

# Kingdom News

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

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## The Chief Cornerstone



### ***Series: Pressing the Battle to the Gates***

*Part II – He is not Omnipotent*

... And the gates of hell shall not prevail against ...<sup>(1)</sup>

Contrary to popular belief: The enemy **IS NOT** omnipotent!!!

He's NOT. He wants you to *think* (or at least *act* like) he is omnipotent. But as soon as we get our "understanding"<sup>(2)</sup> around this truth; then we are well on our way to defeating the work of the enemy in our lives; and in the lives of those around us. When it comes to wrestling with the works of the flesh and the adversary, we tend to shy away from the fight ("running away" is probably more indicative of our behavior). Is it because we have mistakenly "given the battle" to the enemy? Do we "throw" the fight because we are deceived into thinking that the enemy is in some sense omnipotent (although we would probably never openly admit it)?

When was the last time you went to the zoo? Did you go to the gorilla cage? Or did you stop by the "lions or tigers or bears (Oh, my!)." Did you become nervous and panic stricken when you were near their cages? Probably not ... but why not? Could it be that although you would not like to meet them openly in a dark alley, it was plain to see the

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## The Leadership Corner *Leadership Living, Inc.*

### Your Need Versus His Supply

Have you ever wondered if God truly cares about what you are going through? I know we are Christians and we are "suppose" to believe that God cares about us. But, if you allow me, I'd like to "pull my skirt up" and show you what's underneath all of the spiritual "fluff."

There have been many times in my spiritual walk that I felt like God was so interested in His plan and purpose for my life that He didn't really care a whole lot about what I wanted or (quite honestly) needed. For example, I've mentioned before that I lost a high-paying job a while back. Now, while I realize that this was God's will at work, it sure was not what I wanted (at least not at that moment when my employer was escorting me off the property). If you can identify with what I'm saying, give me a high five! Thanks. I'm glad I am not alone. And, neither are you.

For months after I lost my job I was trying to understand what God's plan was. He allowed me to apply for, be interviewed (first and second round interviews), and almost get a couple of very promising executive level management jobs. Did you notice I said "almost?" Ok, I was hoping you did not miss that verbiage.

Needless to say that I didn't get any of those "promising" jobs. In each instance I was told that I made an outstanding presentation, but the company "decided to go with someone else." If you have been unemployed recently, these words might sound frightfully familiar.

During this time I wanted so badly to just land a decent job and stop the search process. It was completely

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## A Journey to Intimacy

### My Life, A Ransom

... the Son of man came not to be ministered to, but to minister; and to give His life a ransom. (Luke 10:45)

We often say that “Jesus Christ was our example.” Do we really know what that means ... that Jesus is our example? When the scriptures admonish us to “mark well the man who is spiritually and naturally mature, and behold His upright “ness”;<sup>(1)</sup> it was pointing to the man Jesus Christ. He is exactly what we *ought* to become, what we are intended to become.

I hear you, when you say that “it’s too hard.”<sup>(2)</sup> Or you say, “We’ll never be like Him.” Well if that’s how you genuinely feel, I would like for you to consider what God meant when He said, “that we were predestined to be conformed into the image of His Son.”<sup>(3)</sup> Is it warm in here, or is it just me? The temperature in the room always seems to rise a bit when we begin to compare ourselves to the Person of Christ.

**Warning:** I’m preparing to tell you something that you’re probably not going to want to hear. You may want to get off the bus at the next stop. (If so, I’ll completely understand and respect your right to do so.)

For those of you who decided to “stick around (thank you):” The scriptures tell us that Jesus came to give His life a “ransom” for us.<sup>(4)</sup> One definition of “ransom” is a means of deliverance or rescue from punishment for sin.<sup>(5)</sup> He came to ransom us into reconciliation with God.<sup>(6)</sup> Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice *to the Father*; that the Father would give His [Jesus’] life as a gift to us. This is what God does with the “ransom” of a life (Jesus’ life; my life; or your life). I like to call it the *Law of the Ransom*. When we lay down our lives before Him and take up our crosses and follow Christ; the Father pours out *Life* [Jesus] into others who desperately need Him.

Notice a peculiar thing here, Jesus didn’t give His life *to us*; He gave it *to the Father for us*.<sup>(7)</sup> Why does this matter? It matters because it may clear up some confusion. Often we think we have honored God by “giving our lives *to* others; or even giving it *for* others.” At the risk of sounding a bit harsh (please forgive me); we cannot give *our* lives to another person (or other people). Why is this? There are many reasons (we’ll talk about two).

- **One** - We can only give what “belongs” to us. Our life doesn’t “belong” to us. It belongs to God. Therefore we cannot give it to anyone (really). All we can wisely do is agree with God that our life belongs to Him, and begin to live like it belongs to Him.
- **Two** - In a very real sense, it is only the life of Jesus Christ that will be of any use to others. It’s not *our* life that will profit another. Unfortunately, *our* own life is scarcely profitable to *us*.

Another reason we need to know how the *Law of the Ransom* works; is because this same thing is expected of us.<sup>(8)</sup> He gave His life a ransom and He told us to “go and do likewise.”<sup>(9)</sup> God knew that we had no idea how to “love the Lord with all of our heart and to love our neighbor as our self.”<sup>(10)</sup> This by the way, is what provokes the ransom. So He sent Jesus, to show us what this type of life “looks-like, walks-like and talks-like.” Jesus poured His life “out;” and God now pours His life “in.” Right!? “We have Him (Jesus) as this awesome treasure in our earthen vessels...”<sup>(11)</sup>

We give our lives that we may receive His life. The Lord then ransoms the souls of others with the Life of Jesus Christ, working in us. But if we do not “give” our lives to God; we cannot be useful in the “ransom” of other souls.

The use of the term “ransom” implies very firmly, that there is a sense in which *there is a price to be paid* for the freedom of the souls of men. Jesus came (and paid with His life) so that we could “see” a perfect man. From that we

## Precepts in Practice



### What's the Weather Like in Your House?

It can be amazing to study the weather. Sun, snow, wind, rain, sleet, earthquakes, hail, tornadoes, hurricanes, and heat waves are things that happen without the help of human kind. All of this “natural” activity can be overwhelming depending on where you live.

It's also interesting to observe and learn about weather patterns. Most people come to know how the weather will most likely behave in a given season. For example, in Texas and Arizona summers will be hotter than a fire cracker while winters will be mild (even warm in some areas). In Alaska winters can be treacherous with all of the snow and ice while summers are often mild. In Washington state rain can be the order of the day regardless of the season.

So, we see that the weather does its thing, on its own. And it usually keeps a general pattern geographically. What can be unnerving is the loss of life when natural catastrophes happen. People (Christians and non Christians alike) begin to question God's involvement.

Think about this. When natural weather-related activities happen and no one is hurt (or few people are hurt), we don't often hear this “God involvement” conversation. For example, on January 12, 2010 Haiti suffered a 7.0 earthquake that claimed the lives of approximately 230,000 people (wikipedia.org). This was certainly devastating and the relief efforts continue. During this disaster there were many conversations about God's involvement (or lack thereof).

On the other hand, on June 16, 2010 there was also a 7.0 earthquake in Indonesia that claimed the lives of 17 people. Additionally, on April 4, 2010 there was a 7.2 earthquake in Mexico that claimed the lives of 4 people. Now, I must say that I didn't hear much at all about God's involvement (too much or too little) with these two earthquakes. Why? My guess is because the human casualties were very small in number compared to Haiti and other notable earthquakes.

Precepts in Practice

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## Love and The Truth



### The Fruitful Vineyard II

This article contains adult information, and is intended for an adult audience.

Over the past three articles in this column, we have been walking around the vineyard, and looking to see what could be learned from it. We looked to see what wonderful secrets the Lord might be telling us in the parables or references to the vineyard(s). Just in case you don't know where the vineyard is, here are two of its many addresses (Matthew 21:33-44; Isaiah 5:1-6)

In reviewing the parable of the vineyard, we saw in it the relationship of husband and wife (in the relationship of the husbandman to his vineyard). We also saw some of the responsibilities given to man. You may be useful to read, as a prerequisite: *The Fruitful Vineyard*, and *The Fruitful Vineyard: What Can Be Learned – Husbands and Wives*, from the July 2010 and August 2010 editions respectively.

In the prior articles, we learned that husbands have a responsibility to sow into their wives (vineyards). They have a responsibility to be diligent to sow into their wives in a godly, loving, diligent, tender way. The husband must be sure that his responsibility of sowing into his wife is predicated on her need to bear fruit, to God; more than for his own personal interests. And we saw this with in the husbandman's responsibility to bring forth fruit for the Master of the house. As husbands, you must also recognize that although you are the *primary* earthly tool used in the process of your wives' sanctification; but you are not the *only* tool. Husbands are not the only ones sowing into the lives of their wives. Husbands also have the primary receivership of the fruit of their brides, but again they are not the only ones to receive of her fruitfulness. God is worthy and desirous of the first-fruits of every bride. It is also the case that the wife is intended to minister *primarily* to her husband (on a human level). But she also has a responsibility to minister to others too, albeit quite differently. Therefore the husband must give her rest so that he does not consume her, and damage the other ministries of his wife. We saw this in the vineyard principle that every seventh year the

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parameters of their boundaries. These are boundaries that you knew that they could not cross, even if they wanted to. There was a sense of “safety;” irrespective of the nearness of their presence when you knew that they could not do anything to harm you. U-N-L-E-S-S of course, you trespassed. At which point “all bets were off.” It is the same with the enemy. There is an understanding of the things of God and a *place* of “abiding” in God; where even the near proximity of the enemy does not pose a threat to us. It is because, in that *place*, we know that the enemy could not harm (destroy) us; even if he wanted to. In that *place* of understanding, we see very clearly the parameters of his boundaries. We’ll expand on those boundaries shortly.

The enemy comes for the sheer purpose of “stealing, killing and destroying.”<sup>(3)</sup> And everything he does will resolve itself into one of these three manifestations of death. At the risk of being irreverent, I have one question, “So, what?” It is the enemy’s job, to steal, to kill and to destroy. It’s a dirty job, but under the circumstances somebody’s got to do it. Let him do his job. What’s more important is that it is the job of the Word that God has spoken over us; to keep us, to protect us ... you know:

- “Behold, I have given you power over all of the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”<sup>(4)</sup>
- “No weapon formed against you shall prosper ...”<sup>(5)</sup>
- “If you have faith, and not doubt ... you shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and ... it shall be done.”<sup>(6)</sup>
- And many, many more such warrants are available to us.

The enemy has what amounts to three weapons (theft, murder and destruction). Confirmed, they are powerful weapons indeed, but they have their respective limitations (bless God!!). These weapons disguise and express themselves in manifold variations of the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.<sup>(7)</sup> The lusts of the flesh kill, steal and destroy; likewise, do the lusts of the eye and the pride of life. Isn’t it peculiar just how true the Word of God is? When we die to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, the enemy has NOTHING to work with. This was one very central point of strength, in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, our Lord. He said to us, “Fear not, be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.”<sup>(8)</sup> This of course, means that the “world” can be overcome. This is what Jesus meant when He said, the “prince of this world comes but he has nothing in Me.”<sup>(9)</sup> Said otherwise (in the voice of Jesus); “I have an appointment with the tempter. But he will find his efforts futile. His weapons are impotent against Me. Because the vehicles that he uses to subdue, *are dead to Me*; and *I am dead to them*.” This is where the Lord intends to bring us. This is to be OUR testimony. It is! No, I’m serious! Jesus said, “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also might

be sanctified through the truth.”<sup>(10)</sup> He did these things so that we could see and know what it looked like to “love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ...”<sup>(11)</sup> One reason we needed to “see” it, was because He fully intends that we should “be” it.

Our focus this month is to see from the Word of God how that the scriptures reveal to us that the “enemy of our souls” is not omnipotent. Why does this matter? In warfare, it’s important to both know yourself and to know your enemy.

While we seem to believe that this fight is solely between us and the enemy; essentially this battle is being waged between two Kingdoms: Light and Darkness. Legally, if you are in one kingdom, the seat of power of the opposing kingdom has very limited; or in some cases “No” authority over you. We see this with the laws of foreign governments. When you are in the U.S., the laws of Great Britain do not govern your affairs, unless you are an Ambassador of Great Britain. In which case, you are being governed by the laws of both “kingdoms.” In one real sense the only time the King of another territory or domain has jurisdiction over you is when you are “trespassing.” Are we beginning to see how this works?

One of the enemy’s overarching strategies against us is very clearly “deception.” What’s more; is that “deception” is one of the enemy’s greatest personal problems. The enemy is *himself* “deceived.” I have a little saying, “he who deceives, must first himself be deceived.” The enemy still believes that he will usurp this throne above the stars of God.<sup>(12)</sup> The enemy still believes that he was justified in his treasonous activities against the Only True and Living God.<sup>(13)</sup> Can you see how deceived the enemy must be? The enemy’s whole “M.O. (*modus operandi*);” his whole method of operating is to “deceive.” And by that deception, he “steals, kills and destroys.”<sup>(14)</sup> By this deception, he intends to bind us. Right? Because the scriptures teach that one cannot spoil the house of another lest he first bind the strongman.<sup>(15)</sup>

To “deceive” has a couple of expressions. One expression is to “mislead by a false appearance.” Another expression of the term to deceive is “to be unfaithful to.”<sup>(16)</sup> When the enemy “deceives” he employs both of these expressions. The enemy “misleads by false appearance; by being unfaithful to the truth.” So we see that the scriptures have rightly discovered him; he is the Father of all deceptions (lies).

When the Lord judged (and shall yet exact judgment against Lucifer) the prophesy goes like this. “All of the kings of the earth (who make their bed in hell) shall say to you [Lucifer] at your entrance, “You have become as weak as we are. You’re not much different from us.””<sup>(17)</sup> And they will be echoing what the Lord, Himself, said to

Lucifer. The Lord said, “Lucifer, when I humble you; you will be just like a man, in the hands of an angry God. You will be helpless to withstand My judgments against you.”<sup>(18)</sup>

When you were in grade school (or primary school) did you ever see the school “bully” sitting outside the principal’s office? If so, wasn’t there something really humbling about that sight. Here the “reign of terror” is, himself, being judged.

Now we see why “deception” is so useful to the enemy. If the enemy can get us to believe that he is in some sense (any sense) omnipotent, then by a law of our nature we become fearful of him. In our sane moments, we are painfully aware that we cannot withstand “omnipotence” in any of its manifestations. Again, we see why deception on this point is so forceful in the hands of the enemy.

As said in a prior article, we are not privy to the breadth of the enemy’s authority; as assigned by God. Nor do we need to be. We would do well, if we would just make use of the revelation that the Lord, has provided. Most certainly, His grace is sufficient.

He is Not Omnipotent!!!

In Genesis, we see some circumscription of the enemy’s power.

When Adam fell ... and God passed judgment on man and on the enemy we see a very interesting secret being let out. God said to the serpent, “upon your belly shall you go, and dust shall you eat all the days of your life.”<sup>(19)</sup>

Dust? The Serpent can only eat, dust?!? Is that all?

Wait what is “dust” really? Hey Adam, where art thou? After we had fallen, when the Lord judged Adam (and all mankind, in Adam); He said, “Adam, you are dust ... and to the dust you shall return.”<sup>(20)</sup> Wow!!!! So what does that tell us?

Doesn’t it tell us that the fallen state of mankind (the flesh) is “dust?” Within the boundaries of the flesh the enemy has been given a certain jurisdiction. God gave it to him, in Genesis. What do we know about the dust (flesh)? That it is at enmity with God and does not (or cannot) agree with the things of the Spirit of God.<sup>(21)</sup> Anything that cannot come into agreement with God, is a very useful instrument in the hands of the enemy.

So what weapons do we see in the arsenal of the enemy?

In the arsenal of the enemy there is lots of ammunition (shells, explosives, etc.) But the primary object that he uses against us is our own *flesh*. And every other weapon is simply a means to bring the flesh (mind, will and

emotions) under the jurisdiction of the enemy. Deception is one means by which the flesh is enticed into bondage to the enemy (sin, Satan and the world).

Now notice, that the *flesh* actually belongs to the person (as opposed to belonging to the enemy). And the flesh can hold either of two positions: 1) to be reckoned as crucified with Christ;<sup>(22)</sup> 2) or to be prey to the enemy.<sup>(23)</sup>

When we live our lives with the present knowledge that our flesh has been crucified with Christ; our “walk” and “talk” is different. When we live our lives lacking that very real truth, our thoughts, words and deeds bring us into bondage to the enemy.

This is why it is imperative that we understand what it means to be crucified with Christ. This renders the flesh, dead to the enemy. It is then totally useless to him, because it cannot be brought into bondage by means of its own lusts, nor the lusts of the eye or the pride of life.<sup>(24)</sup> When this is the case, the enemy is completely impotent.

He is not Omnipotent!!!

When we crucify the flesh with its passions, we can say like Jesus, “the prince of this world comes, but he has nothing in Me [with which to work].”<sup>(25)</sup>

God willing, next edition: *Pressing the Battle to the Gates – He is not Omniscient.* <CC>

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

#### Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

<sup>(1)</sup> Matthew 16:18

<sup>(2)</sup> Proverbs 4:7

<sup>(3)</sup> John 10:10

<sup>(4)</sup> Luke 10:19

<sup>(5)</sup> Isaiah 54:17

<sup>(6)</sup> Matthew 21:21

<sup>(7)</sup> 1 John 2:16

<sup>(8)</sup> John 16:33

<sup>(9)</sup> John 14:30

<sup>(10)</sup> John 17: 19

<sup>(11)</sup> 1 John 2:15

<sup>(12)</sup> Isaiah 14:13

<sup>(13)</sup> Isaiah 14:12

<sup>(14)</sup> John 10:10

<sup>(15)</sup> Matthew 12:29

<sup>(16)</sup> Dictionary.com 8/16/10 at

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/deceived>

<sup>(17)</sup> Isaiah 14:9-10, 15-16

<sup>(18)</sup> Ezekiel 28:9

<sup>(19)</sup> Genesis 3:14

<sup>(20)</sup> Genesis 3:19

<sup>(21)</sup> Romans 8:7

<sup>(22)</sup> Galatians 2:20; 5:24

<sup>(23)</sup> Romans 7:25; Galatians 5:19-21

<sup>(24)</sup> 1 John 2:15-16

<sup>(25)</sup> John 14:30

draining. It took a lot of time, energy, and finances (we all understand that it costs money to search for a job). I'm telling you I had to purchase paper, ink toner, folders, and more to put together complex presentations for agency boards of directors. It was truly the old "dog & pony" show.

All along I knew God was up to something. I also knew that He would only give me what was best – from His perspective – even if I didn't share His view. Still, I felt like I needed a job ASAP, but that God was not really interested in what I thought I needed or wanted. Instead, He was busy working away at His divine plan for me. Which, by the way, always seems to take longer than the plan I have for myself.

I shared that story to help us think about times when we've honestly felt that God was not nearly as interested in our needs or desires as He was (or is) in His plan for us. And, if this is true, why then does God do this? Shouldn't He be at least partially interested in our needs and wants? Let's explore what the word has to say.

One day when Jesus was teaching there was a huge crowd listening to him. As was his custom, he spoke directly to what they had on their minds. One of the issues was their concern for basic human needs like food, clothing and shelter. In Luke 12: 29-32 (KJV paraphrased) Jesus encouraged the people by saying, "Do not worry about food and drink (basic human needs). Your Father knows you need these things (everyday). It is His good pleasure to provide them for you (even without your asking)."

Jesus is telling us that we have a Heavenly Father who loves us (more than we understand) and who provides for our needs before we need them. He does not wait to see what we will pray for and then go in a back room to try to create it. Unlike many of us, God is not a procrastinator. He also is not reactionary. Instead, God **ALWAYS** provides for **EVERYTHING** we need **BEFORE** we need it. This is the character of God.

Did I hear you say you need a little more proof that God supplies our needs **BEFORE** we have them? No problem, I'm excited that you are interested in this discussion. Let's take a quick trip back in time and look at creation. In Genesis chapter one (KJV) we see God's strategy first hand. We notice that God made the heavens, earth, animals, and vegetation all

**BEFORE** he made man. Then He told Adam that He had given him everything he would need to survive and grow. Here is the principle, "*First Provision – Then Need.*"

Oh, but don't stop there. Jesus came back to this same principle in John 14:2-3 (KJV paraphrased). He told his disciples that he would go away and **PREPARE** a place for them. Then, he would come back and get them to bring them (and us – his disciples today) to this prepared place.

Are you starting to see a pattern? In the beginning, at the end, and all throughout time, God has, is, and will **ALWAYS** provide for our needs **BEFORE** we have them. So, why then do we spend so much time praying for basic human needs and material things? I submit that we do this because we take our focus off God and begin to worry about the "things" we need or want, especially if we don't readily see or recognize what it is that God has provided. Are you still with me?

On any given day, we may determine there is something we need or want. At which time we may begin to pray, talk, or worry about this need or desire. Now, here is where we go back to the beginning of our conversation. Remember, we said sometimes it feels like God is more concerned about what His is doing than what we need or want. One reason it may seem this way is because God is **NOT** going to answer our prayers by giving us what we asked for. Why? Because, He has **ALREADY** provided what we need.

Our challenge is to come before God and ask Him to show us what He has already provided for us so that we may utilize these resources (that are actually waiting for us). So, here we find that our lives are not really about what we need (or want). Instead, our lives and our focus should be about what God has already provided and how to utilize His bountiful provision to meet our needs and satisfy our true desires (not our "passing fancies").

Going back to my "job search" story, I finally gave up trying to get one of those coveted positions. When this happened, God had my mentor say to me, "Joyce, why don't you open your own agency?" In that moment it was as if God parted the heavens and delivered me from blindness (my inability to see that this is what He wanted all along, but I was afraid to step out on faith). Talk about a weight having been

lifted off my shoulders.

Since that time, God has blessed tremendously. The agency is new and moving forward. God is faithful to His plan for me. And, I am no longer worried about minor details like food, clothing, and shelter. Why? I've changed my focus from what I believe I need and/or want to what God has already provided for me (and was waiting for me to turn to Him for guidance in this area).

Whew! That was a mouthful. In closing, would you be willing to believe that God is so interested in what you need and want that He doesn't wait for you to ask Him for these things? Instead, He provides them **BEFORE** you need them. It's true. Believe it! ~LLI~

Ok, now I'll put my skirt down.

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## PRAY WITHOUT CEASING



Prayer is the perfect example of  
all love, truth and  
righteousness.

Love is prayer's *motive*

Truth is its *expression*

Righteousness is its *goal*

– Ray C Stedman, Sermon: *Praying Boldly*

could “hope” to be “made” perfect men. Out of that hope is born a “faith” that the Person of Jesus Christ has purchased for us an opportunity to be conformed into His image. Imagine that, to be conformed into the image of the “perfect man.”

**Disclaimer:** Before we start a forest fire ... within the framework of this discourse ... the term “perfect” means spiritually mature; one who the Spirit of God has induced to both *will* and *do* according to God's pleasure.<sup>(12)</sup>

Let's return to the idea that “there is a sense in which *there is a price to be paid* for the freedom of the souls of men.” May we now expand on that? Granted, we know most certainly that the ultimate price for the souls of men was the “blood of the Lamb.” Subsequently, there are sacrifices made by the servants of the Lord, so that men may become “sons of God.”

Can we look at it this way?

When a person or a nation pays a ransom for another (within the many transactions) you'll see that often the “person or nation” that pays the ransom, is different from the “person or people” who procure the object ransomed. But the whole transaction is fulfilling the *Law of the Ransom*. Likewise, Jesus paid the ransom for our souls. And we as “mercenaries,” go into all the world to procure the objects of the ransom (which are the souls of man).

Just as our Lord, came to give His life a ransom for all; so too are we obliged to give our lives to God, so that he may ransom the souls of men.

*Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG*

### Scripture References - King James Version (KJV)

<sup>(1)</sup> Psalm 37:37

<sup>(2)</sup> Luke 18:27

<sup>(3)</sup> Romans 8:29

<sup>(4)</sup> Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45

<sup>(5)</sup> 8/29/10 from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ransom>

<sup>(6)</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:18; Hebrews 2:17

<sup>(7)</sup> Psalm 40:7; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 23:46

<sup>(8)</sup> John 14:12

<sup>(9)</sup> Luke 10:37

<sup>(10)</sup> Matthew 22:37-39

<sup>(11)</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:7

<sup>(12)</sup> Philippians 2:13

It appears that when the weather does its thing and natural disasters occur, we are ok with it unless a substantial number of people get hurt. When human fatalities start to mount some of us (including Christians) begin to indict God for what we consider to be His “bad behavior.”

Is there a lesson we should learn from this discussion? Most certainly. Life and death are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other (at least in the physical world). In Genesis 2:7 (KJV paraphrased) it says that God breathed into Adam’s nostrils and he became a living soul. This lets us know that God is the giver of all life.

Then, in John 3:16 (KJV paraphrased) Jesus tells us that he is the “way, truth, and life” and we can only come to the Father by him. This lets us know that in addition to human life, we can (through the finished work of Jesus Christ) have eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

So now we see that God is the giver of natural and spiritual (eternal) life. God is life. Then, when we go to Hebrews 9:27 (KJV paraphrased) we learn that all humans have an “appointment” with death. It is a natural part of the life cycle.

From these passages we can understand that life and death exist together. We also know that for believers (those who have made Jesus Lord and Savior) also have the eternal life of God inside of us. This means that when we meet with death (at the appointed time), it will be a short meeting. We then drop our earthly garment (body) and show up for duty to take on our next assignment in the kingdom of God. It’s just that simple.

Now, for those who have not (and who do not) accepted Christ and come into the family of God, their appointment with death has a different reality (judgment and sentencing). So let us go back to the natural disaster conversation. As believers we know that our eternal “health insurance” is paid up in full. We, therefore, have no need to concern ourselves with what happens when a catastrophe strikes (or anything else for that matter).

I believe we are to live our lives in a way that brings glory to God (in obedience) and in a way that helps others (including being an example of the love of God). Then, when catastrophes happen (or other events where lives are lost) we don’t have to try to figure out what God’s involvement was (too much,

too little, or too late). Instead, we can rest in God’s word. Those who were prepared for the appointment will “breeze” through it and move on. Those who were not prepared will have to deal with that reality.

In addition, may I submit that as believers, we are to “sanctify God in the eyes of others.” This means that when people try to indict God, we can simply give our testimony (if we are so led) about His faithfulness and the natural and eternal life He has provided for anyone who will accept it.

Natural disasters will come and go. Sometimes many lives will be lost. At other times few (if any) fatalities will be involved. Either way, it’s not about how many were lost (from a Christian perspective). It’s more about how many were ready.

While we mourn with those who mourn (because they will miss the departed loved ones), we don’t mourn as if we have no hope. God is our hope in catastrophic or fair weather.

To God be the glory for giving natural and spiritual life! ~PIP~

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

## AMAZING GRACE

"That thou shouldst so  
delight in me and be the  
God thou art;

Is darkness to my intellect  
but sunshine to my heart."

(Author Unknown)

husbandman must allow the vineyard to full year's rest (no tilling, no seeding, no weeding and no harvest).<sup>(1)</sup> Summarizing the recap: In the July 2010 edition, we saw what the vineyard taught us about *regeneration*. In the August 2010 edition, we began to see how the vineyard taught us about some of the roles of the husband towards his wife. This month the vineyard reveals yet another nugget of gold.

It is said of the husbandman of the vineyard: *"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with diverse (different) seeds: lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled."*<sup>(1)</sup> This directive seems to be quite clear. It is a directive against hypocrisy, against pretense. So often in this age there is a gulf of difference between how we as believers carry ourselves at church, and the same people at home. There is a gulf of difference between how we treat each other when we are happy versus when we are angry, or sad, offended, or hurt. There is a huge difference between our reluctance to forgive another and our desire for speedy and total forgiveness when we are the offender. There is a huge difference between how we treat people we depend upon, and how we treat people that we don't think we need.

The issue here, if it's not already clear is "love." We say that we are children of the God of love, the God of grace, the God of mercy. Yet we find (if we are truthful) that we are (more than we'd like to admit) unloving, ungracious, and unmerciful. The issue here, again, is love. And the word of God says this about love. Romans 12:9 *Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*

The phrase translated "without dissimulation," is the Greek *anypokrytos*, Remove the initial "a" and you have the root from which we derive the word 'hypocrite.' Said literally, let love be without hypocrisy.

Now it is a mistake to think that this refers only to hypocrisy as it is directed towards the wife. Hypocrisy may be directed at anyone. However, where these hypocrisies exist in the husband, they have the grave potential of hindering the development of the wife. Even if these hypocrisies are not directed at the wife, the husband may think it has nothing to do with her. But be sure, when hypocrisies exist (at all) they have their effects, and the effects are very real. Now the reverse is also true; the life of the wife has an effect on the husband also, but this series is focused on the

husband primarily and his responsibilities.

In closing, when the husband allows hypocrisy, not only are we talking about how the husband treats people, but also the spirit of the house itself. If the husband is hoping to sow rightly in his wife, he needs to make sure that the atmosphere in the house is an atmosphere of real, substantial, abiding relationship, and intimacy with God. There needs always to be an open floor to talk about God, the things of God, the word of God, etc. Husbands there cannot be the "Bible study time," and "prayer time," and then other times when you are willing to talk neither about scripture, nor God. There must always to be that sort of unmixed purity in your household. For the Lord says "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."<sup>(3)</sup>

And in light of that I say this to husbands:

Blessed are you husbands which are pure in heart, for in your wife, you shall see God. -LATT-

*David L. White*

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

<sup>(1)</sup> Leviticus 25:3-4

<sup>(2)</sup> Deuteronomy 22:9

<sup>(3)</sup> Matthew 5:8

## TRUTH



**Truth** (in my pocket)

Truth does not belong in our "pockets." It belongs in our hearts. "Pockets" are places for storing things. It symbolizes our learning truth "to tell or to teach it."

*We are to sustain one primary relationship to truth, "the living of it."* We must learn truth to live it. To become it; so that truth may "make" us. We are not to learn truth so that we can "teach" it. Our responsibility is to learn truth, so that we may "do" truth.

As the Lord watches our development, He may choose to "teach" truth; using us as an example. But that's His prerogative; not ours.

(See article entitled Teacher's Aide in the Living Waters column of this edition. I believe it will bless you.)

- JoAnn C. White  
[Received 1/16/10 ~9:36AM (MT)]

On a temporal note, while this may not guarantee that you actually get a “right” answer, altogether; it will certainly go a long way towards positioning you for a right answer. On the other hand, if either of those two components is missing you are far less likely to get a correct answer. If you ask a person who “knows not that he knows not,”<sup>(3)</sup> you’re certain to receive an incorrect response although sometimes it may actually “tickle” the ears. If you position the question incorrectly; or if you do not properly define the question itself, it increases the opportunity for misunderstanding (at one end of the spectrum) and confusion (at the other). I love God (sigh).

So we see that according to the *Principle of Proper Inquiry* it is imperative that we both “ask the right question” and that we “ask the right person(s).”

### WHAT IS TRUTH?

Now in light of the *Principle of Proper Inquiry* we must both properly frame the question and direct it to the correct audience.

#### Proper Frame

If the proper question is “WHAT is truth?” we’d probably get any number of disparate, somewhat incoherent responses. Response such as:

- Truth is a verified or indisputable fact, proposition, principle or the like<sup>(4)</sup>
- Conformity with fact or reality<sup>(5)</sup>
- An obvious or accepted fact; truism; platitude<sup>(6)</sup>
- Fidelity; constancy; steadfastness; faithfulness<sup>(7)</sup>

All of these could be very good responses, if the question is properly “What?” is truth. ( ... more on this shortly)

#### Correct Audience:

Next we’ll want to be sure that we’ve directed the proper question to the correct person(s) or audience. Example: If we wanted to know “what is truth?” We probably would not ask Pilate;<sup>(8)</sup> because it is evident (from his discussion with Jesus) that he didn’t know. And if we wanted to know “what is truth?” We probably wouldn’t ask someone who doesn’t believe that there is such a thing as absolute truth.

We’d want to direct this very important question to an authority on the subject. Wouldn’t we? Hmm ... Where could we go for an authority on “truth? Let’s go to the Bible, the quintessential, foundational authority on all things related to “truth.”

Surveying the scriptures (on the topic of truth) leads us to a most interesting need; a need to reframe the question itself. The scriptures teach us that “truth” is not a “WHAT;” Truth is a “WHO?”<sup>(9)</sup>

Jesus said to him, I AM ... the *Truth* ...

Biblical Christianity is the only place (that I am aware of) where “truth” is a Person. This is very significant in light of the next question.

### WHAT DO I DO WITH TRUTH?

Now that we have identified “Truth;” a reasonable next question is “What do I do with it?” Good question, now let’s direct this to the proper audience.

The scriptures teach that our responsibility to Truth is that we are to:

- **Speak the Truth in our heart**<sup>(10)</sup> - In identifying who shall abide in the Lord’s tabernacle and who shall dwell in the His Holy hill; we are admonished to “speak the truth in our heart.” That means to say “who Jesus is” and to say “what Jesus says.”
- **Know Truth**<sup>(11)</sup> – If we continue to live according to every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God; we shall know the truth, and be freed thereby.
- **Be sanctified through the Truth**<sup>(12)</sup> – We are to allow the Lord to sanctify us through the truth. We are to so establish a relationship with truth, as to be “set apart unto it.” Intercourse with truth brings about an “otherness” to our lives. *Think:* Israel in the land of Goshen during the plagues of Egypt.<sup>(13)</sup> What went on in Goshen, was something completely “other” than what went on in Egypt.
- **Do truth**<sup>(14)</sup> – We have a responsibility to “do” truth. We are obliged to do what is true. *Non Satis Scire:* to know [truth] is not enough.
- **Bear witness to the Truth**<sup>(15)</sup> ... for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth ... And since a servant is not above his Master, we too have a responsibility to bear witness to the truth. We bear witness to the truth by the life we live and the words that we speak.

### WHAT DOES TRUTH HAVE TO DO WITH OBEDIENCE?

All of *Truth* has a most beautifully, unique relationship with *Itself*. We see this in the triune nature of the Godhead. The Father is *Truth* eternally; the Son is *Truth* manifestly; and Spirit is *Truth* up

close and personal.

You may recall that Kingdom *obedience* issues from a heart that has a pre-commitment to live “subject to and in compliance with” the governance of God; and with the precepts of the Kingdom.<sup>(16)</sup> Obedience issues from a heart that believes that God is “Who He has identified Himself to be” and subsequently that He worthy of our *obedience*. Jesus Christ has revealed Himself to be the quintessence of “Truth.”<sup>(17)</sup> He is also the complete physical expression of the Godhead.<sup>(18)</sup>

*Obedience* is a natural response to Truth; remember Jesus Christ is “Truth.” So what relationship does *obedience* have to *truth*? Perhaps the answer is summed up in the words of Jesus: If you love Me (*Truth*), keep my commandments (*Obey*).<sup>(19)</sup>

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

- (1) 2 Corinthians 6:15-17
- (2) John 18:38 paraphrased
- (3) White, J.C. December 2010, Article: *A Parable: He Who Knows Not ...*, column: *Boot Camp*; publication *Kingdom News*
- (4) 6/17/10 from Dictionary.com at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/truth>
- (5) 6/17/10 from Dictionary.com at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/truth>
- (6) 6/17/10 from Dictionary.com at <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/truth>
- (7) 6/17/10 from Webster’s Online Dictionary at <http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definitions/truth?cx=partner-pub-0939450753>
- (8) John 18:38
- (9) John 14:6; John 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:13-15
- (10) Psalm 15:1-2
- (11) John 8:32
- (12) John 17:17
- (13) Exodus 8:22-23; 9:26; 11:7
- (14) 1 John 1:5-6; 1 Peter 1:22
- (15) John 18:37
- (16) Kingdom News-Come Let Us Reason Together, Bible Study notes, June 3, 2010, [www.kingdomnewsonline.com](http://www.kingdomnewsonline.com) under Archives (coming July 7, 2010)
- (17) John 14:6
- (18) Colossians 2:9
- (19) John 14:15

us; Who works in the hearer to both will and to do.<sup>(5)</sup>

We are not very strictly the teachers of men; the Lord, Himself, teaches. He uses a myriad of vehicles by which to impart revelation (to us and to others): His Word, His Spirit, our environment (i.e. people, places and things). Please don’t be mistaken; we do have a responsibility in this *divine partnership*. There is a sense in which it is easier to persuade and influence one by what they “see” more than by what they “hear.” People are looking for a “life well lived;” more than “a word well spoken.” We *talk* about the things of God, but we are hard pressed to “*walk* about the things of God.” If we are to help facilitate the coming of the Kingdom of God in the earth, this **MUST** change.

(Pardon the analogy.) We can lead a horse to water, but we cannot make it drink. It is far more likely that the horse will drink if it goes to the water itself. Said otherwise, we can intend to “teach” another, but if they do not have a heart to receive what is being said; the message will most likely fall on deaf ears. But if we know that a brother or sister needs a Word from the Lord, we can petition the Throne of God on their behalf. We’ll want the Lord to give them an ear to hear and a heart to receive. We’ll also want the Lord to give us a word fitly spoken.<sup>(6)</sup> The apostle Paul knew this well. He asked the church at Colosse to pray for him that God would open an opportunity for him to speak. Paul relied on the Lord to furnish a way. Meanwhile admonishing the Colossians<sup>(7)</sup> to ensure that their words were always gracious; intending to preserve the life of the “hearer.”

This is where prayer does some of its most powerful work. Where we desire to see the will of God in the life of another, we agree with God in prayer.<sup>(8)</sup> The Spirit Himself intercedes for us (and others) according to the will of God. As a result of the intercession of the Spirit, we then see all things work together for good.<sup>(9)</sup> Thus producing in the other person just that character that pleases God.

The very function or responsibility of “teaching” belongs to the Holy Spirit.<sup>(10)</sup> Even so, we have a responsibility to study so that we may receive our Lord’s approval.<sup>(11)</sup> and thereby be a useful aide to the Spirit.

We’re just the Teacher’s aides.

Sr. Editor, JoAnn C. White, sMHG

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

- (1) 1 John 2:20
- (2) 1 Corinthians 8:1
- (3) John 16:13-14
- (4) Kingdom News, February 2010 edition, the Living Waters column, p4
- (5) Philippians 2:13
- (6) Proverbs 25:11
- (7) Colossians 4:3-5
- (8) James 5:16; 1 John 5:14
- (9) Romans 8:26-28
- (10) John 14:26
- (11) 2 Timothy 2:15

## ❧ SUMMARY ❧

### The Chief Cornerstone



Contrary to popular belief: The enemy **IS NOT** omnipotent!!!

He's NOT. He wants you to *think* (or at least *act* like) he is omnipotent. But as soon as we get our "understanding"<sup>(2)</sup> around this truth; then we are well on our way to defeating the work of the enemy in our lives; and in the lives of those around us.

### Precepts in Practice



I believe we are to live our lives in a way that brings glory to God (in obedience) and in a way that helps others (including being an example of the love of God). Then, when catastrophes happen (or other events where lives are lost) we don't have to try to figure out what God's involvement was (too much, too little, or too late). Instead, we can rest in God's word.

### Boot Camp



So we see that according to the *Principle of Proper Inquiry* it is imperative that we both "ask the right question" and that we "ask the right person(s)."

### Living Waters



We can lead a horse to water, but we cannot make it drink. It is far more likely that the horse will drink if it goes to the water itself. Said otherwise, we can intend to "teach" another, but if they do not have a heart to receive what is being said; the message will most likely fall on deaf ears.

## ❧ SUMMARY ❧

### The Leadership Corner

Jesus is telling us that we have a Heavenly Father who loves us (more than we understand) and who provides for our needs before we need them. He does not wait to see what we will pray for and then go in a back room to try to create it. Unlike many of us, God is not a procrastinator. He also is not reactionary. Instead, God **ALWAYS** provides for **EVERYTHING** we need **BEFORE** we need it. This is the character of God.

### Journey to Intimacy



**One** - We can only give what "belongs" to us. Our life doesn't "belong" to us. It belongs to God. Therefore we cannot give it to anyone (really). All we can wisely do is agree with God that our life belongs to Him, and begin to live like it belongs to Him.

**Two** - In a very real sense, it is only the life of Jesus Christ that will be of any use to others. It's not *our* life that will profit another. Unfortunately, *our* own life is scarcely profitable to *us*.

### Love and the Truth



He [the husband] needs to make sure that the atmosphere in the house is an atmosphere of real, substantial, abiding relationship, and intimacy with God. There must always to be that sort of unmixed purity in your household. For the Lord says "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."<sup>(3)</sup>

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