



MAP ♦ 575 US Highway 250 ♦ Greenwich, OH 44837 ♦ (419) 962-1515 ♦ November 2020

The General Epistle of James

Teacher's Outline and Study Bible™

<p>1. Ask wisdom of God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. God gives generously b. God does not scold c. Ask in faith never doubting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Doubting is illustrated by the waves of the sea 2) Doubting receives nothing 3) Doubting shows instability 	<p>B. The Way to Conquer Trials & Temptation, 1:5-12</p> <p>5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.</p> <p>6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.</p> <p>7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.</p> <p>8. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.</p>	<p>9. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:</p> <p>10. But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.</p> <p>11. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.</p> <p>12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.</p>	<p>2. Rejoice in your status</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Because the poor believer is exalted by Christ. b. Because the rich believer is humbled by Christ. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.) The rich face a danger: False security 2.) The body of the rich ages & dies: Illustrated by the burning heat of the sun 3) The pursuits of the rich fade away <p>3. Remember the reward for persevering: a crown of life</p>
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Section I

TEMPTATIONS AND TRIALS: THE BASIC FACTS

James 1:2-27

STUDY 2: THE WAY TO CONQUER TRIALS AND TEMPTATION

TEXT: James 1:5-12

AIM: To develop a strategy for conquering trials and temptations.

MEMORY VERSE:

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (James 1:12).

INTRODUCTION:

Trials and temptations are common to us all. We all suffer such burdens as...

- pain
- separation
- hurt
- death
- sickness
- divorce
- emptiness
- disease
- disappointment
- loneliness

And we all face such temptation as...

- immorality • lust • untruthfulness
- greed • dishonesty • anger

The lists could go on and on. What is the worst trial you are facing—right now?

What is the worst temptation—the one that swarms in upon you and overcomes you and leads you into sin? Is there an escape? Is there a way to overcome the trial? the temptation? A way that can assure victory and deliverance? There certainly is, but the way is found only in wisdom from God. You cannot escape temptation by “turning over a new leaf,” reading a self-help book, or getting the latest therapy. A person must put all his faith in God in order to conquer temptation. This is the subject of this passage: *The way to conquer trials and temptations*.

OUTLINE:

1. Ask wisdom of God (vv.5-8).
2. Rejoice in your status (vv.9-11).
3. Remember the reward for enduring: a crown of life (v.12).

1. ASK WISDOM OF GOD (vv.5-8)

How can a believer conquer trials and temptations? First, he must ask wisdom of God. Wisdom means far more than just knowledge, far more than just being intellectual about life or some area of life. Knowledge is the grasping of facts, and most people in the world have heads full of facts.

- ⇒ Just think of all the schools in the world: schools for children, schools for young people, schools for men and women, schools for tradesman.
- ⇒ Think of the millions of farmers, scientists, business people, tradesmen, mechanics, contractors, physicians, and on and on.

Millions and millions of us are knowledgeable. But when coping with the trials and temptations of life, something more than a head full of facts is needed. Being a knowledgeable person is not enough in order to be a victorious and fulfilled person. Wisdom is what is needed. But what does the Bible mean by wisdom? Wisdom is not only seeing and knowing about life, it is seeing and knowing what to do about life.

Wisdom grasps the great truths of life. It sees the trials and temptations that surround life and death, God and man, time and

eternity, good and evil—the deep things of the universe and of God. But wisdom not only grasps these facts, wisdom knows what to do about them, and then does it. Wisdom not only understands the trials and temptations, but it understands how to conquer them and then does it. Wisdom acts and conquers and gains the victory over the trials and temptations.

Now, if we lack that kind of wisdom—if we do not understand, if we do not know how to conquer life or some trial and temptation—then there is one sure way to get the wisdom:

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...and it shall be given him” (Js.1:5).

Asking wisdom of God is the way to conquer the trials and temptations of life. Now, note two significant points.

1. Note the wonderful promises made to us when we ask God for wisdom.

- ⇒ God will give us wisdom.
- ⇒ God will give us a liberal amount, an abundance of wisdom.
- ⇒ God will not reproach or rebuke us—not scold us—for not knowing how to handle the trial or temptation. The idea is that God will not even question us for lacking wisdom and for not knowing what to do.

God loves us; we are His sons and daughters. He is our Father, and He wants to meet our every need. Therefore, God will hear our request and our cry; He will give us the wisdom to conquer the trials and temptations of life.

2. Note a critical fact: we have a responsibility. We must do something, and whether God hears us depends upon our doing this one thing. If we do it, God hears us and gives us wisdom to conquer the trials and temptations. If we do not do it, God cannot hear us. What is it that we must do? When we ask God to give us wisdom to conquer some trial or temptation, we must ask in faith and not waver. We must believe that God loves and cares for us, that He will hear our cries and prayers and meet our every need. When we pray and cry out to God, we cannot doubt; that is, we cannot ask and then...

- wonder if God really exists
- wonder if God is really going to hear
- wonder if God can really do what we ask
- wonder if we know God well enough for Him to hear us
- wonder if the request is the will of God

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Such doubting cannot be heard by God. God cannot answer the prayer of a doubting person. If He did, then He would be rewarding doubt—rewarding those who do not believe or trust Him. He would be rewarding those who ignore, neglect, question and, in many cases, curse, deny, and fight against Him. God cannot hear and answer a person who wavers in his faith. We must believe that God is, that He exists, and that He does love and care for us. We must believe that He will hear and answer us when we ask for wisdom to face the trials and temptations of life.

“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (He.11:6).

Note what Scripture says about the person who wavers in faith.

a. First, the person is just like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed to and fro.

b. Second, the person will not receive anything of the Lord. Why? Because a person who wavers back and forth does not know the value of God’s gifts. If God granted them, the person would not always use them nor would he use the gifts as they should be used. If God gave the wisdom to a person to conquer the trials and temptations of life, the person might or might not use it or might use it irregularly. He might misuse it or abuse it. Therefore, the person who wavers in faith will not receive anything from God.

c. Third, the person who wavers in faith is a double-minded person, and he is unstable in all his ways. A person who wavers in faith lives a life that is up and down, back and forth. His whole behavior, including his prayer life, is unstable and unreliable. He is like a person with two minds: he is not sure; he is uncertain; he feels yes and then he feels no. He believes, then he disbelieves.

ILLUSTRATION:

*It was a good answer that was once given by a poor woman to a minister who asked her, “What is faith?” She replied: “I am ignorant, and I cannot answer well, but I think it is taking God at His Word.”*¹⁰

May the Lord help us to remember this simple and wonderful truth: God is always true to His Word. What pearls of wisdom!

¹⁰ Richard A. Steele, Jr. and Evelyn Stoner. Practical Bible Illustrations from Yesterday and Today. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1996), #402.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. In practical terms, how is wisdom different from knowledge?**
- 2. Why do we need wisdom to be able to conquer trials?**
- 3. Tell about a time when God gave you just the wisdom you needed.**
- 4. What kinds of instability come from not fully trusting in God?**

2. REJOICE IN YOUR STATUS (vv.9-11)

How can a believer conquer trials and temptations? The believer must rejoice in his status in life. Whether a person is poor or rich, healthy or unhealthy, crippled or sound, he is to rejoice in the Lord.

1. First, the believer of lowly status is to rejoice in the Lord. This does not mean that he is to rejoice because he is poor, unhealthy, or crippled. It means that he rejoices in Christ despite the circumstances—no matter how terrible. Christ loves the lowly person. Christ has saved the lowly person and has promised to exalt him as a king and prince throughout all eternity. Therefore, the believer of lowly status is to have a spirit that is as strong as the spirit of a king and prince. A lowly person who does not allow his status to defeat him but, rather, conquers his status develops a strong, strong spirit. He develops such a strong spirit that with the wisdom of God he can conquer any trial or temptation thrown against him.

2. Second, the believer of rich or high status in life is to rejoice in that he is made low by God. What does this mean?

a. First, a rich or high person is not accepted by God because of who he is or what he has. His rich and high status means absolutely nothing to God. Even if he were the ruler and owner of the whole earth, it would mean nothing to God. What is such status or wealth in comparison to the whole universe? The rich and high have to approach God bare—as nothing and as having nothing—approach Him as a little child, poor and without anything. This is the only way God accepts any person; therefore, the rich and high are no better off than the poor and lowly. All men—no matter their status in life—stand before God as equals. Let the rich and high rejoice in God and in the fact that God accepts him, not in his rich and high status.

b. Second, a rich and high person must use all that he has and is—all of his riches and high influence—to help

Continued on Next Page

meet the desperate needs of the starving, impoverished, diseased, homeless, sinful, dying, and lost of the world. This is a fact that is neglected, ignored, explained away, and in some cases denied. Nevertheless, let the Word of God be true and every man a liar—as Scripture says. It is the clear teaching of Scripture (see Mt.19:16-22; 19:23-26; 19:27-30). The rich and high are to give and live just as sacrificially in meeting the needs of the lost and needy of the world as the middle and lower classes of society. They are to use all to meet the desperate needs of this world for the gospel and for food, water, medicine, education, clothing, and housing. Note what this passage says: the rich and high must remember a critical fact:

“For he remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again” (Ps.78:39).

ILLUSTRATION:

How many people—rich or otherwise—when facing death try to bargain with God? How many would trade their wealth for more time?

The famous author, Oscar Wilde, once wisely noted, “No man is rich enough to buy back his past.” Truly, we have only one chance to make the most of each day, then it is gone.

QUESTIONS:

1. **No matter what our status in life, what should be our attitude toward trials and temptations? What reasons do you have to rejoice today?**
2. **Why is it important not to seek to exalt ourselves?**
3. **If any person wants to be accepted by God, what attitude is absolutely necessary?**
4. **What spiritual good can you do with your earthly possessions?**

3. REMEMBER THE REWARD FOR PERSEVERING: A CROWN OF LIFE (v.12)

How can a believer conquer trials and temptations? He must remember the reward for enduring. He will be blessed and will receive a crown of life. Note exactly what is said.

1. The person who endures temptation will be “blessed.” The word “blessed” here refers to this life, to the here and now. The word blessed refers to inward and spiritual joy and satisfaction; an inner assurance and confidence that carries one through all

the trials and temptations of life no matter the pain, sorrow, loss, or grief. Simply stated, the person is secure in this life. He knows that God is looking after and caring for him and is going to deliver him from all the corruption and evil of this life including death, giving him life eternal.

“He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.” (Lu.6:48).

2. The person will receive the crown of life in the next world. What is the crown of life? Life itself is the crown.¹¹ The believer who endures the temptations of this life will be crowned with eternal life—life that will go on and on, never ending. The eternal life given to the believer will shine more brightly than all the earthly crowns ever worn by the rulers of this world.

APPLICATION:

Just imagine the actual moment when Christ crowns us with the crown of life. Being crowned...

will fill us with unbroken joy and rejoicing

will bestow upon us honor and dignity

will give us a deep and perfect sense of victory and triumph

will conform us to the image of eternal royalty

“And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life” (1 Jn.2:25).

3. The person who endures trials and temptations is the person who will be blessed and receive the crown of life. But endurance is an absolute essential. A person has to confront the trials and temptations with the spirit of a conqueror; he has to...

- endure
- stand fast
- persist
- persevere
- carry on
- stick with it
- be steadfast
- keep trying

He has to conquer and triumph through Christ Jesus our Lord, and then he will receive the promises of God. A person has to be tried and tested and has to prove faithful. He has to endure to the end in order to be saved and to inherit the crown of life.

ILLUSTRATION:

What a marvelous reward awaits the genuine believer. The human mind cannot imagine what lies in store. As the Apostle Paul wrote, “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” (1 Co.2:9). D.L. Moody described heaven this way:

¹¹ A.T. Robertson. Word Pictures in the New Testament, Vol.6, p.17.

The paradise of Eden was as nothing compared with [heaven]. ... Think of a place where temptation cannot come. Think of a place where we will be free from sin; where pollution cannot enter, and where the righteous shall reign forever. Think of a city ... without griefs or graves, without sins or sorrows.¹²

How beautiful and glorious heaven will be! Do not miss out on your heavenly reward for the corruptible things of this world!

QUESTIONS:

- 1. What does the Bible mean by the word “blessed” in v.12? What are some examples of these blessings in your life?
- 2. What temptations are keeping you from receiving the crown of life? What can you do about them?
- 3. How would you rate your level of endurance? Is it strong enough to survive and overcome to the end?

SUMMARY:

Trials and temptations often flood in upon us. In a weak moment, endurance seems impossible, not to mention victory. Even the Apostle Paul felt this way and prayed he would not go through such experiences. Nevertheless, Paul was assured that God’s grace was all he needed to make it through the trial (2 Co.12:9). We have the examples of Paul and many other strong Christians when we face difficult times. But even more important, we have the great example of Christ Himself. And Christ promises to help us whenever we call out to Him. With His help, we can endure any trial, no matter how terrible. Our task is to follow the steps spelled out in this passage:

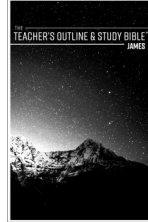
- 1. Ask wisdom of God.
- 2. Rejoice in your status.
- 3. Remember the reward for enduring: a crown of life.

PERSONAL JOURNAL NOTES:
(Reflection and Response)

- 1. The most important thing that I learned from this lesson was:
- 2. The thing that I need to work on the most is:
- 3. I can apply this lesson to my life by:
- 4. Closing Prayer of Commitment:

END

¹² John W. Reed. 1100 Illustrations from the Writings of D. L. Moody. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1990), p.137.



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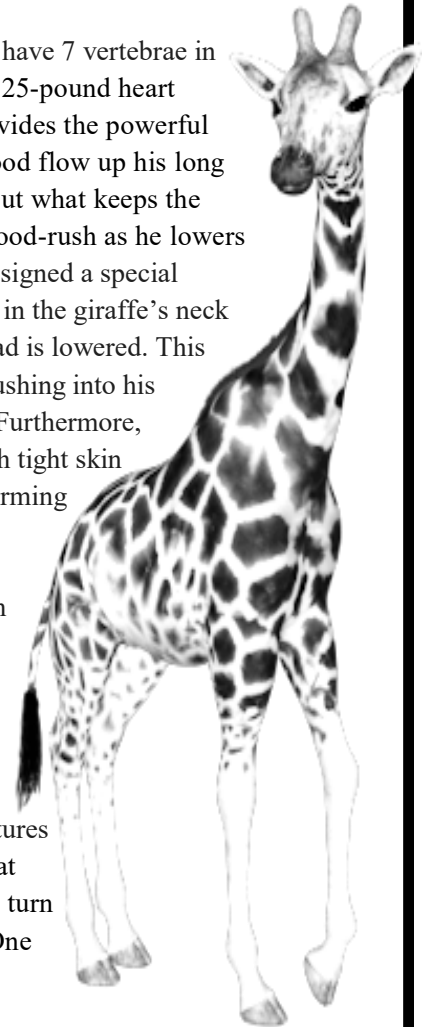
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Did You Know?

Both giraffes and humans have 7 vertebrae in their necks! The giraffe’s 25-pound heart measures 2’ long and provides the powerful thrust needed to make blood flow up his long neck and into his brain. But what keeps the giraffe from a massive blood-rush as he lowers his head to drink? God designed a special system of one-way valves in the giraffe’s neck that constrict when his head is lowered. This prevents the blood from rushing into his brain and causing injury! Furthermore, God designed giraffes with tight skin on their necks and legs, forming a compression-sock effect that keeps blood from pooling in their legs which would cause the giraffe to pass out when he raises his head back up! God is the Master Designer! He lovingly and thoughtfully designed each of His creatures so that we would marvel at their complexity and then turn our worship back to the One who alone is worthy!



“For I say to you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven”
(Matthew 5:20).

Am I a Pharisee? I recently found myself asking this question while reading in the book of Matthew. No, I haven't rejected Jesus Christ, Savior of the world, as the Pharisees did. And I don't do good things so that other men will admire me. But, I noticed something in this passage that stood out to me – Jesus was warning the Pharisees that they were doing the little things, but yet they were *omitting* [not doing] the weightier matters of the law.

You see, it's easier for me to do what's right in some things – usually little things that I can do with a sense of satisfaction and self-fulfillment. It's the bigger things God requires that are often the things I'd rather pretend God doesn't require.

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

It's relatively easy to pay a tithe. A real tithe is a full 10% of income, and writing a check is not all that hard to do unless one is a tightwad. I don't think I'm a tightwad, but even this little matter of giving back to the Lord is not always easy. But if I have trouble with the little things, how much harder are the *weightier matters*?

Judgment: Am I really fair in my dealings with others? Am I truly honest in word and deed? *“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth”* (1 John 3:18). Not gossiping about others, especially about

people we don't get along with particularly well, is perhaps the most difficult area in which we ought to be judging more fairly. There are always two sides to every story, yet how often do we actually find ourselves stopping a gossipy conversation by saying that we ought to first talk to our brother before talking to others? Even more than that, we ought to pray for each other and speak generously to the people we may otherwise be tempted to gossip about.

This word "judgment" isn't only about speaking fairly about others, but truly being fair in all details of life and interaction with others. What a big thing this one is! Yet, praise God, with Christ all things are possible.

Mercy: Am I truly merciful? *“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”* (Matthew 5:46, 48). By sending His Son to die for us while we were yet sinners, God proved that He is merciful beyond what we deserve, and Scripture makes it clear that because that is what God did for us, we should be merciful towards others.

Oddly, I've found that it's actually easier to be merciful to strangers than to those who are close to me. It hurts most when the ones I love hurt me. It's easier to send money to feed the poor, or to forgive the stranger when he harms me. But when a family member or a church brother says something unkind about me, it hurts! Imagine how much it must hurt God when His own children rebel against Him, rejecting His son, or not truly being kind to their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Faith: *“But without faith it is impossible to please him”* (Hebrews 11:6a). Do I have real faith – faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and faith that withstands the

storms of life? It's so easy to fall into a routine. A routine of getting up in the morning, spending a half hour reading the Bible and praying, and then working the rest of the day (often stopping only to eat). A routine that doesn't seem to require much faith.

Do I have enough faith to truly appreciate Christ's sacrifice for my sins? *“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation”* (Hebrews 2:3).

Do I have enough faith to stop and pray when I encounter problems throughout the day? *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”* (Philippians 4:6).

Do I have enough faith to talk about Christ to others? *“For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels”* (Luke 9:26).

Do I have faith which allows me to obey the greatest commandment, the commandment which empowers me to overcome sin, which empowers me to love others as God loves me? *“Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind’”* (Matthew 22:37).

Lord, create in me a clean heart.
Open my eyes if I am only doing lip service to You instead of following You in word and deed.
Please change me and make me willing to follow You, help me truly obey You in the weightier matters of the law, and to not leave judgement, mercy, and faith undone. Amen.

Christian, or Disciple?

—by John Weaver

Many people consider themselves to be a Christian. A lot less people would say that they are disciples of Jesus. Jesus never used the word ‘Christian,’ but He often used the word ‘disciple.’ He used this word not only for the twelve men who followed Him, but also for anyone else who followed him, or anyone who would follow him in the future.

A disciple is a follower, a learner, or an imitator. The last words of Jesus, just before He ascended into Heaven, were to those who were with Him. He told them to go into all the world and teach people to observe all of the things that He had taught, and in that way, they would be making disciples of Him.

Jesus gave at least three different characteristics of being a disciple of His. One of the best known is found in John 13:35: “*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*”

Another is in John 8:31b-32: “*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.”

And another verse is John 15:8: “*Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*”

So, a disciple of Jesus will have radical love for others. He will continue in the Word (walk in obedience), and he will bear much fruit.

A few things that Jesus said will prevent someone from being His disciples:

- If you are not willing to forsake parents, siblings, wife, and children, then you cannot be His disciple.
- Whoever is not willing to bear his cross cannot be His disciple.
- Whoever is not willing to forsake all that he has, cannot be His disciple.

Every true and real Christian will be a disciple of His, even if he or she is described as radical. We should consider it an honor to be called ‘odd’ or ‘out-of-touch’ or whatever else we may be labeled. The early disciples of Jesus rejoiced right after being beaten for preach-

ing about Jesus, because they were privileged to suffer for their Savior!

Today, we hear more about ‘radical Islam’ than we do about ‘radical Christianity.’ If people who follow a false religion are radical about it, how much more should those who follow the real deal be radical?

Jesus told us to be both a light to the world, and the salt of the earth - two very good things. But He also warned that salt can lose its effectiveness, and a light can be hidden under a bushel.

Paul described what it meant to be a disciple of Jesus when he said, “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me*” (Galatians 2:20).

Jesus was willing to die for me and you. Certainly, it is just a reasonable service for us to give ourselves as a living sacrifice for Him who died for us. Amen!

Wealth and Power

—by Joe Keim

Have you ever asked yourself: Why are the ungodly so blessed with wealth? As of May 17, 2020, Jeff Bezos (Head of Amazon) tops out at \$145.4B. Bill Gates, at #2, is worth 104.8B. Mark Zuckerberg, at #4, is worth 77.8B. Between the three, they have 326 billion dollars.

I always thought that with lots of money comes lots of power. I also wondered, if money equals power, why does God not bless His people with lots of money?

Imagine the impact Jeff, Bill and Mark could have in our world if they were truly born of God and serving Jesus Christ! \$326B dollars would send a lot of missionaries out, buy an immense number of Bibles and literature for distribution.

But then it crossed my mind, if it were God's people who owned \$326B dollars,

we would, without a doubt, rely on our own wealth, our own power, and our own strength, instead of relying on God.

Here's another thought: The raw power of \$326B does not compare with the power of the Holy Spirit. In all honesty, you could put the world's 2,095 billionaires and their money together and it would NOT hold a drop of power when compared to the power that comes from just one individual full of the Holy Spirit.

Jeff, Bill, and Mark don't stand a chance. Not even an inkling of a chance, unless of course, the people of God quench and hold the Holy Spirit back.

Rise up child of God! Rise up church! Rise up and let the Holy Spirit flow from your blood and bones. If you don't know how, read the Book of Acts. Read Ro-

mans 8. What these men and women did is phenomenal! Mind boggling! These were men and women, just like you and me. If God could do it through them, He can also do it through us. Amen!?

Acts 8:17-21 says: “*Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God.*”

While at the grocery store this morning, I was observing all the people walking around in the parking lot. I noticed signs pointing to the fact that there was only one door we would be allowed to enter, and signs stating that you must have a mask to enter.

As I watched the people walking around slowly with their masks on, the Lord asked me a question. "My son, what do you see?" I immediately saw people as puppets with no voice. It was as if they were silenced and moving in slow motion. As I walked up to the door, no longer was it a grocery store employee, but a security guard. This security guard's job was to make sure a mask was on before you entered. No words were spoken between us at all. As I walked around the corner, there was a store employee on an iPad marking the fact that I was a number entering the store. Again, no words were spoken.

I gathered my items, purchased them, and left the store. As I walked out the only exit door, I immediately knew that people were being groomed for a future day. There is coming a time when you will have to receive a mark to buy or sell. Instead of a mask, it will be a chip. Instead of an employee marking you as a number, you will have a number. It will all be the same number, #666 (ONE WORLD ORDER).

When I got home, I looked up the definition of what I saw. Puppet - a person, party, or state under the control of another person, group, or power.

I am thankful that I see what hour we are in. I'm also thankful that I won't be here when the Anti-Christ is revealed. Yet I'm saddened for those left behind that will experience those days ahead.

"And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in

their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name" (Revelation 13:16-17).

I have studied the Bible a lot in my life, in many different forms, and it really does always come down to this. I have been hearing about the second coming of Christ and the events unfolding since I was a kid. The "Mark of the Beast." Microchips. No cash, just plastic.

Marshall Law. TOTAL government dependency and control. When we are raising a family, working long hours, - some two jobs - lots of things go unnoticed or just get ignored.

No one can comprehend how bad it will be until it is. We have NEVER been told to stay home, quit work, and rely on the government. We are seeing a lot of "firsts" since January. Can our minds and bodies handle what is coming? Not without God.

I wonder which doctor they will have on the news explaining the rapture and the disappearance of so many people? I will not be here for it, but it is just a thought.

While the devil is preparing people for the Anti-Christ, God is preparing people for the rapture. I do not know when the rapture will take place, but I do believe it could be soon. And I KNOW that I won't

be left behind when that trumpet sounds!

I also believe right now that God is giving us a chance to repent. We need to get the Gospel message out!!! Until the Good Lord calls me away from this world to go home, I want to make it clear that I believe in Jesus Christ as the one and only True Lord and Savior. Even though I am human, and I fail a lot, I believe that Jesus is the Son of God. I believe that He came as a baby. I believe that He died on the cross as a sacrifice for



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our sins and that He rose from the dead on the third day, and He is now in Heaven preparing a place for all of those who believe and trust Him as their Savior. He loves us all dearly - far more than we deserve - and forgives our sins when we repent.

God's Word says, *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have ever lasting life"* (John 3:16).

The Bible also says, *"But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven"* (Matthew 10:33).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Please get right with Jesus!!

END

Feedback and Response

1

Just a few lines to thank you for this publication. I enjoyed it very much! I hope to be kept on your mailing list. 25 years ago my dad said he feels our Amish people are losing what our forefathers believed. To live for God and not just follow the Amish ordnung, but to realize it's a separate thing. Our ordnung, I feel, is very necessary, but our Love for God and accepting Jesus as our Saviour is what will let us see heaven. Your magazine is very well written, and I feel very needed. Sincerely, BR

Thank you for your kind words, BR.

We are glad that you enjoy the *Amish Voice*. You are quite right—living for God begins in the heart. It certainly is not wrong to make a list of guidelines to help keep us disciplined and on the right path in following Jesus, but when we begin to think that we are good people and are on the way to heaven because we follow a list of rules, then we

know we have left the narrow path that leads to heaven.

The apostle Paul was incredibly good at following his religious list of rules, but God opened his eyes and he saw the truth that outward obedience to manmade rules has nothing at all to do with holiness or pleasing God. Rather, Paul learned that we do not get to heaven by following rules or being religious,

but by realizing that we are guilty, condemned sinners who can do nothing to make ourselves clean—so must trust completely in Jesus Christ alone and His righteousness. Then, once our hearts are made new, we will love and serve and obey Him gladly and tell others of His truth and love.

Keep following Jesus and loving God and others! —Paul Miller

2

It irritates me greatly to see how people twist & turn & leave some things out of scripture so they don't have to feel guilty. AM

Thank you for your letter, AM.

We often print articles by others who might have a different perspective on some things. It is okay to disagree. We will not agree with everyone on everything. Peter and Paul did not always agree. Paul and Barnabas did not always agree. The religious leaders certainly did not often agree with Jesus. Even some of our forefathers did not always agree with each other.

Is the answer, then, to condemn and turn away, or is a better way to go to the Scriptures in love, seek God and His Word together, and look for God's truth? Rather than rejecting something because it is not what we

were taught to believe, let us go to the Holy Scriptures and search.

That is what Jesus demonstrated for us. He taught us to search the Scriptures. Even when confronted by Satan, Jesus told him what the Scriptures said. He told the religious leaders that they were wrong because they did not know the Scriptures or the power of God. Jesus told the devout, religious people that they were wrong for following their tradition while ignoring what the Scriptures said.

Let us not make those same mistakes. Let us go directly to the Bible and see what God's Word actually says. If you disagree with

an article, rather than getting irritated and telling us that we are wrong and rejecting the entire *Amish Voice*, pray for us. Go to the Scriptures, seek God, and then show us from the Bible where you think we erred, twisted and turned or left out scripture. God tells us that His Word is like a fire, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces. It takes love, effort and kindness to seek to help others walk more closely with God. That is our desire for you, and we hope that is your desire for us.

We look forward to hearing from you. Keep seeking the truth and love of Jesus Christ.

—Paul Miller

I grew up as a tiny girl on a dairy farm in an Amish Mennonite community in Canada. One of my main goals and dreams in life was to be the best wife that I could possibly be. I would always be willing to serve. I would keep a very clean house, always serve wonderful meals, and never say a disrespectful or unkind word to or about my husband. I would go where he went, stay where he stayed, and his people would be my people, and his God my God.

When I grew up and did marry at age 21, I threw my heart and soul into this relationship. I opened my heart wide, gave everything, and took responsibility for a lot of things that weren't my fault because I wanted to be sure to give my 100 percent. After all, didn't a godly wife have great power to help her husband find healing? Wasn't it her job to keep him happy? Many times I gave in to what he wanted for the sake of peace. The only problem? I began to lose pieces of my own personality in the marriage.

Marriage was not intended to be a union where one partner loses themselves. It is the melding of two souls into one, not one soul overtaking another.

The sad thing is, I am learning it is not only Amish Mennonite girls who are taught things about marriage that are not true. In almost every Christian Church in the world, throughout generations, women have been taught that they have the power to change their husbands (with the Lord's help, of course). They are taught that they can turn their marriages around. They are taught that if they are always respectful, the marriage will go well.

Now don't get me wrong, women do hold great power to bring change. Women can help their husbands find great healing. We all need to lay aside what we want many times in a marriage. But, and this is the question of the hour, why is it that

churches are heaping so much responsibility onto women for the sake of the marriage relationship?

I have listened to many a sermon on the man being the head of the wife, and the wife needing to submit to him. But when it comes to taking any responsibility, suddenly the wife is called to task. And granted, there are some women who really need to be called to task. We ALL, male or female, are responsible for our OWN actions. (This will be mentioned again in a bit - so stay tuned.) But for now, can we focus on the word "head" for a bit. Some of you are simply going to have to humor me for a few minutes. In the Greek language, there are a couple of different meanings for the word "head," and one of them means 'source,' and the other means 'authority' as in a military way. Contrary to popular belief and opinion, the original Greek word used in ancient manuscripts was not the one that meant 'authority' (because that one was used only for purposes such as the military), but the one that meant 'source.' During translation, since there was confusion, the wrong definition was used.

Now before we begin to argue on how accurate my information is here, that isn't the main point. For just a few minutes, humor me and ask yourself, "If this is the case, how would this change the way I view roles in marriage?"

Ok, so I am not going to shove new doctrine down your throat. But let's say, for the sake of those who simply cannot believe such a translation error could have occurred, that the original texts written in the Septuagint (original Bible) actually meant 'military authority.' I still would ask you, what happens when an entire regiment of soldiers is disorderly?? Who is called to task for it? What's that? A little louder please! That's right! The leader of that regiment.

Now let me ask this - why is it that when a home is disorderly, the wife is the one who usually gets the blame? When the wife isn't happy, why is she always told she should lower her expectations? (There are times this is necessary, and there are cranky and ungrateful women in this world.)

Why are women given so much responsibility for the health of the marriage? Yes, I am aware that one person can singlehandedly do a lot to make or break her marriage. But, by and large, in churches all over North America at the very least, when there are issues in the marriage (even abuse) and women go to ask for help, they are asked questions such as:

- What are you doing to cause him to get angry?
- Are you being respectful and submissive?
- Are you doing your part?
- Do you pray for him?
- Do you speak words of encouragement to him?
- What could you do to help him?

Now some of these questions are good. The issue with this is - are we truly aware of what it actually takes for MOST women to come and admit she isn't happy in her marriage?

Usually by this time she has wept and prayed hours and hours. She has read the good marriage books and tried building her husband up with positive words. She has communicated her heart. She has often tried everything she could think of and she is desperate. To be asked these questions at that point is very painful.

So, what am I suggesting? If you are concerned that I am going to blame it all on the poor husband, you can relax now. I won't do that. I know it takes two to

make a marriage work. I know there are many marriages where there are issues with the wife. Women are, after all, human too.

But I don't believe that we are aware of the damage being done in churches today, that has happened for generations because of too much pressure and responsibility being put on women in marriages. Even abusive marriages.

I personally know of a woman (and have heard so many similar stories) whose husband is extremely abusive and selfish. She had to leave the home with her children for safety, and yet people feel sorry for the husband and ask her if she couldn't at least cook him some home cooked meals and speak positive words of encouragement to him. What? Folks, let's think here. SHE had to leave her home for her safety. SHE had to live in someone else's home with her children because her husband is not a safe man. Do we really think that she should make him meals to make it easier for him? This man needs to grow up and take responsibility FOR HIS OWN ACTIONS and get help. This woman should not be given any more responsibility at this time

than to rest and take care of her children.

Now I know I'm already probably about to get kicked out here, but since I have the floor, I'm going to take this one step further. (I know - a lot of nerve, right?)

Let's go back to the husband being the head. If the husband is the head and if the head means 'authority,' and if we think the buck must stop with him, who is really responsible? It seems to me, in today's world, we have a lot of little boys in big, grown up bodies who want all the fun and privileges of marriage, but none of the responsibility. As a result, we have a lot of tired, haggard women taking responsibility for a lot of things that really are not their problem in the first place.

If we want to get serious about roles in marriage, the Word tells us pretty clearly that the husband's role is one of provider, protector, leader, and the woman's role is one of helper. Why is she helper? Because God saw that it was not good for the man to be alone. He saw that man was not complete alone. So He gave him a helper suitable for him. The word helper used in Hebrew for wives is the same word that was used when Jesus told

us that God gave us the Holy Spirit to be our helper.

Women are not created to be slaves or servants. Women are created with an intuition - a gentle, nurturing side that brings wholeness to the marriage when allowed. This side of her can and does help her man to heal if she allows herself to be used and if the husband allows himself to be vulnerable enough to let her in.

The husband carries a strength, a safety, and a protecting ability that also heals his wife when he allows himself to be used and if the woman will allow herself to be vulnerable. These things are not intended for us to use in a way that we take advantage of each other, but that we work at together in harmony, each person bringing their gifts to the table to offer freely for the benefit of all, not to take from one another.

When we get right down to it, I am responsible for my actions and you are responsible for yours. We cannot blame those on each other. We need to lay down our walls and become vulnerable and safe places for each other in order for this marriage thing to work.

Don't Blame Satan!

—by Eli Lee

Recently, I am seeing and hearing so much about looking at the positive and not the negative - which is good. So let's quit giving the devil credit for messing up our lives, and start praising God for allowing the amount of trouble in our lives that it takes for us to grow into a deeper relationship with Him!

After all, God has sufficient power to block all of the attacks of the enemy in our lives. It's not a lack of power. Some might think, "So He must not care about Satan beating me up." This is a lie from the devil!

So if God really does have the power, and does love and care enough about us to

keep us out of harm's way, then why doesn't He?

Because He loves us enough not to! He knows that if we didn't have trouble and hardships in our lives, we would seldom seek Him. Not to mention that many of those terrible things that happen to us are a direct result of our own choice to listen to the voice of our enemy, and do things our way instead of being obedient to the instructions that He gave us.

He really does love us that much! It is a depth of love that many will never understand, because they choose to not seek Him and praise Him in the midst of their trouble.

*"Trust in the LORD with all
thine heart; and lean not unto
thine own understanding. In all
thy ways acknowledge him, and
he shall direct thy paths"*

Proverbs 3:5-6

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

Psalms 23:4

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November

The Message of Christmas

(part 1 of 2)

First announced to shepherds centuries ago, the wonderful news of the Savior's birth is still being proclaimed to our world today! There are no limits to the incredible love of God as He continues to reach out to people with the message of hope. Gain a new appreciation for this life-changing truth and for the importance of sharing it with others who need to know Christ. (Message by Charles Stanley.)

Win the Heart of Your Children

Have you a desire and passion to be Godly parents? Do you have the heart of your child? Paul Washer shares the importance of being a Godly dad to your children and mother. You are training them for the future. They are learning from someone, and usually it is their friends or school.

Turning Anger from a Foe to a Friend

(part 1 of 2)

Are you tired of the bursts of anger that leave loved ones hurting and friendships reeling? Would you like to quit losing your temper? Chip Ingram encourages you that it's not only possible to control your temper, but you can actually turn your anger from a foe to a friend.

What is Faith?

(Parts 1 and 2 out of 6)

How is biblical faith defined and how do I know if I have it? What does the Bible mean in James 2:19 where it states, "even the demons believe"? Can we have any assurance of our faith in Jesus Christ? Pastor John Marino (Orville, OH) provides biblical answers to these questions.

December

The Message of Christmas

Message by Charles Stanley (part 2 of 2)

What Christmas Says to The World

Because Jesus came to earth, believers have identity and purpose. Dave Wilson explains the ways that Jesus' birth affects every aspect of our lives.

Turning Anger from a Foe to a Friend

Message by Chip Ingram (part 2 of 2)

What is Faith?

Messages by Pastor John Marino. (Parts 3 and 4 out of 6)

January

Book of Romans (Romans 1:1-17)

Michael Pearl has been studying and teaching the book of Romans for over 40 years. This verse-by-verse teaching is presented for the layman from the unique perspective of a student that believes the Bible rather than a scholar that critiques it. Instead of presenting a devotional study, Michael addresses all the hard theological issues that have been the foundation of Christian faith down through the centuries.

You are Wanted

When we trust Christ, we become a new creation, but the past tends to pull us down and distract us from the freedom God wants us to enjoy. In this message, Chip Ingram explains how to understand and live in the joy God says is already ours in our journey toward becoming Christ-like!

How To Make Sense of Suffering

Romans 8:18-23 is a passage for those who know sorrow, pain and disappointment; it's for the ones experiencing confusion, frustration and fear. There are three key words in this passage that can reveal to us how to make sense out of suffering: bondage, liberty and hope. (Message by Adrian Rogers.)

What is Faith?

Messages by Pastor John Marino (Parts 5 and 6 out of 6)

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The Gospel of John in the Amish Language

Jesus said, "*Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.*"
(Mat 19:14, Mar 10:14, Luk 18:16).



Photo by Tamara Menzi (Unsplash)

How can Amish children come to Jesus if the scripture is only spoken in German, and not in Amish/Pennsylvania Dutch? When the church was started, as it says in Acts 2: 6-8 "*Every man heard them speak in his own language.*"

Listen to scripture in your own heart language. Memorize it and speak it to others in the same heart language. God's Word does not return void (Isa 55:11), so speak scripture into other's lives, especially in the language that they understand best.

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individuals, were enemies of God. The clearest example from this passage which bolsters this point is found toward the end of the paragraph where it states, “*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life*” (v. 10). The word ‘when’ denotes that at some point in time, we were enemies of God. This is also shown elsewhere in Scripture (Ephesians 2, for example). Because of our sin nature which was passed down through Adam, humanity stands guilty before God, thus bringing His wrath upon ourselves. We are known as enemies, because left to ourselves, we would choose anything and everything that would go against God, or we would do anything and everything for the wrong motive of satisfying our desires rather than to glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31).

The second truth, according to this segment of Scripture, is that mankind can have reconciliation with God through the death of Jesus Christ on our behalf, thus bringing about peace with God rather than wrath. Because of this, verses 1, 6, 8, and 9 extol the great love and mercy that God demonstrates toward us through providing His Son. Verses 6, 8, and 9, offer us the truths of Christ’s sacrifice for us. Verse one, following the detailed segment on our right placement before God (justification), demonstrates that we now have peace with God because of faith in Christ. Not only do we have peace, but we also have joy because we have the hope of the glory of God even in trials and tribulations, which ultimately produce character and remind us of our hope (verses 2-5).

Combined, these truths demonstrate to us the stark contrast of being alienated enemies of God deserving of wrath, and being transformed into children of God after placing faith in Christ - resulting in

peace with God and hope in this life and the next. Although we have peace with God in a positional sense, we can also have peace that comes from God in our everyday lives. This expands not only to ourselves, but also to having peace with others. These truths are what we will look at next.

Personal Peace from God and with Others

As noted above, there are two practical, day-to-day benefits that believers in Christ can enjoy and utilize. The first benefit is that once we have experienced positional peace with God and have been secured a place in eternity by God, we can know and experience peace in our daily trials and tribulations. The second benefit is more of a command to pursue peace with the outside world as to win them to Christ with our actions toward them. Let’s first consider the daily peace which we can experience even in the midst of trials.

Probably the best place to really know, grasp, and understand this truth is found in the book of Philippians with special attention given to chapter four. Notice what this text shares.

“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:4-7).

As with every passage we study, we must recognize some of the context in which the Apostle Paul is writing to the church that is in Philippi. Paul was imprisoned at Rome at the time this letter was written. He was writing to the church at Philippi to encourage them to be unified and

pursue joy in Christ in the midst of the persecution they were experiencing by a group of people called Judaizers. These Judaizers were known for trying to uphold some aspects of the Old Testament law while believing in Christ for salvation. In other words, they were adding to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They were combining faith plus works for salvation. Not only did Paul seek to correct them, he also sought to strengthen the body of Christ by reminding them of the gospel and encouraging them to grow in unity and joy through tribulations. After expounding on the unity and identity with Christ in the first three chapters and after encouraging certain women who were co-laborers with Paul to repent and be united (4:1-3), Paul turns to a short list of imperatives, or commands, concerning the believers outward conduct.

In verse four, there is a command to rejoice. But this is not just a mere command to be happy. Biblical joy is not just a mere emotion. It is a disposition or a lifestyle that is rooted in the relationship one has with Jesus Christ, hence the “rejoice in the *Lord*.” True joy comes first through knowing and believing in Jesus Christ. Then, joy is experienced as we continually remind ourselves of the benefits and privileges we have because of our faith in Christ.

The second command in this paragraph is to let our moderation, or reasonableness, or gentleness be known to all because the Lord is near. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ could return at any moment. Because of this truth, we are to be responsible children of God by showing love and gentleness to those around us.

The third command is that we are not to be careful, or better translated anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplications with thanksgiving, make our requests known to God (v. 6). There is a joyous truth that as believers, we do

not need to be anxious or be burdened with care over the things of this world. Instead, we can know that our Father in Heaven cares for us (Matthew 6:25-34)

and that we can make requests to God knowing what we need and that He hears us. God the Father is not distant. Because of Christ, we have intimate access to Him thus resulting in the next truth which this point concerns: the peace of God that passes all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

This is where we see that

we can have peace in this life despite hardships. The God of the universe, who graciously bestows salvation through Christ to us, continues to offer peace in our hardships *because* of our union with Christ. This peace is too complex for the human mind to grasp yet it is freely given to those who are God's.

This peace is also active in the Christian's life. It will guard our hearts and minds. More often than not, the battles that we face on this earth are fought within our very being. Sometimes it's a condemning mind. Sometimes it's a heart burdened by the cares of this world. Other times, it's a physical malady or illness that consumes our thoughts. In any case, the peace of God is there for those who are in Christ and it resolutely comforts those with peace that is literally "out of this world." Take heart, Christian. God has supplied everything you and I need to experience peace in this life and the next. Not only has He provided us with personal peace, He has enabled us to live peaceably with others. This last point is found in back in Romans 12.

The second benefit we have as those who have peace with God eternally and in our present lives, is that we can and

should seek to live peaceably with others. Let us notice what this last passage commands as we consider peace with others.



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Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 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. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:14-21).

After spending nearly eleven chapters expounding on the rich truths of salvation in Christ, Paul now turns to the application of those eleven chapters: live as new beings in Christ. This chapter, and the remaining ones, offer a glimpse as to what a Christian ought to look like as he lives out the truths of the gospel in his life. The section quoted above is the

last segment of chapter twelve and offers a string of commands on how to live out this new life in Christ. Yet, it is in the center of this passage we will spend our remaining time.

Verse 18 states, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." This verse is rather straightforward, yet Christians have struggled with it through the ages. Essentially, the charge is this: as much as it is in your power, when living amongst others, saved and unsaved, live at peace with them. In a world that is saturated in the ideology that it's "my way or the highway," this notion of living at peace with all men has become tainted and almost forgotten in our Christian circles. Because we live in America, we believe that we can say and do just about anything for the sake of freedom of speech.

Yet as believers in Jesus Christ, we have no such freedom. We are bound as slaves to Christ and thus are commanded to live a certain way before God and man. We forfeit our rights just as Christ forfeited His (Phil. 2:1-11). As believers, we are to live and communicate in such a way that demonstrates we are children of the King of the Most High. We are to live peaceably with others, despite their actions toward us (notice the surrounding verses in this section). Beloved, although we may be tempted, tried, and tattered by the people and messages in this world, we must rise above with the power of the gospel and live at peace with those around us because we are the ones who truly know peace because of the One who has freely offered it.

As we have seen in the above mentioned passages, there is a way to have peace with God, from God, and with others. May we no longer have "no God and no peace," but let us know God and His peace intimately and share that peace with those around us.

END

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How to Possess and Live in God's Peace

—By Z.W. Singletary

There's a familiar saying that has been floating around in Christendom for the last 50 years or so that states, "No God, No Peace; but Know God, Know Peace." The play-on-words here is a little quirky, yet the message comes loud and clear: if one wants to truly have peace in his life, he must know God.

Yet, as the Scriptures tell us, to merely *know* God in a strict mental sense is insufficient to know the God of the Universe intimately. To believe in God in a true biblical sense is to believe that God loves us enough to send His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to die on the cross for us and rise from the dead in order to defeat death once and for all. Because of this, if we place our faith in Christ and fully trust that His sacrifice is completely sufficient for our salvation, we may have the privilege of knowing God intimately and truthfully. Further, the Bible explains at great lengths, that one of the many blessings of salvation in Christ alone is the blessed gift of having peace with God (positional) and with others (personal).

For as long as humans have been in existence, there is this longing from every soul to experience peace. It may be that you might desire peace from a difficult relationship. You might long for peace in the midst of a terrible trial. You may also

crave peace in a world that is riddled with wars, abuse, famine, etc. All of these scenarios, and many more, are characteristic of a person's life, even a Christian's. But there's great news. We can experience and know God's peace!

The goal of the following paragraphs is to share, through Scripture, how one may have peace with God, which we will label as *positional* peace, and how one can experience peace in the day-to-day struggles in this fallen world, which we will call *personal* peace. Let's start with a proper foundation of having positional peace with God.

Positional Peace With God

Romans 5:1-11 is a succinct passage of Scripture that highlights two truths that pertain to our conversation. First, we are enemies of God if we don't have faith in Christ Jesus. Second, if and when we do have faith in Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God and experience peace rather than wrath. Allow me to share the passage with you before we dive into these two points.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace

wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. (Rom. 5:1-11 KJV)

The first thing which we must focus on is that at one point in time, each of us, as

Continued on Page 14