lack of it is accompanied by a blessing or a curse.

Verse 20 identifies one who is generous and not selfish. A generous person is a pleasure to be around and will have many friends who will love and respect them. The fact that a person's generosity is toward the poor who cannot offer repayment means that they are doing it as unto the Lord, which demonstrates faith in Him. This kind of faith is more evident when real sacrifice is involved. Jesus pronounced a special blessing on them in Luke 6:38. He said, "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." On the other hand, a selfish person can be very cruel and heartless in their dealings with others. Those who are "lovers of their own selves" are among a list of other evils mentioned in II Timothy 3 which it concludes by saying in verse 5, "from such turn away."

Verse 26 portrays one who is careful with their words and speaks kindly. What a blessing to find someone with these virtues. The Lord only knows how many tears have been shed because someone spoke hasty, unkind words. James 3:6 tells how powerful and defiling the tongue is. It says, "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." May God help us each one to be careful about what we say. Jesus said, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matthew 12:37. Don't allow your tongue to cause you to miss heaven.

Spiritual beauty is the reflection of Jesus shining to the world on our countenance and in our conduct. It requires much prayer, diligence and a willingness to do God's will to cultivate these heavenly graces. Those who will put forth the effort will find God living in their heart and blessing their lives.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey



**SEPTEMBER 4, 2005**

**SPIRITUAL WARFARE**

Isaiah 59:16 And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him.

17 For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

19 So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

II Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:

4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

Ephesians 6: 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness:

15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

II Timothy 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus,

3 Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life,... I Timothy 6:11-12.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The greatest enemy to humankind is the devil, a spiritual foe that can only be fought and overcome by the use of spiritual weapons. Jesus overcame Satan by faith, love, submission and faithful obedience to God and we must use these same weapons to gain the victory over him today.

### **WORD DEFINITIONS**

(Isaiah 59:16), "*intercessor*": One who works to accomplish good by importuning, that is, touching both sides in a controversy, to bring about harmony and reconciliation. "*his arm*": The outreach of God's love and strength in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

(Isaiah 59:19), "*lift up a standard against him*": The Hebrew says, "Shall cause him to vanish away."

(II Corinthians 10:4), "*not carnal*": not of the flesh. "*strong holds*": arguments, vain reasonings or ignorant ideas that people have against the truth.

(II Corinthians 10:5), "*imaginings*": reasonings and thoughts in the minds of men. "*every high thing*": thoughts of selfish pride suggested by the devil. "*bringing into captivity*": compelling to be conformed. "*thought*": idea, belief or purpose. "*obedience of Christ*": compliance and submission to the mind and Spirit of Christ.

(Ephesians 6:11), "*wiles*": tactics and methods.

(Ephesians 6:12), "*rulers of the darkness of this world*": Satan, the god of this world, seeks to keep his subjects in darkness and ignorance, blinding their minds lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. "*high places*": the spiritual realm where this warfare is engaged.

(Ephesians 6:13), "*withstand*": resist and go right against. "*having done all*": having worked out and accomplished everything the Word of God requires.

(Ephesians 5:18), The Greek reads: "By way of fullness of prayer and petition (begging, pleading, supplicating), praying at every time in the Spirit and watching to this same thing in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints."

(II Timothy 6:11), "*flee*": Run away from, escape and shun. "*these things*": Paul had just fervently warned this young minister about the influence of covetous men who suppose that godliness brings material gain. He also stressed that real gain is godliness without the covetous love of money, which he terms as the root of all evil. This covetous disease of the mind and spirit is what he is telling Timothy to flee and stay away from, for it has drowned many souls in destruction and perdition, piercing them through with many sorrows.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

Spiritual warfare and conflict is a vitally important part of the Christian life. He who does not learn to wage resistance and war against the power of satan will not succeed. We must fight, but we must fight with the right weapons. Our lesson today clearly shows that the Christian's warfare is not a battle of literal weapons of guns, swords, bombs and such like. It is a spiritual conflict and must be engaged with spiritual weapons and we have them clearly defined.

Our first scripture is from the vivid prophecy of Jesus in Isaiah 59 in which he shows the awfulness of sin upon the human race. It sounded like a hopeless mess of woe with no one to intercede on the behalf of man, but the prophet declared that "his own arm would bring salvation unto him." This "arm of the LORD" is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And here it pictures Him coming forth armed with spiritual weapons to accomplish His vengeance against satan and sin. Victory is promised to those who fear the name of the LORD, as His Spirit lifts up a standard against the enemy.

Then we go to the New Testament and the writings of the apostle Paul who gave up his old law profession for the work of Christ and the fight of faith. Instead of carnal weapons for which Jesus rebuked Peter for using in His defense, (Matthew 26:52 and John 18:11) Paul lists the spiritual weapons of righteousness, faith, truth, salvation and the Word of God, accompanied with fervent prayer and supplication in the Spirit before God. He shows us the antagonists we war against are the hosts of darkness and error. He shows us the realm of thoughts and imaginations that strive to take hold in our souls. It is a struggle to be daily waged by the child of God, but it is a good fight, worthy of our most ardent support. —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of weapons did Isaiah prophesy Jesus would put on?
2. Why are carnal weapons not to be employed in this warfare?
3. Name the various weapons Paul said we must use in the fight of faith.
4. Why is prayer and supplication so important in this fight?
5. What does it mean to captivate every thought to the obedience of Christ?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Wonderful songs have been written about the Christian warfare. George Heath wrote: "My soul, be on thy guard, ten thousand foes arise and hosts of sin are pressing hard to draw thee from the skies. Oh, watch and fight and pray, the battle ne'er give o'er, Renew it boldly ev'ry day and help divine implore. Ne'er think the vict'ry won, nor once at ease sit down; Thine arduous work will not be done, Till thou hast got the crown. Fight on, my soul, till death shall bring thee to thy God; He'll take thee, at thy parting breath, up to His blest abode." Let us live up to these songs: "Be an Overcomer," "While the Fiery Darts are Flying Thick and Fast," "Press the Battle On" and "Stand By the Cross." "I've Enlisted in the Service Till I Die," so it is, "Onward, Upward" and "On to Victory." "Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war! With the cross of Jesus going on before; Christ our royal Master leads against the foe, FORWARD INTO BATTLE, see His banners flow!" —Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

We once observed a civil war battle re-enactment, complete with soldiers, banners and military equipment. The two opposing armies were fighting over the possession of a certain hill and it was interesting to see the progress of the battle. One cavalry would charge the other, cannons booming, men yelling and guns blasting. Men would fall and banners would falter, until the soldiers who occupied the hill were put down and the charging army took the hilltop. The other side would regroup and then charge in for possession again. Watching from another hill, the details were sometimes obscure to us, but we could see when the banner of one side would be taken down and the

opposing banner would be displayed. It portrayed a great lesson to me, as I thought of our spiritual warfare.

We, too, are fighting over the possession of land, spiritual land. Actually, when we became believers in Christ, we enlisted in a fight that has been going on between God and satan since the beginning. It is a great battle between mighty hosts on both sides. God is spoken of several times in the Bible as "Lord Sabaoth" or the "Lord of hosts." Elisha, through the eye of faith, was aware of the mighty hosts of God and prayed until his servant also saw the spiritual horses and chariots that surrounded the man of God.

There are also hosts on the other side. We read of the man who was possessed by legions, or thousands, of demon spirits. Jesus, our commander-in-chief, gained the victory over all of these demon hosts and gives to us the victory. He is our victory. Through His name and through *prayer*, entering into His intercession to God for us; *fasting*, denying satan of his most powerful strongholds, the flesh; and *praise*, lifting high the banner of love and devotion to Him, we gain victory after victory. Purity and soundness of mind, emotional healing, physical healing, the salvation of souls, the breaking of spiritual bondage, the advancement of the gospel into heathen areas—these are all lands for which we battle.

Whose banner flies over your land today?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck



**SEPTEMBER 11, 2005**

### **SPIRITUAL RICHES**

Luke 12:15 And he (Jesus) said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.

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.

Mark 10:23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

29 Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

1 Timothy 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But 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,...

17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18 That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19 Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

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

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** While earthly riches have such an attraction and are desired by so many of this world, there are greater riches for us to seek after. The spiritual blessings of salvation in Christ, His kingdom, peace, righteousness, hope, victory and happiness within the heart—these are treasures that are everlasting that we can possess here and will never fail.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Luke 12:15), "*Take heed, and beware of*": The Greek says, "Beware and keep back from." "*covetousness*": Desire for wealth and riches.

(Luke 12:33), "*alms*": compassionate gifts to the poor and needy.

(I Timothy 6:9), "*will be rich*": resolving and purposing to be rich. "*drown*": cause to sink. "*destruction and perdition*": ruin, death and everlasting punishment.

(I Timothy 6:10), "*root of all evil*": This means that covetousness and the love of earthly riches is the main cause and life stream of all the evil, sin, wickedness and moral decay that is rampant in this vain world.

(I Timothy 6:18), "*communicate*": to share generously with others.

(I Timothy 6:19), "*laying up in store*": treasuring away. "*against the time to come*": for the coming age.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus spoke much of the peril of earthly riches. I hardly think that there was anything that He warned us about more than this destructive element that works havoc and destruction in the hearts and lives of men. Many people have left the vivid testimony of this awful truth behind them as they took their departure from this life. We have those who made wealth their aim and found that it did not bring the happiness and satisfaction that they thought it would. Jesus knew this was true and therefore He faithfully warned us about it.

Between our first two scriptures from Luke 12:15 and 21 Christ gave the parable about the rich man who was pondering the bumper crop coming on and what he was going to do with it. His thoughts were only for himself and his own security and ease. Instead of desiring to help others, he decided to lay it all up for himself and his future comfort. He formulated his selfish plans and ravished in his mind the fulfillment of them. The great almighty God read his heart and judgment came swift and sure. That very night his soul was required of him and he left all of that big crop for someone else. In that same chapter Jesus pointed us to an earnest effort to procure everlasting gain by sharing with the poor and needy. Where our treasure is, there will be our hearts and where our hearts are will decide what our eternal judgment will be.

We have drawn from Mark's account of Jesus and the rich young ruler who came inquiring about eternal life but went away sorrowful when Jesus told him what it would take for him to obtain it. When the disciples were astonished at His statement of how hard it is for a rich man to enter His kingdom, Jesus modified it by saying it was those who trust in riches that He was referring to. And I believe it is just that hard for those who *have* riches to *not* put their trust in them.

The apostle Paul's counsel from I Timothy 6 is so good concerning this important matter. We would all do well to take heed to his words. How true it is that we brought nothing into this world and that we certainly will take nothing with us when we leave it. Contentment learned by a godly person spells the greatest gain one can have. But can you find a wealthy person who is content with what they have? Very few can be found. Our lesson today points us to the spiritual riches of Christ Jesus, who was a Man who sought not earthly fame and wealth but brought out the truth of spiritual treasures, treasures that He acquired by submitting to the death of the cross and the perfect will of God.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is man so prone to look on material wealth as so desirable?
2. What do earthly riches lack that fail to satisfy and bring true happiness?
3. What are the riches that Christ promised to those who leave all to follow Him?
4. What are the riches that Paul tells us to follow after?
5. Why do we need to lay a good foundation for the age to come?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan, we have the scene portrayed in the house of the Interpreter of the "man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck rake in his hand. There stood one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand and offered to give him that crown for his muck rake, but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks and the dust of the floor." The Inter-

preter explained that "his muck rake doth show his carnal mind. And whereas thou seest him rather give heed to rake up straws and sticks and the dust of the floor, than to do what he says that calls to him from above with the celestial crown in his hand, it is to show that heaven is but a fable to some and that things here are counted the only things substantial. It is to let thee know that earthly things, when they are with power upon men's minds, quite carry their hearts away from God." When Christiana exclaimed: "Oh, deliver me from this muck rake!" the Interpreter said: "That prayer has lain by till it is almost rusty. 'Give me not riches' is scarce the prayer of one of ten thousand. Straws and sticks and dust, with most, are the great things now looked after." We would be wise to take heed to the admonitions of God's Word.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living GOD, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." I Timothy 6:17. We have a couple of examples in history that remind us just how uncertain riches are. After the Civil War, the Confederate dollar was worth virtually nothing. Wealthy citizens found themselves penniless paupers. In October of 1929, the stock market fell. Investors unable to face bankruptcy committed suicide while others had heart attacks as ticker tapes tapped out their losses.

This is just further proof that our focus should be set on investing in eternal wealth, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and thieves do not break through and steal." After all, we leave this world with exactly what we brought into this world—nothing but our souls.

"I ain't a gonna need my bank account  
to pay for my new home

"I ain't a gonna need a bill of sale  
to tell me it's my own.

"I'm sure I won't need a ticket  
for JESUS paid the toll.

"For I'm traveling light to heaven  
taking nothing but my soul."

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2005**

**SPIRITUAL SABBATH REST FOR THE SOUL**

Hebrews 3:7 Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

10 Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways.

11 So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Hebrews 4:1 Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2 For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

3 For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.

4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works.

5 And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest.

6 Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief:

7 Again, he limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day, after so long a time; as it is said, To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.

9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.

10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

11 Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Matthew 11:28-29.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** God instituted the seventh day as a day for man to rest and cease from work. God also labeled the entrance of Israel into the promised land of Canaan as entering into His rest. The New Testament combines these two as figures of a spiritual rest which Christ gives to the soul, a ceasing from self and our own works that we might enjoy God's work accomplished in our hearts and lives.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

(Hebrews 3:8), "*provocation*": This is referring to the children of Israel irritating and provoking the Spirit of God to anger by drawing back from going on in to possess the promised land of Canaan. "*temptation*": That day when Israel vexed and grieved God.

(Hebrews 3:9), "*tempted me, proved me*": Israel had seen God's works and miraculous power for forty years in their journey from Egyptian bondage and there was no real cause for them to balk and draw back from going forward to take the land of Canaan. They had seen what He could do, but they still chose to give heed to the bad report of the ten spies and their words rather than obey the will of God. It was for this cause that God's anger was kindled and He shut them out of going into the Canaan rest and sentenced them to wander in the wilderness until they died.

(Hebrews 4:2), "*not being mixed with faith*": The word of the promise for them to enter the land of Canaan rest did them no good because they refused to move out by faith.

(Hebrews 4:4), "*on this wise*": thus, or like this.

(Hebrews 4:6), "*it remaineth that some must enter in*": This means that God is still offering us an entrance into His rest, this spiritual rest of faith and obedience to His will.

(Hebrews 4:7), "*limiteth*": marks out or offers for us. "*after so long a time*": God made His rest available in the Sabbath seventh day rest at the beginning of the world. Then in David's prophecy, quoted in our lesson from Psalm 95, (a long time later), He offers it to us again, telling us to hear His voice and not harden our hearts against Him.

(Hebrews 4:8), "*For if Jesus had given them rest*": This name "Jesus" here is really referring to Joshua and the Canaan land rest. Both names, Jesus and Joshua, are from the Hebrew name "Jehoshua," which means *Jehovah saves*. He is saying here that the rest Joshua gave in taking them into Canaan was not the true, fulfilled rest that man really needed. God was pointing them on to the day when Jesus would bring the rest for the soul, a spiritual rest of ceasing from our own works.

(Hebrews 4:9), "*There remaineth a rest*": This is saying that there is still a Sabbath rest for the people of God to enter into today and that is this spiritual rest of faith.

(Hebrews 4:11), "*labour*": Use speed, make eager effort, be prompt and earnest. "*unbelief*": This is no mere lack of faith but rather an obstinate and rebellious disobedience and refusal to obey the command of God.

### **LESSON BACKGROUND**

In our lesson today is revealed the truth that the literal seventh day Sabbath rest and the Canaan land rest were types and shadows of the spiritual rest that Jesus promised us in our memory verse from Matthew 11:28-29. God's rest that He wants us to enter into is more than just a one-day-a-week affair. The apostle Paul brought it out in Colossians 2:16-17 like this: "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body (the real substance and fulfillment) is of Christ." Also from Jeremiah 6:16 we note: "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Also we find another referral to the spiritual Sabbath in Isaiah 58:13-14. It says, "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places (spiritual life) of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

There is a Sabbath for us to keep, a rest for us to enter into. It is the rest of faith, a spiritual forsaking of the ways of self and pride and worldly ways and a taking upon us the yoke of Christ,

a way of meekness, love, forgiveness, peace, patience and charity. God gave us the seventh day rest as a type of the true rest He wants us to enjoy. To cease from our own works and to enter into a life of faith and resting in Him brings to us a heaven on earth to enjoy.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What two Old Testament rests are mentioned in our lesson?
2. What kind of rest does Jesus offer us if we will take His yoke upon us?
3. How does "believing" give us entrance into the Sabbath of the soul?
4. What does it mean to "cease from our own works?"
5. How serious is this matter of entering into God's rest?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We have three different rests mentioned in our lesson. The first two come from the Old Testament writings. The seventh day Sabbath rest was instituted by God as one of the Ten Commandments given to Israel on Mt. Sinai. It was a very important part of the old law system. Then we have the entrance of Israel into the land of Canaan called the Lord's rest. But then our New Testament scripture points to another rest, which is beyond doubt the fulfillment of the first two. It is a spiritual rest of the soul, a ceasing from our own works that originate from our own ideas, thoughts, desires and endeavors. It is a rest that we must learn how to take part in and this we can do through the means of the indwelling Holy Spirit that Jesus made it possible for us to have. Entire sanctification is that wonderful soul rest, the spiritual Sabbath that the Lord God wants us to enter into with Him. It takes dying out to self and our own ways and thoughts and being willing to be taught and led by the Holy Spirit, following the meek and lowly ways of the Lord Jesus.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

To the man or woman who is still slaving in Egypt, those who are bound in the chains of sinful habits—day after day, year after year, you serve your master—sin. He has bruised your family, your health and your soul. He leads you on with one lie after another. Like a wave your hope rises with expectation

of fulfillment and happiness only to crash again on the rocks of hard, cold reality. You ponder at times that life was meant for something better, deeper and more meaningful, yet you haven't found it; it vanishes as a dream in the night. You have tried one pleasure after another and after the momentary thrill is gone you are lonelier and emptier than before.

The optimism of youth slowly dims as you have tried one thing after another to be free, yet no rest, no satisfaction. Perhaps you have tried so hard to be good, to do what was right, yet there is an inward evil power that still controls, that still brings you back to your captivity and you find yourself back in your old dungeon of despair. You try to appear outwardly that life is okay, that you are fine and everything is in control. But if people only knew the wretchedness, emptiness and loneliness of the real story, the behind the scenes story. Suicide, that dreaded word; never, but its alluring temptation to freedom has once, twice beckoned at your door.

You once intimately knew a lad/girl of youthful innocence and purity. But you lost touch and the memory has been nearly forgotten. You would roll back time and do it all over if you could, the hurt and pain you have caused to others and yourself, but you can't and the clock continues, eternity draws nigh.

You that labor under the guilt and consequences of your own sin—can you admit to yourself that you are lost? That you really don't know where you are at in life and you really don't know the way?

Hear the gospel message, my friend. Hear it in your heart!

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

—Bro. Bob Wilson



**SEPTEMBER 25, 2005**

### **THE SPIRITUAL KINGDOM OF PEACE**

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

**Daniel 2:44** And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

**Mark 1:14** ...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

**15** And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

**Luke 17:20** And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

**21** Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

**John 3:3** ...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

**John 18:36** My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

**Matthew 11:12** And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force.

**Luke 16:16** The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

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

**Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. **Matthew 6:33.**

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Almighty God has set up an everlasting kingdom through the merits of His holy Son, Jesus Christ. This kingdom is a spiritual kingdom in the hearts and lives of men who love and obey Him. It is an everlasting kingdom that will never pass away.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

(Isaiah 9:6), "*government on his shoulder*": The burden and responsibility for directing and ruling the kingdom of God rests upon Christ. The Father has committed all judgment unto the Son. (John 5:22.) "*Wonderful*": Miraculous and marvelous. "*Counsellor*": One who gives advice, direction, instruction, reproof, correction and doctrine.

(Daniel 2:44), "*not be left to other people*": No one else will take it over. Every other kingdom has been changed and overrun by other powers, but this everlasting kingdom of God will never be overrun nor shall the powers of hell prevail against it.

(Mark 1:15), "*The kingdom of God is at hand*": One rendering of the Greek puts it: "The Royal Majesty of God has approached." "*repent*": To change one's mind, purposes and ways.

(Luke 17:20), "*not with observation*": not with outward show.

(Luke 17:21), "*within you*": Within the heart and soul of a man is where God wants His kingdom set up to reign.

(John 3:3), "*born again*": a new birth through the quickening power of the Holy Spirit from heaven above.

(Matthew 11:12), "*suffereth violence*": seized or laid hold of by force or determined effort. "*the violent*": One who forces by strength and energy.

(Matthew 6:33) "*all these things*": All the earthly things that we will need.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is concerning the spiritual kingdom that God set up through Jesus Christ, His beloved Son. Our first two scriptures are from prophecy. Isaiah makes a clear prophecy of Jesus Christ as the child born and the son given, who would set up the kingdom and control it. In Mark we see Jesus announcing the approach of the kingdom of God and what we must do to enter therein. Repentance and faith is still the door by which we enter the kingdom of heaven. We have several scriptures of Christ's own words concerning the kingdom. He declared to the

earthly minded Jews that the kingdom of God would not be accompanied by outward grandeur and show but that it is a spiritual kingdom within the heart. He declared in John 3:3 to Nicodemus that the entrance into the kingdom of God is a spiritual birth from above. He also declares later in conversation with the governor Pontius Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world, not from this earthly realm below. Then we have the two expressions about the kingdom of God being taken by violent force, which is the strong, determined effort of a repentant and believing soul going against the opposing powers of the carnal world.

Our final scripture in our text is from the apostle Paul and his wonderful declaration of what the kingdom of God is as being righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. From this scripture has been given to us Bro. Barney Warren's wonderful song, "What A Kingdom!" I would like to quote it here. "There's a theme that is sweet to my mem'ry, there's a joy that I cannot declare, there's a treasure that gladdens my being, 'Tis the kingdom of righteousness here. There's a scene of its grandness before me, Of its greatness there can be no end; It is joy, it is peace, it is glory, in my heart how these riches do blend. I am lost in its splendor and beauty, To its ne'er fading heights I would rise, Till I see the King come to receive me and explore it with Him in the skies. What a pleasure in life it is bringing! What assurance and hope ever bright! Oh, what rapture and bliss are awaiting, when our faith shall be lost in the sight! 'Tis a kingdom of peace, it is reigning *within*, it shall ever increase in my soul; We possess it right herewhen he saves from all sin, And 'twill last while the ages shall roll." All glory and praise and worship be to Him who has given us entrance into this wonderful kingdom!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Who was the child born and the son given?
2. What did Jesus tell us to do at the approach of the kingdom of God?
3. What must one experience to enter the kingdom of God?
4. Where does God want His kingdom to be set up?
5. In what ways does God's kingdom differ from worldly kingdoms?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

In our memory verse we quote from Christ's sermon on the mount. He is teaching us to take no thought for the material things such as food and clothes, for as the heavenly Father cares for the birds and the flowers, so will He care for us. Jesus gives us wise counsel when He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." Oh, that men and women, boys and girls would seek first the kingdom of God. Instead of seeking gratification of the appetites of the body which will soon perish, we should be seeking and pressing our way into the kingdom of God. We should be opening our hearts to the Word of God so we can be aware of where we have sinned and transgressed against His holy law. We need to be aware of the reality of eternity and what Christ has accomplished for our escape from eternal damnation and be calling upon the name of the Lord to come and rain righteousness upon us. Oh, how we need to seek for the kingdom of God to come into our hearts! It is the most important thing. All of our foolish dreams of fleshly gain and pleasure will never be fulfilled. Only the kingdom of God that Jesus brought to us will satisfy the longing of our hearts. Seek first the kingdom of God!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

Today we can be a part of the kingdom that Jesus established more than two thousand years ago. It is still just as pure and glorious as it was when the Holy Spirit witnessed Himself to the followers of Christ on the day of Pentecost. His power, ability and willingness to heal, save and deliver is still the same today. The earnest call of His Spirit is going out to those who are hurting and dissatisfied with the life of misery that sin has trapped them in and He is offering "...beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3.

Our hearts join in praise with the writer of old by "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Colossians 1:12-13.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey

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