

Kingdom News

The Kingdom is Yours; the power is Yours and the glory is Yours, forever... (Matt. 6:13)

Volume 5, Issue 1

January 2011

Motto for the year of 2011

Render therefore unto God ... **the things that are God's.** (Matthew 22:21 KJV)

The Chief Cornerstone



Our Leaves Were *Not* Supposed to Wither...

Hear the Cry of Nature

One day, while walking through a wooded area, we were admiring the beautiful hues of Fall and looking at the changing colors of the leaves on the trees. I heard this, "Their leaves were not supposed to wither..." When I asked the Lord what that meant; this is what I received:

The whole earth is full of the glory of God;⁽¹⁾ the earth and sky; the land and seas; the beasts of the field, the birds and trees. As I walked among them, the trees said to me ...

"Our leaves were *not* supposed to wither.⁽²⁾ In the Garden of the Lord, we were beautiful, so beautiful indeed; and pleasant to the eyes.⁽³⁾ Our branches reached towards the heavens to worship our Maker for His kindness in setting us in such array. Solomon with all of his wisdom and glory was not so adorned. Even Solomon's beauty was not like ours.

"Our leaves were not supposed to wither."

Chief Cornerstone

Continued on page 6

The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

In 2011 Conflict Resolution is the New Opportunity

It's finally here! 2011 has arrived and we have no time to waste. The word for this year is "**Opportunity.**" God has re-engineered our thinking (during the month of December 2010 – if you read this column and followed the instructions). And, He has created a specific set of opportunities for the people of God.

Here is the catch. These golden opportunities are hidden in plain sight. Yes, they are public, but most people will not be able to see them or take advantage of what they have to offer. Why? It's because these special opportunities are veiled in conflict. They are cloaked in opposition.

That's why most people (including unsuspecting Christians) will not notice them. You see, we have been taught to think that all (or most) opportunities come wrapped in nice, bright, easy-to-open (or easy to deal with) packages. We think the label says "Great Opportunity!" Well, please forgive me when I tell you that this kind of thinking will keep us from seeing what God is doing and taking an active part in His plan.

In the December Leadership Corner article we talked about how we have been disappointed by segments of our society. As a result, we prayed and now God is answering our prayers by sending "Us" out into the battle to create positive change. Understand that the president of the United States is not the answer. The commercial bank is not the answer. And the economies of other nations are not the answer.

God, our Heavenly Father, has given us the answer. It's Him working through us to bring about His desire in the earth (in

The Leadership Corner

Continued on page 8

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 **The Chief Cornerstone & The Leadership Corner**
- 2 **Son of My Wisdom & Journey to Intimacy**
- 3 **Precepts in Practice & Love and The Truth**
- 4 **Boot Camp & Living Waters ... Special Gift**

Son of My Wisdom



Ethos, Logos, Pathos from Scripture

In the prior month's editions of *The Ethos, Logos and Pathos of God*, we introduced to some (and re-introduced to others) three "modes of persuasion." These hale to us from the Greek language and from literary circles. In plain English, these are terms that sage or tenured writers defer to in their effort to influence their audiences.

Of course you may be thinking, "Oh this is not for me. I am not a writer." Don't move so quickly. Just about everyone has an "audience." Unless you are born and will die completely alone, you'll have an audience. You will at some point in time need to *persuade* someone of something. Especially if you are a child of God, and even more so if you are an ambassador of Christ.

REQUEST: Please, at least in this discourse; do not confuse "*persuasion*" with "*manipulation*." To persuade, in one sense, is to encourage someone to understand, believe or agree with something. To manipulate, in a sense, is to coerce or deceive someone into subjection or compliance. This brings with it the unsavory attribute of deception and sometimes aggression.

What we'd like to do this month, is to outline a rough draft of the 2011 Agenda for the exposure of the Kingdom perspective on *Ethos, Logos and Pathos*. And in the following months, we'll "bring the heat." Is that acceptable?

As one may appreciate, the Lord may take the liberty to shuffle, condense, or expand the topics at His discretion. We're just along for the ride.

2011 AGENDA (Draft)

Ethos represents *Character and Authority*
Logos represents *Thoughts, Words, and Deeds*
Pathos represents *Experience and Emotion*

1. Ethos of God – What we are to know first and foremost is that HE is the Lord our God and



A Journey to Intimacy

All Disobedience is a Stumbling Block

Victimless Crimes –

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. ⁽¹⁾

In the Kingdom there is no such thing as a victimless crime. All offenses against the Holy One, has victims; and lots of them. Of a certainty, we ourselves are one of the victims of our own misdemeanors and felonies.

The following is very personal and admits of certain transparencies. I have gained the expressed permission of the other parties to this discussion.

During a visit with my sister and her husband, I noticed that my eating patterns had been very unusual. One morning as I prayed, I was repenting for not properly managing my nutrition schedule. Shortly thereafter, we were going on an early morning walk, and I confessed to my sister that I had not been a good steward over my nutrition. ⁽²⁾ During that same conversation she mentioned to me that she was glad that I had shared that confession. Because she too had been repentant for not being a good nutritional steward; she mentioned that my unusual eating patterns had an inadvertent influence on her eating behavior. She mentioned that each day, she maps out her daily nutrition schedule, during her private time with the Lord. But in an effort to accommodate me and be social, she would occasionally find herself renegeing on her nutritional commitment.

We continued our lengthy and very scenic walk. It was a refreshingly beautiful morning.

When I returned home and was spending time with the Lord, I found myself crying, profusely. I felt as if a dam had broken, as the tears gushed forth. I said to the Lord, "Father I am so sorry for being a stumbling block to my sister." I was so hurt that my disobedience had had that affect on her. I hurt so badly, because I know that my sister has a very high regard for me. I had been unwittingly careless. The

Precepts in Practice



The Animal Kingdom Wants to Speak to Us

We've mentioned many times that often God speaks to us through our environments. He may cause one or more circumstances to occur such that we "get" what He is trying to tell us. Well, in 2011 God will use the animals to speak to us in this column.

We will listen as the chipmunk, fox, rabbit, horse, tiger, ant, and many other creatures chat about the things of God. We will eaves drop on conversations where they discuss kingdom principles and how they are impacted by them. We will ponder remarks they make to each other about how humans respond to God. And, we will surely receive wisdom and instruction from creatures we see, but don't pay close attention to, as they go about doing what God created them to do – in complete obedience.

Have you ever wondered if animals disobey God? Do they wrestle with the laws of nature or the instincts God placed inside of them? Might they contemplate the externalities of unrighteous thoughts and behaviors? Maybe the elephant has an issue with the fact that he has no wings. Is it possible that the eagle wishes she could spin a web like the spider?

In 2011 we will explore many of these concepts. And, we will grow exponentially in our knowledge of the God who loves us and has set us over the work of His hands. We will do this by giving ear to the "work of His hands" and gleaning nuggets of truth along the way.

Do you find it interesting that we would delve into such an elementary observation (of animals)? Does this approach challenge your theology because humans are higher beings than animals? If so, let's grapple with a couple of scriptures to see whether or not this is a worthy endeavor (scriptures are KJV paraphrased). Proverbs 30:24-28 says, "There are four creatures which are little upon the earth, but they are exceedingly wise: the ant, the badger, the locust, and the spider."

Now, we know that all wisdom comes from God. Scripture also tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge - including wisdom and understanding (Proverbs 1:7). It is interesting that God would talk about His own wisdom embodied in the creatures He created.

Check this out. Nowhere in scripture does God talk about humans being endowed with Godly wisdom (without being submitted to God). But, He does in fact talk of animals

Precepts in Practice

Continued from page 11

Love and *The Truth*



Prayer: A Way of Life

Though this article contains doctrine and some elements of theology, it is above all an admonishment. The Lord has been making exceedingly clear to me that there is something peculiar about the way of Jesus Christ and it is this: though He is God, He nevertheless prayed continually; He prayed without ceasing.

So herein I want to develop some thoughts on prayer that I see in Christ, and that I get from elsewhere in scripture.

One of the things about prayer that is clear is this. The right, indeed the commandment, to pray comes as the result of having covenant relationship with God. For, *the Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.*⁽¹⁾ Furthermore, *the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*⁽²⁾ Recognizing that only men who are justified by grace through faith have ever been considered **righteous** before God, we acknowledge that the 'righteous' herein mentioned are those in covenant relationship with God.

The second thing about prayer we see in places like these: *when you pray enter into your closet, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father in secret*⁽³⁾ ... *and when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray*⁽⁴⁾ ... *sit ye here while I go and pray yonder*⁽⁵⁾. The common element shown in the preceding verses is "privacy." This is NOT AT ALL to say that there should be no corporate prayer among others and in public settings. But what is to be seen here is that prayer life is fundamentally "private." You'll notice that even the publican dropped his head (smote his breast) in the public place of prayer.^(2A)

Notice that, the basis of true and abiding prayer life is "private time" in prayer. Jesus so readily slipped away to pray. By the lack of reaction from his disciples his private praying seems remarkably common. Now to understand the climate of this private prayer of His we need to see that they had times of public prayer already. You will see where the scriptures reference the 9th hour as the hour of prayer, and that there were times where they came together to pray pretty regularly. So

Love and The Truth

Continued from page 12



Boot Camp

Public Enemy #1 - *The Flesh*



Segue from Pressing the Battle to the Gates Series - Introduction

Last month in the Chief Cornerstone column we wrapped up a five-part series entitled *Pressing the Battle to the Gates*. During the wrap up, we identified that although the devil is our archenemy and one who intends to subvert the efforts of the children of God. There is another enemy who is closer and who ought to be more of a concern to us. Allow me to introduce to you this “menace to society” - the *flesh*.

I know ... I know ... we’ve always relished the idea that our enemy was supposed to be remote to us. But with that mindset we gain something of a “false sense of security.” It may be quite disconcerting to find that our real enemy is much closer than we originally thought. You’ve heard the old saying “keep your friends close, but keep your enemies closer.” In this case that is not optional; your enemy is closer.

Now, let’s take a quick detour and discover anew the definition of the word “enemy.” On the one hand: A *friend* is someone who has “your best interest at the heart of everything they do for you, or to you. Contrariwise, an “enemy” has his/her own best interest at heart. Even gestures of kindness are suspect and are not to be trusted. You’ll remember the scriptures teach us that “faithful are the wounds of a friend but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”⁽¹⁾ The *flesh* is not our friend, it is our enemy.

We often think of enemies as ones who are emotionally hostile and antagonistic. This of course would make the hostility considerably more noticeable, wouldn’t it? But this understanding (or misunderstanding) enables our less emotionally volatile enemies to subvert our judgment. In walks the *flesh*. You’ll recall from our prior discussion, that the *flesh* came into existence within the heart of man, as a result of our inappropriate liaison with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Throughout this series, as we interleave excerpts from the prior series *Pressing the Battle to the Gates*; we also intend the following (in no particular order):

- ❖ We will reiterate what is meant by the use of the term *flesh*
- ❖ We will talk about the *soul* and its faculties and their respective functions
- ❖ We will rediscover the faculties of the *human spirit*

Living Waters



The “BE” Attitudes

Series Pt 3 – Matthew 5:6-8

Please continue to regard these “BE” attitudes as directives, very personally.

Blessed are the peacemakers ... (Hint: “BE” a peacemaker)
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake ... (Hint: “BE” persecuted for righteousness sake)
Blessed are you when men revile you ... (Hint: “BE” reviled)

Last month we rediscovered what it means to be *hungry and thirsty for righteousness*; what it means to be *merciful*; and what we are being asked to do by being *pure in heart*.

This month, we’ll receive revelation on what our Father expects of us as He directs us to *be peacemakers*; to *be persecuted for righteousness sake*; and *be reviled*.

“BE” a Peacemaker

Sounds good ... but how?

As simple as it sounds, a peacemaker is one who “makes” peace. The concept of “making” something implies the “bringing forth from something else.” It’s no different with our Lord’s mandate to “BE peacemakers.”

What does it mean to “make” peace? Perhaps we could state it a bit differently to stimulate understanding.

Blessed are those whose *presence* makes a place peaceful.

Blessed are those whose *speech*, says to the storms of life, “Peace, be still.”

Blessed are those whose peaceful *disposition* brings calm and strength to others.

Blessed are those whose peaceful *dealings* bring stability to situations.

Blessed are the peace “makers.”



The Meditations of a Ghost Writer

The Life of "My Choice"

Last night I spent some quiet time writing by candlelight. What a wonderfully quiet experience. It led me to a place where I began to discover my heart before God. As you could appreciate it, I came to a place of healing and understanding. In that place my sight began to clear. I was able to better understand what the Lord required of me.

This enlightenment came on the heels of some very deep and genuine brokenness. I began to confess sins I didn't even recognize I was involved in. I had created idols throughout my life, and I wasn't even aware of it.

I am ashamed to say that my concept of idols was rather "Old Testament-ish;" which by the way is very, very deceptive. Twenty-first century Western idols don't look much Biblical idols. We create idols out of ideas and concepts and perceptions of what is "good and right" in our own eyes. I confess, *"there is a way that seems right to man, but the end of that way leads to death;"* again the Lord is correct. It turns out that I had idolized so many people, places and things; I wonder that I could see anything of God ... at all. And now that my sight is clearing, I am certain that I had not seen very much of God, thus far. It was frightening ... no terrifying!! All the while, I professed my allegiance to Christ; and He was not even one of my many "idols." I don't mean to be disrespectful, but of all the things I "worshipped" Jesus was not one of them.

How could this have been?!?

So many of my major life's decisions; were made for the wrong reasons. I had never intentionally wanted to do "wrong." I didn't. I thought that I was "following the rules." I blithely ran past every "yellow flag," every "yield sign," every "stop sign" and every "red light." All the while, I was thinking, "Those are just small, insignificant issues; they won't matter." Not only did they "matter" they proved to be catastrophic!

I wanted to "prove something to myself." It seems that "life" proved something to me. I unwittingly took on responsibilities that I should not have. At the same time, many of the doors that the Lord had opened for me, I closed them. How foolish I was. Who did I think

that I was?

I didn't mean to dishonor God; I just didn't intend very fervently *to* honor Him. What was I thinking? Somehow I knew that my relationships with my loved ones, took time and attention. But I completely missed this reality concerning my relationship with God. I didn't think that I was "putting Him last;" I now see that I simply was not "putting Him first." Really!! ... If God is not FIRST; then He is LAST.

The more the Lord discovered my heart to me, I saw that I not only put God last, but I had buried the talents that He had entrusted to me. Silly servant. As I looked in the bottom of my treasure chest; there were all of these brilliant stones; radiant with light. The Lord had entrusted some very beautiful gifts and talents to me. He intended to express Himself through me, using those gifts and talents. But I was so short-sighted that I hadn't even taken that into consideration as I mapped out my life's goals.

I moved to the city of "my choice."
I picked the community of "my choice."
I bought the house of "my choice;" on the street of "my choice."
I purchased the furniture and fixtures of "my choice."
I painted the walls the colors of "my choice."
I arranged the rooms "according to my choice."

And as I went to take a seat and survey the world of "my choice;" to my utter horror, God was nowhere in it. I searched everywhere, I could not find Him. In an effort to "find myself;" I lost myself. The scriptures are true, that "whoever seeks to save his life, will lose it." I know that firsthand. But more importantly I had lost sight of God.

My heart broke with weeping. Tears ran down like the latter rain. How many pieces can a heart break, until it cannot be broken anymore? I don't know ... but I was sure I'd find out this time.

And when it comes to relationships, exactly how much "compromise" is enough? Who decides? How much is wise, according to Gods standards? I have heard people say that relationship require great compromise. I'm not sure I believe that anymore. "Each person's relationship with God MUST come first, always and forever. The only compromise a person should ever make is putting their own erroneous desires away and assuming the desires of

Meditations ...

Continued on page 17

Our Maker used us to communicate with the humans, who were the apple of His eye. We were made to worship Him; but He used us to help the humans. We provided shade from the sun.

In the very constitution of our being, we embodied some of the principles of His Life. The law of reciprocity; the soil gives to us, and we give to the air, the air gives to the waters, and the waters give back to the soil.⁽⁴⁾ The miracles of photosynthesis are also a part of our makeup and much, much more. Did you know that “A mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year?” Where you find lots of trees together, we act as a giant filter for the air that humans breathe. We actually help muffle or reduce noise. “Trees help clean the soil. The term phyto-remediation is a fancy word for the absorption of dangerous chemicals and other pollutants that have entered the soil. To produce our food, we trees absorb and store carbon dioxide in the wood, roots and leaves. Tree roots bind the soil and their leaves break the force of wind and rain on soil. Trees fight soil erosion and conserve rainwater.”⁽⁵⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

The Lord saw to our every need. The Garden was the most beautiful place on the face of the earth. And He made a great river which ran through Eden to water the garden, so great it was that it went four ways.⁽⁶⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

We knew the humans were special to Him, and we were all okay with it. His thoughts towards the humans were very great; thoughts of peace and to give them an expected end.⁽⁷⁾ For we only wanted to be a part of His plan for them. Our leaves were strong and beautiful; they were regenerative and could heal the humans. They were rich in shades and colors. We helped to make the Garden welcoming to the humans; it was our pleasure to do it.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

We were delighted to be in the Garden of the Lord. We knew that this garden was simply a type or shadow of another more beautiful place. We had heard whispers of this other place, and often longed to go there ourselves.⁽⁸⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

Among all of the trees of the Garden, there was one tree. It didn't look much different from the rest of us. The Lord named that tree, and Adam named the rest of us. But we heard the Creator, say to the human(s). “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it. For in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.”⁽⁹⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

On that dreadful day we saw the female human standing in front of that forbidden tree. The serpent was talking with her about the tree and about the Creator. We knew that what the serpent said to her was wrong. We saw the way she looked at that tree. She was taken by its beauty; but we were all pleasant to the eye. The fruit of that tree was good for food; but so was our fruit.⁽¹⁰⁾ All of us trees were created alike; with one exception. The Creator placed a prohibition on that particular tree. As she stood there, we longed to bid her “run Eve run!!!” But we were not allowed to speak to the female human, at that time. We heard it said, “She must choose to obey of her own volition; no one else could choose for her.” Our hearts ached, as she took of that tree. Afterwards the male human ate too.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

Our hearts were turned against the humans. We felt the earth recoil, beneath our feet, at their disobedience. And we could no longer *agree* with the humans. The humans had set themselves in opposition to the Holy One, Whom we served day and night. It is a frightening thing to disobey the only True and Living God. The humans were created to serve Him; all of creation exists to serve Him. We were made to ONLY serve the Creator and those who serve Him. The humans were no longer at the Master's “beck and call.” His enemies were our enemies, too. And we could no longer yield ourselves to their petitions. We wanted them out of the Garden, NOW!!!⁽¹¹⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

We all (earth, fire, air, water, trees, etc.) in covenant; refused to surrender to the petitions of the humans. We were created to help sustain their lives; but we could not sustain the life of rebels, ones who oppose the Holy One. For their act of disobedience was treacherous; turning all of creation against them.⁽¹²⁾ The sky was wroth at their deeds. The sea became bitter at their revolt. The ground wanted to spew the humans out of the land. A last, the humans became outlaws to us.⁽¹³⁾ Then a very tragic thing happened.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

We were terrified as we heard the Master walking through the Garden. We felt His presence among us. It was not like at other times, and we all knew it. He was as peaceful as He had always been, but there was a chilly wrath in His silence. The humans knew something was wrong, too. They hid themselves among us. Somehow they thought He would not be able to find them. We heard Him call to them. He knew all the time where they were; He *always* knew where they were. But this call, we could see, was a

test. It was for the humans to acknowledge that they had sinned.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

The humans had fallen before the Almighty. We wanted nothing else to do with them; their disobedience had brought shame upon all of creation. For they had been given lordship over us. We had been given a mandate, to feed them; to bear fruit for the humans.⁽¹⁴⁾ (nd our leaves would heal them. But they betrayed our Lord and we wanted them OUT!!! We pleaded with the Master to dethrone them. We didn’t want them to lord over us; because they would not be subject to our Lord. They would use us to serve other gods.⁽¹⁵⁾ The Creator knew of our covenant: that the earth (air, land and sea) had refused to yield to the humans’ petitions, hereafter. We were very displeased with them.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

Our hearts sank as our Lord and Sovereign said to us, Ssshhhhh!! Peace, be still!! You must continue to serve mankind; lest they die, before their time. And so He cursed the ground *for man’s sake*.⁽¹⁶⁾ The Creator made the ground inferior, all of creation experienced a painful groaning and travail. We even heard the creatures moan and bewail their plight. There was weeping and gnashing heard throughout all of nature.⁽¹⁷⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

When the Master called the land out of the waters (we, the trees, came later); He saw that it was good and suitable to bring forth abundantly.⁽¹⁸⁾ But after the humans disobeyed and fell from their first estate, in His infinite wisdom He humbled the earth, bringing its strength back under the dominion of the fallen man.

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

A melancholy disposition overcame us all (the earth, the sun and the seas).⁽¹⁹⁾ Because after the curse, it didn’t matter how much sun and rain the earth received, it still could not yield its full strength. And even of the strength that remained, the ground was still cumbered about with thorns and thistles, subjected to vanity and futility.⁽²⁰⁾ The humans were made to toil; but we were made to toil too. Just as the humans depended on the ground; we too depended on the ground. When the earth was humbled because of the humans, neither could it yield to us its strength. And over time, we noticed a change in the flow of life from the earth. This life now under the curse could not continue to maintain the life and vitality of our leaves. Decay had become a characteristic attribute of our natures. Our strength would ebb and flow across the seasons. It was as if we would get tired; this never used to happen before. We were strong and beautiful all of the time! But

our leaves began to wither, because of the curse.⁽²¹⁾

“Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

Although the Lord was wroth with the human’s betrayal, He said that He would not sacrifice the humans; but that He had already provided for Himself a Sacrifice. And in the fullness of time, He would reveal His plan of redemption and restoration. We both long for and rejoice to see that day.

Because our “Our leaves were not supposed to wither.”

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

⁽¹⁾ Isaiah 6:3

⁽²⁾ Psalm 1:3

⁽³⁾ Genesis 2:9; 3:6

⁽⁴⁾ Genesis 2:6

⁽⁵⁾ Collected 12/19/10 from

http://forestry.about.com/od/treephysiology/tp/tree_value.htm

⁽⁶⁾ Genesis 2:10

⁽⁷⁾ Jeremiah 29:11

⁽⁸⁾ Revelation 22:1-2

⁽⁹⁾ Genesis 2:16-17

⁽¹⁰⁾ Genesis 2:9

⁽¹¹⁾ Leviticus 18:24-25

⁽¹²⁾ Jeremiah 12:4

⁽¹³⁾ Genesis 4:14

⁽¹⁴⁾ Genesis 1:28-29

⁽¹⁵⁾ Deuteronomy 29:17

⁽¹⁶⁾ Genesis 3:17

⁽¹⁷⁾ Romans 8:22

⁽¹⁸⁾ Genesis 1:9-10

⁽¹⁹⁾ Romans 8:22

⁽²⁰⁾ Genesis 3:18-19; Romans 8:22

⁽²¹⁾ Mark 11:21

FAITH: LEADER OR FOLLOWER

“In natural matters faith follows evidence and is impossible without it.

But in the realm of the spirit, faith precedes understanding; it does not follow it ...

The natural man must know in order to believe; the spiritual man must believe in order to know.”

A.W. Tozer’s Man: The Dwelling Place of God, p.14

our lives, families and communities). With this in mind, let's take a look at what opposition and conflict might mean. We will utilize Webster's New World dictionary to get us started.

Opposition: resistance, conflict, disagreement, dissatisfaction, hostility

Conflict: (con = together + flict = to strike), incompatible, sharp disagreement, fight or war, differ, oppose

The definitions of these two words let us know that we generally experience conflict or opposition when we are dealing with more than one person, set of values, authorities, etc. that seems to be striking against each other. And, we have not yet worked out the details such that we can proceed in an agreeable manner.

An interesting point to consider is that multiple priorities, tasks, values, or people **can** coexist in a harmonious state. Conflict or opposition appears when we fight against or resist each other or one or more elements present in the situation.

We have heard the "experts" tell us that conflict itself is healthy. There is nothing wrong with it. And, it is indeed a natural part of our lives. Not knowing how to handle conflict and opposition is where we get entangled.

Well, in 2011 God has a word for us concerning conflict and opposition. They represent the new "Opportunity" He has planned. And as such, we need to learn how to handle conflict and opposition so that we can see and take advantage of the opportunities they have enveloped inside.

Our ability to "see" hidden opportunities rests on our ability to see God in each situation. If we cannot see God in an opposing or conflicting situation, then we can't possibly see what is really going on. Let's "drum up" a scripture to direct our conversation (KJV paraphrased).

I John 1:5 says, "This then is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare to you, that God is **light** and in Him is no darkness at all."

Webster tells us that **light** is "the form of radiant energy acting on the retina of the eye to make sight possible."

This is very telling. Every day we interact with many objects and people. It is the radiant energy (light) touching our eyes that causes us to see these elements (as long as there is no damage to the eye itself). This is what happens in the natural. What happens in the spiritual realm is similar.

Each day we encounter situations and circumstances some of which seem positive while others may seem to be negative. Some look like they are favorable to us and others seem to be in opposition or conflict with us (our thoughts, desires, plans, etc.). Often we try to steer clear of the opposing

situations, or we regretfully deal with them as best we can (maybe even complaining along the way).

What God is saying now is that He will bring opposing and conflicting situations to us in 2011. They will hold great opportunities for us to experience what He has in store for us, and to further us along the path He has prepared for us. Our job is to not react in the natural. Instead, we are to focus our attention on God so that He can illuminate the situation for us. By doing so, we will be able to see God in the situation and follow the steps He instructs us to take to extract the opportunities that exist in each situation we face.

Is there something you need God to do for you in 2011? Are there goals you have in your heart that may seem impossible? Does it appear you don't have the resources (money, time, health, information, talent) you need to achieve what God has placed in your heart? If so, now is the time to get excited!

God is bringing custom-made opportunities to your doorstep (at home, at work, in relationships, etc.). These opportunities are hidden inside of your everyday tasks, routines, and challenges. When you see opposition or conflict here is what you can do.

1. *Stop and identify what the opposition or conflict is.*
2. *Ask God to show you where **He** is in the situation.*
3. *Have Him tell you how to accurately view the event and what He wants you to do.*
4. *Follow any directives He places in your heart (He may tell you directly or speak to you using your environment).*
5. *Be assertive and persistent.*
6. *Keep a watchful eye on how God unfolds the opportunity as you do what He tells you to do.*

Now, you may say, "Joyce, you've told us things like this before. What is going to make our 2011 challenges any different than our 2010 challenges?" Good question, the answer is "**God's timing**." It's time for believers to stop talking about what is or is not happening the way we think it should. It's time for us to "Do" what God places in our hearts with all of our might.

We are no longer to run away from opposition or conflict. No more whining about who's doing us wrong. We are to be about our Father's business in our daily lives. The Kingdom clock is ticking. God has promised He wants to fulfill in the earth (through us). This is what will get us ready for the return of our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ. Then, we will have a whole other set of wonderful projects to engage in when we get to the "other side."

For now, let's step up to the plate. Look adversity, conflict, and opposition dead in the eye and say, "Bring it

on!" We can do this because we can *see* God and we can see the opportunities He has for us that are hidden in these seemingly negative facades.

Go forth in 2011 and conquer! ~LLI~

Joyce M. White, MSW

Leadership Living, Inc., Joyce M. White, MSW – CEO
For additional information you may contact us at leadershiplivinginc@yahoo.com

that beside Him, there is no other

- a. Character of God
- b. Authority of God
2. Logos of God – The most perfect expression and manifestation of the Ethos of God is the Logos of God
 - a. Thoughts of God
 - b. Word of God
 - c. Deeds of God
3. Pathos of God – What we may learn from what God has experienced ... and much more to be revealed here
 - a. Experience of God
 - b. Emotion of God
4. Ethos of Man – What this tells us about ourselves
 - a. Character of Man
 - b. Authority of Man
5. Logos of Man - Aligning our logos with His Logos
 - a. Thoughts of Man
 - b. Words of Man
 - c. Deeds of Man
6. Pathos of Man – Our experiences and emotions
 - a. Experiences of Man
 - b. Emotions of Man
7. Relationship between Ethos of God and Ethos of Man
8. Relationship between Logos of God and Logos of Man
9. Relationship between Pathos of God and Pathos of Man
10. Practical: Sanctifying Man's Ethos - The work of God to unify Man's Ethos to God's

Ethos.

11. Practical: Sanctifying Man's Logos – The work of God to unify Man's Logos to God's Logos
12. Practical: Sanctifying Man's Pathos - The work of God to unify Man's Pathos to God's Pathos

In summary

1. The *Ethos* of God is comprised of *character* and *authority*. We see both of these expressed in the names of God.
2. The *Logos* of God is comprised of *thought*, *word*, and *deed*. We understand this to be the glory of God, the self-expression of God, the Person of Jesus Christ.
3. The *Pathos* of God is comprised of *experience*, and *emotion*.

All of this is to set forth a foundation for viewing scripture in light of the Ethos, Logos, and Pathos of God. We will explore salvation, sanctification, and a godly life among other things in light of these three categories. Won't you go with us on this journey?

~SOMW~

David L. White

GOSPEL OF JOHN

The gospel of the whole book of St. John is summed up in (1:1)

In the beginning was the Word (*Eternity*)

And the Word was with God (*Equality*)

And the Word was God (*Deity*).

Leonard Ravenhill in sermon Beatitudes (Part 01)

Lord is certainly forgiving. But He did not spare His chastisement.

The Father told me in no uncertain terms, that “**ALL DISOBEDIENCE IS A STUMBLING BLOCK.**” He said further, “that *no* act of disobedience is a victimless crime.” Sometimes we think that our acts of disobedience or irresponsibility (You like that word?), when kept in seclusion are harmless to anyone other than ourselves. Oh how mistaken we are. When we incur an infraction (sin); this compromises our fellowship with God; when that is left untreated it prohibits the flow of the life of God to us and especially through us. Thus creating a situation in which others may be lead unwittingly to stumble. Now we fancy that (while we refuse to be reconciled to God); because we still “know a few Bible verses” that we can still teach, encourage or correct others. But what we don’t recognize is that real Kingdom teaching, encouragement and correction flows out of the Spirit of Truth active within us. So while the words that we utter may be topically correct, they still lack the effervescence of the Spirit of Truth. You’ll recall that Jesus said that “the words that I speak are both “Spirit” and “truth.” It does not come from the number of Bible verses that we have memorized. You’ll remember that “knowledge puffs up; whereas charity (Godly love) edifies.”⁽³⁾

As Children of God and Ambassadors of the Kingdom we are to be “salt” and “light” to the world, and to those around us. Any and every act of disobedience is a stumbling block to someone; whether or not you think anyone sees. Disobedience renders us unfit for duty, before God; as we bring shame on the throne of our Sovereign.

We were created to be an expression of the living God. Again, our disobedience shuts up or dams up the flow and work of the Spirit in our lives. And *continued* disobedience is the material out of which strongholds are built. In every area of our lives we are to overflow with the life of God. There are a lot of hurt people in the world around us; some of the living right up under our roofs; or next door; or And we are the “salt of the earth.”⁽⁴⁾ From a Kingdom perspective, if salt does not *preserve life*...; if it does not *season, or enhance the flavor of life* it is useless. And people know and are affected by it; whether they mention it or not. The Son of God, said “I AM the light of the world.”⁽⁵⁾ He went on to say that “we are the light of the world.”⁽⁶⁾ This of course means that the world, very desperately, needs “light.” Paul then

reminds us that the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. The whole of creation groans to that end.⁽⁷⁾

If we live our lives in reckless disregard of this truth, we leave a sea of dead bodies in our wake. All of whose “blood” will be required at our hands.⁽⁸⁾

We are the “light of the world.”⁽⁹⁾ The world *NEEDS* that light. Our family, neighbors, friends, and colleagues all *NEED* that light. But when we walk in disobedience (no matter how trivial we think it is); there’s a sense in which that light has been put under a bushel. Men are not able to see our good works and thus not able to glorify our Father which is in heaven. When our lives do not return glory to God, we are living “worthless, salt-less” lives. I know that’s not what we want to hear. But it, very well, may be exactly what we need to hear.

In 2011, the Lord is requiring that we render to Him, what belongs to Him. He’s very serious about that mandate. It won’t be long into the year 2011, when we’ll begin to know, on a very personal level, the truth and urgency of this directive. The enemy has said to God, that we fear God for nought.⁽¹⁰⁾ Please don’t be surprised if the Lord returns the reply to the enemy, “Behold, all that he/she has is in your power; only upon their person or their life put not forth your hand.”⁽¹¹⁾

Whatever, we believe our relationship with God to be; will be put to the test in 2011. We will come face-to-face with truths about ourselves and about God that will dishevel our life’s philosophy.

During those times, we will need to have a very intimate knowledge of God’s expectations of us; so that we may comply with them. All acts of disobedience create stumbling blocks for others and prohibit the flow of life to them and ourselves. **JTI**

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, SMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) Romans 14:13 | (2) 1 Corinthians 4:2 |
| (3) 1 Corinthians 8:1 | (4) Matthew 5:13 |
| (5) John 8:12 | (6) Matthew 5:14 |
| (7) Romans 8:19, 22 | (8) Genesis 42:22 |
| (9) Matthew 5:14, 16 | (10) Job 1:9 |
| (11) Job 1:12 | |

showing His wisdom in their daily activities. What does this mean?

For one, the scripture does talk about an “*earthly wisdom*” as being separate from “*kingdom wisdom*.” James 3: 13–18 teaches us that earthly wisdom is destructive in nature, while kingdom wisdom is life-giving.

When the scripture talks about wisdom in the animal kingdom it lets us know that God created animals in His wisdom and each of them displays some part of God’s magnificence. They adhere to laws and principles that govern their existence. They don’t disobey these laws. They don’t back-talk God. And, they don’t deliberate over which laws they will or will not submit to. As a result, their very existence speaks (dare I say “shouts”) of God’s wisdom in very intricate and awesome ways.

It is for this reason we shall embark on a journey of “*animal enlightenment*.” As a preview, let’s take a quick peek at the world of spiders.

Going back to Proverbs 30:28, it says, “The spider takes hold with her hands, and is in king’s palaces.” One of the interesting things about spiders is their ability to spin webs. They emit silk and can build intricate webs which can be used to capture prey, hold eggs, and/or house the spider. God gave spiders the ability to do this. He fashioned their bodies this way. For the sake of our discussion, we will personalize a spider and call her Myrtle.

My name is Myrtle. I am two years old. I travel quite a bit. I’ve been in places where many humans are forbidden to go. Recently I lived under the bedside table of the President of the United States. I listened as he and his wife reflected on the events of the day. Sometimes the room was filled with stress. At other times, the environment was actually relaxing.

It’s funny because I lived under that bedside table for nine months. Each day I would listen as the maid deep cleaned all areas of the bedroom. Still, she never disturbed my web. Every now and then I would crawl under the bed or the dresser. Once, I lodged in the corner of the ceiling for about a month.

I didn’t have to worry about how I would get up to the ceiling or how I would maintain my location. You see, God made me with the ability to climb walls, be present without being detected, and create my habitation (web) where ever I go.

I never wondered what life would be like if God had made me something else. Instead, each day I engage in activities that are common for the instincts my Maker gave me. By doing so, I glorify Him.

I also have many family members. Some of them live in your home (or at least visit from time to time). You may never see them, but they are there. We do what we do because of how we were made. So, the next time you see

evidence of our visits, remember that our silk webs come from God.

I have wondered, however, why the families I’ve lived with focus so much on what other people are doing. They constantly compare themselves with others wishing their lives could be different, as if “different” means “better.” I can’t say that I understand this. All I know is that God has given me everything I need to engage in the spider lifestyle He has assigned to me.

I wonder what life would be like if humans (Christians in particular), would rest in God the way we spiders do.

~PIP~

Joyce M. White, MSW – CEO Leadership Living, Inc.

LEAVES OR FRUIT



Do you ever wonder if you’re being a good spouse, parent, friend and/or neighbor? Perhaps, we should wonder from time to time. There is a healthy contemplation that drives us to check our commitment to our various relationships with others. While I have your attention may I ask another question? Do you ever wonder if you’re really saved? I don’t mean to intrude ... okay maybe I do intend to intrude. Do you contemplate your loyalty and commitment to your relationship with **Christ** very specifically? Respectfully, we are not talking here about your relationship with a religious institution. We’re asking about a very up-close and personal relationship with the Person of Jesus Christ.

The scriptures encourage us to periodically check our “fruit.” We are admonished to work out your own soul’s salvation with fear and trembling.⁽¹⁾ But how does one do that? Sometimes we check by simply thinking *within ourselves* that we “give to others;” or that we’re “kind to others;” or that we “tolerate others’ differences;” therefore God must be pleased with us. But those are only “leaves.” A tree is known by its “fruit;” more so than by its “leaves.” While leaves can be very telling; sometimes leaves alone can be misleading. Because it is possible for both “fruit bearing” and “non-fruit bearing” trees, can have the same or similar leaves. At the risk of being a bit edgy, one does not have to be in covenant with God, “to give, to be kind or to be tolerant.” In the words of one writer, “even the heathens do this.”

Here I’ll say it for you ... “Dog-gone-it, JoAnn!!” Why are you in my business? A person’s relationship with God is “private.”

That may well be the case, just as the internal workings of a tree are “private.” But the “fruit” is not private. The “fruit” is not even for the tree’s personal consumption. The “fruit” is for everyone else. I can just imagine

despite the atmosphere of prayer, Jesus still slipped away quite often to pray privately.

I will go further to say this: where there is no private prayer life, you will find that public prayer is either counterfeit, or at least generally ineffective.

- So *first* we saw that prayer is a gift only truly available to those in covenant with God.
- *Second* we saw that prayer life is fundamentally private.
- *Third* we see that prayer is to be very, very regular. We need to establish times for prayer.

There will also be in addition to the regular prayer times, spontaneous calls of the Lord to enter in; to come away with Him. But make no mistake about it the Christian life is so carried on by prayer that the two terms ‘prayer life’ and ‘Christian life’ could at times be used interchangeably.

He spoke a parable unto them, to drive home this point: that men ought always to pray and not to faint⁽⁶⁾.

The interesting implication from this verse and a few others is that prayer is a way to embrace the way of the Spirit, and reject the way of the flesh. I draw this most clearly from the explicit statement of Jesus: *watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*⁽⁷⁾ So then I will restate it as such: *because the spirit is willing whereas the flesh is weak, therefore watch and pray.* The implication is that “watching and praying” (and more precisely) the “watching of prayer” draws the soul to walking in the spirit, and away from walking in the flesh...the way of the spirit rather than the way of the flesh.

There is a conforming of the soul to the leadership of the spirit that **ONLY HAPPENS IN PRAYER LIFE.**

I understand the practices of “watching” and “praying” to be one and the same because of a couple things. First in the garden of Gethsemane^(7A) when Jesus brought Peter, James, and John with Him, the commandment He gave them was simply to “watch.” But when He returned, they were asleep. Jesus, before he walked away again told them to “watch and pray.” In Luke’s account of the Gethsemane experience, the Lord’s language was simply to “rise and pray.”⁽⁸⁾ But secondarily and most explicitly is the directive in scripture to “continue in prayer and watch in the

same” with thanksgiving.⁽⁹⁾ This indicates, so far as I can see, that it is *in prayer* that we are *watching*. The antithesis is that if we are *not praying* as a way of life, we have submitted to a sort of blindness, and the *spirit of slumber*. Again First Peter tells us to be sober and watch unto prayer.⁽¹⁰⁾

The following is simply a development of some thoughts which I draw from scripture about prayer.

- It is a gift to those in covenant with God.
- There is to be a very real, very intentional private prayer life.
- It is to be regular.
- It is verily how we as Christians are given vision, and insight, and without it we have submitted to blindness and the spirit of slumber.

Lastly in prayer life we are being conformed to the Life of the Spirit⁽¹¹⁾ in a way that no other Christian activity can. Do remember that though there is doctrine and information about prayer here, the purpose of this article is to admonish:

Pray without ceasing; and don’t make prayer a *part* of your life, but make prayer your *way* of life. =LATT=

David L. White

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV), unless otherwise stated.

- ⁽¹⁾ Proverbs 15:29
- ⁽²⁾ Proverbs 15:8
- ^(2A) Luke 18:13
- ⁽³⁾ Matthew 6:6
- ⁽⁴⁾ Matthew 14:23
- ⁽⁵⁾ Matthew 26:36
- ⁽⁶⁾ Luke 18:1
- ⁽⁷⁾ Matthew 26:41
- ^(7A) Mark 14:34
- ⁽⁸⁾ Luke 22:46
- ⁽⁹⁾ Colossians 4:2
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ 1 Peter 4:7
- ⁽¹¹⁾ Romans 8:26-27

GIFTS OR FRUIT

“I can live without the *gifts* of the Spirit; but I cannot live without the *fruits* of the Spirit.”

Leonard Ravenhill in sermon Beatitudes (Part 01)

and their several functions

- ❖ We will revisit the relationship between the *soul* and the *flesh*
- ❖ We will receive illumination on the *human spirit* and its relation to the *Spirit of God*
- ❖ We will expose the relationship between the *human spirit*, the *soul* and the *flesh*
- ❖ The Lord will teach us how He intends for the *human spirit* to mentor and lead the *soul* (you will NOT want to miss this topic)

These and many other enlightening topics and discourses will unfold before us in the months to come. You'll recall that this is the year where we "render unto God, the things that belong to Him." (2011 Motto) By His awesome grace, I believe that we'll see that He will render to us in return, the things that the blood of Jesus has purchased for us; beginning with Himself.

When the scriptures handle the *flesh* we find various meanings, such as:

- ❖ Some uses of the term *flesh* referencing the physical body of both man and beast⁽²⁾
- ❖ Sometimes the term *flesh* is used to refer to humankind or personhood⁽³⁾
- ❖ The term *flesh* is also used to indicate something non-physical and very likely non-personal⁽⁴⁾

With further research I believe that we will find that primarily under the Old Covenant, the *flesh* was used to refer to either humankind or the physical body. But under the New Covenant, our Lord has introduced us to a more transcendent understanding of the *flesh*.

So that you see where we're going, let's take the scenic route and look at a few places in which our understanding was enhanced by the revelations of the New Covenant. In the Old Covenant, when the law said "thou shall not kill;" everyone understood that meant that the "taking of the life of another was forbidden." But when we get to the New Covenant, our Lord increased our understanding of the commandment. He said, "You have heard that it was said by them of old time, You shall not kill ... But I say unto you, That if you are so much as *angry* with his brother (without a cause); you're in danger ... or if you say to your brother, *Raca* (*you are worthless*), you're in danger ... but if you are so inclined as to say to your brother, You're a *fool*, you are in danger"⁽⁵⁾ As if that illumination was not already stretching the seams of our compassion and humility, our Lord went on to say "You have heard it said; that you shall love thy neighbor, and hate your enemy. But I say unto you, *love* your enemies, *bless* them that

curse you, *do good* to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."⁽⁶⁾ Love our enemies, why? Because this is what God does; therefore this is what the children of God are commanded to do.⁽⁷⁾ Like Father, like sons.

What was expected of us in the Old Covenant was a shadow of things to come. The New Covenant expectations point straight to the heart of God. Under the Old Covenant there is a sense in which our Lord "winked" at our ignorance. Not anymore.

And the time of this ignorance God winked at; but He now commands all men every where to repent. (Acts 17:30)

Now where were we? So we see how our understanding of our Lord's expectations, commandments and dispensations were enlightened in the New Covenant. Likewise, in the New Covenant, we see another expression of the *flesh*. In the New Covenant, the *flesh* also typifies the *fallen human nature*. This "new" use of the term *flesh* is not indicative of the physical body; it is not the whole of mankind. The *flesh* represents the fallen nature that governs the faculties of the *soul* (apart from God). When Adam was created, he was created a *living soul*. And as such, how he related to this world was quite different, prior to the Fall. The *flesh* is the immoral state of existence into which mankind fell (that fateful day in the Garden). It is the *flesh* that drives the *soul* to choose sin either transactionally or as a way of life.⁽⁸⁾

You'll recall that the *flesh* is both a weapon against us and an enemy within us.⁽⁹⁾ The *flesh* cannot be disciplined, it must be crucified. You cannot dress up the *flesh* in a suit and tie; its deeds must be mortified (put to death). The *flesh* cannot be negotiated with.

- ❖ It operates by one law: SIN.
- ❖ Its deeds yield one outcome: DEATH.

In "walks" the cross. Both the cross of Calvary and the daily crosses that we MUST bear. What is the cross and why do we need it? There is a sense in which the cross is the "people, places and things" that are excruciating to us. Why the cross? Because the *flesh* "is not a gentleman;" it will not offer you its seat (life); it must be taken. The means, by which the enemy brings us into subjection, is the *flesh*. Our *crosses* were prepared to destroy the works of the devil. Where the *flesh* has been remanded to the cross,

mind does that? Name one *sane* person who puts up with someone persecuting them ... What's that you say? ... Jesus Christ? ... Oh, okay ... I stand corrected.

Question: Why did Jesus do it?

Answer: Because He *knew* that they *didn't know* what they were doing. As he hung there on that "god-forsaken" cross (no disrespect intended);⁽¹²⁾ (He asked the Father to forgive those who persecuted Him, for righteousness sake.⁽¹³⁾ But He wasn't just asking for the forgiveness of those who physically nailed Him to the cross; or those who literally uttered accusations against Him, that fateful day on Golgotha's hill. He was also praying for *our* forgiveness ... for *my* forgiveness. Because He knew that all of his persecutors were not standing at the foot of the cross at Calvary. He knew that one day I would be born. He knew that although I was not literally hanging on one of the two crosses next to Him that I would "cast the same accusations in my teeth."⁽¹⁴⁾ He knew I would ask, "Lord how could You let this happen to me?" He knew I would wonder who was really in charge in this world, as it seemed that those who had no regard for God, always seemed to triumph. He knew that I too would persecute Him. And so He said, Father forgive JoAnn (or put your name here), she don't really understand what she's doing. They don't understand why they shun the Arms that long to carry them through the valley of the shadow of death ... to comfort them. Father, forgive them. They don't understand that the ache in the pit of their stomach is really "My calling card." Saying come unto Me, all you that labor and are burdened with a heavy load, your rest is with Me. And so they scorn, Me for their pain.

The decisions that the Lord makes for us (on our behalf) are made in righteousness; whether or not we agree or understand. And although we act like we believe that He ordains our way; we still persecute Him for it. We moan and complain about the way that He has chosen for us ... about His way with us. Instead of saying "Be it unto me, as You have ordained." Jesus said to the disciples, "What I do, you won't know now, but hereafter you will."⁽¹⁵⁾ And so He says of our lives.

Question: Why is He asking this of us, too?

Answer: There are more reasons here than the

books can contain. Some of the reasons He asks us to do it is because He did it for us. And we are predestined to be conformed into His image.⁽¹⁶⁾ Another reason He directs us to bless those who persecute us for righteousness sake is because we reap what we sow. And if we do not bless those who persecute us ... we will not be blessed, when we persecute Him. Because not only are we our brother's keeper ... we are our brother. What we do to others we do to ourselves. That is why the Lord admonishes of to do unto others as we would have done to us. And because "God is not mocked" what we do to others, will be done to us.

Question: What does it mean to be persecuted "for righteousness sake?"

Answer: We offer the following disclosure, so that we don't make the tragic mistake of thinking that all persecution is the same. And so that we don't misunderstand; all persecution of "Christians" does not fall under *the banner of "persecution for righteousness sake."*

We can either be persecuted for "doing" righteousness; or for "being" an expression of righteousness.

In a very succinct manner: If you are doing or saying (or being for that matter) what has been ordained by God and we are persecuted for it; that comes under the banner.

However, if our life is not circumspect (I didn't say perfect) and we are buffeted or persecuted for our own indiscretions, this most certainly does not come under the banner.⁽¹⁷⁾

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"BE" Reviled

Okay, wait a minute. First you want me to be persecuted for righteousness sake. Now you're asking me to allow people to revile me? What's the difference between being persecuted, and being reviled? Great question! To be persecuted is to be "afflicted or harmed." To be reviled is to be "cursed at, or spoken to with harsh often slanderous language."

So we see that we are directed to bless both those who “do” us harm AND those who “speak” harmfully to us. Wow! ...

Now here’s an interesting paradox. We as Ambassadors for Christ are commanded to “do” justice and to “speak” peacefully, under ALL circumstances. And when we don’t, we are chastened, and rightfully so. But when someone else “does” injustice to us; and “speaks” injuriously to us; we are commanded to bless them? Okay, so let me see if I’ve got this right ... we must “do and speak” right. And we must endure or tolerate others who do not “do or speak” right to us?

Why?!? Because ...

A person who would persecute or revile someone, especially someone who loves them, someone who honors God, is very, VERY broken. And God’s desire is for them to see their need for the saving grace of Jesus Christ. And He intends to do this by allowing them to occasionally find themselves face-to-face with a child of God. Notwithstanding the unfavorable circumstances in which we then find ourselves.

It’s often easier to notice that *your* “light is OUT;” when you’re standing next to someone who’s light is not only “ON” but is “Very Bright.” The Lord is seeking to win them to the Light. And He’s going to use us to win them; imagine that. However, He is not seeking to win us to the Light. He is simply making us an able reflection of that Light.

This also explains why we must *bless* those who find themselves unwittingly seeking to do us harm or to speak irreverently to us; (very specifically) when we have not provoked such an attitude or response.

At the risk of adding salt to an open wound; please notice the qualifications affixed to these directives. The scriptures says when we are persecuted FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE, we are to bless the perpetrator. Or when we are reviled, FALSELY FOR CHRIST’S SAKE, we are to bless the prosecutor. Why such qualifications as “for righteousness sake” or “falsely, for Christ’s sake?” B-e-c-a-u-s-e if we are persecuted or reviled as a legitimate response to our own indiscretions, we are commanded to “repent” and not to justify our inappropriate behavior.

Sometimes it easier to take a spanking (without

retaliating); when you know that you deserve it. But when you have done nothing worthy of such an attack, it takes the GRACE of God (and a great deal of it) to return “blessing” for “cursing.” And that’s just the point, isn’t it? The Lord wants to extend His grace to those who are thus broken; and He wants to extend it through us. But He can only do that if we submit and allow Him to respond with blessing (and not have us respond in-kind).

We could go on to talk about the VERY, VERY, VERY attractive Return on Investment (ROI) promised to those of us who will “bless persons who persecute or revile” them.

But why?

Isn’t it sufficient enough of an incentive to do it because our Lord requires it of us?

Blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven.

Remember, man shall not live by bread alone, but man shall live by every “BE” attitude that proceeds out of the mouth of God. -LW-

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

- (1) Hebrews 12:14
- (2) Luke 10:5-6
- (3) Philippians 4:7
- (3A) Romans 5:1
- (4) Psalm 119:165
- (5) 1 Corinthians 7:15
- (6) Ephesians 2:14
- (7) Galatians 5:22
- (8) Romans 8:6
- (9) James 3:15
- (10) Colossians 3:15
- (11) Romans 15:33, 16:20; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20
- (12) Matthew 27:46
- (13) Luke 23:34-36
- (14) Matthew 27:39-44
- (15) John 13:7
- (16) Romans 8:29
- (17) 1 Peter 2:20

the spirit, the desires of God. That's the only compromise, the only real sacrifice, the only flexibility we should exercise. I believe we should pursue our relationship and journey with God with a raging vigor. Whoever joins in along the way, then, is meant to be there. I don't mean that we shouldn't be *open to negotiation* in terms of which days to watch TV or who does the dishes. I mean that we should never compromise who we were made to be. It is my humble experience, that we should never do that, because in doing so we end up creating idols, I think, and sabotaging our individual relationship with God. We give something up *for someone else*, as opposed to "giving something up" to align ourselves with God. That's the only sacrifice that truly matters: the giving up of everything to align oneself more with God. I think I understand a little more what the scriptures mean when they say that I should have "no other gods before the Lord" and that "no man can serve two masters.""

One day, I read something that featured the Virgin Mary, the Handmaiden of the Lord. When the angel came to her, her reply was simple, "... be it unto me..." Something resonated within me. I wanted to be His handmaiden too; but I didn't quite know how.

My desire now is to reconnect with God and to destroy all of the altars and the idols that I had created along the way. I have resolved to cut down all of the groves and green trees under which I paid homage to those idols. "I understand that now and receive it." Not completely sure what that looks like. But I am committed to forget those things which are behind. I am pressing towards the mark; for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. By God's grace, I will begin anew to cultivate the talents that He once vouchsafed to me. The talents by which He intended to glorify Himself through me.

Right now, I don't know what that specific steps will direct my "tomorrows." But right now I am clear on what needs to happen and why. I am at peace with knowing that I must, above all else, be reconciled to Him ... and all those other things shall be added.

WHAT TO DO WITH SCRIPTURE

There are two things to do with the scriptures:

Believe them and behave them.

Suzanna Wesley (Mother of 19 children)

Jesus standing before the fig tree, asking "Hey guys, what type of tree is this?" His disciples replied (almost snickering), "My Lord, it's a fig tree." And Jesus asks again, "How can you tell, that this is a fig tree?" His disciples reply again (almost bursting at the seams), "Teacher, we can tell by the leaves." Jesus once again, "Okay, let Me ask you guys one more question ... what is the purpose of a fig tree, if it won't bear figs." They all fell silent.

Jesus cursed the fig tree saying, "Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit, My Father will remove. It will not be allowed to continue to make demands of (or trouble) the ground."⁽²⁾ He looked at the disciples and walked away en route to Bethany.⁽³⁾

So I ask again, how do we know that we have a personal covenant with God?

May I make a few suggestions on ways to discover the truth?⁽⁴⁾

1. How does your covenant with Jesus Christ affect your concept of God and your attitude towards Him?
2. How does your relationship with God affect your attitude towards Jesus Christ (Him as a Person and His Lordship over your life)?
3. How does your covenant with God affect your attitude towards the Holy Scriptures?
4. How does your relationship with Christ affect your attitude towards your "self-life" or your "flesh"?
5. How does your covenant with Christ affect your relationship with and attitude towards your fellow Christians?
6. How does your relationship with Jesus affect your relationship with and attitude towards the world?
7. Last, but in no way least, how does your covenant with Jesus affect your attitude towards sin?

Perhaps we should take the next couple of weeks or months and grapple with this? Try to answer each question thoroughly in light of the scripture's mandates on each of these respective relationships.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.⁽⁵⁾

Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

⁽¹⁾ Philippians 2:12

⁽²⁾ John 15:1-2; Luke 13:7

⁽³⁾ Matthew 21:17-19

⁽⁴⁾ Gleanings and adaptations from A.W. Tozer's Man: The Dwelling Place of God, p.62-68

⁽⁵⁾ Hebrews 13:20-21

~ SUMMARY ~

The Chief Cornerstone



Our hearts sank as our Lord and Sovereign said to us, Ssshhhhh!! Peace, be still!! You must continue to serve mankind; lest they die, before their time. And so He cursed the ground *for man's sake*.⁽¹⁶⁾

Son of My Wisdom



Ethos represents *Character* and *Authority*
Logos represents *Thoughts, Words, and Deeds*
Pathos represents *Experience* and *Emotion*

Precepts in Practice



Now, we know that all wisdom comes from God. Scripture also tells us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge - including wisdom and understanding (Proverbs 1:7). It is interesting that God would talk about His own wisdom embodied in the creatures He created.

Boot Camp



The flesh cannot be negotiated with.
❖ It operates by one law: SIN.
❖ Its deeds yield one outcome: DEATH.
In "walks" the cross.



Meditations of a Ghost Writer

I didn't mean to dishonor God; I just didn't intend very fervently *to* honor Him. What was I thinking? ... If God is not FIRST; then He is LAST.

~ SUMMARY ~

The Leadership Corner

Well, in 2011 God has a word for us concerning conflict and opposition. They represent the new "Opportunity" He has planned. And as such, we need to learn how to handle conflict and opposition so that we can see and take advantage of the opportunities they have enveloped inside.

Journey to Intimacy



The Father told me in no uncertain terms, that "ALL DISOBEDIENCE IS A STUMBLING BLOCK." He said further, "that *no* act of disobedience is a victimless crime."

Love and the Truth



- So *first* we saw that prayer is a gift only truly available to those in covenant with God.
- *Second* we saw that prayer life is fundamentally private.
- *Third* we see that prayer is to be very, very regular. We need to establish times for prayer.

Living Waters



We received revelation on what our Father expects of us as He directs us to *be peacemakers; to be persecuted for righteousness sake; and be reviled.*

Website: www.kingdomnewsonline.com

Enjoy them and feel free to share the newsletters at your leisure.

For previous editions please visit us online. Or by mail at: Kingdom Newsletter, P.O. Box 140482; Irving, TX 75014-0482. You can also find us on www.Scribd.com

We welcome questions or comments on any of the articles represented in these newsletters (past or present). Please send us an email at KingdomNewsletter@yahoo.com.

Sr. Editor: J.C. White, sMHG

KingdomNewsletter@yahoo.com