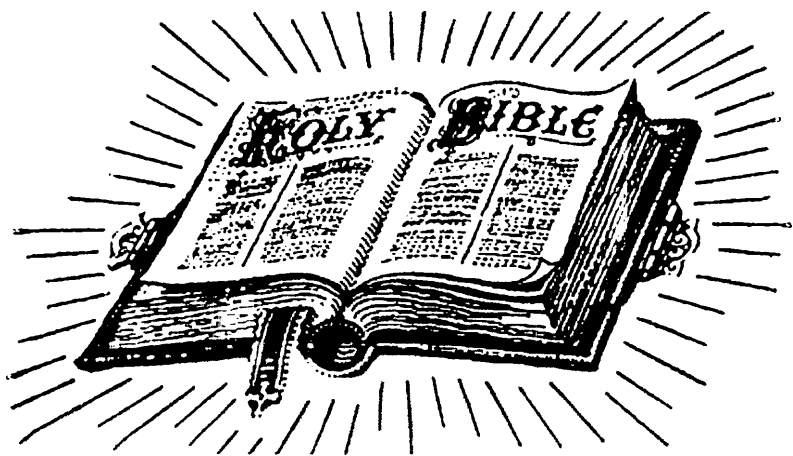


# Bible Lessons



I am the resurrection, and the life: he that  
believeth in me, though he were dead, yet  
shall he live.

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**April • May • June**  
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*Quarterly Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People*  
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# Bible Lessons for Adults and Young People

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Edited by Leslie C. Busbee and Clifford & Patsy Smith

Articles contributed by: Sis. LaDawna Adams, Bro. Bob Wilson,  
Sis. Angela Gellenbeck  
Sis. Patsy Smith, and Sis. Julie Elwell

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## BIBLE LESSONS, SECOND QUARTER 2014

### THEME FOR SECOND QUARTER

We are inspired to have for our studies and lessons for this quarter the various spiritual blessings that our Lord Jesus Christ has made available for us to experience and have in reality in our hearts and lives. There are natural and material blessings to have and enjoy, but much more important and of far greater value are those mentioned by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." The spiritual blessings are offered to us in the grace and abundant provisions that Jesus Christ has purchased for us to have and enjoy. We pray the Lord will bless these lessons to everyone who partakes of their study.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

APRIL 6, 2014

### THE BLESSING OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

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.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

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

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 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.

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

Luke 11:34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

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

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

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

1 John 1:5b 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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. 1 John 1:7

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The soul of man needs the light of Christ and His eternal Word to shine in one's innermost being. We must open our hearts and let His light shine and give us understanding and guidance how to live and conduct ourselves before God and before our fellow man.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

John 1:5, "*the darkness comprehended it not*": The darkness of men's hearts and minds did not take and receive

the light.

Ver. 9, "*lighteth*": Enlighten and bring understanding.

Luke 11:34, "*eye is single*": Clear and open to light. "*eye is evil*": Diseased and darkened by sin and vanity.

Ver. 35, "*Take heed*": Watch and be on guard.

Ephesians 5:10, "*proving*": Discovering and properly understanding.

Ver. 12, "*made manifest*": Revealed and made clearly known.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

How wonderful is good, clear, and bright light! Consider the brilliant sun and what it really means to all humanity! Psalm 19:5 in speaking of the sun says it "...is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." Then we think of the multitude of artificial lights that man has invented and produced for our use. Light is truly a wonderful blessing.

But let us turn our thoughts to consider a much more wonderful and important light. There is spiritual light that we need far more than the sun and all these artificial lights. This is the light that we have in our lesson today. It is the light of the Word of God and the wonderful teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. John speaks of this light shining in the Word of life which shone in Christ. It is spiritual light that makes known to one's inner man the truth and wonderful communication of Almighty God. Jesus Christ brought this wonderful light to the world. It is to illuminate our minds and hearts concerning the holiness and goodness of our Sovereign Creator. And it also shows and makes evident the vile current of sin and transgression that has defiled and darkened humanity.

Oh, how we need to respond to this light by obeying and following its wonderful message. Shining in the pages of the Holy Bible and revealed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is the vital substance of man's hope and salvation from sin and death. May we all take heed to this glorious light as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:6, "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 (or image) of Jesus Christ."

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do we need spiritual light?
2. Who brought this spiritual light to the world?
3. How did He bring it, and by what means is it communicated?
4. What danger are we in rejecting this Light?
5. What must we do to receive the blessing of this spiritual Light?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The wonderful truths of the Light of God and its blessings and benefits to the soul of man has been a great inspiration to my heart. I sweetly recall an experience the Holy Spirit blessed me with several years ago while we were living in Springfield, Missouri. I was working for an Office Furniture business driving their delivery van. I came home at noon for lunch with my family and was surprised to see that Brother and Sister Ira Stover were there. I was so glad to see them but regretted that they were just about to leave on their journey to visit a dear sister in southeast Missouri. I spoke with them, but they were pressed to get on their way, so they left. I was so disappointed and felt that I needed some encouragement and hoped they would stay awhile. When I got back to my job, I was given directions to deliver a lovely floor lamp to an address entitled "Sisters Of The Adorers Of The Precious Blood." When I arrived there I was greeted by a sweet looking elderly woman dressed in white. I knew then that it was a Catholic place. I took the lamp in and set it up and showed them how to operate it. I then said, "That's a lovely lamp!" And the lady agreed. Then I said, "It will give you good light!" "Yes," she said, "it will." I said, "We all need light, and we need spiritual Light. We can get that through reading the Bible and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit!" She answered, "Yes, we can!" I went on out to the van and was soon driving down the street, still thinking about what I had said about spiritual Light. And oh, how the Holy Spirit filled my heart and mind with inspiration, comfort, and encouragement! The scriptures began to come to my mind with such glory and blessing, one after another. Oh, the blessing and joy that filled my soul! Oh, how wonderful the memory of that blessing has been to me through the years! The scriptures in our lesson today along with many others lifted my soul above my hurt and disappointed feelings, and I went on my way rejoicing! This experience made this subject of the

Light of God a favorite soul-feeding lesson through the years!  
—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it *was* good. . ." Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." John 1:1 What a beautiful parallel these scriptures describe. John's reading was a witness of the Word becoming flesh to dwell among us. Jesus was there in the beginning to create physical light and then came to earth to bring spiritual light.

In the gospels we read of Jesus taking Peter, James and John to a mountain to pray. While on this mountain, Christ was transfigured before them. In Matthew, we read that "...his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light." In Mark the account says that "...his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them." Luke records that "...the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening." This was further proof of his Divinity, and in essence, he peeled away the veneer of humanity to reveal a tiny glimpse into heaven. What a marvelous witness to the disciples that truly this was the Son of God!

In Revelation we read that "...the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. . . And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there." What a glorious hope we have in this Light. Oh, what will it be to be there.

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

**APRIL 13, 2014**

## **SPIRITUAL BIRTH, RESURRECTION, AND LIFE**

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

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.

John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Ephesians 2:4 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.



Romans 8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.

13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. 1 Peter 1:22, 23

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To please God and be what He wants us to be, we must deny selfish, fleshly lusts and worldly desires and give our hearts wholly to the Lord and faithfully be led by and obedient to His Holy Spirit in all things.

### WORD DEFINITIONS

John 3:2, "*Rabbi*": My Master. This is an official title of honor.

Ver. 3, "*verily*": This is from the Hebrew word used in the Greek text, meaning surely and truly without fail. "*be born again*": Receive birth from above. This is a spiritual change and transformation in the heart of man from fleshly ways and desires to that of the Holy Spirit of God.

Ver. 5, "*born of water*": Made a new creature through the Word of God.

John 5:25, "*they that hear*": They that give diligent heed and obedience.

Ephesians 2:5, "*quickened*": Made alive.

Romans 8:12, "*debtors, not to the flesh*": We do not have to live to the flesh.

Ver. 13, "*mortify the deeds of the body*": Put to death; bring under strict control and submission.

### LESSON BACKGROUND

We continue our study today of spiritual blessings with that of the spiritual birth and the resurrection of the soul of man from the dead state of sin to spiritual life and fellowship with God. We have the account of the night visit of one of the leaders of the Jews, probably doing thus so as not to be seen

by any of his fellows. He was deeply impressed by the wonderful miracles that had come through Christ. But when Jesus stated that a man must be born again, Nicodemus showed his ignorance by questioning how a man could be thus. When Jesus tried to explain it to him, he still questioned how it could be. There are no doubt many people even today who are in total darkness of what Jesus was speaking of.

We have included some more of Christ's teachings about this same matter, only He spoke of it as the dead hearing His voice and coming to life. It is the same thing. To be born unto a new creature is to be resurrected from the dead state of sin to a pure and holy life of peace and victory over ungodliness and iniquity. And then Jesus mentioned further about the final resurrection which will take place at the ending of this present world. How wonderful that through Christ's sacrifice and death on the cross and His resurrection we can be resurrected from the dead state of sin to a happy life of grace and fellowship with God! If we follow Him faithfully all the way, we can experience the glorious resurrection from the grave unto eternal life.

We include also what the apostle Paul mentioned in his epistle to the Ephesians about being quickened from being dead in sins and raised up to sit with Him in a heavenly life. From the epistle to the Romans we have the truth expressed of how we are no longer bound to living to the flesh, but we can put to death the fleshly lusts and live and be led by the Spirit of God, making us sons of God. For our Memory Verse we have the precious words of Peter how we can be born again of the incorruptible Word of God "...which liveth and abideth for ever." Oh, what a great blessing and benefit we can have through our Lord Jesus Christ!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What did Jesus say was the requirement of entering the kingdom of God?
2. What does it mean to be "born again"?
3. What must a person faithfully give up to really experience the new birth?
4. Do we live to the flesh if we accept Christ as our Savior?
5. What does it mean for us to truly "hear" the voice of the Son of God?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

We have in our lesson today another of the wonderful spiritual blessings that we can have and experience through the grace of God that has come to us through our Lord Jesus Christ. To truly be born "from above," as Christ brought out, is a vital and precious experience that we can have by the help of His Word and Holy Spirit. But to obtain this precious experience, there are things that we must faithfully carry out. We must count the cost of what we must give up and cease from our ways, thoughts, desires, and the direction we have been going. The scriptures bear out that "...all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23. It is the work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with the Word of God to convince a person of his sinful state. And, in response to the dealings of the Holy Spirit, we must earnestly, completely, and whole-heartedly break off and cast from our hearts and lives all sinful ways, thoughts, and habits that we have been in. That is a vital part of true repentance. Our lustful ways and desires must be brought to an end. We must do this diligently and earnestly with all of our hearts. I can look back in my youth on the things that I knew I would have to give up to be saved. I had a very bad habit of cursing and taking God's name in vain. I had a worldly girlfriend that I knew I had to give up. It was hard, but I wanted to be saved with all my heart. I gave it all up and found peace and victory in the Lord! I laid claim to Christ as my Savior and He saved me. Then later I consecrated and earnestly sought for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and He satisfied completely all my heart and soul. Yes, it takes great decision and faithful obedience, but it is surely worth it all when we can obtain these spiritual blessings!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

There's a "cheap grace" doctrine being peddled today in many religious circles; a "grace," they say, that just forgives our sins but still leaves us under the same old power of sin. But the Bible teaches a *new life*. How ridiculous would it be to insist that a baby must remain in its mother's womb, while saying that it has been born. How senseless would it be to say that the free, colorful butterfly must stay locked in its dark cocoon! How

preposterous would it have been to require Lazarus, raised from the grave by the powerful Word of Jesus, to remain bound in his grave clothes the remainder of his life on earth? But this worldly gospel, that isn't a gospel at all, insists that the part of our lesson today that says our new life of following the Spirit means forsaking sin and denying the fleshly lusts is all legalistic dogma and isn't necessary at all. "Why," they say, "don't worry about self-denial—that's so pharisaical. Sacrifice? God wants you to be free. Trying to please God—you'll never be good enough. That's not what it's all about, anyway. Just be yourself. Messy, sinful, imperfect—God delights in you."

There's an awesome, life-changing power that lifts you *out* of sin when you really *hear* and *believe* the Word of God. It resurrects you; it quickens your spirit, which was lifeless and unresponsive to spiritual things. It's not a cheap grace. It's a strong grace—a mighty influence upon our hearts, reflected by how we live our lives—no longer for ourselves, or for the flesh, but for Him. And it teaches us that "...denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world." (Titus 2:11)

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

**APRIL 20, 2014**

## **THE RESURRECTION POWER OF JESUS CHRIST**

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11 And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the

Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Fear not; I am the first and the last: I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. Revelation 1:17b and 18

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** When Jesus Christ was resurrected from the grave and death by the power of His Father God Almighty, He was given the supreme power and position of authority over all in this present world and in the everlasting world to come.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Philippians 2:5, "*mind*": Purpose, attitude, and disposition.

Ver. 6, "*being in the form of God*": Existed with God before time and the creation of the world. "*thought it not robbery to be equal with God*": Counted not this position of equality with God to be held on to.

Ver. 7, "*made himself of no reputation*": Emptied himself. "*took upon him the form of a servant*": Assumed the lowly position of a slave. "*in the likeness of men*": the lowly level of humanity.

Ver. 8, "*humiliated himself and became obedient unto death*": Yielded to the will of God to allow himself to suffer the shameful and awful death of the cross.

Ver. 10, "*under the earth*": The departed dead of humanity.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In special remembrance on this Easter Day, we are inspired with a lesson on the wonderful resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and what it has made available to us for our eternal good. The two texts of Scripture from the writing of the apostle Paul portray so wonderfully what Christ's triumph over sin, death, and the grave has brought to us. Both of these have been a great blessing and inspiration to us.

The first one from Paul's epistle to the Philippians reveals the mind and purpose that our Lord and Savior earnestly possessed. It shows how that, though He was in the form or likeness to God, His Father, He willingly relinquished it to become a servant and be brought down to the level of mortal man. This was a great condescension for Him to willingly make. But He did it for us poor and destitute mortals in the bondage of sin and corruption. He came down to the realm of our troubles, afflictions, and sorrows to rescue us from eternal destruction. He made Himself of no reputation and emptied Himself of all of His heights of glory and power. Then, being in this lowly level in fashion or shape as a man, He humbled Himself much farther. He became obedient to die, not just a normal death of old age, sickness, or disease, but a horrible death of pain, suffering, and dishonor. Yes, it was the death given to criminals. It was the death of being nailed to a wooden cross along with being beaten with many stripes, crowned with thorns on His head, and strung up for people to gaze on and mock at. Can we imagine the pain and suffering that He went through? It has been observed that this kind of death was the most horrible death that one could ever suffer!

But then, as our text in Ephesians declares, God highly exalted Him, bringing Him up from the grave and setting Him at His own right hand in the Heavenly eternal world! There He is interceding for us mortals down here in this wicked world! We can go to Him in prayer day or night and be blessed and strengthened by Him for any burden or need we might have in this life! We also have the bright Hope of His coming to take us all to be with Him forever!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What purpose did Christ have in coming down from heaven?
2. Why was He so willing and obedient to the death of the cross?
3. What was God's great reward to Christ for His obedience?
4. What has His obedience made available for us mortals?  
What kind of power and authority does Christ have today?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

It is plain to be seen in the account from the Holy Scriptures of the suffering and death of our blessed Lord and Saviour that He had the power and privilege to draw back and avoid all that came upon Him from the world. We have recorded in Matthew 26:51 that one of them who was with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck a servant of the high priest and smote off his ear. (John 18:10 says that this was Simon Peter who did this. And Luke 22:51 says that Jesus touched his ear and healed him.) Then in Matthew 26:52 it says: "Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" So this tells us that Christ had the liberty to call for deliverance and escape from the awful suffering that He was facing. But think now about what it would have caused if Christ had yielded to the temptation of escaping from the awful death that was facing Him! It would have been eternal loss for the souls of men if Christ would have failed to go through the death of the cross. It may have meant the end of everything in this world. But Jesus willingly submitted in obedience to the death of the cross. Our text in Philippians tells us to have this same mind that Christ had. If we are going to be followers of Christ and be accounted worthy of sharing in His triumph, we must be willing to suffer as He suffered. We must be willing to lay down our lives in meekness and obedience to the Heavenly Father with faith as Christ had faith to believe that God would bring Him forth to life and victory. Oh, how we rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ the Son of God! And we can be willing to follow Him and suffer and give our lives as He did. Only by doing this can we be accounted

worthy to attain to the resurrection of the dead as Christ so triumphantly did.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

Death brings separation, sorrow, and great heartache. The shortest verse in the Bible, “Jesus wept,” was in relation to his friend Lazarus’ death. Death is a reality of life that we all face sooner or later; and, oh, how it hurts.

In John 5:26-29 “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

The Hour is Coming! There will be a great reunion with those that have passed away from this life. What an event, when time will be ushered into the realms of eternity. We will be able to be with our blessed Savior, the heavenly host, and the faithful that have gone on before us. Let us remind and comfort one another. Death which seems so final is only temporary. Death will be the last enemy to be destroyed. This is the great hope for the child of God. We have been promised eternal life.

—Bro. Bob Wilson

**APRIL 27, 2014**

## THE WATER OF LIFE

Psalms 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.

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

10 O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright of heart.



Psalm 46:4 *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High.*

5 God *is* in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, *and that* right early.

Isaiah 12:1 And in that day thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.

2 Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH *is* my strength and *my* song; he also is become my salvation.

3 Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

John 4:5 Then cometh he (Jesus) to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

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 (Jesus) 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:** In the grace that is brought to us through Jesus Christ there is a well of spiritual water that is opened and made available to us. It will provide for our eternity-bound souls, life and strength and victory over sin and this present evil world and a blessed hope of eternal life in the world to come.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 36:7, *"excellent"*: Outstanding and very precious and rich. *"lovingkindness"*: Beautiful and gracious tender mercies and good will.

Ver. 8, *"fatness"*: Fullness and completeness.

Psalm 46:4, *"tabernacles"*: In Christ this is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, which are the souls of men and women, boys and girls. *"most High"*: The supreme and Almighty God.

Ver. 5, *"right early"*: Very soon at the dawn of the day.

Isaiah 12:2, *"LORD JEHOVAH"*: Both of these words are from the same Hebrew meaning "the self Existent or Eternal God, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth.

Ver. 3, *"wells of salvation"*: Springs of the water of spiritual life for the soul of man.

John 4:6, *"sixth hour"*: 12 o'clock noon.

Ver. 9, *"no dealings"*: Do not associate with.

Ver. 10, *"living water"*: Jesus is speaking of the spiritual water of the Word and Spirit of God.

Ver. 14, *"shall never thirst"*: Will be completely satisfied in one's heart and life. *"well of water"*: A flowing fountain of

spiritual inspiration, enlighten, and blessing of the Holy Spirit of God.

John 7:38, *"out of his belly"*: From his inner most being.

Revelation 22:17, *"the bride"*: Those who truly believe in Christ and follow Him, who make up the Church of God. *"whosoever will"*: All who thirst with great desire and sincere purpose. *"freely"*: With glad and abundant supply.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Jesus and His disciples had been to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover, and many believed in His name when they saw the miracles which he did. After Christ's good visit with Nicodemus, He and His disciples tarried in the land of Judaea and had baptized a number of disciples. Then they left Judaea and departed again into Galilee, purposely going through Samaria, the section of Israel between Judaea and Galilee. There in the city of Sychar at Jacob's well Jesus found a place to rest while His disciples went into the city to buy some food. While Jesus was resting, the Samaritan woman came to draw some water. When Jesus asked her for a drink, she asked why? as she thought that Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. Then Jesus introduced to her the offer of being given "living water." And when the woman asked him how He was to offer her water, Jesus responded with the wonderful declaration that the water He was offering her was living water and would be a well of water springing up into everlasting life. She did not understand Christ's meaning, still thinking of the literal water. Jesus then asked her to go and call her husband to come. When she answered, "I have no husband," Jesus spoke about her having had five husbands, and it really moved her heart to perceive that Jesus was a prophet. How wonderful it was that she went and told the men of her city about Jesus. They came out to see Jesus and he had two days of being with them, and many more believed in Him because of His words. This wonderful truth about the living water is the theme of our lesson today. We have included scriptures from the Psalms and Isaiah about the water of life. We have Christ's invitation given to the people at Jerusalem on the last day of the feast of tabernacles about the water that He would give as rivers of living water flowing from one's inner being.

We have the wonderful scene pictured in Revelation 22 of the pure river of life flowing out from the throne of God and the

wonderful invitation given to us to come and take of the water of life freely. This is an invitation that we have for us today in the grace of God and salvation through Christ from sin and death to eternal life in that blessed world to come!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What all can we enjoy if we put our trust under the shadow of His wings?
2. What can God do for the soul because of His anger being turned away?
3. What kind of water is that which Jesus offered to the Samaritan woman?
4. How can we truly partake of the water of life today?
5. What will drinking of this spiritual water do for the soul of man?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Oh, what a wonderful blessing to drink of the water of life! Literal water is such a wonderful blessing. How important that we drink several glasses of water each day. It is said that the human body is made up of two-thirds water, a chicken is made up of three-fourths water, and that a pineapple is made up of four-fifths water! Water is something we are prone to take for granted, but we ought to stop and think about what a blessing it is to have good water. The great news of the gospel of Christ is that we can have spiritual water that will bring us hope of eternal life. We drink this water of life that Christ spoke of by obeying His precious Word and by receiving, obeying, and following His Holy Spirit truly and faithfully. What a wonderful privilege to drink of this water that flows from the throne of God! Whosoever will can apply one's self to seeking God, believing in Christ, and faithfully obeying the Word of Life in the Gospel of Jesus Christ! We can drink of the water of life every day! We can cease from drinking the spirits of lust, selfishness, love of money, and all the other vanities of this present evil world. In drinking of this wonderful water of life we can be assured of gaining the heavenly realm of eternal life in that blessed world to come!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **REFLECTIONS**

In 1838 American Biblical scholar Edward Robinson shook up the archeological world by discovering Hezekiah's tunnel – a tunnel 1750 feet long, 131 feet underground, and high enough to walk through. The Assyrians from northern Iraq were on the warpath in 701 BC and Hezekiah, king of Judah, ordered his engineers to guarantee a steady supply of drinking water to the western quarters of his capital city, Jerusalem. Two crews, one starting from the east and the second from the west, chiseled a tunnel under the city which diverted water from the Gihon spring into a pool later called the Pool of Siloam. Hezekiah's tunnel is proof of the scriptures found in 2 Kings 20:20, "And the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city."

What are we willing to do to protect the source of living water in our lives? Is it not equally imperative for us to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to protect the springs of living water in our lives? The enemy with whom we wage spiritual warfare is far more motivated to cut off this water supply imparted unto us by Jesus Christ than was the Assyrian army. As we trust in the Lord, He WILL make a way (as he did with Hezekiah) to help us keep the clear crystal springs of living water flowing in our individual lives.

—Sis. Julie Elwell

**MAY 4, 2014**

### **TRUE WORSHIP TO GOD IN THE SPIRIT**

John 4:19 The (Samaritan) woman saith unto him (Jesus), Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But 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.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come; he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

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

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand *are* the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills *is* his also.

5 The sea *is* his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry *land*.

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

Psalms 96:9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

Philippians 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Ephesians 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

**MEMORY VERSE:** God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. John 4:24

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The Almighty God who created the heavens and the earth would be pleased and accept our worship to Him if it is from our whole heart and in communion with His Spirit, not in outward show or fleshly demonstration.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

John 4:21, "*neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem.*" It is no longer at an earthly location where we have to worship God. There will be places where we can gather to worship God, but it must be from our hearts in the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 23 and 24, "*worship in spirit and in truth*": Worship God with your inner man and heart in accord with His Word.

Psalm 95:2, "*psalms*": Spiritual songs and hymns.

Ver. 4, "*strength*": Heights and the summits.

Ver. 6, "*worship*": Bow down in humility, submission, faith, honor, love, and devotion.

Philippians 3:3, "*circumcision*": It is not physical circumcision that we are called to have now in the New Testament. It is rather "...the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." Colossians 2:11

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The spiritual blessing we want to consider in our lesson for today is that of spiritual worship and devotion to God through the inspiration and blessing of His precious Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament age the worship of God was in a literal place in an earthly location. They had literal blood sacrifices and outward show of worship. The Samaritan woman, when she beheld how wise and divine Jesus was, made mention of the place of worship in her area and that of Jerusalem. Jesus plainly told her that it was no longer at any earthly location but that it was spiritual worship from the heart and soul of man that God was looking for. God is a great and wonderful God, but He is a Spirit that must be approached unto and worshipped by the spirit of man.

Our hearts must be reaching out in earnest devotion and affection before God. We have included in this lesson quotes from the Psalms, so beautifully and inspiringly expressed, of how we must come, worship, and bow down before the great God of Heaven. We are also reminded of the text in Isaiah 66:1, 2: "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? 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.” This shows the spirit that we need to assume in our worship before God.

It is not in outward show of human talent and man-made instruments that we can successfully worship God. Not that it is wrong to play on a literal instrument, but it is that God is not looking or listening to that. He is looking at the attitude and purpose of our heart, that is, our inner man, our spirit—an humble and submissive spirit, fervent in love and devotion to Him, with a willing and obedient heart to please Him and do His will. That is what our God is looking for and is pleased with.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why is it so necessary for us to worship God with our spirit?
2. What kind of spirit before God do we need to have in our worship?
3. Why is it right and proper and necessary to worship God?
4. Who is He and what all has He done to be worthy of sincere worship?
5. Why should we be diligent and earnest and whole-hearted in worship?

### COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

This world that we live in with all of its wonderful blessings and benefits did not just happen to be. There is definitely a master-mind, an all-wise and almighty power back of everything that is seen and felt in this earthly life. Look at that beautiful and brilliant sun that shines so brightly, coming up faithfully in the east and passing over our heads through the day and going down in the west! As Psalm 19:1-4 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day [day after day] uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.* Their line [message] is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” Paul quotes from this scripture in Romans 10:18. Think of all the wonderful trees, grasses, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and flowers, besides the hills, mountains, and beautiful rivers and streams. Did they just happen to be? No! They are the work of an almighty, wise, and gracious creator who created them for our benefit and enjoyment. Think of the air that we breathe! Where did it come from? Oh, how poor



and needy we are of all of God's benefits! We need to recognize this truth and be thankful and devoted to this wonderful God who created it all. Sad to say, the majority of humanity goes along partaking of these blessings with little or no recognition or sense of where it all comes from!

Above all of these earthly and material blessings we have in the Holy Scriptures the truth how mankind has fallen into the pit of unbelief and lust and transgression of God's law of holiness and righteousness. For this cause God sent His Holy Son down here into this world to show us His love and power and to give His life to atone for our sins and ungodly ways and attitudes. Jesus Christ was and is the everlasting Son of the most high God! He died for our sins and arose from the grave and ascended up to the right hand of God to be our intercessor and everlasting means of victory and salvation for us. Oh, how we need to worship and honor God Almighty and His precious Son! God, help mankind some way to wake up to the Holy Spirit and truth that is working in this world around us!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

The world today offers a smorgasbord of religions and ways to worship. Some may practice worship through meditation, karma, astrology, or the occult. Paul was faced with these ideologies when he stood on Mars' hill and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 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; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; 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; 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." Acts 17:20-28

So then, how do we worship the Almighty? Shall we offer a

disciplined life? Shall we help the poor? Shall we devote ourselves to a charitable cause? How do you worship the Creator of all things? The prophet Micah asked similar questions: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, *and* bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6:6-8

—Sis. LaDawna Adams

**MAY 11, 2014**

### **THE BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE**

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

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.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?

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.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

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.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

**MEMORY VERSE:** 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. John 6:27

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Jesus Christ came down from the eternal heavens to give His life for the salvation of the souls of mankind. To be blessed and benefited by Him we must come with our whole hearts to Him, partake of and obey His Word and Holy Spirit, and "eat" spiritually of Him as the Bread of Life. His father, almighty God, will draw the hearts of men who truly love and obey Him to His Son to partake of Him.

## **WORD DEFINITIONS**

John 6:26, "*verily*": Truly without error or fail. "*eat of the loaves*": This was the bread that Jesus had fed them with the day before.

Ver. 27, "*Labor not for the meat which perisheth*": Do not be so interested in having literal food. "*Son of man*": Jesus was the Son of God and was also the Son of man. "*God the Father sealed*": Made to be unchanging and everlasting.

Ver. 31, "*manna*": This was the bread God gave to Israel. It was called manna because of what the children of Israel said when they found it; "*Manna, manna?*": Which means "What is

it, what is it?"

Ver. 35, "*cometh to me*": Truly comes to Jesus with all one's heart and is willing to follow Him all the way.

Ver. 37, "*All that the Father giveth me*": These He is referring to are those who come to Him in response to God Almighty's witness of Him as the Son of God and author of eternal life. God works on the souls of men to bring them to Jesus. "*I will in no wise cast out*": In no way will Christ refuse or turn away those who come to Him with an honest heart before God.

Ver. 44, "*except the Father which hath sent me draw him*": Jesus is declaring that no one can really successfully come to Him unless the Spirit of God moves on his or her heart to do so.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we have the wonderful declaration of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour declaring that He is the Living Bread from God to feed the souls of men to nourish them unto eternal life. Jesus had just the day before fed the great multitude of men, women, and children with five loaves and two fishes. Sensing that the men wanted to come to try to force Him to be their King, Jesus had gotten away from them. Yes, they felt that if He were their king, they would never suffer want or hunger again. For that reason they searched for Him and found Him the next day. But we see that Jesus endeavored to inform them of the kind of bread He was really offering them. It was the spiritual food for *their* spiritual life and welfare. Sad to say, disregarding all that Jesus tried to explain to them about the spiritual Bread of Life that He could be to them, these blinded men responded with, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" And from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with Him.

We live in a society today that is drunk on and absorbed with the fleshly appetite for literal food. Oh, how ignorant people are of the real food that they truly need! We can, in Christ the Bread of Life, find food for our eternity-bound souls. Through His Word and the Holy Spirit He has made available to us, we can feed our souls on the Bread of Life, and it will enable us to lay hold on eternal life. May the Lord help us to not be ignorant of the spiritual blessing of this Bread of Life!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## QUESTIONS:

1. Why were the men so desirous of having Christ to become their King?
2. What kind of food and nourishment was Jesus offering to them?
3. What was their response to what Jesus said about spiritual Bread?
4. How can we today receive and partake of the wonderful Bread of Life?
5. What will this Living Bread that Christ gives enable us to have?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

In the beginning of the world, Satan tempted mother Eve with the forbidden fruit, and she partook of it. The fleshly appetite for literal food is not evil, because God made the human body to need the nourishment and benefit thereby. But unbridled appetite for food can be a detriment and will not only have a bad effect upon the body, but it can also hinder the spiritual part of man to hunger and seek for the more important spiritual food, the food that Jesus Christ our Savior is offering to us. In Philippians 3:18-19, Paul speaks with weeping of people who are "...the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, Whose God is *their* belly [fleshly lust and gratification for literal food]... who mind earthly things." It is true: we live in a society whose God is their belly, their fleshly appetite for food. How we need to take heed to this warning! Sure, we all need literal food for the nourishment and health of our bodies. God made us that way. But we must not make it a god and allow it to hold us in bondage. Oh, how we need to partake of the Bread of Life that Christ has made available for us! Through His precious Word and Gospel with our faithful application of prayer and submission to the leadings of His Holy Spirit, we can enjoy and feast upon the wonderful Bread of Life! It can and will feed our inner man and enable us to live spiritual lives in preparation for eternal life in the world to come.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

"Heavenly manna: what will it enable us to have?" we are asked in today's lesson.

**LIFE** "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and *they* are life." (John 6:63). The components of literal manna were such that life was sustained, from birth to old age, just by eating this one food, every day! Talk about a "super food"! Mankind has tried for years to concoct just such a meal tablet. But only God could do that, and spiritually He has done it for us in Christ, the LIVING WORD.

**JOY** "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.." (Jeremiah 15:16). I remember the vigor and joy given to me as a young Christian by reading and memorizing God's Word. It spoiled me from wanting the worldly pleasures. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full." (John 15:11)

**VICTORY** "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalm 119:11). A man, who kept falling into a moral sin, said that when he began pouring himself into God's Word, the power of that sin was broken. A young mother told about the power of God's Word when she taught it to her young child: it gave him strength not to tell a lie.

There was a time in our country when God's Word was read and revered in the public schools. It can be documented that a sharp decline in the quality, safety, and success of public education occurred after laws were enacted keeping God's Word from being read publicly. Surely God's Word contains a powerful sustaining and preserving quality we cannot do without!

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

**MAY 18, 2014**

## SPIRITUAL FREEDOM FROM SIN

John 8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were

never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

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.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** While mankind through the ages has sought and fought for domestic and national freedom, Jesus Christ has introduced and provided in His great salvation a freedom and deliverance from the power of Satan and the dominion of sin and transgression against the law of Almighty God.

## **WORD DEFINITIONS**

John 8:34, *"the servant of sin"*: Is in bondage to sinful habits and ways.

Ver. 35, *"servant abideth not in the house for ever"*: A servant is not a true permanent dweller. *"the Son abideth ever"*: The law-abiding Son is the owner and permanent dweller. This is pointing us to the grace of God that will give us eternal dwelling in His House by being delivered from sin and transgression.

Ver. 36, *"free indeed"*: Really and truly free from the bondage of sin.

Romans 6:12, *"reign"*: Gave the rule and control. *"lusts"*: A person's passions and fleshly desires.

Ver. 13, *"your members as instruments"*: This is referring to your hands, feet, eyes, ears, and tongue, and how they are tools that you use in your habits and ways.

Ver. 14, *"have dominion"*: Lord over and control. *"under"*: beneath the rule or control. *"God forbid"*: Let it not be!

Ver. 16, *"servants"*: Obedient followers.

Ver. 17, *"ye were the servants of sin"*: In times past sin had control of you.

Ver. 19, *"iniquity unto iniquity"*: From one state of sin to a worse state. *"righteousness unto holiness"*: Being justified and forgiven of sins and then advancing to holy power and triumphant living by the Holy Spirit of God.

Ver. 20, *"free from righteousness"*: Not under the power and grace of God.

Ver. 23, *"wages"*: Just payment and punishment.

## **LESSON BACKGROUND**

The first part of our lesson today is from the account of Christ's words spoken to the Jews in the treasury. The Jews



responded to His statements with various things: "Where is thy Father?" "Will he kill himself?" "Who art thou?" And finally, as He spoke those words to them, many believed on him. Then Jesus said to them, as verse 31 in our lesson states, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But notice their answer that they were Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man. They were not aware of the real bondage of sin to which Jesus was referring. But Jesus spoke of the bondage of sin, and how He, the Son, could make them free from that bondage.

We have from the apostle Paul's epistle to the Romans the wonderful declaration of truth concerning the deliverance from the power of sin we can have through our Lord Jesus Christ. His words are clear and plain: "Let not sin reign therefore in your mortal body." "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." "Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." This is the truth! There is no room for sin to be excused and justified. By the grace of God we can be delivered from the bondage of sin and be free indeed. Praise God for His wonderful plan and provision for us to be delivered from the power of Satan and all sin!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of freedom does God want us to truly have and enjoy?
2. What members of our bodies are instruments that sin can use?
3. What must we do to be a true partaker of this freedom from sin?
4. Why is it so needful and expedient for us to be made free from sin?
5. What are the wages of sin, and what is the gift of God?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

When Adam and Eve yielded to Satan and partook of the fruit that was forbidden to them of God, sad to say, it started the downward trend of humanity to ungodliness and evil. Although God made provisions for humanity to confess their

sins and strive to live to please Him, it still had to be a personal choice and decision for each person to make. The two sons of Adam and Eve is a picture of this. Abel sought to offer the acceptable sacrifice and was accepted of God. But Cain took the other course and yielded to sin in an awful way by killing his brother! We then see the current of the world going down, down, down, until God finally decided to destroy it all. But Noah was a man who sought to overcome sin and to please God. And so has the stream of history flowed. Those who sought earnestly to obey and please God were blessed richly of Him. There was Enoch who so well pleased God that he was translated to not see death. Then there was faithful Abraham. Oh, how he obeyed God and made the moves that God directed him in! Even to the offering of his beloved son Isaac, Abraham found favor with Him. We see how sin worked in the lives of people. The Bible has a clear record of the sins of people, even people who were so richly blessed and favored of God. There was David, a man after God's own heart, who was so richly blessed of Him, overcoming many sorrows and difficulties and gaining kingship of God's people after the death of Saul, who had been guilty of awful transgression and sin. But look out! Sin was lying at the door. David looked across from his housetop and saw a woman taking a bath and his lust rose up and caused him to commit sin. He also had the woman's husband, one of his great servants, put on the front line to be slain and then took his wife to be his. Sin is a terrible woe and bondage.

But thank the Lord, Jesus came and made the way for us to overcome sin and be able to live a godly holy life right here in this present sin-cursed society. We can overcome and be triumphant over all sin and transgression against God.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

**SIN** – That little three letter word has such far-reaching damnable consequences. The enemy of our souls likes to hide the truth. Temptation is pictured as a pleasurable, enticing experience that won't hurt anyone. Satan doesn't tell you that it may cost you your life, your family, your health, or your honor. He doesn't tell you of the broken homes, broken hearts, and broken dreams that lie in the wake of sin.

All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There

is not a man alive that has had power to overcome sin or its evil consequences by his own efforts or merits. Sometimes people appear to overcome sinful habits within themselves; but it is only like a balloon, when it is constrained in one area, it expands in another.

God sent the law to give us the knowledge of sin. Then he sent the Savior as an answer and remedy for sin. Sin is your problem, the Savior is the answer to your problem. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

--Bro. Bob Wilson

**MAY 25, 2014**

### **SEEKING FOR THE TRUE RICHES**

Luke 12:13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?

15 And he 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.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

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

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

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

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, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

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:** 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. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Luke 12:33, 34

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Earthly material riches are temporal, vain, and soon to pass away. We must set our hearts and affections on the spiritual riches of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness that we can have by following Christ Jesus and yielding to God and letting His will and good pleasure be done in our hearts and lives.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Luke 12:15, "*Take heed*": Pay attention and be wise.  
"*beware*": Avoid and keep away from.

Ver. 20, "*thy soul shall be required of thee*": Thy soul shall

return to and have to answer unto God who gave it.  
Ecclesiastes 12:7

Matthew 6:21, "*heart*": Affections and interests.

1 Timothy 6:6, "*godliness with contentment*": Perfect happiness and satisfaction with reverence and respect toward God.

Ver. 8, "*raiment*": Clothing and shelter.

Ver. 9, "*snare*": A trap set by the devil. "*drown men*": Cause men to sink. "*perdition*": Eternal loss and destruction.

Ver. 10, "*erred from the faith*": Been seduced away from confidence in God by the devil.

Ver. 17, "*trust in*": Set hope upon.

Ver. 18, "*distribute*": Impart and give to help those in need. "*willing to communicate*": Be generous to help others.

Ver. 19, The Greek text reads: "treasuring away for themselves a good foundation for the coming age, that they may lay hold on everlasting life."

Luke 12:33, "*alms*": Benefits and blessings for the poor and needy.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

Our lesson today is concerning one of mortal man's most common snares to be caught in and how, by seeking and following the holy way of godliness and faith in Jesus Christ, we can overcome this trap of the devil that so many people get caught up in. Seeking for treasures that are eternal and beneficial to the soul was one of our Savior's greatest messages. In our first scripture text from Luke 12, Jesus responded to one of the company's request for Him to speak to his brother about letting him share in the inheritance. Jesus responded with a direct warning against coveting worldly wealth as He rejected the man's request. He then gave the parable about the rich man who, with a bumper crop, decided to hoard all the produce to himself, looking forward to ease and prosperity instead of thinking of how he could benefit his neighbors or anyone in need. That very night death came and his soul was faced with the judgment of Almighty God. Jesus said that is the way it is with whoever lays up for selfish reasons and is not concerned about his state with God.

Contentment and faith are much better courses to take than the love of money, which Paul told Timothy to be the root of all evil. Oh, that the eyes of men and women, boys and girls

could be turned to take in what are the real treasures for us to have! Instead of big bank accounts and earthly wealth, we should be rich in good works, ready to share with others, and lay up for ourselves a bright hope for eternal blessings and treasures in eternity.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why is earthly wealth such a temptation to a person?
2. What did our lesson's scriptures point us to seek for?
3. What is the great gain that we should earnestly desire?
4. What is going to happen to all the worldly wealth and possessions?
5. What should we seek after and lay up in store for?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

We live in a world and amid a society that is covered with the cloak of love, concern, interest, and strife for earthly wealth and possessions. Yes, we all have to have means to live, provide for our families, and meet needs that come to us. We have Christ's teachings in the gospels about how we should set our hearts on eternal values and trust in God to help us with our earthly needs. He said, as it is recorded in Matthew 6:25-34, to "...take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on." He pointed out the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field and how God takes care of them so wonderfully. He declared that our heavenly Father knows that we have need of all these things. Then in verse 33 Jesus gave the key: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." How wonderful are the teachings and counsel of our blessed Lord and Savior! Think how He came down from Heaven to take upon Him human flesh to show us the way to live and pay the price for our redemption! Money and wealth were not His goal. He willingly allowed those evil men to take Him and hang Him on the cross and leave Him there until He died. But think of the eternal wealth of power, grace, strength, and goodness that He has now at the right Hand of God to help us down here in this sin-cursed covetous society. For this reason Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1-4 such wonderful inspiring words: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where

Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who* is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Oh, what a treasure we can have in the grace of Almighty God in His wonderful salvation!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

Covetousness and the love of money are insidious sins that ensnare and consume before one realizes the damage that has already been done. The verse in our lesson states, "...they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare...which drown men in destruction." Remember when the children of Israel entered Canaan, they lost the battle of Ai because Achan coveted silver, gold, and the Babylonish garments. His sin caused a demoralizing loss for the nation of Israel and resulted in his own death as well as his whole family. The love of money destroys marriages, families, and saps interest in spiritual pursuits.

The Apostle Paul, in referring to himself, said, "...as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (II Cor. 6:10) The things that belong to the real joys of life are the blessings to the soul. They are to be found in the riches of grace, of faith, of good works, of forgiveness, of love. Look over your own life and you will find the greatest treasures you possess have not been given to you by those with great material wealth, but rather those champions of faith who have taught and lived spirit-filled lives. John D. Rockefeller said, "The poorest man I know is the man who has nothing but money."

A good barometer of spiritual health is to assess how we are spending our time and money. Are we using them to be a blessing to those in need and to help further the kingdom of God? "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty...he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Proverbs 11:24,25

—Sis. Patsy Smith

**JUNE 1, 2014**

## **THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

Psalm 103:19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Psalm 145:9 The LORD *is* good to all; and his tender mercies *are* over all his works.

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints shall bless thee.

11 They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy kingdom *is* an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth* throughout all generations.

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.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

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

11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take 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 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

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 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

5 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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men. Romans 14:17, 18

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The real true Kingdom of God that Christ established is not an earthly realm of rule and power, but it is rather a spiritual dominion in the souls of humanity with Jesus Christ in His resurrected life and power at the right hand of God as the everlasting King.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Psalm 145:12, "*glorious majesty*": Magnificent splendor of rule and power.

Daniel 2:44, "*in the days of these kings*": During the time of the Roman Empire. "*set up*": Raise up in power and establish. "*not be left to other people*": Will not be overtaken by unlawful and foreign people. "*break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms*": Will ultimately overcome and destroy all other kingdoms of earth in the end.

Matthew 4:17, "*Repent*": Change your ways from sin to righteousness. "*at hand*": Has come near.

5:3 "*poor in spirit*": Is fully conscious and aware of one's need and destitute condition.

11:12 "*suffereth violence*": Has to be pressed diligently into. Luke 16:16 says the same thing, only it is worded differently: "every man presseth into it." In fact both of these expressions are from the same Greek word.

13:44, "*treasure hid*": Hidden from human and fleshly understanding. "*hideth*": Keeps it secret and does not consult human wisdom. "*selleth all that he hath*": Gives up every thing that would hinder.

Luke 17:20, "*cometh not with observation*": Is not shown with outward fleshly show or evidence.

Ver. 21, "*within you*": In your heart and spirit.

John 3:3, "*born again*": Born from above, a spiritual birth.

Ver. 5, "*of water*": This is not literal water, but rather the water of the Word of God.

Romans 14:18, "*approved of men*": Recognized and accepted by God-fearing people.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We began our lesson today on the Kingdom of God with several Old Testament scriptures, the first two being from Psalms. Both express wonderful things about the kingdom of God that really do fit that which is spoken of it in the New Testament. Then we have the text from Daniel 2:44. Daniel was called upon to reveal to king Nebuchadnezzar the dream that he had and its meaning. The dream showed the four kingdoms that ruled the world, the Babylonian one first, followed by the Medes and Persians, then the Greek, and finally the Roman Empire. It was to be during that last kingdom that God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed and would stand forever. That was surely referring to the spiritual kingdom that Christ Jesus brought forth in His ministry and sacrifice of His life as the Redeemer of mankind from sin and death.

Then we have the New Testament reading concerning the Kingdom of God. The words of Jesus are clear declarations of the kingdom of God and what it would take to enter therein. From the beginning of His ministry the Lord Jesus spoke much about the kingdom of God. The requirements to enter the kingdom of repentance and being born from above are clearly brought out. Then the pressing that must be done to enter in is also shown. Jesus also declared how great a treasure the kingdom of God is and how that it is not a literal earthly realm of outward show but rather an inward work in the hearts of men.

Our final scripture that we have as our Memory Verse is from the apostle Paul's wonderful epistle to the Romans. He expresses it so clearly that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful privilege and blessing is ours to press our way, giving up the world and our sinful ways, and finding entrance into the glorious kingdom of peace and joy that will endure forever!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of kingdom is presented in our lesson today?
2. What must one do to be able to enter into the Kingdom of God?
3. What must one press against to get into this wonderful Kingdom?
4. How is it a kingdom not of outward show but rather "within" us?
5. How is this kingdom the most valuable treasure one can ever have?

## **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

A most wonderful song that portrays and describes this glorious kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit is No. 32 in the Evening Light Songs hymnal. It just brings it out in such an inspiring and heart-lifting and warming way. How we have enjoyed singing it in the wonderful camp meetings and home services of the saints of God! It just so wonderfully expresses the depth of the values and joys that the kingdom of God can mean to the human heart.

## **WHAT A KINGDOM!**

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!

Chorus:

"Tis a kingdom of peace, it is reigning within,  
It shall ever increase in my soul!  
We possess it right here when He saves from all sin,  
And 'twill last while the ages shall roll.

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!  
—*Words and Music by B. E. Warren*

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

In passing through town the other day, I noticed a sign at a local church proclaiming, "We Stand With Israel." This seems to be a commonly-held position in secular Christianity regarding a millennial reign. Even political powers seem to want to protect Israel. But Christ said that the kingdom of God is within you.

In his book, "What the Bible Teaches," F. G. Smith brings clarity to the millennial theory in the following passage:

*"The millenarian doctrine is delusive. It is presented in many forms, according to the fancies and desires of its propagators, but evidently the idea is about the same--that there will be an earthly kingdom and reign of Christ for one thousand years.*

*"This theory was first introduced under Christianity by Cerinthus, who was the worst heretic of the first century. The church historian Eusebius has preserved a fragment of writing from Caius, who lived in the second century, and who thus describes the doctrine of Cerinthus: 'But Cerinthus too, through revelations written, as he would have us believe, by a great apostle, brings before us marvelous things, which he pretends were shown him by angels; alleging that after the resurrection the kingdom of Christ is to be on earth, and that the flesh dwelling in Jerusalem is again to be subject to desires and pleasures. And being an enemy to the Scriptures of God, wishing to deceive men, he says that there is to be a space of a thousand years for marriage-festivities.' One of the doctrine that he taught was that Christ would have an earthly kingdom. Caius evidently believed the Scriptural doctrine that the kingdom of God was set up at Christ's first coming; therefore he brands Cerinthus as an 'enemy of the Scriptures, wishing to*

*deceive men.'*

*"Bro. D. S. Warner has stated that the devil works especially to deceive men in either one of two ways; either first, some other way than Christ; or second, some other time than NOW. This is true. If men will not accept his deception that some other way will do, then he proceeds at once to delay all important things until the future. Thousands of people have thus grasped the delusive idea that there will be after this dispensation another age of blessedness in which salvation-work will be effected. Such is a rank deception of the devil. 'NOW is the accepted time: behold, NOW is the day of salvation.'"*

While Christ walked this earth, he brought a salvation plan that would supersede any political power, government or law. This salvation does not depend on any futuristic happening. Christ made it complete, to be established within the heart of man. It cannot be destroyed or removed, for the kingdom of God is within you!

--Sis. LaDawna Adams

**JUNE 8, 2014**

## **SPIRITUAL BEAUTY AND CHARM**

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

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

9 *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10 *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13 Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16 *Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

1 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.

1 Peter 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

2 While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear.

3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;

4 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.

**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. 1 Peter 3:3, 4

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The real true beauty of a man or woman is not in outward show of styles and fashions of this world, but rather that of meekness, kindness, purity, holiness, and inward graces that are well pleasing in God's sight. This also includes covering up the body with sufficient clothing and apparel.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

Romans 12:1, *"beseech"*: Earnestly invite and intreat. *"present"*: Offer and consecrate for holy service. *"living sacrifice"*: Offering to God one's whole heart and life. *"reasonable service"*: What one really owes.

Ver. 2, *"not conformed"*: Not fashioned like. *"transformed"*: Changed from worldliness to godliness. *"renewing of your mind"*: Change from the old way of worldliness and pride to fervent love and devotion to God. *"prove"*: Discover and be convinced of.

Ver. 9, *"without dissimulation"*: Sincere and without pretence.

Ver. 11, *"not slothful in business"*: Not hesitant and slow, but diligent. *"fervent"*: Glowing and warm.

Ver. 12, *"continuing instant in prayer"*: Not letting up in your prayer life.

Ver. 16, *"in your own conceits"*: In your own estimation of yourself.

1 Timothy 2:9, *"modest apparel"*: Not showy or worldly, but plain and well covered. *"shamefacedness"*: Meek and reserve toward men. *"sobriety"*: Soundness of mind and self-controlled behavior. *"broided hair"*: Hair adorned with fancy colors and entwining.

1 Peter 3:2, *"chaste conversation"*: Pure and holy behavior.

Ver. 3, *"plaiting the hair"*: Elaborate and fancy braiding.

Ver. 4, *"hidden man"*: The secret chambers of godly thought and purpose.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

We live in a world and society that is charged with the vanity of outward physical beauty and show. Both men and women like to show their outward flesh, and the clothing that is generally worn is fancy and attractive to the opposite sex. Rings, necklaces, ear adornments, fancy clothes and hats, neckties, and other fancy materials are a natural practice for wearing and showing off. The human body, especially that of the female, is widely advertised and displayed with insufficient cover. Publications, magazines, and the Internet portray men and women with all manner of undress. Such practice and display is an awful and serious offence to the Almighty God. In

the beginning when Adam and Eve sinned and were made aware of their nakedness, they made aprons of leaves, but God made them "...coats of skins, and clothed them." Genesis 3:7, 21.

The counsels expressed in our lesson today are plain and firm standards of life concerning this problem of outward beauty and display. In Romans 12 we have the wise counsel of godly reverence for the care and discipline God requires of the human body. We are not to conform ourselves to the manner of dress and behavior of the worldly trend around us. Not only in dress, but in behavior, habits, and our relationship with others are we called upon by godly fear and reverence just how to do.

In 1 Timothy 2 and 1 Peter 3, we have the clear, clean-cut instruction of how women should dress their bodies. Outward adornments are plainly forbidden. It is so sad that we have such clear and plain teachings in the Bible, and yet women yield to the temptations of fleshly and outward beauty. Let us remember that the real beauty of a person is the inward and spiritual loveliness of the soul. It was prophesied of Jesus in Isaiah 53:2 that "...when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him." The beauty that Christ had was the spiritual beauty of humility and pleasing God well. This is the beauty that we should all earnestly seek to faithfully have to display.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of sacrifice should we offer unto God?
2. Why should we not be conformed to this present evil world?
3. What kind of treatment and relationship should we have to others?
4. How should a woman clothe her body to be well pleasing to God?
5. What kind of beauty is the real beauty for us to seek to have?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

Inward beauty of the heart, spirit, and life is a far more valuable treasure for a man or woman to seek for and have to display to others. Outward beauty and adornment without this



inward beauty and adornment is empty, void, and vain. We must not desire to display beauty to please the carnal lusts and praise of men. We need to adorn our hearts and minds with godly fear and reverence toward our Creator in all that would be well pleasing in His holy sight. At the same time, we must discipline and control our relationship with others so that, while we are moderate and godly in our dress and outward form, we are governed by loving and gracious manners and ways. Our text in Romans lists several things that we must be diligent about. There is brotherly love, diligence, warmness of heart, rejoicing, cheerfulness, patience, generosity and kindness to others in need, blessing those who mistreat and persecute us, humility of heart and mind, honesty, returning good for evil, and a peaceable living with others. All of these are adornments of the soul and are greatly to be sought to have and display.

A special entreaty from the scriptures is found directly given to women. A woman must keep her body covered when she goes out before others. Modest and plain, yet neat and presentable must be her clothing. Outward adornment of gold and fancy rings and jewelry are not becoming to godliness and what pleases our Maker. A meek and quiet spirit, a kind and pleasant countenance, a soft and gentle voice and manner of expression, an honest and truthful spirit—all of these qualities shine forth along with modesty and plainness of dress to show the shining character of a godly and holy person well pleasing before God!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

I have long wondered, "How far back in history can we find records of the dress and behavior of the saints?" My studies about this subject have led me to some interesting finds. In our local public library, in a resource book about early Christianity, I found this: "[The Christian] women did not wear jewelry or use cosmetics. . . The Christians maintained the highest standards of conduct. They helped the poor and the weak. Other people changed their ideas to conform to the latest fashion. Christians faithfully held to the same unchanging beliefs."

In the archaeological supplement of my Thompson Chain Reference (KJV) Bible is a similar historical observation: "The Christians were . . . considered queer, and to be hated and counted as enemies of society, because they were simple and

modest in their dress, they were strictly moral in their conduct, and they would not go to the games and feasts. . . ."

Jeanne Marie Guyon, (late 1600's and early 1700's), wrote: "My trials were connected, in part, with the fashions of those times . . . It seemed to me that the dress of the ladies. . . was hardly consistent with Christian, or even natural modesty. . . My associates, seeing that I covered my neck much more than was common for females at that time, assured me that I was quite modest and Christian-like in my attire. . . But something within me told me that it was not so. 'Whither art thou going, thou whom My soul loveth?' Divine love drew me gently and sweetly in one direction; while natural vanity violently dragged me in another. I was undecided; loving God, but not wholly willing to give up the world. My heart was rent asunder by the contest."

That ancient "contest"--choosing between God and the world--still rages. Knowing what side the godly chose in the past has been helpful to me in my contest; how about you?

—Sis. Angela Gellenbeck

**JUNE 15, 2014**

## **SPIRITUAL STRENGTH AND WARFARE**

2 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;

6 And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

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

3 Thou therefore 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.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

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.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Ephesians 6:10, 11

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** To be a successful Christian and enjoy the blessings of salvation in Christ Jesus, we must put on the whole armor of God: truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the sword of the Holy Spirit, which is the Word of God. We must use these weapons if we want to stand against the wiles of the devil.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

2 Corinthians 10:4, *"not carnal"*: These weapons we must use as a true soldier are spiritual weapons; the warfare of a true Christian is not flesh against flesh: *"strong holds"*: These are places in one's life where Satan has gained a strong place to work.

Ver. 5, *"imagination"*: Vain thoughts and ideas. *"captivity"*: Subjection and control. *"thought"*: What one is persuaded to

believe and count as truth.

Ver. 6, "*revenge*": Straighten out by the Word of God.

2 Timothy 2:3, "*hardness*": Difficulty and adversity.

Ver. 4, "*entangleth*": Gets overly involved.

Ver. 5, "*strive for masteries*": Competes in conflicts and games.

Ephesians 6:10, "*power of his might*": The force of God's strength, what He can help us to accomplish in our lives.

Ver. 11, "*wiles*": Cunning craftiness and trickery.

Ver. 12, "*principalities*": Rulers. "*powers*": Authorities. "*high places*": The spiritual realm of the soul of man.

Ver. 15, "*preparation*": Readiness to preach.

Ver. 18, "*supplication*": Earnest requests and petitions. "*perseverance*": being persistent and determined.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

In our lesson today we have a very important aspect of the true Christian life to consider and study. It is something that we need to clearly and correctly understand. The Christian life and experience portrayed and laid out in the Holy Scriptures is a spiritual warfare. As it is brought out, we are not fighting a fleshly war with carnal earthly weapons made by sinful ignorant men. It is rather a spiritual warfare fought with spiritual weapons that are mighty through God and the power that He bestows upon us. It is not earthly enemies of men that we are combating. It is the powers of Satan and the oppression of evil influences that throng this earthly realm. Our worldly society is taken up with wars and battles and conflicts of mortal mankind. They are raging and have been raging all down through the ages. Teeming millions of people have been slain in these horrible wars. How ignorant has mankind been of God's disapproval of such action and doings! Think of the horrible weapons of guns and warships and tanks and cannons and bombs that have been produced and used with great destruction all around this earth that God created!

While mankind is taken up with this vain and useless warfare, the real warfare that God instituted and His beloved Son Jesus Christ engaged in is overlooked. In our lesson today, we have this spiritual warfare laid out very plainly for us to consider. It is a conflict and battle that is fought in the Christian's mind and by the Christian's heart in earnest conflict

against Satan and his hosts of evil. We have pictured the conflict and the weapons that are to be used therein. Get a good look at them and consider diligently their importance: "...skirt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Word and Spirit of God." If we are going to be successful and victorious in the true and most important warfare that is to be carried on, we had best be wise concerning these weapons that we surely must use without fail.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### QUESTIONS:

1. Why should a true Christian not engage in the earthly warfare?
2. What warfare does the Holy Scriptures challenge us to engage in?
3. Who is our Captain and Leader in this great conflict and war?
4. Who are the enemies and foes that we are warring against in his war?
5. What are the weapons with which we are called upon to fight?

### COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

We have another Bible teaching about this spiritual warfare that we want to add to this lesson. It is found in Revelation 19:11-16. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." The following scriptures show the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against him that sat upon the horse and his army. They

show how these opposing forces were defeated by Christ and His army and were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

How solemn and serious is this Bible lesson concerning the true warfare and conflict that we need to be engaged in! It is of eternal importance and value. If we refrain from its conflict and engage in other vanities of this fleeting mortal life, we will pay the awful price of being cast into the burning lake of fire that is pictured in the Bible. So let us be strong, put on the whole armor of God, and be true soldiers for our Captain Jesus Christ!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## **REFLECTIONS**

Many of the Christian's battles are fought and won right down on our knees. Jesus is our example. As he faced Calvary, His real battle was in the Garden of Gethsemane. Here he fought with his own will, heart, emotions, and flesh as his sweat poured out as great drops of blood. He was in agony as he understood the humiliation, suffering, and death He would soon face in fulfilling the will of God. He went a little farther and prayed, "...if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done. It is clear to us the agony he felt there was great. He continued praying until his full surrender to the will of God came and He knew it.

Our flesh, wants, and desires will cause us to fail if we don't overcome with a complete surrender into obedience to God. The ministers that have gone before us have often reminded and warned us that our #1 enemy is our own self. The natural thoughts and ways of humanity run contrary to the will of God.

There have been many battles that have waged in my heart and mind over the years and there will be many more to come. I have found that victory comes through surrender to God.

—Bro. Bob Wilson

**JUNE 22, 2014**

## **BRINGING FORTH SPIRITUAL FRUIT**

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:

and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it; that it may bring forth more fruit.

3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

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.

6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

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

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

18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

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

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

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

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

**MEMORY VERSE:** For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth. Ephesians 5:9.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** Every person is likened unto a tree because in each heart and life there is fruit brought forth in his speech, actions, attitudes, and ways. God is observing this fruit and will one great judgment day give to every one the just return of the fruit of his life. In Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, is found grace and spiritual life that will enable us to bring forth the same fruit that He brought forth in His life here on earth.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

John 15:1, "*husbandman*": Vine dresser.

Ver. 2 "*purgeth*": Prunes or takes away bad sprouts in branches.

Ver. 4 "*Abide*": Remain faithful.

Ver. 6 "*cast forth*": Cut off and thrown out.

Proverbs 11:30, "*winneth souls*": Draws, attracts, and helps people by the righteous fruit of their life.

12:14, "*satisfied with good*": Be richly blessed of God. "*by the fruit of his mouth*": By his wise and godly conversation and speech.

18:21, "*the power of the tongue*": How the tongue is handled and used.

Matthew 7:15, "*sheep's clothing*": Outwardly professing to be godly.

Ver. 16, "*by their fruits*": By what they bring forth in heart and life.

Ver. 17, "*corrupt*": Rotten, worthless, bad.

Galatians 5:22, "*love*": Pure affection and kindness. "*joy*": Cheerful delight. "*peace*": Calmness, quietness, and rest. "*longsuffering*": Patience and forbearance. "*gentleness*": Tender kindness. "*goodness*": Faithful virtue and benefit. "*faith*": Confidence and steadfast trust. "*meekness*": Gentleness and humility. "*temperance*": Unfailing self-control in conversation, in appetite, in attitudes, and in actions.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

The spiritual blessing that we have in our lesson for today could be one of the most important and serious of all, because



it not only is a benefit to one's own heart and life, but it is that which reaches out to others. As Jesus brought out in His wonderful counsel to His disciples, we are all fruit-bearing creatures like the vine. We are bringing forth in our words, actions, attitudes, and mannerisms some kind of fruit and influence. Therefore we need to be very much concerned about what kind of fruit we are bearing toward those around us.

One of the things mentioned in the lesson from Proverbs is that of the tongue and how important it is for us to bring it under control. That is one of the main things that we need to really take care of. How we talk, what we say, and the attitude we have, exert great bearing on those around us. God gave us a wonderful tool and ability to be able to talk and commune with others. But if we do not take heed to exercise godly care and discipline in controlling our words and power of speech, we may find ourselves being barred out of heaven. Do you remember what our Lord and Saviour said in Matthew 12:36 and 37? "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

There are other aspects to the fruit we bear in our lives. Where we go, what we do, and how we treat others has a great influence. Through faith and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, we can bring forth the fruits of the Spirit that we have listed from Galatians 5. We have a great field of activity and exercise in these worthy emblems of spiritual fruit and influence.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of fruit does God want to come forth from our lives?
2. What do we need to do to bear the fruit that is good and pleasing to God?
3. Why are we instructed to control our tongue and the words we speak?
4. What are the fruits of the Spirit that we should seek to manifest?
5. What is going to happen to people who bring forth evil fruit?

## COMMENTS AND APPLICATION

The kind of fruit we bear in our daily lives in our homes, at work, in our neighborhoods, and in all our relationships with our fellow creatures of earth is of vital importance before our great and Wise Creator. He wants His children who profess His name to bring forth in their conversation and actions the fruit of the Holy Spirit that is expressed in our text of scripture from Galatians 5:22 and 23. We must yield our hearts and lives completely to this precious Holy Spirit and learn how to speak and conduct ourselves in a manner that would be pleasing to Him and a blessing to others. It takes earnest daily prayers and special times of worship and fervent seeking the Lord and living close to Him. We want those fruits of the Spirit to be manifested in our daily conduct. There are trying things that we face, things that are unpleasant and provoking. We must be watchful and very diligent to control our words and attitudes to what is pleasing to God and not hurtful or discouraging to our fellowman.

James 3:2 says, "If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body." God is able to help us to control our tongue, but there are times when we may be chastened and corrected by the Holy Spirit concerning something we have spoken. Oh, how we must keep our heart and mind open to His reproof and correction! We are bringing forth fruit that our fellowmen of earth will notice. We need to seek the Lord for guidance and grace to keep ourselves in the love of God and control our feelings and thoughts in subjection to His will.

Natural fruit is a wonderful blessing! How we enjoy apples, peaches, grapes, plums, dates, figs, oranges, and other wonderful things that God has created for us to have and enjoy! Let us be diligent to bring forth and enjoy the spiritual fruit also for our good and the good of others.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

One of the most powerful prayers in the midst of suffering was uncovered from the horrors of Ravensbruck concentration camp. Ravensbruck was a concentration camp built in 1939 for women. It was in this place over 90,000 women and children perished, murdered by the Nazis. Corrie Ten Boom,

who wrote "The Hiding Place," was imprisoned there as well. A prayer found in the clothing of a dead child was as follows:

"O Lord, remember not only the men and woman of good will, but also those of ill will. But do not remember all of the suffering they have inflicted upon us: Instead, remember the fruits we have borne because of this suffering, our fellowship, our loyalty to one another, our humility, our courage, our generosity, the greatness of heart that has grown from this trouble. When our persecutors come to be judged by you, let all of these fruits that we have borne be their forgiveness."

As we face the hardships and trials life inevitably brings, let us be challenged that by the grace of God we bring forth the kind of fruit this child so beautifully expressed.

—Sis. Julie Elwell

**JUNE 29, 2014**

## **SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE**

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

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

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

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know

*them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,

21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

22 And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

23 Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

**MEMORY VERSE:** But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14.

**CENTRAL THOUGHT:** The blessings, treasures, and benefits of Almighty God are of eternal spiritual essence and cannot be received nor understood by the human mind. The inspiration and enlightenment of God's Holy Spirit, which is available for man to experience through His Son Jesus Christ, can be revealed and made wonderfully clear only through Him.

## WORD DEFINITIONS

1 Corinthians 2:6, "*perfect*": Complete and mature. "*princes of this world*": Human rulers. "*come to nought*": Will pass away.

Ver. 7, "*mystery*": Hidden secret. "*ordained*": Planned and purposed. "*unto our glory*": For our eternal happiness and welfare.

Ver. 10, "*revealed*": Opened up, disclosed, and uncovered. "*searcheth*": Investigates and seeks for.

Ver. 11, "*save*": Except.

Ver. 13, "*comparing*": To judge one thing in connection with

another.

Ver. 14, "*natural man*": The fleshly minded. "*foolishness*": absurd and silly.

Ver. 15, "*judgeth all things*": Discerns and understands both the natural and the spiritual.

Ver. 16, "*mind of Christ*": The understanding that our Saviour had.

Ephesians 1:18, "*eyes of our understanding*": Spiritual eyes of perception. "*enlightened*": Made to see. "*hope of his calling*": The bright future in eternal glory He has invited us to share with Him. "*his inheritance in the saints*": Christ's blessed wealth of eternal happiness with His Bride, the Church of God that is made up of holy, godly people that He redeemed with His own blood.

Ver. 19, "*the working of his mighty power*": The energy of the might of His strength and what all He can do for us.

Ver. 20, "*wrought in Christ*": Made available to and for us through the resurrection of Christ from the dead: victory, peace, joy, and bright hope.

Ver. 23, " *filleth all in all*": Filling all of those who are His with all that He has for them.

## LESSON BACKGROUND

What a wonderful and glorious lesson we have before us from the inspired writings of our beloved brother Paul! It is such a rich and inspiring blessing that makes all the material things that carnal man goes after just as trash and rubbish. It shows how blind and ignorant humanity can be the real essence of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. But it also declares how the precious Holy Spirit can and will reveal these spiritual eternal blessings to the hungry and thirsty hearts who earnestly seek for and open up to Him. How sad that the princes and rulers in Israel were so blinded and ignorant of the truth that was revealed in Jesus! As Paul said, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory had they known it. Then Paul quoted in reference to their ignorance from Isaiah 64:4. This shows how dark and ignorant mankind is in their fleshly worldly state of mind. Then he joyfully declares in our text from 1 Cor. 2:10 that God has revealed it to us by His Spirit. Oh, what a blessing and rich experience this can be for all who will be willing and obedient to the gospel of Jesus Christ! Yes, it is

true that the natural man in his fleshly and worldly frame of mind cannot take in and comprehend the heavenly things that the Spirit of God has to offer. We must repent of our sins and die to this lustful world and give our hearts wholly to God and seek earnestly for His rich blessings.

Paul was so thankful to God for the saints at Ephesus, and his prayer for them was that their eyes of understanding would be enlightened. Just notice in our lesson the things that he wanted them to know! These things he listed are still the treasures that we need to be seeking for today! We do not get them haphazardly or without diligent sincerity and prayer. We must study the Holy Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments and pray for God to reveal these wonderful truths to our understanding. No one is going to force us to do this, but we can do it on our own decision and purpose. May the Lord bless all who have a part in this study!

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

### **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do we need to have the things of God revealed by His Spirit?
2. What must we do to get in a right condition for God to do this?
3. What are some of the rich and wonderful things He wants to reveal?
4. Where is Christ now and how did He obtain this position of power?
5. What is He doing from His position at the right hand of God?

### **COMMENTS AND APPLICATION**

What wonderful blessings are being missed by the fleshly-minded society we live in today! With houses, cars, airplanes, sports, banks, business, and other money substances, people are all taken up and involved to where their minds and thoughts have no room nor intake for anything else. Styles, fads, fashions, books, magazines, television, and other interests add more to the list. But how blessed are the men and women who have found and sweetly obtained the spiritual relationship of their hearts and minds with the Almighty God and His precious Son, our Lord Jesus Christ!

To obtain these wonderful spiritual blessings that we have

been studying in this series of Bible Lessons a person must seek the Lord in earnest prayer and true repentance and give up sin and the world. One must seek God with the whole heart and have an open mind to the Holy Bible and the standard of life and character that it teaches. It must be the uppermost purpose and desire of their heart. I can testify that I truly sought the Lord in that sincere whole-hearted way, and He has blessed my soul with these spiritual blessings down through the years. It is surely worth all the endeavor and earnest seeking one can put forth to make a spiritual contact with the Lord and have Him reveal Himself so sweetly and clearly.

—Bro. Leslie Busbee

## REFLECTIONS

"The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." James 3:17

When you want the best, you reach for the one that says 100% pure. God's wisdom is to be sought above all others, for it is pure and holy--it will meet the needs of the human soul in any age, any society or any circumstance. Our land is full of halls of learning that teach philosophy. Shelves are loaded with self-help books. There are counselors available to help with a myriad of problems, but the true wisdom that satisfies the deep-seated longing in the soul of man can only come through the Spirit of God.

God's wisdom runs counter to human understanding. Through humility and repentance we receive redemption. Forgiving our enemies brings liberty. Rejoicing in the midst of the battle brings victory. The wisdom of God combined with His power is a formidable force the world cannot withstand. It was the wisdom of God that instructed Joshua to march the children of Israel around Jericho for seven days and then shout as the walls fell. Again it was God who told Gideon to only take three hundred men to conquer the Midianite army. The wisdom of Christ continually confounded the Scribes and Pharisees as they endeavored to catch him with trick questions. The people marveled at the wisdom with which He spoke and the authority with which He taught.

Our children and young people who grow up in homes where the Bible is taught and its precepts practiced will enter their adult years primed for success. They have a great

advantage over others because they have profited by the wisdom of the scriptures in knowing how to handle interpersonal relationships, how to control their tongues, thoughts and actions. The wisdom of God will stand the test of eternity.

—Sis. Patsy Smith



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